

Newtownhamilton Renewal and Development Plan

Final Report
July 2012



Prepared for



Revision Schedule

Newtownhamilton – Renewal and Development Plan
July 2012

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Appendix A Community Consultation Advertisement

1

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2007-2013 was launched to build capacity within local communities and provide support for community economic development in the most disadvantaged rural areas. The NIRDP is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and is managed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. A core principal of the approach to broader rural development in Northern Ireland has been and continues to be that the communities which most closely experience problems should be involved in the design and delivery of projects and programmes to tackle such problems and, thus, improve their quality of life.

The NIRDP contains a number of measures under each axis. These measures are specific areas where support is to be targeted. Each measure was selected from a menu of options provided by the European Union in order to target the aspects of rural life that are most important to Northern Ireland. Measure 3.5 targets Village Renewal and Development with the aim of "creating long term visions for villages and surrounding areas and to support initiatives promoting cross-community development".

The objective is to enable and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full potential of their area is achieved and also to support integrated village initiatives.

1.1 How is the Programme administered at a local level?

The Southern Organisation for Action in Rural areas (SOAR) is the Joint Committee and Local Action Group for the Craigavon, Armagh and Newry & Mourne Council areas. They are responsible for the administration of the NIRDP within the rural areas of Craigavon, Armagh and Newry. SOAR local action group is comprised of local Councillors and Social Partner Representatives. Craigavon Borough Council acts as the Lead Council with responsibility for all financial and administrative matters.

1.2 Village Renewal and Development

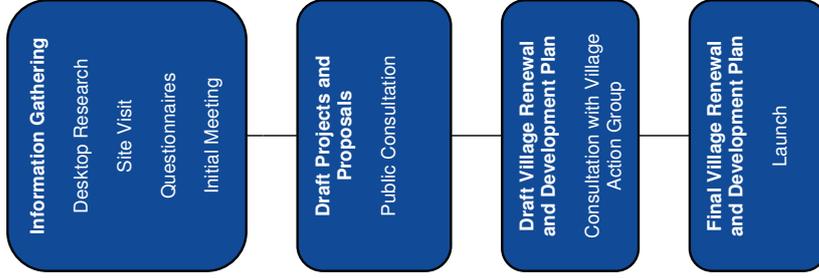
Newry and Mourne District Council secured funding under Measure 3.5 for the preparation of Village Renewal and Development Plans for 13 pre-selected villages and clusters across the Newry and Mourne District Council Area.

URS were commissioned by Newry and Mourne District Council to facilitate the development of these plans. The plans will be prepared between February and June 2012, with potentially a second stage which will involve selected projects being taken forward to the stage of submitting an outline planning application, making a submission for funding or being ready to feed into an economic appraisal.

1.3

Methodology

This Village Renewal and Development Plan has been developed by the community for the community. The methodology was strongly consultation based and allowed a range of stakeholders including NMDCC, local Councillors, community and voluntary groups and the general public to get involved.



Programme for Government (PfG) and the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI). The Strategy takes account of key driving forces such as population growth and movement; demographic change, the increasing number of households, transportation needs, climate change and the spatial implications of divisions that still exist in our society. The RDS is not operational planning policy which is issued through Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) published by the Department of the Environment (DOE).

The RDS has a statutory basis under the Strategic Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, and the Order requires Departments to “have regard to the regional development strategy”.

The Strategy has four key elements:

- A Spatial Development Strategy which divides the region into 5 components based on functions and geography;
- Guidance at two levels;
 1. Regional level that is to be applied to all parts of the region, and
 2. Specific guidance for each element of the Spatial Framework
- A Regionally Significant Economic Infrastructure section which identifies the need to consider strategic infrastructure projects;
- Implementation.

The aims of the RDS:

- Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland;
- Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West;
- Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential;
- Promote development which improves the health and wellbeing of communities;
- Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places;
- Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake;
- Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaption to climate change; and
- Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.

1.4 Policy Context

1.4.1 Regional Development Strategy 2035 ‘Building a Better Future’

The RDS provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors. It does not redefine the other departments’ strategies but compliments them with a spatial perspective.

The RDS 2035 revises the original strategy published in 2001 and amended in 2008. The RDS influences various government strategies including the

Chapter 3 of the RDS sets out the strategic guidance for the region focusing on the key principles of the economy, society and the environment. The guidance is also split into Regional Guidance (RG) and Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG).

There is a dedicated section regarding Rural Northern Ireland and the key guidance is set out below:

SFG13: Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside

- Establish the role of multi-functional town centres
- Connect rural and urban areas
- Revitalise small towns and villages
- Facilitate the development of rural industries, businesses and enterprises in appropriate locations
- Encourage sustainable and sensitive development

SFG14: Improve accessibility for rural communities

- Improve the overall connectivity or rural communities to services and other parts of the Region by exporting innovative ways of bringing these services to the communities
- Integrate local transport

1.4.2

Rural White Paper Action Plan (Draft)

The Rural White Paper Action Plan is an Executive initiative aimed at addressing key issues and challenges facing rural communities. The development of the Action Plan is being led by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Public consultation on the draft Action Plan commenced on 13 March 2011 and finished on 13 June 2011, with the final Rural White Paper Action Plan anticipated to be published in early 2012.

The draft Rural White Paper Action Plan has been developed following extensive consultation with the Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group.

The RWP has been developed to provide a strategic framework for rural policy for the next ten years and will help guide the work of the Executive in this significant and challenging area.

The RWP identifies the Rural Vision:

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive rural society where rural dwellers enjoy the same quality of life as all others in the region. We envisage **vibrant, strong rural communities**, resilient and receptive to global trends through **strong inter-linkages with urban areas** and market towns.

Our vision is for rural economies adapting to global trends and **improved infrastructure and transport systems** to ensure rural dwellers can avail of employment opportunities and **key services**.

Our vision is for rural areas that maintain their distinctive features as places of agricultural production, areas of outstanding beauty, places of social, historic and cultural uniqueness and places with a **strong community infrastructure** which can avail of **economic, social and cultural opportunities**.

Our vision is for the continuing development of **linkages between rural and urban** areas so that everyone can enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of rural places and the facilities and services of larger towns and cities.

Draft Rural White Paper, p5

In order to achieve the Vision the RWP identifies 5 key themes:

1. Urban / Rural Linkages
 - To support the development of an efficient transport and infrastructure system that facilitates effective rural – urban inter-linkages;
2. Access to Services
 - To promote fair and equitable access to key services for all rural dwellers;
3. Sustainable Rural Communities
 - To promote tolerance, health, well-being and inclusion for rural dwellers;
 - Seek to minimise, where it exists, disadvantage, poverty, social exclusion and inequality amongst those living in rural areas and in particularly amongst vulnerable groups;
 - To maintain a viable economic, social, cultural and physical infrastructure in rural areas and seek to ensure that regional infrastructure disparities are minimised;
 - To preserve the cultural and social uniqueness of rural community life linked to its smaller population settlement;
 - To promote the development of effective and inclusive rural governance structures and sufficient community capacity to engage in these structures;
 - To enhance and refine the Rural Development Programme to ensure the maximum benefit from future Programmes for rural communities;

4. Sustainable Rural Economies

- To provide rural businesses with appropriate support to ensure the development of dynamic and innovative rural economies;
- To seek to maximise employment opportunities for rural dwellers;
- 5. Sustainable Countryside
 - To support the development of a more sustainable agricultural sector, a more competitive agri-food sector and enhanced agri-environmental links;
 - To safeguard the beauty and fabric of our rural areas and increase opportunities for all to enjoy the benefits of the countryside.

The RWP does on to set out a detailed Action Plan which is based on the 5 key themes set out above, consisting of some 90 specific actions.

1.4.3 Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-2015

This framework sets out the goals, objectives, priority action areas and outcomes for the Programme for Government commitment to bring forward a package of measures to tackle rural poverty and social isolation.

The framework aims to:

- Build on the work of the Rural Anti-Poverty / Social Inclusion Framework 2008-2011;
- Provide the necessary tools to identify the needs of vulnerable people / groups in rural areas;
- Develop programmes / interventions to help alleviate poverty / social isolation amongst vulnerable people / groups in rural areas;
- Complement and add value to existing government strategies aimed at tackling poverty and social isolation;
- Empower rural communities to help themselves.

1.4.4 Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013

The NI Rural Development Programme was approved by the European Commission in July 2007 and has three key elements:

Axis 1 – improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors by supporting restructuring, development and innovation. Key measures include vocational training, adding value to agricultural products and marketing, farm modernisation and improving the supply chain. The upskilling and reskilling

opportunities in this axis are a means of targeting farmers income and potential to be more competitive both within farming, or outside if that is more appropriate.

Axis 2 – improving the environment and countryside by supporting land management. Key measures include agri-environment programmes and less favoured area compensation schemes.

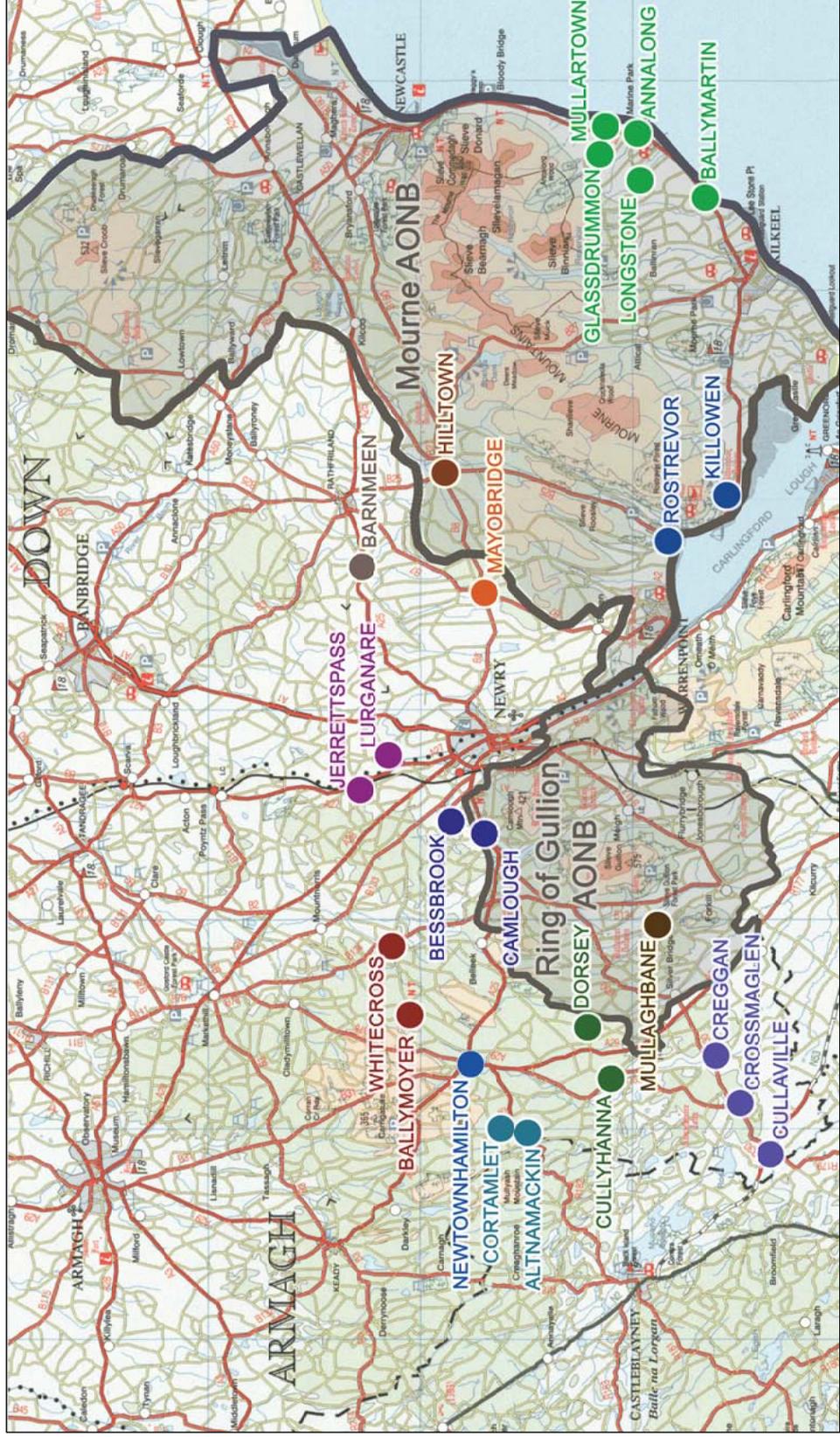
Axis 3 – improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging the diversification of economic activity. Key measures include business creation, farm diversification, encouragement of tourism activities, support for basic services for the rural economy, village renewal and conservation / upgrading of the rural heritage.

1.4.5 INTERREG IV Programme (Cross Border Rural Development)

The INTERREG IV Programme focuses on the strategic development of the North and border counties of the South. The funds are targeted towards those disadvantaged rural communities that are most in need of cross border support.

2 Overview of the cluster

The map below indicates the location of Newtownhamilton in relation to the other village clusters. The town is strategically located between the cities of Armagh and Newry and is in close proximity to the Irish Border.



3.1 Town Profile

3.1.1 Background

Newtownhamilton is a small town located 12 miles west of Newry in County Armagh. It is the smallest town in the Newry and Mourne District. There is a good range of services available for public use within this town including retail, commercial, industrial and community facilities. They include a post office, bank, garages, livestock market, primary and secondary schools, churches, health centre and a fire station.

National Statistical Research Agency

Information about the settlements was obtained from the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NISRA). NISRA classified Newtownhamilton as a "Small Village, Hamlet and Open Countryside".

The NISRA statistics revealed that the population of Newtownhamilton was 648 No. with 258 No. Household Spaces and Communal Establishments as recorded in the 2001 census.

3.1.2 Planning Policy Context

The Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 includes a number of designations which are listed below and are highlighted on the Designations Map.

Settlement development Limit - Designation NN 01 Settlement Development Limit

The settlement development limit allows for development of well located under-utilised land while emphasising the existence of locally significant land and drawing the settlement in to protect these areas. The presence of the limit also acts as a constraint to avoid unnecessary expansion into the surrounding rural area. The designation of two nodes for this settlement seeks to reduce ribbon development along the Dundalk Road.

Town Centre Boundary - Designation NN 07 Town Centre Boundary

The designation of a town centre allows for the inclusion of commercial, social, retail and mixed-use areas. The main areas of residential use have been excluded from the boundary.

Development Opportunity Sites

There are a significant number of Development Opportunity Sites identified within Newtownhamilton village centre. These opportunity sites provide the prospect for a new development to be accommodated within the village which could be the economic and social catalyst for the regeneration of the village.

Open Space

The development plan identifies two major areas of open space and recreation facilities in Newtownhamilton. These are St. Michael's GAC Grounds, Dundalk Road and at Jim Steen Park, Dumgormley.

Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)

Designation NN 15 Local Landscape Policy Area North-east Newtownhamilton

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- Distinctive localised landform between two stream corridors in glacial valleys;
- Distinctive localised landform between Ninemile Road and Market Hill Road;
- Hedgerows and associated nature conservation value.

Designation NN 16 Local Landscape Policy Area Church of Ireland

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- Church of Ireland church including views and settings;
- Single storey development may be allowed within this area as long as there is no adverse impact on views and setting of the church.

Designation NN 17 Local Landscape Policy Area Southern Newtownhamilton

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- Locally significant Presbyterian Church including graveyard and associated vegetation.
- Views and setting of Presbyterian Church;
- Listed bridge and stream corridor;
- St. Michael's RC Church (listed) on raised landform;
- Views and settings of the listed church;
- Distinctive landforms surrounding churches;
- Manse, a locally distinctive building (1871) and original Vallenbrook House (now replaced);
- Vegetation associated with the two properties form a distinctive feature;
- Hedgerows and associated nature conservation value.

Listed Buildings

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) database revealed that there are eight listed buildings designated within the study area. These buildings are indicated on the accompanying map and listed in the table.

Planning History

The planning history search revealed that there are twenty one recent planning applications within the town. These applications are indicated on the accompanying map and are listed overleaf. The applications indicate that the town is expanding with numerous applications for increased housing provision.

One application of particular note is planning application No. NH6. This planning application was submitted in 2007 and was approved with an expiry date of March 2013. The proposed development includes 'Environmental improvements to existing streetscape to include parking, hard and soft landscaping.' If this proposed development was to be undertaken it would have a significant impact on the town centre.

LISTED BUILDINGS – (Source of information for table NIEA)

ID	HB Num	Council ID	Ward ID	T Type	Address	Original
9179	HB16/18/002	16	18	HOUSE	52-58 DUNDALK ST. NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B1
9180	HB16/18/003	16	18	CHURCH	ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH SHAMBLE LANE NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B
1767	HB16/18/006C (NIEA HAVE ADVISED NO. 44 DUNDALK STREET WAS DEMOLISHED WITHOUT CONSENT)	16	18	HOUSE	42-44 DUNDALK ST. NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B2
1563	HB16/18/014	16	18	HOUSE	10-12 ARMAGH ST. NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B2
9374	HB16/18/015	16	18	SCHOOL	TOWNSEND NATIONAL SCHOOL, CASTLEBLANEY STREET, NEWTOWNHAMILTON, CO. ARMAGH	B2
9182	HB16/18/016	16	18	Pump	Water Pump outside Townsend National School Castleblaney Street Newtownhamilton Co Armagh	B2
2271	HB16/18/018	16	18	HOUSE	16-18 CASTLEBLAYNEY ST. NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B2
9178	HB16/18/001	16	18	CHURCH	ST. MICHAEL'S R C CHURCH TULLYVALLEN NEWTOWNHAMILTON CO.ARMAGH	B



PLANNING HISTORY - NEWTOWNHAMILTON

No.	Planning Application Code	Site Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Expiry Date
NH1	P/2006/1704/F	Lands to the rear of No. 80 and No. 86 Dundalk Street, Newtownhamilton.	Erection of housing development - 12 No. dwellings.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	27/01/2014
NH2	P/2006/0943/O	80m North West of 6 Fairview, Newtownhamilton.	Site for 6 No semi detached dwellings.	APPLICATION DEFERRED BY COUNCIL FOR OFFICE/SITE MEETING	Pending
NH3	P/2006/1417/O	25m north-west of No.s 5 & 6 Fair View, Armagh Road, Newtownhamilton.	Site for housing development.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	14/09/2012
NH4	P/2006/2067/F	Newtownhamilton High School, 9 Armagh Road, Newtownhamilton, Newry	Extensions for stores	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	
NH5	P/2007/1013/F	Lands at and adjacent to No. 11 Armagh Road, Tullyvullan, Newtownhamilton (extending eastwards to boundary shared with No. 12 School Road)	Erection of housing development comprising 6 No. detached dwellings and 20 No. semi-detached (with d...	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	06/10/2014
NH6	P/2007/1584/F	Armagh Street, Dundalk Street, Newry Street, Newry Road, Castleblaney Street and The Square, Newtownhamilton.	Environmental improvements to existing streetscape to include parking, hard and soft landscaping.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	10/03/2013
NH7	P/2008/0749/F	Lands adjacent to no 1 School Road, Newtownhamilton.	Erection of dwelling and associated site works.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	12/01/2014
NH8	P/2009/0667/F	Newtownhamilton High School, 9 Armagh Road, Newtownhamilton, Newry.	Erection of 1No. 9x6m modular building on this site to be used as an additional classroom for the ex...	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	23/07/2014
NH9	P/2011/0519/F	9 Armagh Road Newtownhamilton Newry BT35 0DG	New mobile accommodation	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	17/08/2016
NH10	P/2012/0386/F	9-11 Dundalk Street Newtownhamilton	Two No. replacement dwellings	CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED	Pending
NH11	P/2010/1461/F	54 Castleblaney Street Newtownhamilton BT350PD	Alterations and extension to church hall to provide kitchen and toilets	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	26/05/2016
NH12	P/2007/0532/F	30 and 32 Armagh Street, Newtownhamilton	Erection of housing development (3 No. units).	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	16/07/2013
NH13	P/2007/0120/F	14 Castleblaney Street, Newtownhamilton, Newry	Erection of replacement dwelling	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	12/11/2012
NH14	P/2011/0290/F	4 The Commons Newtownhamilton Newry	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of ground floor retail premises and first floor office ...	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	05/08/2016
NH15	P/2007/1628/F	38 and 38a Newry Street, Newtownhamilton, Newry.	Erection of 2 No. dwellings to replace dwelling and shop.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	07/11/2013
NH16	P/2007/0938/F	2 Newry Street, Newtownhamilton, Co. Armagh.	Provision of new plastic coated metal profiled sheeting garage, to accommodate four vehicles.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	07/03/2013
NH17	P/2006/1536/F	Site adjacent to 24 Newry Street and due South of existing Church of Ireland, Shambles Lane, Newtownhamilton, Co. Armagh.	Demolition of existing public houses and erection of new residential development including 10 no. apartments.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	23/01/2013

PLANNING HISTORY – NEWTOWNHAMILTON - CONTINUED

No.	Planning Application Code	Site Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Expiry Date
NH18	P/2006/0105/F	23 Armagh Street / Shamble Lane, Newtownhamilton	Residential development consisting of 8 no. dwellings and ancillary works (access via Shamble Lane)	PLANNING APPEAL - APPEAL UPHELD (PERMISSION GRANTED BY PAC)	
NH19	P/2011/0728/O	Lands to the rear and west of Nos 71-81 Dundalk Street Newtownhamilton	Site for housing development	CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED	Pending
NH20	P/2009/0344/F	Lands at 83 Dundalk Street Newtownhamilton	Proposed demolition of existing buildings and proposed residential development to include 8 no apartments and associated site works	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	26/01/2017
NH21	P/2007/1508/O	Lands between Nos. 44-50 Dundalk Street Newtownhamilton extending to the rear (east/north-east) of Nos. 40-56 Dundalk Street and southwards to the boundary shared with No. 60 Dundalk Street	Site for residential development with access provision (between Nos 44 and 50 Dundalk Street), parki...	CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED	Pending

3.2 Deprivation

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010 report was published on 26th May 2010. The NIMDM 2010 updates and replaces the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 as the official measure of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland.

Newtownhamilton Super Output Area is ranked as the 293rd overall most deprived in Northern Ireland. The individual NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 Ranks for Newtownhamilton are broken down as follows: Income: 298; Employment: 343; Health & Disability: 353; Education Skills and Training: 291; Proximity to Services: 120; Living Environment: 451; Crime and Disorder: 258; Income Deprivation Affecting Children: 359 and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People: 223.

3.3 Consultation Process

STAGE	CONSULTATION METHOD	DATE	VENUE	ATTENDANCE / RESPONSES
Information Gathering	Village Action Group Meeting	Monday 12 th March 2012.	Newtownhamilton Community Centre	5
	Baseline Questionnaires	March 2012	N/A	None
	Open display for Councillors	16 th March & 20 th April	Council Offices Newry	N/A
Draft Proposals	Public Exhibition	30 th April to 11 th May	Newtownhamilton Community Centre	N/A
	Public Consultation Questionnaires	May 2012	N/A	3

Draft Village Renewal and Development Plan	Draft Plan presented to Project Steering Group	21 st June	Council Offices Newry	N/A
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Consultation with key stakeholders and statutory agencies was also undertaken in the development of the plan. Newry and Mourne District Council, Planning Service NI, Roads Service, Department for Regional Development - Street Lighting, British Telecom, Northern Ireland Electricity, Northern Ireland Water, Translink and Northern Ireland Environment Agency were all consulted.

3.4 Consultation Findings

3.4.1 Information Gathering Stage

Site Visits

This section of the report provides a summary of the key points and issues observed during our site visits in February 2012.

- The entrance to the village is very poorly signposted.
- The existing play area within the village is of a poor quality with limited play value. In addition there is evidence that the play area is vandalised and the location for anti-social behaviour.
- The village has a good range of shops and services.
- There is poor provision of public open space. The urban public spaces are unsightly and in need of environmental improvements for example The Commons and The Town Square.
- Pedestrian routes are in poor condition.
- Vehicle traffic often becomes congested as it travels through the village. In particular heavy good vehicles were noticed reversing and taking alternative routes through residential areas.
- There is a need for increased provision of off street parking.
- The centre of the village around the town square is characterised by the presence of the police station with its associated security provision which is unsightly and restricts the other functions of the town square.
- There are a high number of derelict buildings present within the village centre.
- The shop frontages within the village need improvement.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis below is a summary of the information gained during the early information gathering stage. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified during the initial consultation workshop and the initial questionnaire which was circulated throughout the community. The questionnaire addressed a range of factors, focusing on 3 general themes of Planning and Infrastructure, Essential Services and Economic and Community Development.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village well used. Good ethnic mix within the village. 'Walk for Autism' Community Event brings people together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Square & The Common unsightly. Traffic Congestion & Footpath surfaces poor. Buildings in disrepair / Large number of derelict sites in the centre of the town. Poor bus networks. Young people have to leave town daily to find work. No footpath beside garage on Newry Road.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regenerate the Town Square and derelict sites. Public toilets & signage improved for visitors. Traffic calming measures - Dungormley Estate. Garden at back of Community Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty over the future of the police station site could hinder the redevelopment of the Town Square. There is not a good community capacity. At present there are poor linkages between organisations within the town. Increased traffic throughout the town, particularly quarry traffic

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Improvement Scheme for TC. Play Area at Jim Steen Park. Traffic Management Scheme. All weather sports facility for youth. 	travelling north / south.
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Key Issues / Opportunities

The list below is a summary of the main issues and opportunities that have come to light as part of this process and particularly during the Village Action Group Meeting.

- Regenerate the Town Square and surrounding derelict sites.
- Public toilets & signage improved for visitors.
- Traffic calming measures through Dungormley Estate. – Dungormley Estate (residential area) is presently used as a means to bypass the traffic congestion in Armagh Street, this is deemed unsafe and unsustainable.
- Garden at back of Community Centre - there is an existing courtyard space at the back of the community centre which is in a state of disrepair. NMDC own the land and the Community centre.
- Environmental Improvement Scheme for the Town Centre.
- Play Area at Jim Steen Park. - It is our understanding that the plans for this play area are being progressed. The park is a NMDC council asset.
- Traffic Management Scheme to reduce congestion in the whole town.
- All weather sports facility for youth. - Potential location Jim Steen Park.
- Vision that came out of the Workshop - "Physical revitalisation of the Town Centre with attractive public spaces and a greater community spirit."
- Community capacity needs to be built up.

3.4.2

Draft Proposals

The draft Plan was put on public display in Newtownhamilton Community Centre for a two week period from Monday 30th April until Friday 11th May 2012. In order to gain feedback from the public a questionnaire was available for completion.

In total there were 3 questionnaires returned. The response was positive with almost all the respondents 'liking' all the proposals, with only one respondent stating that they had 'no opinion' regarding the public toilets.

The public consultation questionnaire encouraged respondents to rank the projects and proposals in order of importance to help establish the key priorities. The two proposals which were highlighted of highest importance were a 'Traffic Management Strategy' and a 'Play area at Jim Steen Park'.

Importantly, the response rate when compared to the size of the settlement is very poor. It was identified during the initial consultation process that there is poor community capacity within Newtownhamilton. For example, at the baseline stage over 50No. questionnaires were circulated throughout the community and none were completed. So while some assumptions can be made clearly different members of the community have different opinions on what they feel are priorities for their area, this is understood. However there are also key issues which people are clearly agreed upon.



**'Village Renewal and Development plans'
Newry Villages Community Questionnaire**
Newtownhamilton



1. What is your interest?

Business	Community Group	Individual	3
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Section 1 – Proposals

2. Please select how you feel about the following proposals:

Ref.	Proposal	Like	Dislike	No Opinion
A	Gateway Signage and Artwork.	3		
B	Introduction of Planter Boxes with floral displays.	3		
C	Environmental Improvement for the Town Centre.	3		
D	Public Toilets.	2		1
E	Traffic Management Strategy including traffic calming measures. A study would also be undertaken to explore the viability of a bypass.	3		
F	Play Area at Village Park at Jim Steen Park.	3		
G	Redevelopment of Community Centre and Regeneration of existing community garden.	3		
H	All weather Sports Facility.	3		
I	Potential Development Site for Private / Civic Use.	3		

If you wish to provide additional comments about any of the above proposals please expand on your answers below or on a separate sheet:

Section 2 – Prioritising the Proposals

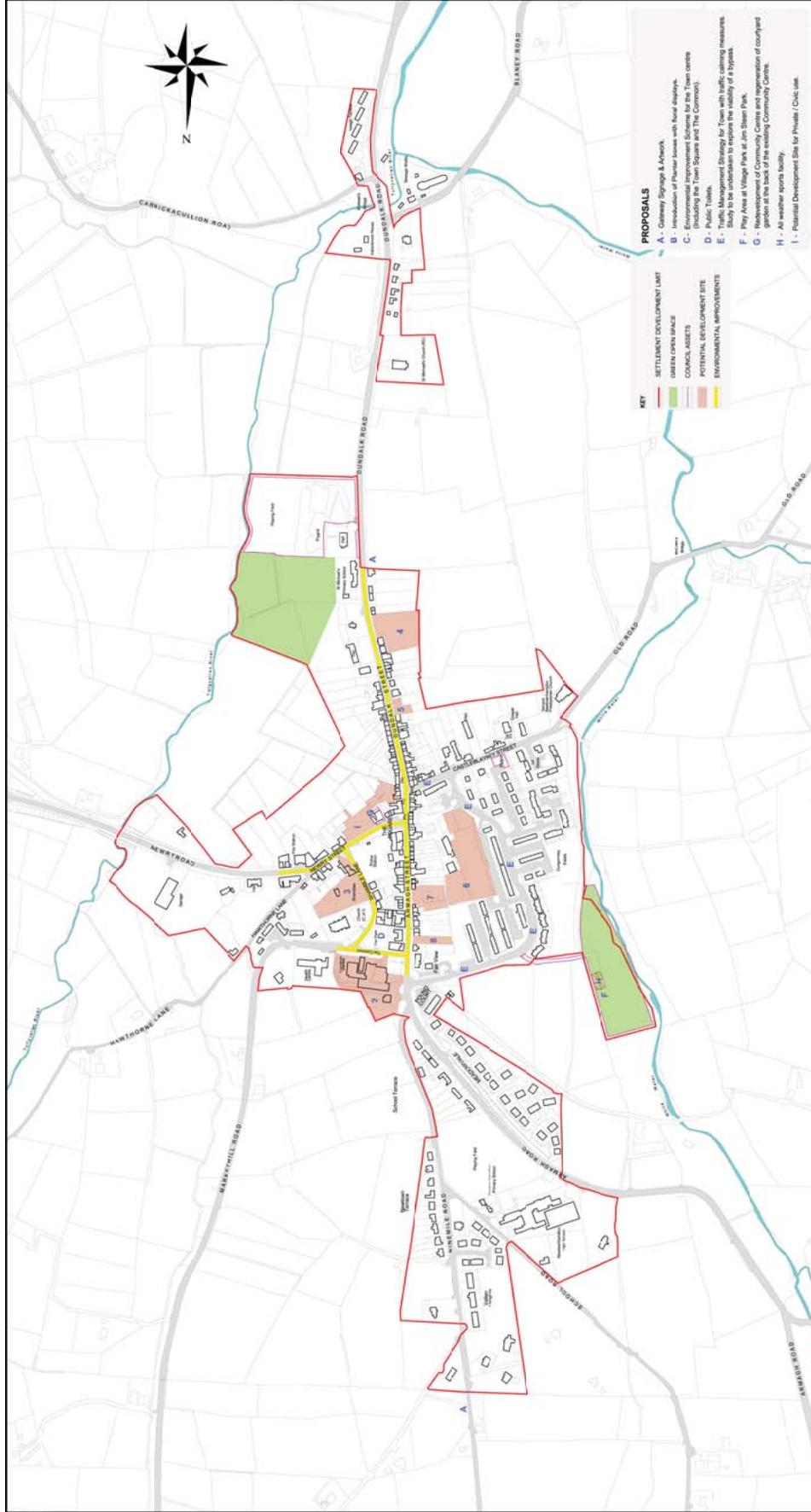
3. Please identify in the table below how you would prioritise the following proposals (i.e. 1 = Highest Priority, 5 = Lower Priority):

Ref	Proposal	Rank Order								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	Gateway Signage and Artwork.							1		1
B	Introduction of Planter Boxes with floral displays.				1					1
C	Environmental Improvement for the Town Centre.			1					1	
D	Public Toilets		1	1						
E	Traffic Management Strategy including traffic calming measures. A study would also be undertaken to explore the viability of a bypass.		1	1						
F	Play Area at Village Park at Jim Steen Park.		1			1				
G	Redevelopment of Community Centre and Regeneration of existing community garden.			1			1			
H	All weather Sports Facility			1					1	
I	Potential Development Site for Private / Civic Use.							1		1

Section 3 – Additional Comments

4. Is there anything which you feel you would change / modify in the Village Plan? Or any additional proposals which you would like to see included? (Please provide details below or on a separate sheet):

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.



NEWRY AND MOURNE VILLAGE RENEWAL PLANS

Improvements to the Streetscape to include paving, planting, lighting and street furniture. Town Square to be revitalised to regain it's position as the heart of town.

Gateway Signage & Artwork, & Planting to promote the identity and highlight the entrance to the village. Local residents to contribute to the design of the artwork.

Provision of a play area and all weather facilities at Jim Steen Park. The Multi-use games area provides facilities for young people to undertake a variety of sports.

Regeneration of the community centre garden as an asset to the community.

NEWTOWNHAMILTON

URS
URS Services to the Community (P.L.C.)
47060183/08-1-1A | April 2012

3.5 Initiatives

3.5.1 Play Area

The desire for a play area at Jim Steen Park was identified during the initial consultation process and was selected as the highest priority proposal by a respondent during the public consultation process. The proposed play area should be iconic and provide play facilities for a range of ages and abilities. The play facilities with their associated soft landscaping, pathways and seating facilities will define the spaces and create an identity for the Park. The viability of introducing public toilets to the Park may also become feasible due to the increased use of the play park when combined with the use of the existing football pitches. The images below show the proposed location of the play area (top left) and examples of play areas in a similar context.



3.5.2 Traffic Management Strategy

Traffic Management through the town was identified as a major concern during the initial consultation. The combination of the large volume of through traffic, narrowness of the Main Street and onstreet parking (on both sides of the road) all contribute to traffic congestion. The proposal of a Traffic Management

Strategy should include a detailed transport study and include exploration into the feasibility and cumulative impacts of the following proposals.

- One way system;
- Provision of accessible car parking as an attractive alternative to onstreet parking;
- Review of the potential for traffic calming measures in Armagh Street, Dundalk Street and Dungormley Estate;
- Bypass around the town.

Traffic Calming Measures

Potential traffic calming measures (e.g. ramps and / or chicanes) that could be introduced in the Dungormley Estate are illustrated below:



Bypass

The Newtownhamilton Strategic Development Framework (Ferguson McIlveen, 2003) proposed a bypass around the town the concept of which is outlined below and illustrated overleaf.

“if approaching from a southerly direction, vehicles would join the bypass on Carrickacullion Road, turn onto Tullyet Road, left onto Newry road and through the town via the Shambles and the Common. While the route shown on the map consists of minor roads, it has been used before as an informal bypass and upgrading may be an alternative to the provision of a new road.”

However, Banbridge Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 District Proposals for Newtownhamilton do not contain provision for a bypass. Subsequently, this proposal makes provision for the transport study to determine if a bypass is necessary and if appropriate identify alternative bypass routes around the town which should be full evaluated, before making any recommendations.

3.5.3

Environmental Improvements for the Town Centre

Although not identified as a priority proposal during the public consultation process it has been determined that environmental improvements to the town centre and particularly the Town Square are essential. The need for an environmental improvement scheme was also established in the Newtownhamilton Strategic Development Framework document which was published in 2003 by Ferguson McIlveen. The desktop research undertaken as part of this renewal plan preparation also established that there is presently planning approval granted for an environmental improvement scheme for the town. This environmental improvement scheme was only partially implemented due to funding constraints.

The town is attractive with a distinctive character however there is a need for significant improvement. There are a number of derelict units and sites throughout the town which should be redeveloped in the future. These have been identified on the renewal plan as potential development sites. The implementation of an environmental improvement scheme is viewed as an essential catalyst in attracting inward investment into the town to secure the redevelopment of these sites.

The images below illustrate the types of improvements that could be made to the streetscape within Newtownhamilton.



Source: Newtownhamilton Strategic Development Framework, Ferguson McIlveen: 2003

In addition in the short term derelict and run-down buildings could be painted and given a face lift. Initiatives which animate vacant and derelict shop units have become popular in recent years as a creative way of improving the aesthetic of poor quality units while showcasing local arts and crafts.

The Town Square

The Town Square is the central focal point of Newtownhamilton and is surrounded by a range of retail, service and community uses. The Town Square at present is an unpleasant space at the heart of the town which is dominated by vacant sites and derelict buildings including the old police station.



However The Town Square has much greater potential and would benefit from a comprehensive Environmental Improvement Scheme. This should include paving, landscaping, good quality street furniture and lighting. The redevelopment of the Square should consider areas which could accommodate festivals and events within the town. A review of the parking arrangements is also needed.

It was also suggested during consultation that there is the possibility that the police station may re-open. The present situation in which the police station forms an unattractive void at the centre of the town is unsustainable. The

recommendation is therefore that the police station site is redeveloped to form the catalyst for the redevelopment of the Town Square.

The illustration below is an artist's impression of the type of improvements that could be made to the Town Square. In this instance the vacant sites have been filled, the police station site has been redeveloped and an environmental improvements scheme has been undertaken.



Source: Newtownhamilton Strategic Development Framework, Ferguson McIlveen: 2003.

3.6

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN						
Initiative	Key Stakeholders	Priority	Timescale	Potential Funding Opportunities	Actions	Indicative costs **
Gateway Signage and Artwork.	NTC, NMDC, Priv, PS, RS, DCAL, AC	L	S	NMDC, RDP, AC	Feasibility study, design work, statutory approvals, installation of gateway signage and artwork.	£120,000 - £150,000
Introduction of Planter Boxes with floral displays.	NMDC, NTC, Priv, RS	L	S	NMDC, Lot, RDP	Installation, Management and Maintenance.	£20,000 - £30,000
Environmental Improvement for the Town Centre.*	NMDC, NTC, Priv, RS, PS	H	S	NMDC, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals and construction. Translink have advised that at present there are no plans to change bus stops in the near future. They will work with the community if changes are needed to fit into the proposed schemes. BT have advised that they do not have a budget for undergrounding aerial apparatus so such work would be at the cost of the project sponsors.	£750,000 - £1,250,000
Public Toilets.	NTC, NITB, NMDC, PS	M	S	NMDC, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals and construction.	£60,000 - £100,000
Traffic Management Strategy including traffic calming measures. A study would also be undertaken to explore the viability of a bypass.*	RS, NMDC, NTC	H	S	RS	Preparation of a Traffic Management Strategy, including a review of traffic calming measures. Consultation with RS, road improvement works.	£25,000 - £50,000
Play Area at Village Park at Jim Steen Park.*	NMDC, NTC, DCAL, PS	H	S	NMDC, Lot, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals and construction.	£100,000 - £150,000
Redevelopment of Community Centre and Regeneration of existing community garden.	NMDC, NTC, PS	M	M	NMDC, Lot, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals and construction.	£250,000 - £350,000

All weather Sports Facility.	NMDC, NTC, DCAL, PS, SNI, Priv	M	M	DCAL, SNI, RDP, Priv	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals and construction.	£150,000 - £200,000
Potential Development Site for Private / Civic Use.	NMDC, NTC, Priv, PSNI	M	L	Priv	There are a number of potential development sites that if developed appropriately could greatly enhance the appearance and assist in defining the public space within the town. This is particularly evident in the town square. In addition there are other development sites that could assist in connecting pedestrian routes through the town.	N/A
Townsend National School, Castleblaney Street, Newtownhamilton	NMDC, NTC, NIEA, Priv	M	M	NIEA	NIEA have advised that Townsend National School is identified as a building at risk on the Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) Register. They also advised that they are very keen to work with the Council and Community to get this building repaired and reused.	Unknown

Priority:

H = High
M = Medium
L = Low

Timeframe:

S = Short (1-3yrs)
M = Medium (3-7 years)
L = Long (7-15years)

Delivery Agents, Funders and Stakeholders:

AC	Arts Council	NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
MNDC	Newry & Mourne District Council	Priv	Private Sector
DCAL	Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure	PS	Planning Service
Lot	Lottery Funding	PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RS	Roads Service	SHSCT	Southern Health and Social Care Trust
RDP	Rural Development Programme	SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency	SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	DOE	Department of Environment
		NTC	Newtownhamilton Community

* Projects which have been identified by the community as a High Priority are outlined in more detail in the Initiatives section of this report.

** Capital cost estimates have been produced in the absence of any design information and are purely indicative of costs for works of this nature. All figures are exclusive of VAT, Inflation, Professional Fees, Statutory Authority Charges and Land Purchase.

4 Implementation

- 4.1 Potential Funding Streams
- 4.1.1 **Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013**
The European Union has set three main themes within which all Member States are to focus their Rural Development Programmes. These themes (known as axes) are:
- Axis 1 – Improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry by supporting restructuring, development and innovation
 - Axis 2 – Improving the environment and countryside by supporting land management
 - Axis 3 – Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity
- They also require at least part of all Rural Development Programmes to be delivered through a “LEADER-type approach” – under the NI Rural Development Programme 2000-06, numerous partnerships delivered parts of the Programme within their own geographical area.
- The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-13 (the “NIRDP”) contains a number of measures under each axis. These measures are specific areas where support is to be targeted. Each measure was selected from a menu of options provided by the European Union in order to target the aspects of rural life that are most important to Northern Ireland.
- SOAR will deliver the following Axis 3 measures under the NIRDP using a ‘LEADER’; approach, that is, local people making local decisions.

Measure	Objective	Eligible Applicants	Type of Projects
<p>3.2</p> <p>Business Creation and Development</p>	<p>To create employment opportunities through promoting entrepreneurship and developing the economic infrastructure in rural areas.</p>	<p>Applicant businesses must be located in a rural area and have less than 10 employees (FTE – Full Time Equivalents) and an annual turnover of less than €2 million. These limits apply to individual or linked companies.</p> <p>They may be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> private individuals, aged over 18 years; private companies or partnerships social economy enterprises*. <p>This measure will not provide support for applicants eligible under measures 3.1 and 3.3</p>	<p>Activities could be similar to those funded via the Northern Ireland LEADER+ Programme. Types of projects that might be supported under this Measure could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-care facilities • Waste management facilities • Crafts • Traditional skills • Innovative manufacturing businesses • Light engineering • Innovative services • Renewable energy initiatives (as part of a larger project)
<p>3.3</p> <p>Encouragement of Tourism Activities</p>	<p>To use the natural resources in Northern Ireland’s rural areas to attract visitors, and create new employment opportunities through the sustainable development of the rural economy.</p>	<p>Applicant businesses must be located in a rural area.</p> <p>They may be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private individuals, aged over 18 years; • private companies or partnerships • social economy enterprises* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and existing tourism products can be supported under this measure e.g. Activity tourism • Niche/specialist tourism markets/local crafts or produce Eco-tourism • Self-catering accommodation • Rural Signature Projects – enhancement or development of significant tourism infrastructure projects or programmes that impact significantly on rural tourism. Applicants will have to demonstrate

<p>3.4 Basic Services for the Rural Economy and Rural Population</p>	<p>To improve or maintain the living conditions and welfare of those living in rural areas, and to increase the attractiveness of such areas through the provision of more and better basic services, for the economy and the rural population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non departmental public bodies • councils <p>This measure will not provide support for applicants eligible under measure 3.1.</p>	<p>fit with local strategies.</p>
<p>3.5 Village Renewal and Development</p>	<p>To enable and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full</p>	<p>Applicant businesses must be located in a rural area. They may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private individuals, aged over 18 years • social economy enterprises • social economy enterprises* • councils 	<p>Examples of project could include:</p> <p>Outreach work providing access to a wide range of services (health & well being; education; benefits; jobs; financial and debt counselling)</p> <p>'Door-step' delivery of a range of services</p> <p>ICT Services which provide access to information on housing; healthcare; benefits; jobs; financial and debt counselling; education or other services to rural communities</p> <p>Sharing of equipment and premises in order to deliver value for money services</p> <p>Better or multiple usage of existing or new community buildings or other public facilities in providing access to a wide range of services e.g. housing a number of key services such as healthcare; training; IT; childcare; library; community shop; pharmacy or other service provisions in the one building.</p>
<p>3.5 Village Renewal and Development</p>	<p>To enable and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full</p>	<p>Applicant businesses must be located in a rural area. They may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private individuals, aged over 18 years 	<p>Examples of projects could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Action Plans • Streetscape improvements • Aesthetic improvements • Promoting greater community inclusiveness/participation • Greater use of existing buildings

<p>3.6 Conservation and Upgrading of the Rural Heritage</p>	<p>To create opportunities to preserve and upgrade Northern Ireland's rural heritage and to use the natural and built environment as the basis for sustainable economic growth in rural areas.</p>	<p>potential of such areas is achieved; To support integrated village initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social economy enterprises* • social economy enterprises* • councils 	<p>Applicant businesses must be located in a rural area. They may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private individuals, aged over 18 years • social economy enterprises* • social economy enterprises* • councils 	<p>Examples of projects could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monument/heritage site conservation and protection • Access/signage/information re heritage sites • Culture, history and heritage
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4.1.2

Big Lottery Fund Village 'SOS' Scheme

Village SOS began in 2010 when six enterprising UK rural villages won Big Lottery Fund investment of around £400,000 to revive their communities through new business ventures.

Each village could draw on the expertise of their own Village Champion, a business expert who lived in the local area for one year, and use their knowledge and skills to get the local enterprise up-and-running.

Today, Village SOS aims to build on the experience of these ten projects and inspire the whole nation to join in and take the bold step towards starting a new business that will regenerate their own community.

Ongoing support, including expert advice and events, is on offer to help community led business ventures get off the ground, breathe new life into their areas, create new jobs and improve the quality of life of local people.

Funding through this scheme is open to all rural villages or small town with a population under 3,000, therefore Newtownhamilton is eligible.

A community enterprise is a business that is owned and run by the community. With time, a community enterprise should be able to sustain itself without having to

rely on grants or other public funding and any surplus is reinvested back in to the community.

There is a wide range of community enterprise ideas which can be funded, such as village shops, community transport, training schemes, cafes and tea rooms, woodland projects, broadband initiatives, energy schemes and much more besides.

We are interested in original ideas that really take advantage of your local assets, whether human or physical. You should think carefully about the skills and experience local people have; one residents' hobbies or skills could become a successful and sustainable enterprise. And why stop there when you could have a whole range of products or services, all produced or delivered by local people with unique skills. You could also take advantage of local natural resources, technology or buildings.

Voluntary and community groups or organisations, social enterprises and some parish, town and community councils are eligible for funding:

- a registered or unregistered charity
- a community group such as a village committee, association or trust
- a village or community-based co-operatives
- a social enterprise or a company that reinvests any profit back into the community.

More information can be found www.villagesos.org.uk.

4.1.3

PEACE III Programme

PEACE III Programme is a distinctive programme part-funded by the European Union (€225 million from the EU with further national contributions of €108 million) through its Structural Funds programme. The full title of the PEACE III Programme is the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. The programme covers the period 2007-2013.

The main aims of the PEACE III Programme are to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by assisting operations and projects which help to reconcile communities and contribute towards a shared society for everyone.

The programme is divided into two main priorities. These are:

- Reconciling Communities

- Contributing to a Shared Society

It delivers these priorities through "themes" - these themes are:

- To build positive relations at the local level
- To acknowledge the past
- To create shared public spaces
- To develop key institutional capacity for a shared society

PEACE III follows on from the PEACE I and PEACE II Programmes and will carry forward some of the key aspects of the previous programmes. PEACE III has a renewed emphasis on reconciliation. Like the earlier programmes, it also has a focus on cross-border initiatives.

Operations and projects in the PEACE III Programme are delivered by Lead Partners which are public bodies or their equivalent.

There is a new strategic approach to achieve maximum impact from the funding available from the PEACE III Programme. As a result, community and voluntary groups can access PEACE III Programme funding in a new way.

Local Councils in Northern Ireland have formed themselves into eight clusters and play a much more strategic part in the delivery of PEACE III. The six County Councils in the Border Region of Ireland have the same role. Working in partnership with communities, they have developed local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans.

PEACE III remains committed to a strong emphasis on the "grass roots up" approach to the development of projects which address shared issues and concerns. Community and voluntary groups are encouraged to contact their local authority for information on their cluster's or County Council's "Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan", which may contain a small grants programme and opportunities to tender for the delivery of projects in the future.

Community and voluntary groups which are considering developing projects relating to acknowledging and dealing with the past should contact the Consortium of Pobal and the Community Relations Council (CRC), which has been appointed to deliver this theme.

4.1.4

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Funding

The Historic Buildings Unit (HBU), as part of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Built Heritage Directorate, is responsible for the protection of the built heritage. In carrying out this function, HBU operates the relevant provisions of the Planning (NI) Order 1991. The statutory authority to provide grant-aid is detailed in Article 106 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991.

Historic Buildings Grant Aid Scheme

To assist with the protection and retention of the 'special' interest of these historic listed buildings NIEA: HBU provide grant-aid for the repair or maintenance of listed buildings through the Historic Buildings Grant-aid Scheme. Advice on grant eligibility of buildings should be directed to the NIEA Historic Buildings Grants Team.

Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI)

Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) is a programme run by NIEA in partnership with the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (UAHS) to identify listed buildings at risk. The aim of the programme is to support community organisations etc in their efforts to acquire, repair and re-use such buildings. NIEA has advised that it can offer financial assistance to Building Preservation Trusts to assist with the acquisition of listed buildings 'at risk'.

5 Conclusion

The Village Renewal and Development Plan for Newtownhamilton presents an ambitious yet achievable list of projects and initiatives which will help the town reach it's full potential.

At the local scale the comprehensive set of projects and proposals will address the needs of the local communities. The Plans were strongly consultation led and therefore represent the hopes and aspirations of the communities.

It must also be recognised that the community capacity within Newtownhamilton which has been eroded over a significant period of time would need to be built back up if real progress on these projects is to be achieved.

Appendix A Community Consultation Advertisement

 <p>COMHAIRLE AN IÚIR AGUS MHÚRN NEWRY AND MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p> <p>Newry & Mourne Village Renewal Action Plans <i>(South Armagh Plans)</i></p> <p>* <u>COMMUNITY CONSULTATION / VIEWING</u> *</p>
<p>Newry & Mourne District Council and its appointed consultants (URS) are currently working in partnership with a number of pre-selected local rural communities across the region to have a total of 13 Village Renewal Action Plans completed.</p>
<p>Draft proposals for the South Armagh Village Plans are now to be put on display from Monday 30th April 2012 until Friday 11th May 2012 in the following venues:</p> <p>Crossmaglen / Creggan / Cullville Plan – Crossmaglen Community Centre, Creggan Church Hall & Cullville Youth Club</p> <p>Cullyhanna / Dorsey Plan – WALD Centre Cullyhanna & Dorsey Community Centre</p> <p>Mullaghbane Plan – Mullaghbane Community Centre</p> <p>Whitecross / Ballymoyer – St Killan's GAC</p> <p>Bessbrook/Camlough – Bessbrook Community Centre</p> <p>Jerresspass / Lurganare - Jerresspass Village Hall</p> <p>Newtownhamilton Plan – Newtownhamilton Community Centre</p> <p>Alnamackin / Cortamlet – Cortamlet Primary School</p>
<p>Comments sheets will be available for you to have your say. Proposals can also be viewed and commented upon through the Councils Website of www.newryandmourne.gov.uk</p> <p>Council and Community Stakeholder groups would encourage local communities to come along to view the draft proposals and feed your views into the process.</p>
<p>Signed: Mr. T. McCall Clerk & Chief Executive of Council</p>
<p>This project is part funded under the Axis 3 of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 by the European Union and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.</p>