

# Doury Road Action Plan

Sept/Oct 2016

## Building Successful Communities



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**Turley**

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**1.1** Turley has been appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC) to prepare housing-led regeneration Action Plans as part of the Building Successful Communities (BSC) programme.

## Background

**1.2** The context for the BSC programme is set out in the Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland ('Strategy'), which seeks to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access good quality housing at a reasonable cost and recognises the economic role that housing can play in supporting economic recovery through job creation and regeneration.

**1.3** The Strategy identifies that a housing-led approach to regeneration will be advanced to deliver the vision. The BSC programme is the toolkit for delivering regeneration proposals through the formulation of Action Plans. The programme is intended to regenerate communities currently experiencing blight, dereliction and decline.

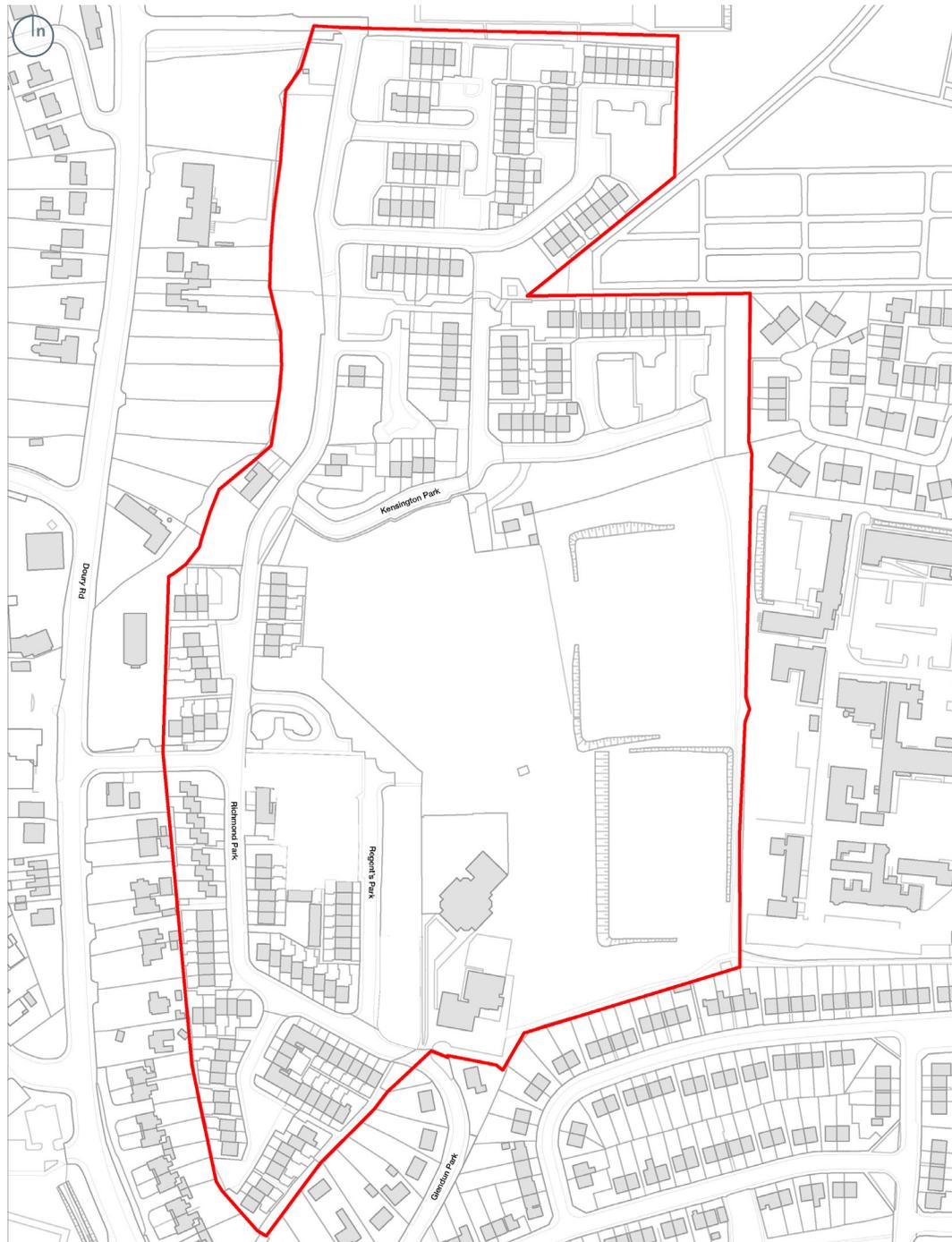
**1.4** In addition to delivering physical changes, the plans should have a community focus and be owned by the community. The Plans should set out the aspirations for how the area will be regenerated alongside social and economic initiatives to ensure that a holistic vision is delivered for the local people of the area.

**1.5** As part of the programme, a Regeneration Forum ('the Forum') has been established within the pilot area. The Forum is facilitated by an officer from the Department. Their role is to bring the local community and statutory bodies together to identify the housing and regeneration needs of the area.

**1.6** The Forum comprises a mix of community representatives, elected representatives and representatives from the relevant stakeholders, including NIHE, Council, Housing Associations, PSNI, Transport NI, Education Authority and Public Health Agency.

**1.7** Doury Road is one of six communities, which are being taken forward as pilot areas for the BSC programme. The other pilot areas are;

- (i) Lower Falls, Belfast
- (ii) Lenadoon and Glencolin, Belfast
- (iii) Lower Shankill & Brown Square, Belfast
- (iv) Lower Oldpark and Hillview, Belfast; and
- (v) Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer, Belfast



**Figure 2.1**  
Extent of Pilot Area - Doury Road

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**2.1** The plans for each pilot area are based on a four stage process as summarised below:

**Stage 1 (Understanding the Place)** – An analysis of the economic, social, physical and environmental needs of the area through the collation and analysis of information including dialogue with key stakeholders

**Stage 2 (Setting the Priorities)** – This includes a synopsis of the priorities and goals for Doury Road through a facilitated engagement with the Forum and the wider community

**Stage 3 (Agreeing the Actions and Formulating the Plan)** – Informed by the findings from the baseline analysis and in accordance with the goals identified in consultation with the Forum draft proposals will be prepared and tested through engagement with the local community

**Stage 4 (Next Steps)** – Identify resources to deliver the draft proposals, prepare an implementation programme, identify stakeholder roles and identify any potential risks to the delivery of each plan

## Report Structure

**2.2** The report is structured as follows:

- Summarises the conclusions from the Stage 1 analysis and sets out the priorities for the regeneration of the area and provides that rationale for intervention.
- Sets out the objectives (short, medium and long term) for the Action Plan as the regeneration framework.
- Identifies in more detail, a catalyst project that will kick-start the delivery of the regeneration framework in the area.
- This sits alongside a number of smaller projects which provide environmental and other improvements in Doury Road. These projects compliment the catalyst project which should be seen as the main driver for change.
- Sets out tasks for key stakeholders and details potential future delivery models to ensure continued joint working between stakeholders to secure the delivery of the long-term regeneration framework.
- Sets out how the implementation of the catalyst projects and other identified interventions will be monitored.



**Figure 3.1:**  
Aerial Image of Pilot Area

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# Stage 1 - Understanding the Place

03

## The Rationale for Intervention

**3.1** The key objectives for the BSC project are to:

- Improve housing and infrastructure within communities which are experiencing blight, decline or dereliction.
- Deliver new social and affordable homes as part of a housing led approach to wider regeneration activities.
- Unlock wider physical and social regeneration in target areas by providing a focus for environmental upgrading.
- Improve access to amenities; and
- Improve access to economic activity.

**3.2** Doury Road was once a well-established and flourishing residential area with a stable and established population, however in the 1970's the area began to decline with increasing numbers of void properties and worsening criminal activity taking place.

**3.3** This has resulted in a changed perception of the area. The blighting effect is exacerbated by a series of clearance schemes that have further degraded the physical environment. Despite significant reductions in the level of anti-social behaviour and crime the area is still stigmatised by its history. This stigma and the poor quality environment has a negative impact on housing demand, the perception of the area and the quality of life for local residents

## The Extent of the Area

**3.4** The Doury Road area has a population of 279 persons and sits to the north of Ballymena town centre (Figure 3.1). The area falls within the administrative boundary of Mid and East Antrim Council and is bound:

- To the north by Dunclug College, with residential areas beyond;
- To the east by Ballymena Cemetery and Braid Valley Hospital;
- To the south by residential properties on Glencariff Crescent and Glendun Drive; and
- To the west by properties on Doury Road, with residential areas beyond.

**3.5** Historically the area comprised of c.526 dwellings however, in the 1980's part of the housing stock (not quantified) was put in to private ownership under a homesteading scheme. In the 1990's large parts of the estate still in public ownership were cleared due to the level of voids and the deterioration of the built fabric of the vacant properties. Ad hoc demolition has continued to take place since then, with no replacement development. This has resulted in large areas of cleared and vacant land across the estate.

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<sup>1</sup> Using bespoke Grid Square data provided by DfC, sourced from NISRA 2011 Census

**3.6** The area has also been associated with high levels of anti-social behaviour but the establishment of the Doury Road Development Group and delivery of many community based initiatives supported by local government and multi-departmental agencies has resulted in the social issues being tackled and the quality of living in the estate being improved.

### Collecting the Data

**3.7** Stage 1 comprised a detailed assessment of Doury Road to understand the issues impacting on the community.

**3.8** The main observations derived from the analysis are presented in the following paragraphs.

## Themes Emerging from Socio-Economic Profile Analysis

**3.9** The proportion of working age people (16-65) is lower than the NI average of 64.5%. The data also highlights a higher than average proportion of households comprising single persons aged 65+ and a high dependency on social housing which comprises nearly half of housing tenure.

**3.10** The social rented sector plays an important role in meeting housing need in Doury Road, and there is likely to be a continued need for this tenure type in the future.

**3.11** Additional need can also be generated by newly forming households, with around 13% of the population aged 16 to 24. The retention of these households in the area will depend upon the suitability and affordability of housing in future.

**3.12** Given the proximity of the pilot area to the town centre the pilot area is well served by public services located within a 1km range. These services include retail at the Tower Centre shopping centre, Braid Valley Hospital and Dunclug College.



**3.13** Within the pilot area there are two existing community facilities at Hope House and the Waveney Centre. Although the area has seen investment over recent years more could be done to knit services together and improve access to them.

**3.14** The pilot area is also located near to the People's Park on Doury Road, which offers a range of formal and informal sports and recreational facilities (Figure 3.3).

## Themes emerging from the Urban Spatial Analysis

### Land Use

**3.15** The pilot area is predominantly in residential use with the exception of Hope House, the Waveney Centre and the former site of the Community Centre. The remainder of the lands in the pilot area comprises of vacant plots, grassed open space and the playing pitches located to the east of the pilot area.

### Legibility and Access

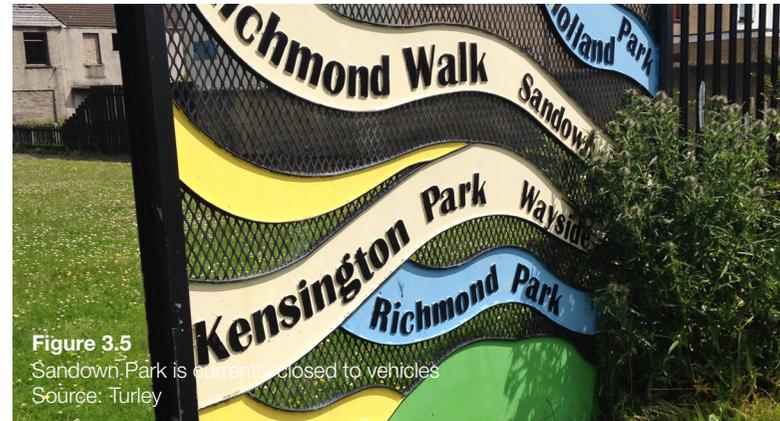
**3.16** Legibility within the existing housing area is poor as a result of the Radburn style layout (comprising cul-de-sac, rear parking courts and alleyways) which makes up a large proportion of the existing stock (Figure 3.4).

**3.17** The area lacks a sense of arrival on approach from Doury Road, particularly the northern access leading on to Camberwell Way and movement through the area is restricted by the closure of Sandown Park, which prevents vehicular access to Camberwell Way (Figure 3.5).

### Built Form

**3.18** The built form within this area has been significantly weakened as a result of extensive demolition in the past. Large areas of clearance have resulted in the creation of a fragmented urban structure which has almost divided the estate into two parts.

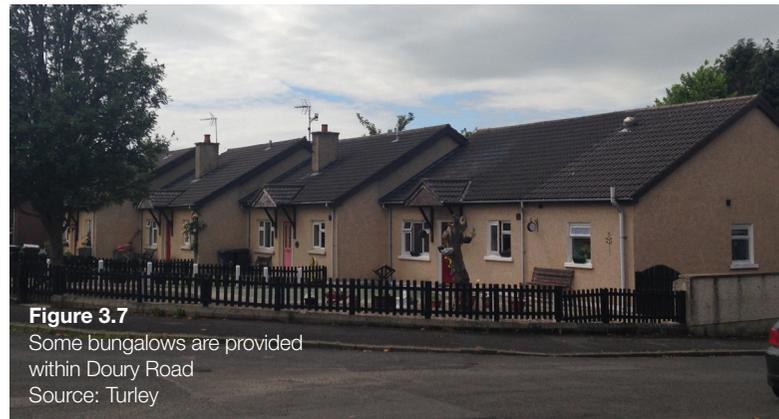
**3.19** To the south along Richmond Park, the built form provides a strong frontage onto the street and areas of parking are largely overlooked. To the north of Kensington Park, selective demolition has resulted in a number of gap sites, which have in the past been used for antisocial behaviour.



**Figure 3.5**  
Sandown Park is currently closed to vehicles  
Source: Turley



**Figure 3.6**  
A large number of properties are derelict  
Source: Turley



**Figure 3.7**  
Some bungalows are provided within Doury Road  
Source: Turley

**3.20** The centre of the site lacks a strong frontage or landmark building to mark arrival into the area. The existing arrival into this part of the site is marked by vacant and declining buildings (Figure 3.6).

**3.21** The built form of the area largely comprises two storey terraced properties, with some bungalows (Figure 3.7). Overall the existing built form is of varying quality, however most of the stock would require some level of investment and many properties sit vacant.

### Green Space

**3.22** Green space within the pilot area comprises a mix of open space and cleared land. Formal open space is largely provided as playing fields in the eastern part of the area and a community garden (Figure 3.8).

**3.23** Informal, disconnected open space is scattered throughout the site as a result of past clearance (Figure 3.9) and a large area of open space exists in the centre of the area, which is fenced off and inaccessible to the public (Figure 3.10).

### Accessibility

**3.24** Overall there is adequate accessibility to the pilot area and outside the area there is good access to the strategic road network. Internally however, connectivity is poor, particularly as a result of the closure of Sandown Park which prohibits vehicular access to Camberwell Way.

**3.25** Furthermore road and footpath surfacing within the area is in need of repair and low levels of lighting can present safety issues in some areas. Parking is not a huge concern; however uncontrolled on-street parking in some parts does clutter the footpaths.



**Figure 3.8**  
Doury Road Community Garden  
Source: Turley



**Figure 3.9**  
Left over space as a result of previous  
clearance schemes  
Source: Turley



**Figure 3.10**  
Area of cleared land now lies in the centre  
of Doury Road and is unmanaged  
Source: Turley

## Community Narrative

**3.26** As a small housing estate on the northern side of Ballymena, Doury Road has sustained a sense of close community for three generations.

**3.27** A majority of those who live on the estate today have now done so for more than 25 years. Many of the longest settled residents occupy private homes or rental properties at the “bottom” of the estate to the south, a stark contrast to the dereliction at the “top” of the estate.

**3.28** It remains a religiously mixed development, with a significant settled traveller community residing in properties in the “middle” of the estate.

**3.29** Over three decades the original 526 dwellings were reduced to 214, 113 Housing Executive owned and 101 private, with less than 150 homes now remaining occupied.

**3.30** Pride in the sense of community remains, “... but little by little pride in the estate has eroded.” As derelict housing has fallen to ruin, sites cleared but not redeveloped, and community facilities condemned - it has reinforced an image of shame about Doury Road as a “forgotten” estate. The resultant “wasteland” is a dumping ground that according to its residents is one of the issues which is hampering the communities’ aspiration to attract new families to sustain the estate.

**3.31** Through the formation of the Doury Road Development Group efforts are underway to challenge decline and this sense of shame. The community endeavours to tackle a perception of Doury Road “as a wasteland estate with nothing for people to do; no library, no shops, no community centre, no playground”.

**3.32** The Waveney Youth Centre is open 7 nights a week, and supports around 180 young people. It also acts as a defacto community space. Crime has fallen from the second highest levels in the district in 2012, by 30% over a three year period. People remain proud of their homes, both tenants and private owners, and welcome steps to improve the safety of the area.

**3.33** A staggering 92% of people are happy in the estate, and 72% believe it is changing for the better. The owner occupied properties in the estate where purchased under historic ‘right to buy’ schemes and there is satisfaction across the community in how the owners have maintained their own homes or property, and sustained the community with limited onsite amenities.

**3.34** Doury Road estate is seeking to be recognised as a successful sustainable community with a sustainable estate; improved homes, community facilities and new houses that will bring new families, new programmes, improve employability and a better quality of life.



**Figure 4.1**  
Doury Road Development Group has made efforts to improve the image of the area  
Source: Turley

# Stage 2 - Setting the Priorities

04

## Community Priorities

4.1 At the completion of Stage 1, a workshop was conducted to present the findings of the baseline assessment to the Forum and to prepare a series of priorities for the Action Plan.

4.2 The following priorities were prepared and agreed by the Forum for Doury Road:



### Community

- Provision of a Community House/Facility within the Estate. Forum members in particular see the provision of a Community House as an investment which shows commitment and be used as an information centre.
- Explore owners' intentions for undeveloped land located along the Doury Road on the fringes of the Estate.
- If the stock transfer programme is progressed clarification should be provided on the timeframe for roll-out of the programme.



### Housing

- Physical Regeneration of the 'top end' of the estate must be undertaken in a phased and managed way. Regeneration initiatives should consider selective demolition only where this is supported by new build and/or the refurbishment of existing housing stock as well as some reconfiguration of the layout and arrangement of the buildings.
- While recognising the need for equal access for all to housing - explore how NIHE housing allocation policy can contribute to sustaining long term tenancies and reduce the continued issues of transient short term lets with the aim of creating a more sustainable and committed community.



### **Environment, Recreation and Open Space**

- Provision of a play park/area within the centre of the estate with consideration given to the option of two play areas – one at each end of the estate.
- Address the issue of landownership and encroachment throughout the estate. While acknowledging that the largest area of encroachment is on Council owned land, there are also a number of smaller incidences of encroachment throughout the estate that members felt need to be addressed ahead of any large scale regeneration proposals coming forward.



### **Access**

- Undertake environmental improvements throughout the estate including enhancements to entrance areas to improve the overall quality of the environment.
- Open up roadway between Camberwell Way and Sandown Park to improve connectivity between both sections of the estate and help create a sense of social-inclusiveness.

# Stage 3 - Agreeing the Actions and Formulating the Plan

## Housing as a Facilitator for Change – The Action Plan

**5.1** This section sets out the detailed Action Plan proposals for Doury Road (Figure 5.1). These proposals will form the framework for future regeneration of the area. This section also summarises the consultation that has taken place on the proposals and sets out how proposals have reflected the comments received from the community and key stakeholders.

### Best Practice – Informing the Need to Change

**5.2** The Action Plan for Doury Road sets out a framework for change to address the variety of issues relating to the urban environment which have contributed to the decline of the area and the anti-social behaviour which still exists to some extent.

**5.3** The Action Plan seeks to use urban design principles to establish the foundation for more appealing living environments. Successfully tackling the issues requires a number of place making-led interventions.

These are identified as:



Restructuring the existing street layout and accommodating new development where possible;

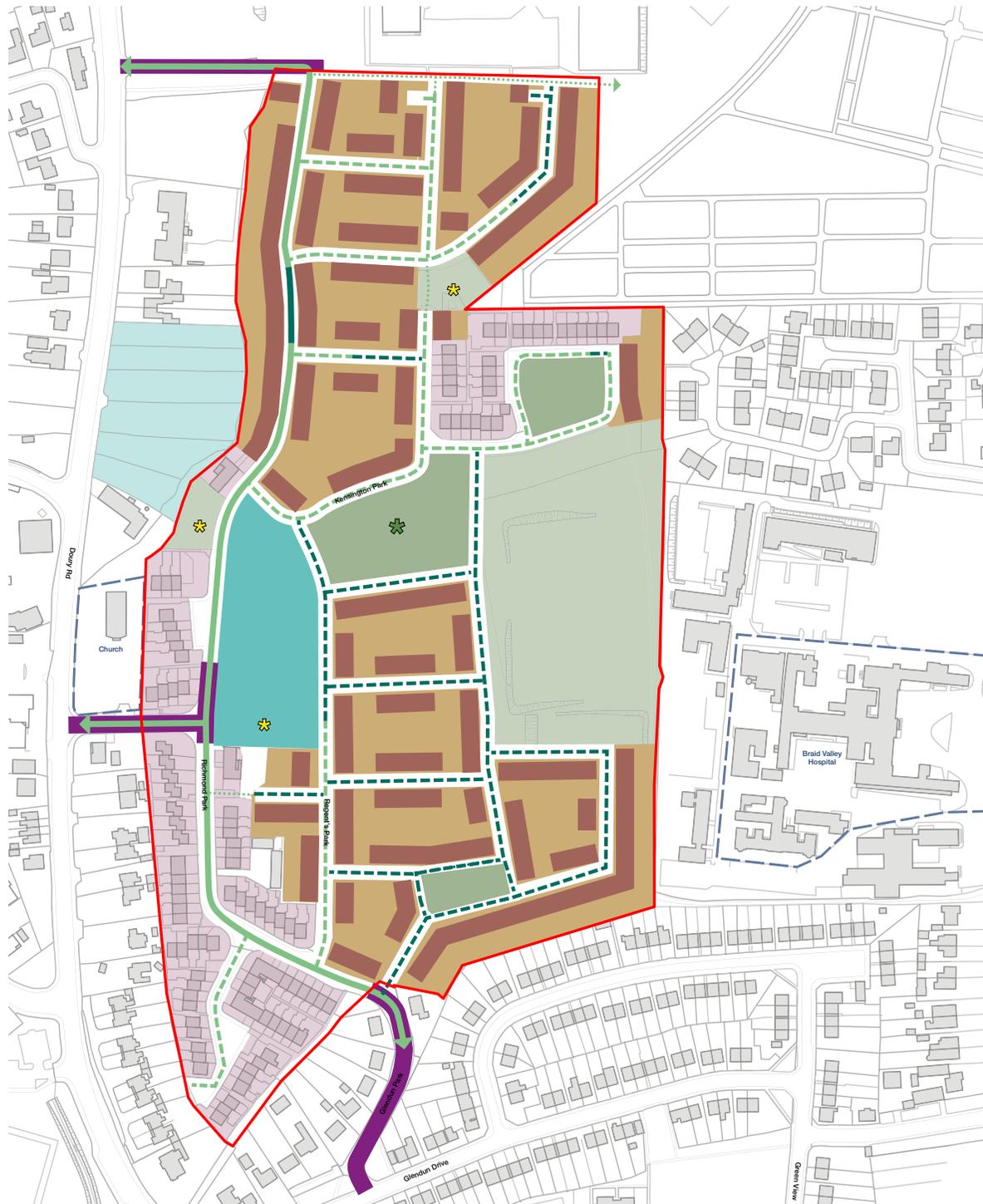


Improving the existing residential stock through improvements to their appearance and/or remodelling of their current layout; and



Introducing environmental improvements to the existing street, pathways and public spaces network.

**5.4** Each of the interventions work in a complementary manner to each other. Whilst any single intervention may prove successful in its own right, each should be applied as much as possible through a combined and balanced approach. The proposals set out in the Action Plan for Doury Road are based on the interventions above.



### Key

-  Pilot area boundary
-  Retained non-residential buildings
-  Housing areas where minimal improvements are needed
-  Proposed new residential development on cleared sites and selective demolition
-  Central Community Hub
-  Potential development on land beyond the pilot area
-  Public open space
-  Football Pitch
-  Play facilities
-  Environmental improvements proposed by NIHE and Roads Service
-  Existing primary streets with environmental improvements
-  Existing secondary streets with environmental improvements
-  Existing improved pedestrian / cycle paths
-  Proposed opening up of Camberwell Way & Sandown Park
-  Proposed new secondary streets
-  Proposed new pedestrian & cycle paths
-  Existing and proposed facilities

**Figure 5.1:**  
Doury Road Action Plan

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## The Action Plan proposes:



New residential development to the south around Glendun Park, which addresses Glendun Park Road and integrates with the existing properties along Regents Park. This will create a new gateway approach to the pilot area from Glendun Drive. New development here will be designed in a logical, ordered and legible way, ensuring that all streets experience high levels of surveillance.



A new central green space for the area south of Kensington Park, which provides a continuous link between a proposed Central Community Hub and the playing pitches, and serves the entire pilot area.



Upgrading of the properties which front on to Kew Link to provide a more positive address to the proposed green space in coordination with environmental improvements.



Re-opening of Camberwell Way and Sandown Park to facilitate a continuous development frontage along the street and improve connectivity.



Substantial new residential development to the north where it is proposed that the existing street layout is retained and opened up as much as possible to improve legibility and improve the level of definition experienced along the street. New development will deliver a more permeable and safer environment. In order to deliver these improvements it may be necessary to demolish some of the existing stock, in particular stock that is in poor condition.



### Case Study 1

New development and restructuring

The housing offer needs to be improved within the area following extensive clearance which has taken place since the 1990's which now replacement properties provided.

Restructuring of exiting housing and/or new residential development can:

- help raise the image of the area, changing the physical appearance of the place and the street.
- improve the appearance and quality of the streetscape by ensuring that new development addresses the street; and
- help address connectivity and legibility issues.

### Sherborne, Crewe

Sherborne housing estate was originally designed using Radburn principles and over time suffered from high numbers of empty properties, unemployment and escalating crime.

As part of the regeneration of the area a selective demolition process was adopted where 13 properties were removed and a further 9 homes constructed, allowing for a more pedestrian friendly layout. The remaining existing units were reconfigured to display a more active frontage, enabling greater security and natural surveillance.

The project was delivered by a partnership between Wulvern Housing and local agencies, private sector agencies and local residents. The remodelling of the estate led to social benefits including an increase in neighbourhood sustainability, with 98% of residents wanting to stay on the estate and a reduction by 33% in anti-social behaviour.



New housing sits alongside remodelled existing housing



## Case Study 2

### Improvements to existing housing stock

The quality of existing housing in the area must also improve if change to the physical environment is to be delivered. Improvements to the exterior of the existing housing stock can improve the appearance of a place, creating more welcoming residential environments.

The poor relationship of some existing properties to the street contributes to some of the antisocial behaviour problems in the pilot area. By reconfiguring properties to ensure it has front door access onto the main street, with its garden and more private areas to the rear of the property, the main street becomes activated with people using it to access their home.

### West Gorton, East Manchester

West Gorton underwent rapid industrial expansion in the mid to late 19th and early 20th century, and following a clearance programme in the 1960/70's the estate was redesigned in a Radburn style. A combination of the reduction in the area's employment base and a limited range of housing types and tenure choice resulted in the neighbourhood falling into significant decline.

To tackle these long standing issues a multi-phased programme for the regeneration of West Gorton is being undertaken which included internal and external improvement works to modernise the housing with the Radburn style housing being remodelled.



Remodelled existing properties at West Gorton



Improvement/remodelling works for a number of existing properties. This is likely include re-cladding buildings, refreshing the materials / paint and upgrading property boundary treatments. These measures will improve the physical appearance of the place. This is considered an early intervention before any demolition is proposed and would apply across all tenure types.



Enhancement and upgrading works to properties which front onto Richmond Park as this is the main approach into the pilot area therefore improvements to the physical appearance of the existing stock will improve the sense of arrival through the pilot area's main gateway.



Development of a central 'Community Hub' area at the heart of the community to provide for a range of buildings and services including community offices, youth club and sports facilities.



Explore options for the inclusion of the land along Doury Road as part of the pilot area. This land could be considered for social enterprise development which could support the local community.



A comprehensive and connected series of streets and new pedestrian links seeking to open up the area to create a more open and welcoming environment.



The introduction of street lighting, street furniture, tree planting and public realm materials at Richmond Park, which will help set the street apart. This will build upon the recent public realm enhancements that have been undertaken by NIHE and Transport NI at each of the key entrances to the pilot area.



Environmental improvements to the existing/retained secondary streets within the areas to include traffic calming, resurfacing and landscaping. These improvements should be considered for Kensington Park, Hyde Park, Kew Link, Holland Park and Alexandra Park.



### Case Study 3

#### Environmental improvements

Establishing a street hierarchy is vital in helping to distinguish public and semi-public/private places from each other, and helping in wayfinding, both for local residents and visitors.

Importantly, streets should function as places, providing the appropriate environment for pedestrians first, then vehicles, in order to promote a more walkable neighbourhood. The action plan for the area envisages a number of different street typologies including;

- **Primary streets** – the main street running through a residential area. A typical primary street could include pedestrian footways, two lane vehicular carriageways and a variety of environmental features such as tree planting, signage, street lighting and street furniture.
- **Secondary streets** – a local network of streets. This means slowing traffic down through signage, street furniture, road markings, raised tables and single lane priority. On-street parking is also encouraged.
- **Pedestrian & cycle paths** – These are separated from primary and secondary streets to provide safe and direct access throughout the community.

#### The Dings Homezone, Bristol

Having an existing sense of community The Dings neighbourhood was able to work alongside the council to see the Home Zone become a reality. Sustrans worked with them at their regular monthly meetings, as well as through a number outdoor events, newsletter-surveys and door-to-door, to consult with the community and collectively draw up a palette of features and materials for the Home Zone. These discussions resulted in different streets being paved in different materials according to the wishes of the residents. Continuity of design was maintained in other ways by using a uniform style to indicate parking bays, and by using pieces of public art throughout the area to enhance its sense of place.



The Dings - pedestrian priority and integrated car parking



### Case Study 3

Environmental improvements (continued)

#### Higher Broughton, Salford

Higher Broughton had developed deep social and economic challenges, and demand for housing stock had declined sharply in the 1980s. A strategic, comprehensive plan was conceived accepting the need to redevelop large areas to improve the mix and quality, but with the priority being to eliminate the stigma that had held the area back. The plan was to balance redevelopment of housing stock with a strong focus on community and social infrastructure/ social cohesion.

Broughton Hub is a new facility providing a one-stop shop to access council services, as well as having neighbourhood policing teams based there, at the heart of the community. Information on Council services is available, plus library, children's centre, youth centre and sports facilities. It is home to the North West's only purpose built trampoline hall and includes a flood-lit all-weather games area and two grass pitches.



Higher Broughton Community Hub

## Community Validation and Adoption

**5.5** In order to gather community feedback and comments on the draft proposals, a two week long public exhibition was held in the Ballymena North Recreation Centre from Monday 16 November to Monday 30 November. During this time the exhibition was manned on three occasions by Turley and DfC staff.

**5.6** Members of the Forum were also invited to make comments on the draft proposals and meetings were held with members of the Waveney Youth Club and Mid & East Antrim Community Planning Committee. The feedback was generally supportive of the proposals however, a summary of the more detailed comments received from the community and forum members is set out below:

- New development will need to make provision for appropriate levels of parking and open space.
- Care should be taken to ensure that private landlords do not occupy the new properties.
- Concern over the implications of the proposals on owner occupiers within the area, particularly should their properties be identified for demolition.
- It will be important not to over develop vacant areas of land within the area.
- It is crucial that any existing facilities are fully replaced within a new community hub area.
- Measures should be taken at the earliest opportunity to address encroachment issues in the area.
- Continued dialogue and engagement with Mid & East Antrim Council, Education Authority and local community will be crucial for the delivery of a new community hub area.

**5.7** As a result of the feedback received from the community, it has not been necessary to revise the proposals set out in the Action Plan. It is recognised that ongoing consultation with the community and stakeholders will be required to inform more detailed proposals as they come forward.

**On the basis of the comments received the Action Plan has been formally accepted by the forum.**

# Stage 4 - Next Steps: Delivering Change

06

## A Catalyst for the Doury Road

**6.1** The rationale for the Building Successful Communities (BSC) programme captures a long-term process of investment to ensure the sustainability of the pilot neighbourhoods for future generations.

**6.2** The Action Plan for the neighbourhood reflects this longer-term ambition for investment and change.

**6.3** Doury Road has seen a significant amount of change as the area has been characterised over recent years by successive programmes of demolition which have resulted in a significantly reduced size of community. The current population of the area sits at only 279, having been over 500 at one point.

**6.4** The long-term plan for Doury Road presents an opportunity to re-populate the neighbourhood whilst also improving the housing conditions of the population which continues to live in the area. In order to ensure that the re-development of Doury Road delivers a sustainable community for the future it is of critical importance that new housing is delivered in a range of tenures and presents the opportunity to attract in new residents to contribute to the community and stabilise the population.

**6.5** As such, the delivery of catalyst projects in the area is critical to setting a benchmark for future regeneration based on housing led initiatives. The projects also need to represent the start of a journey in creating a new perception of the neighbourhood internally and externally in order to attract future investment from a range of stakeholders.

**6.6** In order to start the process of change envisaged a specific catalyst project has been identified that will require the collective support of key stakeholders with land-holdings and funding resources as well as the community and their representatives to ensure that it presents a solid foundation from which to deliver the objectives of the BSC programme and ensure neighbourhoods which match community aspirations for the future.

**6.7** The project is intended to be delivered in the short-term, recognising the commitment of DfC to the BSC programme. Delivery responsibilities and risks are identified for the project and it will be critical that progress is monitored. Where delivery challenges present obstacles to their early delivery a review of other projects which could play an equally catalytic role should be undertaken to ensure the momentum of regeneration and change in the neighbourhood is sustained.

## **Introducing the Catalyst Projects**

**6.8** One catalyst project has been identified for Doury Road. The project proposes a new residential development comprise of private and affordable housing on vacant land at and adjacent to Regents Park.

## **Rationale for the Catalyst Projects**

**6.9** As identified previously, the historic demolition of housing in Doury Road has left a significant area of undeveloped land at the heart of the neighbourhood.

**6.10** The scale of potential re-development envisaged for the neighbourhood presents an opportunity for fundamental re-imagining of the area and the catalyst project represents a unique opportunity to set the tone for the regeneration of Doury Road as an attractive place to live in Ballymena.

**6.11** The scheme is considered to be of a scale and of sufficient prominence to demonstrate a commitment change which will present a new chapter for Doury Road.

**6.12** The identified project has been selected in recognition of the fact that the BSC places community led intervention at the heart of its objectives. The selected project is therefore considered to reflect the community's priorities as presented by the Forum as it will deliver physical improvements to the estate and deliver new housing.

**6.13** It is acknowledged that investment is also needed in the northern part of the pilot area, however it is envisaged that the development of Regent's Park will present an opportunity for new investment in the area which could assist in funding improvements elsewhere in the pilot area. Furthermore, the development of this area will not require the demolition of existing homes or the decanting of existing tenants outside of the pilot area.

**6.14** The delivery of the project is intended to not only present a physical symbol and foundation of change but also to lift the community's confidence in embracing change and providing a focus for continued leadership within the community.

## **Delivering Regeneration**

**6.15** The catalyst project identified for Doury Road presents a strong foundation upon which to deliver the objectives of the BSC programme, however the community aspirations will require that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that they are delivered.

**6.16** Using examples from elsewhere, we have identified a number of delivery mechanisms which could be considered for the catalyst project, and other proposals, for Doury Road.

**6.17 Promoting Ongoing Partnership Working** – In order to deliver the transformation of the Doury Road it will be critical that existing partnerships are strengthened and where necessary new joint working established to ensure maximum input from all individual stakeholders.

**6.18 Joint Venture Partnerships (JVP)** – It is clear that the public sector has a pivotal role to play in pump-priming the regeneration process and to create confidence for private sector investment. For example the public sector could de-risk sites in terms of readying sites for development or, where the public sector is the landowner, they could improve scheme cash flow and viability by deferring the payment of land receipts.

**Case Study 4**  
**Joint Venture Partnership**  
 Sheffield Housing Company

Represents a JVP between Sheffield City Council, Keepmoat Homes Ltd and Great Places Housing Group, set up to provide a regeneration vehicle in an area of Sheffield where the Council had significant freehold ownership of land.

The Council provides the land into the Company as its equity which is matched by cash from the private sector. As development comes forward the Council receives payments to the agreed residual value and 50% of any profit.

Additional value generated can then be used to deliver additional regeneration benefits.

Image: Sheffield Housing Company



**6.19 Master Developer** – The Local Authority/Landowner becomes the developer, allowing them to retain control of the process and let construction contracts.

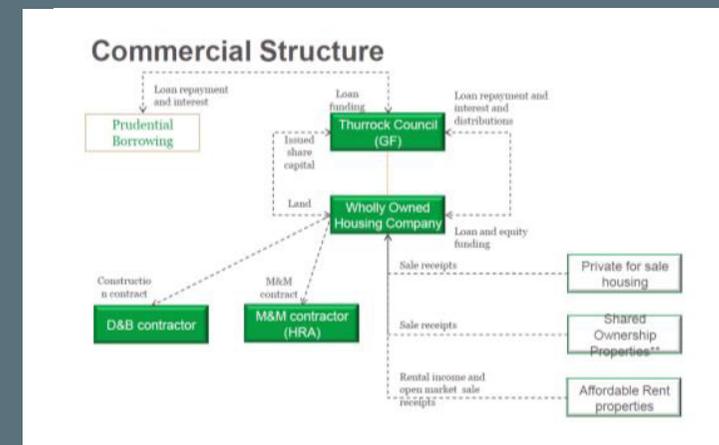
**Case Study 5**  
 Master Developer Thurrock Gloriana

In 2013 Thurrock Council agreed to establish a 'General Fund Special Purpose Housing Company' with aim being for the Council to deliver new housing.

The Council had significant landholdings and was able to use its capacity for prudential borrowing against the Council's general fund at competitively low rates of interest. In this case the Council retained ownership of its assets and as a public sector owner of the land developer profit can be waived with the value resulting directly from the uplift in land value. This ensures the viability of development. This model also ensures that a range of tenures can be developed with the Council able to retain rental income on properties to service interest payments.

The Council procures contractors using their own framework to construct development with the Housing Department acting as the planning applicant.

Image: Thurrock Council



**6.20 Community Land Trust (CLT)** – Provide a mechanism for devolving and empowering the community in the regeneration process.

**Case Study 6**  
Community Land Trust

CLT's are essential local organisations set up and run by the community to development and manage homes. It requires the ownership of land by the community, either gifted or purchased.

**Bristol CLT**

Bristol CLT is bringing forward a development of 12 new homes, which will include a mix of ownership and rental tenures. The scheme has been prepared by CLT and the properties will be advertised for purchase and rent. The property prices are benchmarked to ensure that local members of the community are not excluded from the housing market.

Image: [www.bristolclt.org.uk](http://www.bristolclt.org.uk)



**Addressing the Priorities**

**6.21** It is important to ensure that the action identified for the area seeks to address the priorities identified by the community. The table below demonstrates how the proposed catalyst project meets a number of the community priorities for Doury Road.

**Table 6.1:** Addressing the Priorities

Project	Proposals	Community Priorities
<b>Regents Park</b>	Residential development	Physical regeneration of the estate, including new housing
	Associated landscaping	Environmental Enhancements

## Regents Park – Housing Re-development

### Project Rationale

**6.22** The first significant new housing scheme in the neighbourhood will need to be exemplary in its development form in order to demonstrate to the local community and external stakeholders the quality of new homes which can be provided.

**6.23** To achieve this DfC will commission on behalf of the local community a team to work the framework set out in this Action Plan into a design brief that will act as a guide for the comprehensive redevelopment of the land and provide certainty to developers (public and private) of a structured approach to the sustainable development of the land and to ensure that the place is not developed in a piecemeal way.

**6.24** The brief will set out a series of design principles to protect the quality of any new development and detail specific contributions (financial and or other physical works or social interventions) that developers will be required to adhere to when developing individual parts of the land.

**6.25** It will set out a clear time bound programme for how interventions in both parts of the pilot area will come forward. It will establish where (if any) demolition would be proposed to ensure that the community maintain maximum control and certainty over the project.

**6.26** The design principles established at this stage can be used by the community to inform on-going capacity building with Mid and East Antrim Council in the form of a community plan and its spatial articulation in a development plan. It can also be used as a tool to build and promote leadership in the community.

**6.27** In order to ensure the maximum impact of the first re-development scheme, noting that it will represent only a small part of the overall re-development potential, careful consideration has been given to the selection of an appropriate catalyst housing site.

**6.28** The selected site is considered to be a strong catalyst for change as:

- it is located in a comparatively prominent position at one of the key entry points to the neighbourhood. New development on the site will present a strong visual 'entry' to Doury Road for people approaching the area from Glendun Park;
- the site benefits from its proximity to recent housing investment to properties along Richmond Park and Glendun Park which form a comparatively stable housing area; and
- development of the site will form an important new boundary to the southern part of the neighbourhood and the proposed new 'community hub'. This boundary will form an important further key entry point to the neighbourhood connecting by pedestrian routes through to Doury Road and the development of further areas of housing at the heart of the area.

**6.29** The development of new high quality housing on the proposed catalyst site will provide a clear message to the community and external stakeholders that Doury Road is starting a process of re-building.

**6.30** The catalyst project is therefore instrumental to this process. It will also provide an important foundation for justifying the need and demand for new housing in the area which will reinforce the case for investment in a new community hub in parallel with the sustained development of further new housing in proximity.

**6.31** The delivery of new housing (principally for sale) must be matched with incremental proposals for the existing public sector rented stock in the north. This could in part be paid for by developer contribution under Section 76 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011.



Figure 6.1: Examples of New Housing

**6.32** The initial focus would be on stock classified as in poorer condition / not meeting their needs within the neighbourhood. This will need to be addressed in a strategic manner to enable subsequent projects of packaged investment to be delivered.

**6.33** It is anticipated that further parcels of land will be developed for mixed tenures of housing.

**6.34** The proximity to Braid Valley Hospital represents an opportunity to attract keyworkers to reside in the area with this forming an important consideration for the type and tenure of housing to be provided in future phases of development.

### **Form of Intervention**

**6.35** The project will represent a new housing development located at the Regents Park area of the estate.

**6.36** The extent of the land to be brought forward as the catalyst will need to be determined on the basis of further feasibility work, however it will need to be of a sufficient scale to deliver change. At this stage it is assumed the provision of smaller family housing will be likely albeit the exact mix of housing types will be determined through the bid process for the site and through further engagement with the local community.

**6.37** The housing project will be complemented through environmental improvements to adjoining areas and the main vehicular approach to the site. The opportunity to deliver these improvements through developer contributions will be explored.

### **Resource Plan**

**6.38** A development brief will need to be prepared for the site. This will need to include the following aspects:

- Design / quality requirements.
- Strategy for engaging the community.
- Construction / supply-chain protocols to seek local labour / business commitments.
- Proposed type / tenure mix.
- Developer contributions/commitments
- Development viability assessment underpinning land value / funding gap.

### **Delivery Partners / Stakeholders**

**6.39** The land is understood to be in the ownership of NIHE. The potential for NIHE to provide the land at nil cost to facilitate development will need to be explored further. The NIHE will therefore assume a lead role in facilitating the project.

**6.40** They will lead in the preparation of a development brief for the site (consistent with the design objectives evolved at the early stage) and seek bids from local Housing Associations. The bid should include the option of stock transfer and incremental improvements to the existing stock in the northern part of the site. Where existing private rented or owned properties exist within group of buildings identified for works DfC will seek to provide grant funding to allow for improvements to be made in tandem with the works to the public sector stock.

**6.41** It is also recommended that DfC undertake a headline development appraisal for the site to provide a benchmark against which to assess the existence of a likely funding gap for the site in advance of briefs being issued to Housing Associations.

**6.42** The extent to which additional monies can be leveraged from the Housing Association to fund wider environmental improvements / contribution to a pot of money to deliver the community hub project will need to be assessed.

**6.43** Lands transferred to a Housing Association as part of the proposed Stock Transfer programme for Doury Road is likely to be the best method for delivering certainty around funding and programme but it is critical that DfC action the outworking of the action plan as a neighbourhood plan to provide certainty to the community and key stakeholders alike about the proposed method of delivery and timing for change.

**6.44** The appointed Housing Association should enter into a memorandum of understanding with the community at the commencement of the stock transfer process and any refinement and/or alteration to the design for the scheme and the proposed housing mix should be agreed prior to the submission of a planning application.

**6.45** Central to the delivery of this project is nurturing leadership in the community. The community is a partner in delivery and success of the catalyst project and DfC will need to work in parallel to devise a strategy for building 'leadership' and sustaining community interest.

## **Risks**

**6.46** Consideration will need to be given to future phases of land release and the delivery mechanism to be used. As perceptions improve of the area land values would be expected to increase. The extent to which the approach for the sale of land changes over time will therefore need to respond to the opportunity presented by the market as well as recognising the opportunities presented through re-circulating monies linked with the transfer of stock in the neighbourhood to a single Housing Association.

## **Benefits**

**6.47** The redevelopment of the site will provide new housing housing stock within the neighbourhood. This will represent the beginning of a much larger process of re-development envisaged for the neighbourhood to see the scale of the community return to its former levels. The benefits in terms of the improvement of the internal and external perception of the neighbourhood have been introduced above.

**6.48** The provision of new housing offers the opportunity for new households to be introduced into the area with a vested long term interest particularly where the housing is affordable and private housing for sale.

**6.49** The commencement of the re-development process for the vacant lands offers the opportunity to address potential issues related to anti-social behaviour by adding additional surveillance in the street and create a more secure environment.

**6.50** The development of new homes will provide employment opportunity. Local labour / supplier agreements should be utilised where appropriate to ensure the maximum impact of employment opportunities generated. Training and skills development should also be promoted consistent with normal practices for social housing and promoted through DfC.

**6.51** The potential for growth in the population initiated through the catalyst project should increase the capacity for household spending in the area. This will benefit local shops and services.

**6.52** The delivery of this development will be a vehicle for private investment within the estate. The generation of income from the sale of the properties could be re-invested within the pilot area in the form of environmental improvements or community facilities to attract further private investment within the northern part of the estate. If successful a similar mechanism could be used to deliver new housing in the remainder of the pilot area.

## Timetable and Next Steps

**6.53** The production of a development brief for the site should be undertaken within a twelve month timetable. This will allow sufficient time to engage the Forum and wider community as considered appropriate.

**6.54** The procurement process would be envisaged to be completed within a six month timetable with appointment of a Housing Association to develop the site therefore achieved within 18 months.

**6.55** Additional sites will need to be identified for future phases of re-development which will build on this project. The adjacency of the community hub site to the development will mean that plans should be progressed to explore the capacity and development proposals for this site in the short/ medium term.

**6.56** Table 6.2 sets out an estimated project schedule for the project.

**Table 6.2:** Project Timetable

Year	Tasks	Stakeholder	Time
Year 1	Preparation of Development Brief	DfC/ NIHE	12 Months
Year 2	Procurement of developer partner and start on development	DfC / Selected Housing Association	6 months
Year 3	Site fully developed out		



**Figure 6.2:** Extract from Phase 1 Environmental Improvement Works

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## Complementary Projects

**6.57** In addition to the catalyst project identified for Doury Road, additional bespoke, complimentary projects identified by the Forum will be brought forward consistent with the Action Plans detailed at Stage 3.

### 1. Housing Improvements and Remodelling.

**6.58** The quality of housing stock in the area was identified as an area where improvement was needed. The action plan proposes that some external improvements and internal remodelling may improve the appearance of the area.

**6.59** The level of improvements and remodelling works that could be undertaken will vary, but could include re-cladding buildings, refreshing the materials / paint and upgrading property boundary treatments.

**6.60** A Feasibility Study to assess the need for repair / improvement / redmodelling works for individual properties would need to be commissioned to understand the level of investment required. This could be facilitated by NIHE and DFC. The potential for the creation of a home improvement grant / match-funding scheme could also be considered, to assist home owners with improvement works.

### 2. Transport NI Environmental Improvements

**6.61** Another priority identified by the community is the need to undertake environmental enhancements across the area to enhance the appearance of Doury Road, which for so long has been blighted by vacant buildings/land and poorly maintained streets and spaces.

**6.62** As a result of BSC prioritisation, the Housing Executive in conjunction with Transport NI began implementing a series of environmental enhancements and street improvements in January 2016. The proposals, shown at Figure 6.2, largely focus on the main entrance points to the area.

**6.63** In order to continue the momentum of these improvements further environmental works are proposed as part of Phase 2 works. This second phase of works would again need to be delivered in conjunction with Transport NI and based on costs for Phase 1 is likely to cost circa £300,000. This phase of works could need to be supported by funding from the BSC programme.

**6.64** It is envisaged that a second phase on environmental improvements would sit alongside the catalyst project, providing an enhanced setting for new residential development and directly addressing the communities priority to enhance the appearance of the area.

### 3. Community Hub Area.

**6.65** As part of the Action Plan proposals and the proposals put forward as part of the Environmental improvements a new community hub is proposed for Doury Road. The provision of new community hub is also one of the priorities for the area identified by the community.

**6.66** It is acknowledged that the existing community facilities in Doury Road are well used, however they are not centrally located to best serve Doury Road or the wider community. It is also acknowledged that the Doury Road Development Group does not have a centrally located base to serve the community.

**6.67** Whilst the Action Plan proposes a new central community hub area, the provision of such a facility will need further detailed feasibility work to be undertaken and will require issues relating to the encroachment of land to be addressed. It will also be necessary to secure approval for the relocation of existing facilities from the relevant landowners and stakeholders which could take some time.

**6.68** As such an interim proposal for a temporary community facility has been put forward by the Doury Road Development Group and NIHE. An area of cleared land located at Richmond Park has been selected as the location for a temporary mobile unit and planning permission has now been secured (Planning Application Ref. LA02/2016/0020/F). The lifespan of the temporary facility is expected to be three to five years when the development of a community hub / and or new community facility is expected to be completed.

**6.69** Subject to securing funding and partner buy-in the provision of a temporary community facility is expected to be delivered in 2016/17.

**6.70** Other projects will follow and will be subject to ongoing discussion with the community through the Forum. A list of these will be compiled for the duration of the project and time lines and budgets confirmed.

### 4. Camberwell Way/Sandown Park

**6.71** One of the priorities identified by the community is for the re-opening of the road that runs between Camberwell Way and Sandown Park. Originally a through road, the road was closed off to reduce anti-social behaviour but has since become a barrier dividing the two parts of the estate. Given the social improvements in the area, it is felt by many in the community that re-opening of the road as a vehicular route would be of benefit to Doury Road.

**6.72** The area where the road is blocked is accessible for pedestrians and it is proposed that the barriers are removed and the road reinstated.

**6.73** Discussions with the Community Forum, including Transport NI suggest that this project could be delivered within 2016/17 provided funding is available through the BSC programme.

**6.74** The delivery of this project would directly address the community priority to open up the road and reconnect the two parts of the estate.

# Stage 4 Next Steps - Monitoring the Impact of Intervention

07

**7.1** A baseline has been prepared for Doury Road and this provides an objective assessment of neighbourhood conditions at a base date. This provides a baseline against which change can be measured and tracked over time.

**7.2** The catalyst project has been designed to initiate the regeneration process. Observable change in neighbourhood baseline conditions may take time to occur due to project lead in times associated with feasibility, design, development consenting and construction and implementation. Noting the longer term process of regeneration underway in the neighbourhood, monitoring of the short to medium term outputs and outcomes of each intervention is required in order to assess their impacts and effectiveness.

**7.3** It is therefore recommended that a two stage monitoring process is implemented:

- **Stage 1: Catalyst project monitoring** – collection of output/outcome measures relating to specific projects and interventions
- **Stage 2: Periodic neighbourhood monitoring** – updating the baseline at predetermined intervals in order to test the wider impacts of the regeneration process on neighbourhood baseline conditions over time. This will allow the scale, scope and persistence of impacts to be measured over time.

**7.4** Catalyst project monitoring should be undertaken with greater frequency and it is recommended that this is programmed to occur on an annual basis. Periodic neighbourhood monitoring can be undertaken less frequently, enabling the regeneration process to take effect and discernible impacts to be recorded. It is recommended that a fuller neighbourhood monitoring exercise and update to the baseline occurs at 3 yearly intervals.

## **Catalyst Project Monitoring Indicators**

**7.5** The selection of monitoring indicators needs to reflect not only the nature of planned catalyst projects but also the feasibility of collecting project data on an ongoing basis. Given the breadth of the Building Successful Communities programme, the catalyst project is likely to generate a wider range of impacts.

**7.6** Consideration has therefore been given to a full range of social, economic and environmental indicators and measures which could be monitored. These relate to both outputs and outcomes and are detailed in Tables 7.1 and 7.2.

**Table 7.1:** Regeneration Outputs

Indicator	Measure
Area of land remediated	Hectares of land
Area of brownfield land developed	Hectares of land
Area of land improved and made ready for development	Hectares of land
Public sector land made available for development	Hectares of land
New build homes	Net number of new build properties consented, under construction and completed
Existing homes improved	Number of properties improved or refurbished
Tenure choice	Percentage of new homes provided by tenure
Affordable housing	Net number of affordable homes consented, under construction and completed
Social housing	Net number of social homes consented, under construction and completed
Self-build housing	Net number of self-build homes consented, under construction and completed
Community and social infrastructure	New community and social infrastructure provided (floorspace square meters)
Sports and leisure provision	Number of sports/ play (eg. MUGAs)/ leisure facilities delivered or improved
Open space created/ improved	Hectares of land improved
Public realm	Hectares of land and/ or linear meters of public realm created or improved
Trees planted	Count
Transport infrastructure created / improved	Linear meters of new/ improved road space and pedestrian routes. Public transport services operating (count)

**Table 7.2:** Regeneration Outputs

Indicator	Measure
Investment Value	Total private investment in construction/ refurbishment activity (£)
	Total public investment in construction/ refurbishment activity (£)
	Leverage (ratio of public: private investment £)
Direct employment safeguarded	Full Time Equivalent (FTE) count of jobs safeguarded as a result of investment in catalyst projects
Direct employment created	FTE count associated with construction activities
Local employment created	Number of local people involved in construction process (temporary/ permanent)
Local skills and training	Number of local people involved in skills, training and capacity building activities as part of the physical regeneration process
	Hours of training/ capacity building delivered
Volunteering and participation	Number of volunteers participating in neighbourhood catalyst regeneration projects
Households accommodated	Count of households accommodated in completed dwellings
Affordable housing needs met	Households in need of affordable housing accommodated in new homes
Economic activity	Count of economically active people residing in completed dwellings
Household spending power	Estimate of combined spending power of all households accommodated in completed dwellings

7.7 Information should be compiled and analysed on at least an annual basis in order to track the effectiveness of the programme and progress against the programmed catalyst projects.

7.8 Delivery partners should be provided with a project monitoring form in order to ensure common recording of outputs and outcomes.

### Periodic Neighbourhood Monitoring

7.9 A comprehensive baseline report has been prepared for each neighbourhood which covers thematic indicators such as:

- Socio economic context;
- Residential market performance;
- Accessibility;
- Public services; and
- Planned investments

7.10 The baseline reports contain numerous indicators of neighbourhood health and wellbeing. It will not be possible to replicate the scope of the baseline by way of periodic neighbourhood monitoring every three years. Rather, a shortlist of key indicators should be agreed and these should form the basis of periodic monitoring.

7.11 A sample shortlist of baseline monitoring indicators is suggested in Table 7.3. It should be possible in all cases to show change based on intervention from the baseline position.

7.12 The above are only a sample of the type of indicators which could be monitored periodically and informed by published data sources as well as the catalyst project monitoring data.

7.13 In addition to the above, further insight to perceptions of neighbourhoods and the effectiveness of the regeneration process could be gathered via resident surveys.

**Table 7.3:** Baseline Monitoring Indicators

Theme	Key Indicator
<b>Residential</b>	Change to dwelling stock
	Change to tenure of dwelling stock
	Change in choice of dwellings (as measured by size of property/ number of bedrooms)
	Change in lettings (source: NIHE)
	Change in stock vacancy levels (source: NIHE)
	Average private residential values
	Average private sector rental levels
	NIHE waiting list (count)
<b>Socio Economic</b>	Change to observed levels of multiple deprivation (subject to updates to 2010 NI Multiple Deprivation dataset)
	Economic activity (as measured by employment and unemployment levels)
<b>Accessibility</b>	Public transport services serving neighbourhood (count)
<b>Social infrastructure</b>	Change in number of community facilities
	Change in number of sports, recreation and leisure facilities
	Change in pupil roll and unfilled places for neighbourhood schools
<b>Environment</b>	Change in quantum of open space and greenspace within neighbourhoods

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