

## Aileen McGarry

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**From:** Shane Mathers  
**Sent:** 23 February 2022 09:14  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: M&S Coleraine  
**Attachments:** FINAL Clarification.pdf

Please circulate to the Committee.

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**From:** Eamonn Loughrey <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** 22 February 2022 23:33

**To:** Shane Mathers <[REDACTED]>

**Cc:** Denise Dickson <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** M&S Coleraine

Good evening Shane

Thank you for the call today at 16:10 bringing this matter to my attention.

As you know I disagree with the contention of the very late verbal objection now made. I have not seen any written objection to date from any party.

I do not consider the singular concern identified in the Addendum, when considered having regard to the evidence submitted and the information on Ballymoney already in the public domain, to warrant a deferral.

To this end, I thought it prudent to set out the attached very brief note to clarify my reasoning and position on the matter.

I trust you will give this your urgent attention.

Regards

Eamonn Loughrey  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### Clarification for Case Officer

In response to the Case Officer queries over the relevance of Ballymoney, these matters are already addressed in the Retail Statement (RS) or are able to be assessed by reference to publicly available documents.

#### **1. The Catchment is Robust and Consistent with Nexus and Previous Sainsbury's Catchment.**

Utilising household surveys is the preferred manner in Retail Planning to define a catchment. The use of household surveys allows shopping patterns to be understood.

RS para 5.1-5.5 set out the basis for determining the M&S catchment.

The RS has used the Council's own household survey employed in the Nexus Study.

This Nexus household survey evidence finds that all main food shops in Coleraine draw between 60% and 100% of their turnover from Zone 2.

Sainsbury's draws 86% of all of its food trade from Zone 2. Sainsbury's is located opposite the proposal site and is 1,783 sq m net food floorspace, a third larger than the proposed M&S. It would carry perhaps 15,000 lines of groceries compared to the 5,000 lines of M&S.

The Sainsbury's catchment was defined and accepted under the approval C/2010/0564/F which granted an extension to Sainsbury's. Extracts of the Turley RIA submitted with this application is at **Appendix 1**. It shows the Sainsbury's catchment to exclude Ballymoney town. This is again consistent with Nexus findings and the M&S RS.

#### **Ballymoney (Zone 3) has been considered.**

The proposed Trade Draw of M&S (RS Appendix 7 Table 5) estimates that 90% of the proposal's main food turnover will be drawn from Zone 2. This level of trade draw from Zone 2 is wholly robust and consistent with the Sainsbury's draw at Riverside (found by Nexus to be 86%) bearing in mind that the M&S is a smaller store.

Importantly 10% of the proposal's main food draw will be drawn from inflow from Zone 1 (Limavady) and **Zone 3 (Ballymoney)**.

RS para 5.61 identifies that there is leakage from Zone 2 to Ballymoney (Zone 3) and that Ballymoney is drawing £6.2million of main food spending and £1.6million of top up food spending from the Zone 2.

Ballymoney town centre is located in the 15-20 minutes drive time zone from the Riverside Centre. This is beyond what Council's or the Department would normally allow for a catchment, particularly for a store of this size.

Ballymoney has clearly been considered in the RS insofar as it is relevant. If Ballymoney were included in the catchment it would simply further **reduce** retail impact on Coleraine town centre, lower than that already found acceptable by the Council Planners.

**2. Alternative Sites – Without prejudice to No1 above - the information in the public domain shows clearly that there are no site suitable for the proposal in Ballymoney, even if it is considered to be inside the catchment.**

The information attached is included in two documents in the public domain – the Northern Area Plan and the Ballymoney Town Centre Masterplan Update 2020.

**Northern Area Plan Development Opportunity Sites (Appendix 2)**

***Town Centre - BYT02 Linenhall Street.***

Committed Site. 0.35ha.

Town Centre Site. Too small for the proposal which needs 0.6ha.

Ballymoney Masterplan for this area envisages a mixed use regeneration development over a significantly long term and proposes meanwhile temporary uses.

Not suitable.

***Edge of Town Centre - BYT03 Meeting House Street.***

1.08ha.

The key site requirements for this site states “The only retail development acceptable will be retail warehousing with units of not less than 1,000 sq m”

Outside the town centre. Not suitable and contrary to the NAP.

**Other Town Centre Locations identified in the Masterplan (Appendix 3)**

***Castle Croft Square***

See Masterplan – implementation of public realm works that enhance the ‘Square’. Not a site. Not suitable

***Train Station / Seymour Street Area***

See Masterplan – not a ‘site’. Not suitable.

**Other Edge of Town Centre Locations identified in the Masterplan**

***Northern Regional College***

See Masterplan – not available. Proposals for social housing.

Whilst Ballymoney is outside the catchment, it can be noted that there are no town centre or edge of town centre sites in Ballymoney suitable and available for the proposal.

**Appendix 1**

## 5. Retail Context

### Background

- 5.1 Before undertaking an assessment of the appropriateness of the application proposals, it is first necessary to understand the existing retail hierarchy within the locality and identify the key characteristics and nature of both the existing and proposed retail offer. This review also assesses the vitality and viability of the principal centres, namely Coleraine, Portrush and Portstewart in line with PPS5 advice.

### Study Area

- 5.2 In order to establish the retail context of the proposal, the Sainsbury's store's sphere of influence should be identified i.e. where the extended store will draw the majority of its trade. For this purpose, we have adopted a Study Area based on a 15 minute drive time from the application site. This is identified on the attached Plan (SAIB1052/1) attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 5.3 In order to establish shopping patterns within the 15 minute drive time we have referred to the household survey undertaken by MORI to inform the Drivers Jonas 'Coleraine Town Development Strategy' Report which was carried out to understand existing shopping patterns in the District and to inform the dNAP. This 15 minute drive time broadly equates to the Coleraine District and Centre study zones used in the household survey.

### Retail Provision

- 5.4 In order to understand the suitability of the proposed extension, it is necessary to first establish the condition of the existing retail market within Coleraine and the baseline context in which the proposal will be assessed. As such, this section seeks to provide a baseline of the existing and proposed retail offer in the area.
- 5.5 In line with PPS5 advice we have also reviewed the vitality and viability of Coleraine Town Centre. Various indicators of the vitality and viability of the Town Centre have been assessed including:
- diversity of uses;
  - retailer representation and demand;
  - rental levels;

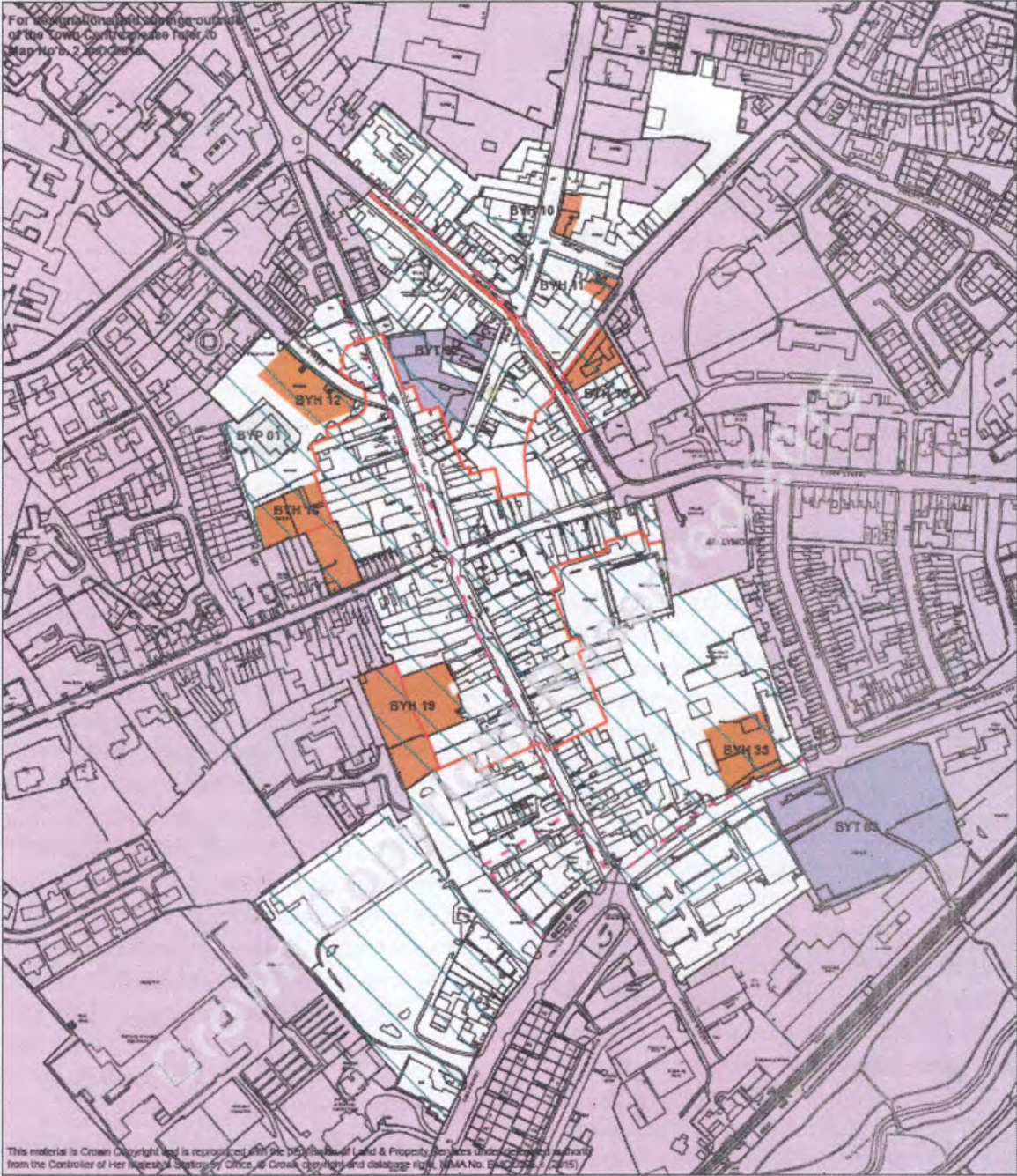




**Appendix 2**








For additional information outside of the Town Centre please refer to Map No. 2/010/2016



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Northern Area Plan 2016  
 - Map No. 2/01b - Ballymoney Town Centre

-  Town Centre
-  Land Zoned for Housing
-  Car Park
-  Opportunity Site

- For Information Only
-  Area of Archaeological Potential (See Map No. 2/01a)
  -  Conservation Area (See Map No. 2/01a)
  -  Protected Route
  -  Cycle Network (Existing)
  -  Archaeological Site and Monument (Unscheduled)





of summer 2003 concluded that only 45% of all retail expenditure from Ballymoney Borough takes place within Ballymoney town. The town centre had experienced considerable decline throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with only small scale commercial investment in that period. However, in the 1990s there was an increase in commercial investment including a major food retailer, complemented by extensive good quality refurbishment of commercial properties in the heart of the town and upgrading of the main commercial streets. The Plan seeks to build on this by providing for significant town centre development and maintaining it as a vibrant shopping location with complementary commercial, leisure and housing uses.

### TOWN CENTRE DESIGNATION BYT 01

#### **Ballymoney Town Centre**

A Town Centre is designated as identified in Map No. 2/01b - Ballymoney Town Centre.

A town centre is defined, within which all retail development will normally be required to locate. This has been defined to exclude all significant housing groups which are considered to have a viable future as a residential environment. Within this town centre boundary, there are a number of development opportunities including properties requiring redevelopment or major refurbishment to bring them back into beneficial use. The Plan designates the following major development opportunity sites.

#### **Development Opportunity Sites**

The Plan identifies the following major development opportunities. Proposals will be assessed against Policy SET 2 in Volume 1 of the Plan and other relevant policies.

### DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

The following sites are zoned as development opportunity sites as identified on Map No. 2/01a – Ballymoney Town and Map No. 2/01b – Ballymoney Town Centre:

#### **COMMITTED SITE**

BYT 02 Linenhall Street, (0.35 ha.)

#### **UNCOMMITTED SITE**

### DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY ZONING BYT 03

#### **Meeting House Street (1.08 ha.)**

#### **Key Site Requirements**

1. A high density housing scheme will be acceptable on this central site with excellent accessibility (up to 100 dwellings per hectare).
2. Commercial development including warehousing and offices will be acceptable on this site. The only retail development acceptable will be retail warehousing with units of not less than 1000 square metres gross floorspace, selling bulky goods.
3. Any development shall not exceed three storeys in height.

### LOCAL CENTRE

The following site is designated for retention for commercial purposes in accordance with PPS 5: Retailing and Town Centres.

### COMMERCIAL DESIGNATION BYLC 01 **Rodeing Local Centre (0.53 ha.)**

A local centre is designated as identified in Map No. 2/01a – Ballymoney.

**Appendix 3**

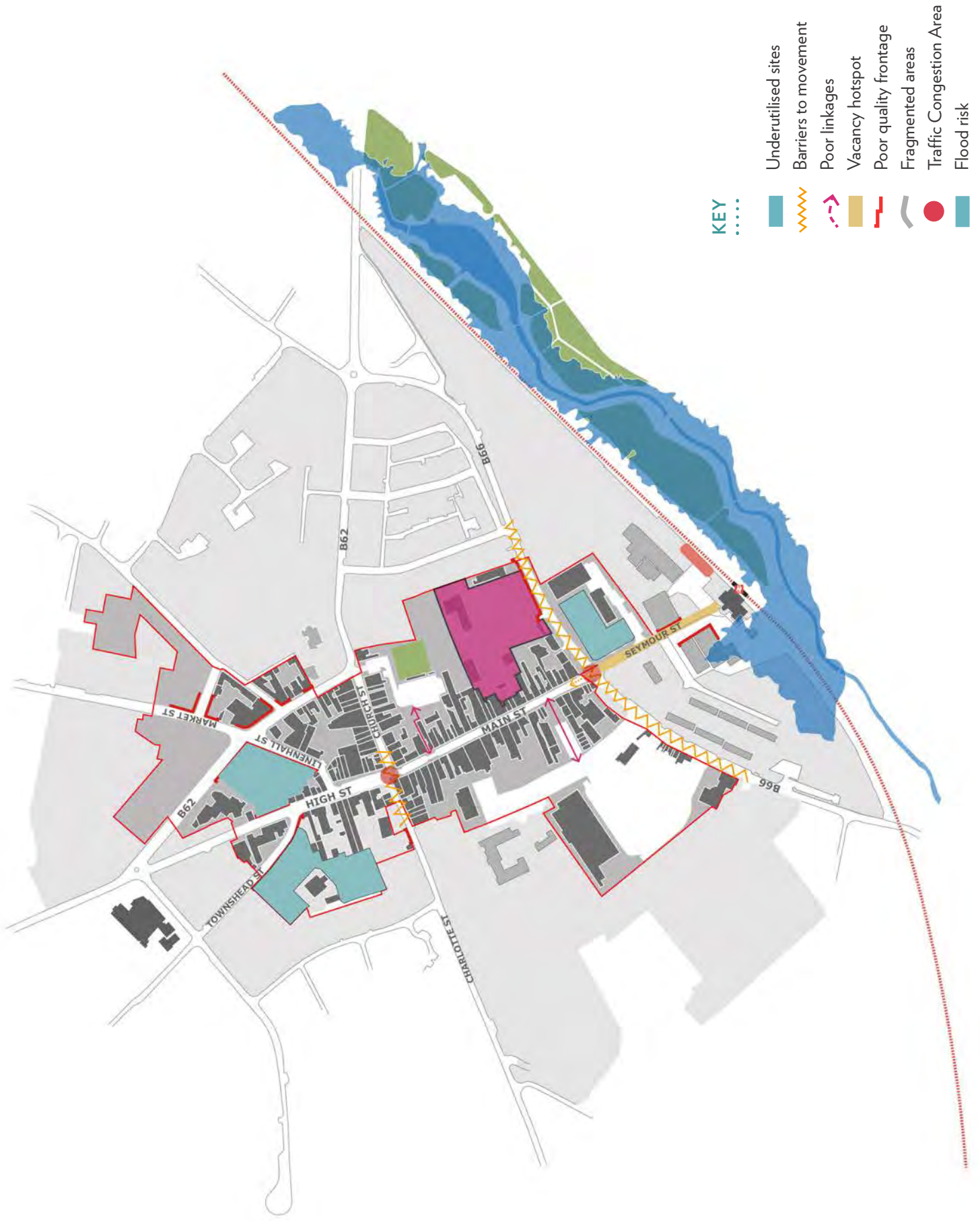


# Ballymoney Town Centre

## 2020 Masterplan Review



ARUP



KEY

- Underutilised sites
- Barriers to movement
- Poor linkages
- Vacancy hotspot
- Poor quality frontage
- Fragmented areas
- Traffic Congestion Area
- Flood risk



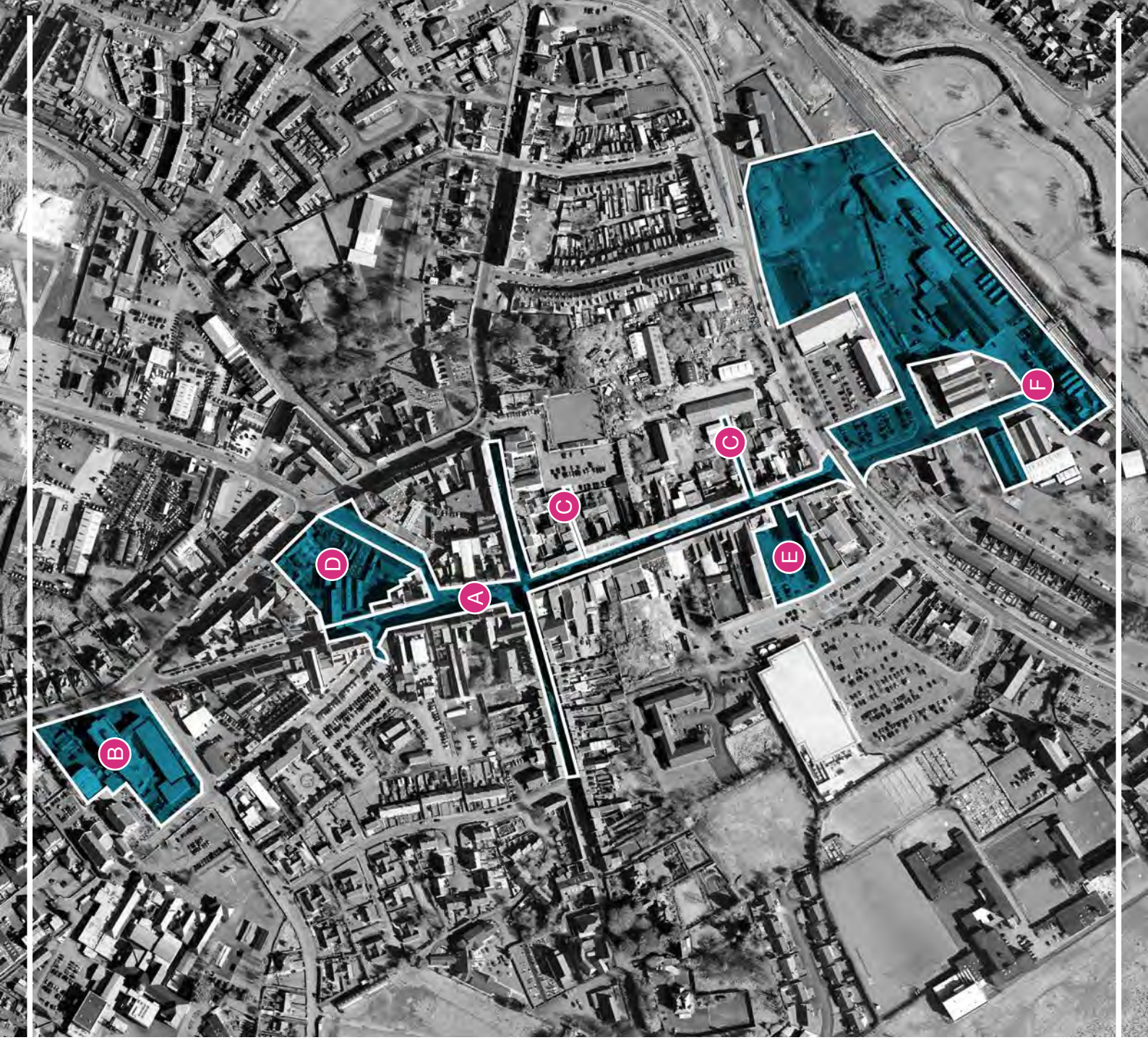
## Areas of Change

The Masterplan Review identified several potential projects throughout the town centre. These projects have been informed through earlier engagement on the 2014 masterplan.

For each site, a potential future or temporary use has been identified alongside key interventions and examples of best practice.

The identified sites for these projects are:

- A** Main Street/ High Street Public Realm
- B** NRC Site
- C** New Linkages
- D** Linenhall Quarter Site
- E** Castlecroft Square
- F** Train Station / Seymour Street





## **B** NRC Site: Re-utilising a Key Asset

*The NRC Site offers a major opportunity to re-utilise the site and create a positive impression for visitors entering the northern gateway. The 0.86 hectare (2.11 acre) site has significant potential to strengthen linkages with the town centre core and catalyse significant positive change for the northern portion of Ballymoney. Bringing the site to market and encouraging viable future uses will be critical in contributing to the regeneration objectives of the town centre.*

### **Site Context**

This site is currently the Ballymoney Campus of the Northern Regional College (NRC). The NRC offers Apprenticeships with, GCSE equivalent courses (Level 2 BTEC Diploma) and A Level equivalent courses (Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma) and Access to University courses.

The site is currently within the ownership of the NRC and is approximately 0.86 hectares (2.11 acres) in area. There is a four-storey building and a two-storey building on the site with a presence fronting onto Coleraine Road (B62), one of the key transport routes leading into Ballymoney town centre. The site benefits from two points of access onto Coleraine Road and two points of access onto St. James Road.

Site is currently not zoned for any specific use in the Northern Area Plan 2016. The site is 'white land' i.e. land (and buildings) without any specific proposal for allocation in a development plan, where it is intended that for the most part, existing uses would remain.

The existing educational building are not statutorily protected by listed status nor do they fall within the Ballymoney Conservation Area.

There are a mixture of uses surrounding the site. To the north of the site lies Megaw Park, a Major Area of Existing Open Space within 200m with residential dwellings to the north and east (located off Coleraine Road). To the west, there are a number of educational facilities including Dalriada Grammar School and Ballymoney Model Primary School are adjacent to the site with Ballymoney Showgrounds providing additional existing open space.

### **The Project**

The opening of new facilities in Coleraine and Ballymena will result in the Ballymoney Campus being surplus to the NRC requirements when their new Campus in Coleraine opens in September 2023/2024.

The relocation of educational facilities from Ballymoney whilst unfortunate, represents an opportunity for the public sector to lead on devising a plan for the future use for the site, thereby putting in place a plan for a quick disposal and redevelopment of the site that can contribute to Ballymoney town centre.

Given the historic nature of the town centre and the development of town centre sites, other than the Linenhall Opportunity site, is relatively limited to infill or backland development. As such, the NRC site would offer a redevelopment opportunity subject to site disposal, feasibility, consultation with stakeholders and necessary planning permissions being put in place.

Prior to leaving the site, the NRC will follow Land Property Services (LPS) guidance regarding disposal of surplus land and property. All stakeholders, including the NRC, are very keen to avoid dereliction of the facilities upon decant.



## Phase 1: Pre-Disposal Activities

**Due Diligence - Legal:** Prior to starting the disposal process it is important that the NRC's legal title to the property has been investigated. This should highlight the source of the title to the property and identify if there are any restrictions or unusual elements within the title.

**Due Diligence - Physical:** The NRC should seek to ensure the legal position accords with what is occurring on the ground. Where boundaries have been encroached or there are illegal or previously unknown occupations these require to be investigated and resolved prior to declaring a property surplus.

**Due Diligence - Financial:** A change in the use or ownership or a public asset must be supported by a proportionate business case. The approving authority for the preferred option will be determined by the relevant delegated arrangements set out between Department of Finance and departments (including their agencies).

**De-Risking:** Efforts to bring more clarity to the potential re use or re development of a site would enable potential purchasers to act quicker and with more awareness of any issues. This could include the production of reports with regard remediation contamination or demolition; the resolution of any title issues; and engaging with the local planning authority through the pre-application discussion (PAD) process.



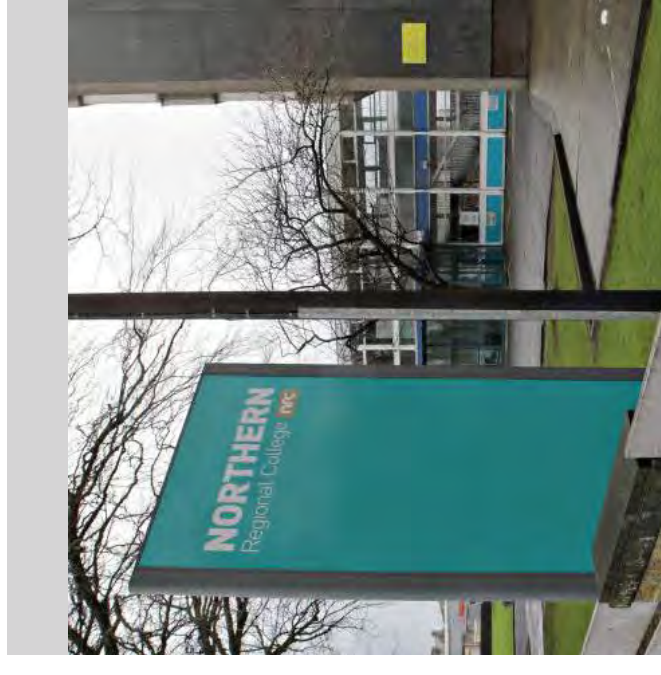
## Phase 2: Disposal

The Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property in Northern Ireland (Land & Property Services) identifies two pathways that a surplus asset may take to achieve a completed sale. They are via the internal market or the external market.

The Internal Market refers to the transfer of an asset that will be re used for some other public sector type use or benefit. Given the role that this site could play within the regeneration of Ballymoney it is expected that an expression of interest would be made by one of the following groups:

- A government department
- A district council
- A housing association seeking land for social housing
- A housing association seeking land for affordable housing
- A third sector body with a sponsor body from either a or b above wishing to acquire under the recognised Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) refers to the transfer of an interest in land or buildings from a public body to a community based or voluntary organisation. The practice is recognised as a means of delivering regeneration, community empowerment and social enterprise and is supported by policy, legislation and funding. A third sector body can express an interest in purchasing a surplus property through the disposal process and the proposal can be considered by the asset owner, where applicable, along with any other internal market expressions of interest, if any.



# D Linenhall Quarter: Maximising the Potential

*The Linenhall Quarter has the ability to enrich, enliven and animate its surrounding environment. Prior to full development of the site, temporary and meanwhile uses offer opportunities to initiate activity and shape positive change.*

## The Project

A redeveloped Linenhall Quarter site would bring a long-standing derelict site back into positive use. It offers the opportunity to create a new focal point and increase activity in the northern portion of the town centre.

The project would include short-term interventions to provide a recognised destination that draws people back into the town centre and ensures consistent activity along High Street, Linenhall Street and Charles Street. Temporary and meanwhile uses can be extremely powerful in creating a renewed sense of purpose. Various types of meanwhile use exist which can enrich, enliven and animate the site. Temporary uses are designed to be flexible and provide an interim intervention until permanent development takes place.

Although the Linenhall Quarter site has been identified as a area of change, it is currently under private ownership and subject to landowner consent. A phased approach has been identified as a potential strategy to activating the Linenhall Quarter site. However the temporary/meanwhile uses could also be explored at alternative locations.

In the long term the Linenhall Quarter site has the potential for a new mixed-use redevelopment, however the project presents a strategy to test innovative and creative approaches and explore potential market opportunities for the future of the site.

## Existing and Proposed Interventions

- **Removing Hoarding:** Potential to improve the appearance and functionality of the site by the removal of hoarding on High Street, Linenhall Street and Charles Street to facilitate a new pedestrian route with associated landscaping.
- **Workspace Pods:** Potential re-use of existing site to accommodate temporary container pods. Pods could provide workspace for start up business, artists and craft spaces with a low risk and low cost opportunity to test ideas and the market.
- **Pocket Park/ Activity Space:** Integration of pocket park and activity space including informal seating furniture, community agriculture gardens, skate park and interactive activity space.
- **Public Art:** Opportunities to introduce public art either as permanent or temporary installation. Appropriately integrated, innovative and distinctive to the Ballymoney it can challenge perceptions on the site and wider town centre.
- **Temporary Stalls and Kiosks:** Proposed food and beverage kiosks, community units and weekend market stalls.
- **Events/Performance Space:** Civic space for outdoor cinema, music and heritage events (motorcycle festival).
- **Temporary Car Parking:** Creation of a temporary car park facility on a portion of the site. This could potentially offset disruption to on-street car parking during public realm enhancements and occasional use for events. Subject to planning permission and access arrangements.

## Relevance of Project

Recognising the timescales to bring forward comprehensive redevelopment proposals of the site, temporary and meanwhile uses could provide an early win. This would involve injecting a wide range of uses and activities within the town centre to enhance and diversify the local economy.

The project would deliver an attraction unique to Ballymoney. The variety and alternative nature of the proposals could be a catalyst in marketing the town and attracting a wider catchment of visitors.

Key advantages include:

- The flexibility and low up-front cost offered by the temporary intervention.
- Diversifying the local economy.
- Easy to assemble, reconfigure and remove.
- Low risk environment for entrepreneurs, start-up businesses and community groups.
- Interim revenue stream for landowner.
- Local development and refinement of business ideas.
- Retention of local creative talent, ideas and skills.
- Increased footfall for surrounding businesses.
- Opportunity to identify future tenants and uses that could be integrated into the future long-term redevelopment of the site.



### Phase 1: Engagement on the future of the site

The existing site has been cleared with perimeter hoarding in place to secure the site. In its current condition the site is under-utilised and fails to encourage footfall to the surrounding area.

The site was recognised as being an opportunity to deliver a transformational project that would bring wider benefits to the town centre. Temporary uses were identified as being a catalyst for future regeneration.

**Key Action:** Liaise with Landowner on how proposed short/long term developments could transform the site and align with the vision for the town.

### Phase 2: Implementation of temporary / meanwhile uses

The vacant site becomes host to a variety of temporary and meanwhile uses:

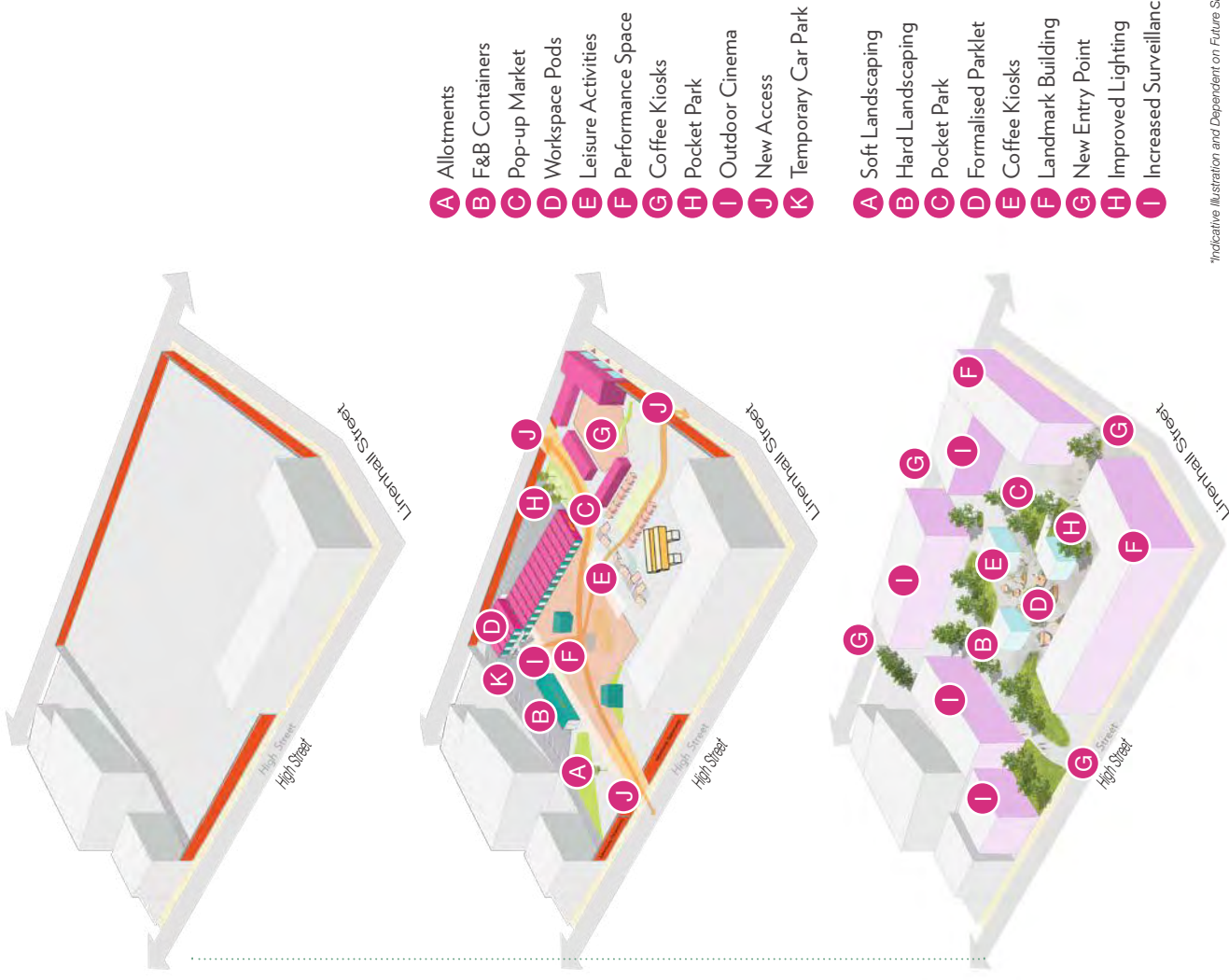
- Business and commercial: Employment workspaces, pop-up food and drink kiosks and start-up incubators.
- Recreational and leisure: Performance spaces, outdoor cinema, skate parks, pump track and play-areas.
- Community: Pocket park, allotments and community hub.

**Key Action:** Source and cost the kiosks / container pods and seek out potential occupiers. Engage with landowner over siting, costs and occupiers.

### Phase 3: Permanent development of site

An established destination is delivered with a mix of permanent and temporary uses. Successfully piloted uses from phase 2 become an attractive proposition for a more permanent and diverse development in phase 3. Entrepreneurs from the meanwhile phase that have become a focus of activity could be incorporated into new scheme to retain existing customers. New entrepreneurs are attracted to facilitate a cycle of innovative uses, ensure the site remains contemporary and attract new customers and visitors.

**Key Action:** Work with landowner over potential detailed design and implementation. Launch / publicity with landowner and occupiers.





## Meanwhile Uses

The value of temporary uses has been recognised across the property and regeneration industry, not least as a stop-gap for longer-term regeneration and development proposals.

The success of this change relies on occupiers being happy to trade from more unusual space and landlords being willing to take a pragmatic approach to new business concepts.



Window Gardens - Queen's Walk London. (Wayward UK)



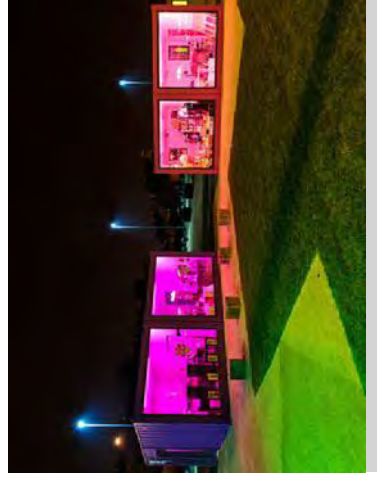
Urban Orchard, Union Street, London (Heather Ping)



Temporary Play Space - Norway



Formalised Parklet - San Francisco (100 Resilient Cities)



Shipping container art pods - Project 24, County Down (Project24NI)



Temporary Parklet - Brussels



Temporary Basketball Court - Paris (Dezeen)



Food and Drink Garden - Brooklyn



Cafe Container / Local community Hub



## E Castlecroft Square: Creating a Place for People

*A renewed pedestrian space, Castlecroft Square will support a strong 'calendar of events', whilst fostering vibrancy, activity and people. The square will animate not only the square but its surrounding streets and spaces.*

### The Project

Public space is key to achieving a balance within a town centre. A well-designed public square can provide an anchor to the town centre. Inclusive spaces where people can meet, socialise, shop or simply rest and relax. A lack of quality civic space within the town centre is widely recognised. At present, Castlecroft Square is the primary public space that is largely underutilised and underperforms as a key arrival point to visitors. The space is dimly lit, lacks animation and activity to entice pedestrians through to Main Street.

The project proposes to create a thriving public space within the town centre. A series of enhancements focus on the pedestrian experience in and around the square connecting key destinations with Main Street. A flexible multifunctional space that supports a broad range of activity and programme of animation will revitalise the space and identity of Ballymoney.

As the project would likely involve private sector investment in the creation of a new mixed use scheme with housing, retail and food and drink uses, the project has been phased to reflect the priority for change over the short, medium and long term as follows:

1. Implementation of a programme of events and animation to bring initial activity and vibrancy to the square.
2. Investment in improving the appearance and functionality of Castlecroft Square.
3. Comprehensive mixed use redevelopment scheme to incorporate town centre living and active ground floor uses.

### Existing and Proposed Interventions

- **Civic Space:** Improvements to the appearance and functionality of Castlecroft Square via public realm works. This could include the removal of car parking and introduction of soft landscaping, water-feature, public sculpture and creative lighting installations.
- **Retention of Small Business Units:** Small ground floor business units should be retained as part of any future scheme. This will ensure a degree of variation in the provision of unit size throughout the town centre.
- **Town Centre Living:** Redevelopment of the square to introduce upper floors above ground floor units. Potential exists to introduce 'over the shop' living to provide both footfall and visual surveillance over the square.
- **Multi-functionality:** Redesign of the square layout to ensure year-round use for different events, taking account of solar orientation and maximising the use of sunny spaces. A new convertible weather covering could modernise the square and allow maximum usability. Large trees could help to define the square and humanise the space.
- **Active Frontages:** Expanding the amount of space available around the edges of the square would facilitate spill-out activity from shops and cafés.
- **Events and Animation:** A programme of events dedicated to festivals, markets and events could bring new life to the square. A range of pop-up play spaces, performance exhibitions, cinema/comedy nights and agricultural or motorcycle shows could make the square a key trip generator and focal point.

### Relevance of Project

The project could have significant benefits in animating a key space within the town centre. The regeneration of Castlecroft Square could deliver a unique proposition that markets the town and attracts first time, occasional and regular visitors to the town centre.

The project is to capitalise on key east to west links and footfall generated by Tesco and Home Bargains. A distinctive public space programmed by a range of events throughout the year would create a strong and attractive pedestrian route through the square and encourage more linked trips to other town centre facilities.

The re-design of the square could provide wider benefits to the town centre. Opportunities to provide town centre living within the immediate vicinity of the town centre can offer both visual surveillance of the square and help to drive the day time and evening economy. The provision of ground floor uses such as cafés, restaurants and bars would also activate the space, increase the duration of visitors stay and encourage consequential spend.

# Events & Animation

A programme of events could bring life to the square and the town centre.



**Naturally North Coast and Glens Artisan Christmas Market**  
Celebrating the local products, food and beverages throughout the borough in a vibrant festive market setting.

**Light the Sky Night**  
Fireworks display with family and community events.

**North Coast Halloween Bash**  
A community event night to celebrate Halloween through interaction, performances and family activity.

**Ballymoney Irish Dancing Festival**  
Annual Traditional Dance Competition featuring dancing schools from all communities.

**North Coast Arts Festival**  
Celebrating the local arts throughout the borough in a vibrant setting.

**North Coast Orangefest**  
An inclusive community event to celebrate 12 July celebrations.



**North Coast Music Festival**  
Celebrating the local music throughout the borough in a vibrant setting.

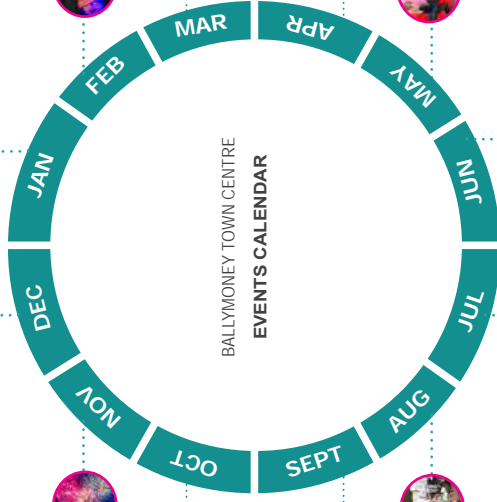
**Illuminate the Town**  
A feature lighting event to illuminate the town centre coupled with family events.

**St. Patrick's Day Parade**  
An inclusive community event to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

**Ballymoney Easter Fair**  
A community event day to celebrate Easter through interaction and activity.

**North Coast Culture Night**  
An inclusive community event to celebrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the borough.

**Outdoor Cinematic Festival**  
Outdoor cinematic events coupled with family events and interactive activity.





# Proposed Interventions

Rediscovering Castlecroft Square as a reinvigorated pedestrian space is critical in the revival of the town centre. Supported by a 'calendar of events', the space has significant potential to enrich, enliven and animate both the square and its surrounding streets and spaces.



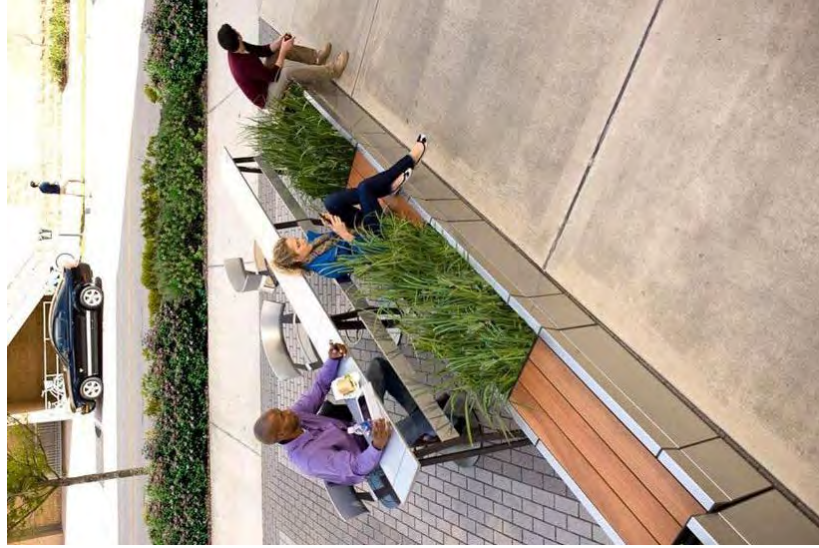
*Reinventing the square*



*Public Art*



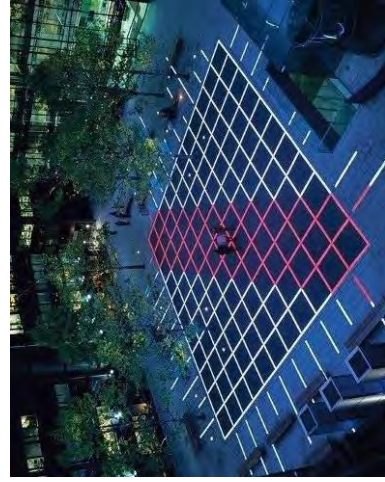
*A flexible and dynamic public space*



*Improved public seating*



*Diverse landscaping to soften the space*



*Bespoke lighting features to illuminate the square*



*Bespoke lighting to illuminate the space*



## F Train Station: Announcing the Town

*Stations are at the heart of regeneration and high-quality interventions can act as a catalyst for wider town centre transformations. The station has a pivotal role to play in announcing the town centre by creating a positive first and lasting impression to visitors. A new road and junction layout complemented by public realm enhancements will inject new life into the area and reconnect the station with the heart of the town centre.*

### The Project

Ballymoney train station is where many commuters and visitors both start and end their day. The need to improve their first impression of the town centre and reinforce a positive sense of arrival is widely recognised. At present, the arrival space outside the train station suffers from being congested, dominated by traffic with a low quality environment. On arrival, the town centre and key destinations are disconnected from the station due to the absence of a coherent and legible route.

The project proposes to resolve this by improving the current road and junction layout, providing a new one-way link road, a revitalised station forecourt and public realm improvements. The project consists of a phased approach with both short term and long term options to reflect the substantial nature of implementing these interventions:

### Existing and Proposed Interventions

- **Public Realm Improvements:** Improved public realm improvements including way-finding to enhance pedestrian routes and connectivity from the Train Station to Main Street.
- **Station Forecourt:** Creation of a new arrival forecourt directly outside the train station to encourage greater prominence and use of the station.
- **Reconfigured road network:** A new proposed road layout consisting of two roundabouts to improve traffic efficiency and road safety.
- **One-Way Link Road:** Further rationalising of the road network by downgrading Seymour Street to a one-way road southbound and creating a new link road running and signalled junction onto Meeting House Street.
- **Mixed-Use Developments:** Intensify and make better use of vacant and underutilised space along Seymour Street and to the north-west of the train station. New buildings to create street frontage.

### Relevance of Project

The project seeks to capitalise on the strength of the existing train station which offers a significant opportunity for the growth and regeneration of the town centre. The transformation of the external pedestrian environment and provision of an attractive, integrated and easy to use public transport system would dramatically improve the arrival experience.

A series of interventions would deliver an aesthetically pleasing setting and strengthen links with the town centre. Overall, a renewed station area could be a powerful catalyst in supporting the tourism sector and encouraging commuters to journey into the town centre.

A reconfigured road layout would formalise the space and enable commuters to avail of a wide choice of travel modes to continue their onward journey, promote active travel and reduce congestion on Meeting House Street and Seymour Street.

### Next Steps

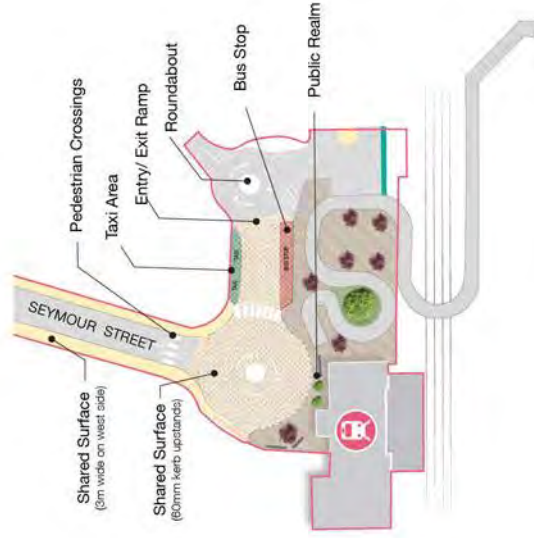
Translink and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) have been consulted about the revised proposals. Both consultees are satisfied in principle, however further detailed design would be required before moving to the implementation stage.

A high-level transport study should also be undertaken to identify how best to meet the transport needs of the town going forward in the context of the Council's growth ambitions.

# Short Term

- Seymour Street remains a two-way street.
- Introduction of a formal roundabout outside station.
- 3m wide shared surface footway on the west side of Seymour Street to increase cycling connectivity.
- Bus stop provided station side with taxi bay in proximity.
- Provision of an additional roundabout to provide access to existing P&R, industrial units and enable buses to loop.
- Enhanced crossing points and raised table to promote pedestrian and cycle first routes.
- Provision of a demarcated pedestrian walkway through the existing P&R car park.
- Major public realm improvements including widened footpaths, tree planting, new street furniture and lighting.

**Key Action:** Detailed design and Public Consultation.



Junction design outside Train Station

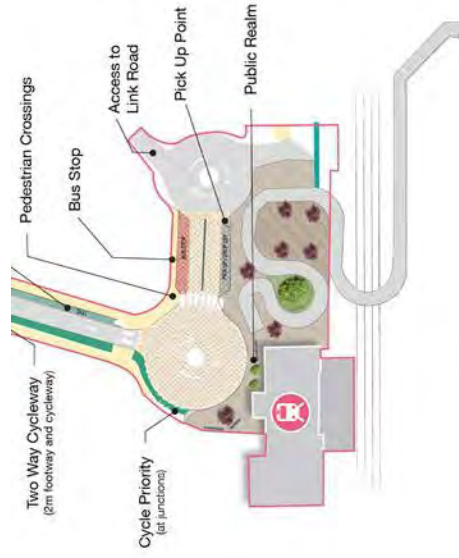




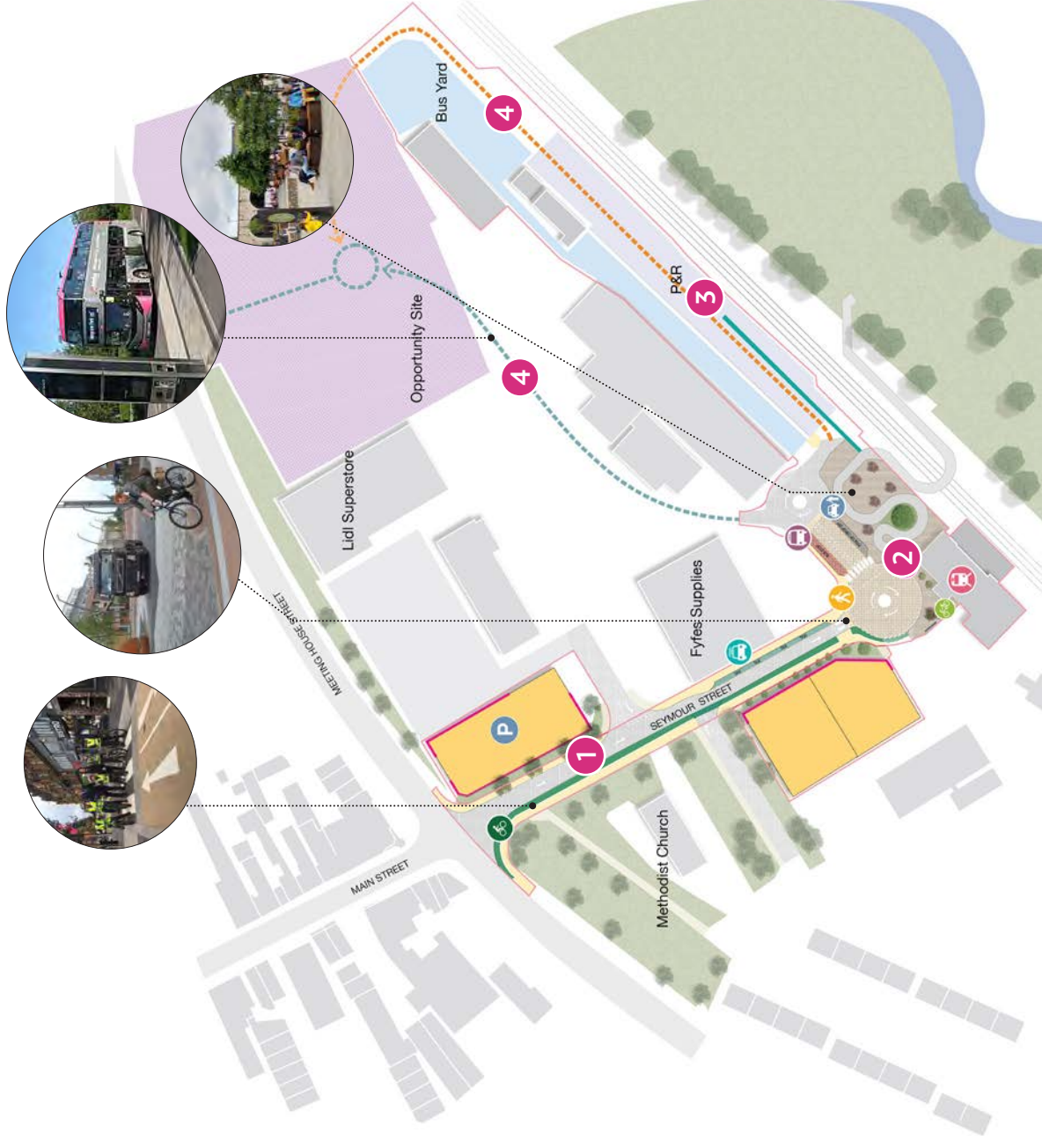
# Long Term

- Seymour Street one way southbound.
- New, separated one way road links to Meeting House Street for buses and cars.
- Additional road space from reducing to one way allows a two-way cycle way and 2m footway on the west side of Seymour Street.
- Longer taxi rank provided on Seymour Street.
- Cyclists given priority across junctions.
- Roundabout footprint the same but modifications to the Seymour St arm and link arm.
- One way set down/ pick up section outside the station.
- Roundabout at the P&R side enlarged slightly to allow for the links to the two new proposed link roads.
- Increased provision of pedestrian footways and islands.
- Major public realm improvements including widened footpaths, tree planting, new street furniture and lighting.

## Key Action: Detailed design and Public Consultation.



Junction design outside Train Station



**Long Term Option Key**

- Taxi service
- Pick-up & drop-off
- Bus Stop
- Station
- Parking
- Cycle storage
- On footway cycle lane
- Park and ride route link
- New access link road
- Demarcated pedestrian link
- Improved footpath
- Key Public Space
- Improved crossing points
- New development parcels
- Key frontage
- Zoned as opportunity site
- Seymour Street (one-way)
- Station public realm
- Retained park and ride facility
- New link road and junction





## Proposed Interventions

Good design of public spaces in conjunction with high quality architectural design can help boost civic pride. The train station plays a key role as both a gateway to Ballymoney and a key destination within the town. The quality and condition of this space is intrinsically linked to the feeling and perception of Ballymoney upon exit of the station.



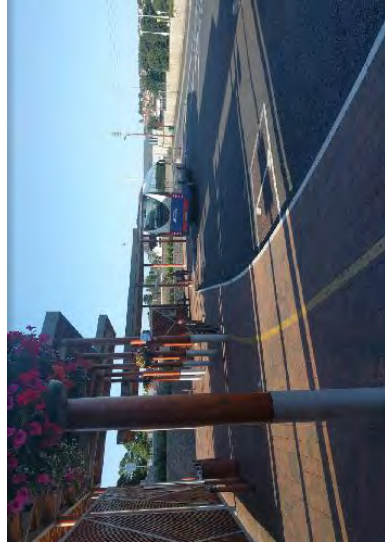
Strengthened connection with Main Street and Town Centre



Improved seating provision upon exit of station



Bespoke wayfinding upon exit of station



Banbridge Bus Depot.



Improved Bike Storage



Pathway illumination to help strengthen connectivity with town centre



Interpretation panels portraying local heritage



Bespoke public art to reflect local sporting heritage

## Delivery and Implementation

Many aspects of the 2014 Masterplan remain relevant. However the 2020 Masterplan Review has identified that the circumstances in which the regeneration projects were formulated have changed and a refreshed action plan framework is imperative to delivering change. The framework sets out how each project or initiative can be delivered, an indicative timescale and key steps which could achieve early quick wins.

The delivery of the projects identified in the refresh of the Action Plan will require a dedicated resource, if available, with the requisite skills and experience to help drive, deliver and implement the range of actions identified in the Masterplan.

### Collaboration and Delivery Mechanisms

To be successfully delivered, it is essential for all stakeholders, funding partners and local champions to have a clear understanding of how projects and initiatives could be delivered, key actors to engage and project programming.

While the council is expected to perform a key role, future public and private sector collaboration with other agencies is recognised as critical to enabling, funding and delivering the projects. A number of delivery mechanisms could potentially be used to deliver change including private sector delivery, public sector delivery and public/private development partnerships.

### Future Proofing

The Masterplan Review focuses on achieving the long-term aspirations of the town centre whilst identifying clear steps to progress each project. There are many key stakeholders involved in the regeneration of Ballymoney and it is therefore critical to ensure an integrated approach to the redevelopment of each area. Delivering this comprehensive approach to development, raising awareness on key projects and the opportunities available will be critical to delivering the long-term vision. It is therefore

important to engage with developers through the planning process to ensure the private sector bring forward developments which benefit Ballymoney and have the greatest impact across the town centre.

## Action Plan Framework

The Action Plan is one of the most vital parts of the Review, as it provides a framework for taking forward regeneration projects. These actions have been drawn up to contribute positively to the regeneration objectives of Ballymoney and are a direct result of stakeholder engagement.

As a non-statutory document, this Masterplan should be used to inform planning and design decisions prior to the planning application stage. Responsibility lies with all key stakeholders to promote such use of the Masterplan Review, leading through example and by proactive outreach to key individuals and organisations.

The projects have been categorised within a series of key moves that underpin the 2020 Masterplan Review. Where a phased approach is required, key actions are highlighted and priority areas identified. Potential projects will need to be delivered over time as resources, funding opportunities and favourable market conditions will play a significant role in their implementation.

### The Action Plan Framework:

► Key Moves .....

- 1 Transport and Connectivity
- 2 Access and Linkages
- 3 Environmental Improvements
- 4 Transformational Developments (site specific and civic spaces)
- 5 Town centre Animation Initiatives

► Timescales .....

- S Short Term (within the first three years)
- M Medium Term (within four to ten years)
- L Long Term (beyond ten years)





► Priority .....









- L Low Priority
- M Medium Priority
- H High Priority



# 2020 Action Plan

## 4 Transformational Developments

Key Move	Ref	Project Title	Description	Status	Delivery Stages	Delivery Partners	Time scale	Priority	Comments
		Encourage the full redevelopment of the Linenhall Quarter development opportunity site	Meanwhile uses (shipping containers) and green/event space.	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with landowner.</li> <li>DfC input regarding funding/implementation.</li> <li>Temporary planning permission required.</li> </ul>	Private landowner, DfC, Chamber of Commerce and CCGBC.			<p><b>Quick win project</b></p> <p>Opportunity to create new uses in underutilised brownfield site in the intervening period prior to being developed.</p> <p>Creative, start-up businesses encouraged, with some element of public space surrounding to create a positive, enticing environment.</p> <p>Opportunity to create interest in Ballymoney through innovative uses.</p>
			<p>Option 1 - Mixed Use</p> <p>-Residential with ground floor commercial</p> <p>Option 2 - Commercial</p> <p>- Commercial leisure and cultural uses</p> <p>Option 3 - Public Park- New park with a performance space and civic gardens</p>	Refocused Existing (KC2a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with landowner to understand potential site plans.</li> </ul>	Private landowner, CCGBC.			Encourage development that will contribute positively to the vitality of Ballymoney and create strong pedestrian linkages to the town centre.

Key Move	Ref	Project Title	Description	Status	Delivery Stages	Delivery Partners	Time scale	Priority	Comments
		Ballymoney Northern Regional College Site	Review the long-term future of the NRC site and investigate potential appropriate use(s) to ensure the site is re-utilised. Potential for private residential and/or social housing.	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with landowner to understand potential site plans.</li> <li>Confirm NRC site disposal process.</li> <li>Detailed Transport Assessment.</li> </ul>	Northern Regional College, Education Authority, DfC, NIHE			The future role of the NRC site and opportunity to create a positive impression on the northern gateway. Exploring viable future uses will be critical to wider regeneration objectives.
		Castlecroft events and meanwhile use space.	Improvements to public realm, landscaping and potential of meanwhile uses to enclose space.	Refocused existing KC4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Castlecroft space incorporated in public realm improvement plans to Main Street.</li> </ul>	DfC, DfI, CCGBC & Chambers of Commerce.			Quick win project Opportunity to enhance existing public space to encourage greater use, dwell time and to create a space that hosts events.
		Riverside Park	Introduce temporary/permanent built form between southern railway platform for Café/creative business space (to include secure bike parking).	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local chambers of commerce to provide comment on potential for new business interests/ existing owners wanting to diversify/ expand or create new business opportunity.</li> <li>Site review to assess appropriate built form achievable on this site.</li> </ul>	DfC, Translink and Chamber of Commerce.			Encourage better connections between Riverside Park and Town Centre whilst creating a new 'destination' at the Train Station. This could also act as a starting point for the proposed Ballymoney to Ballycastle Greenway.
		Establish built form along Seymour Street (eastern edge).	New development to incorporate town centre living and active frontages to increase sense of connection between Railway Station and Main Street.	New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with existing business owners/ landowners to understand ownerships/ leases.</li> </ul>	DfC, private landowners			Although dependant and driven by the private sector, the establishment of suitable town centre uses and living at this location will create a more attractive environment for pedestrians utilising the train and Riverside Park.