

# Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer Action Plan

## Building Successful Communities

Sept/Oct 2016



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**Turley**

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**1.1** Turley has been appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC) to prepare a housing-led regeneration Action Plan 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.

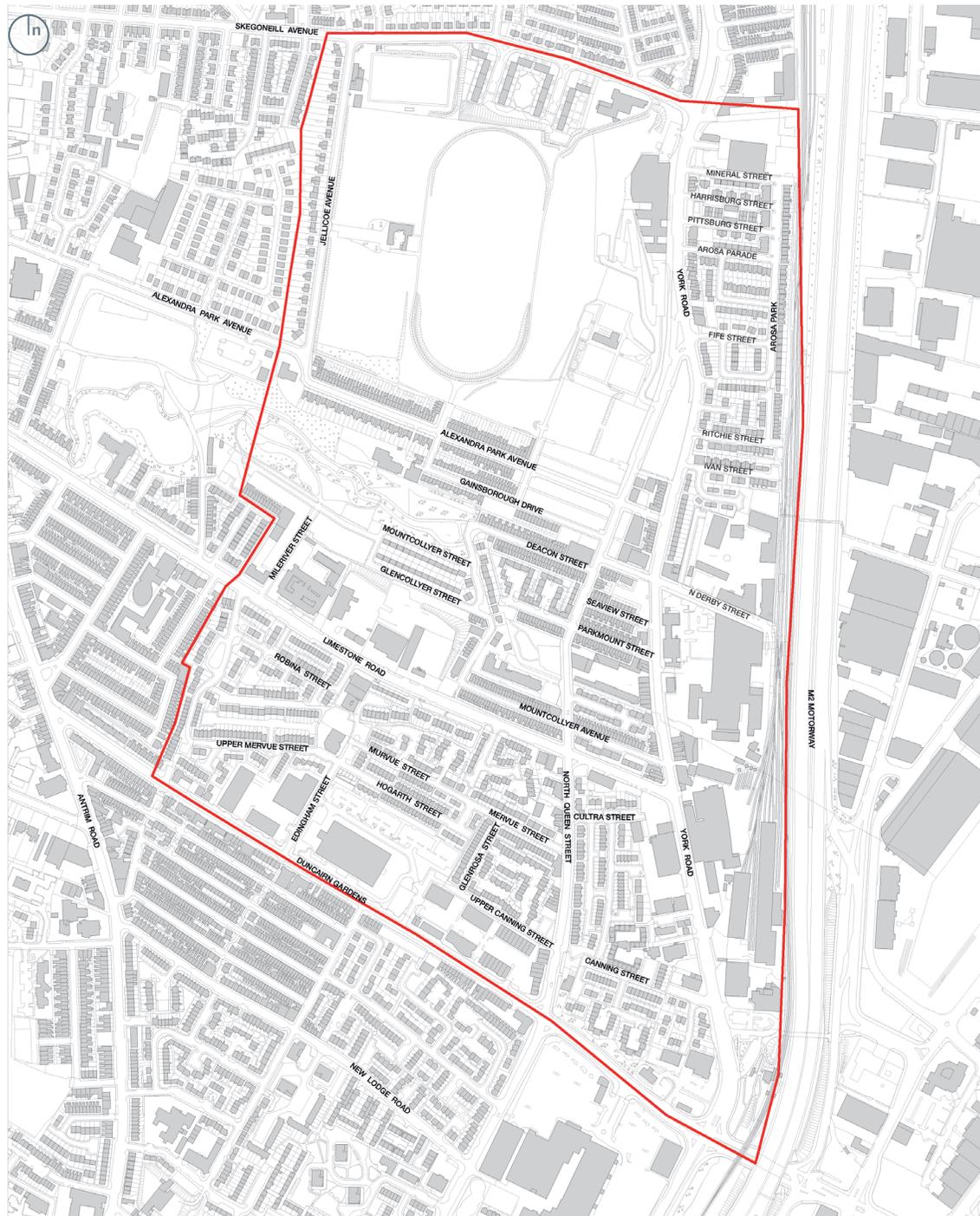
**1.4** In addition to delivering physical changes, the plans are intended to have a community focus and be owned by the community. The Plans set out how the area will be regenerated and propose that a holistic vision is delivered which secures economic and social benefits for the local people in the area.

**1.5** As part of the programme, a Regeneration Forum, referred to as 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 and Transport NI.

**1.7** The Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer is one of six communities, which have been taken forward as pilot areas for the BSC programme. The other pilot areas are;

- (i) Doury Road, Ballymena
- (ii) Lenadoon and Glencolin, Belfast
- (iii) Lower Falls, Belfast
- (iv) Lower Shankill and Brown Square, Belfast
- (v) Lower Oldpark and Hillview, Belfast



**Figure 2.1**  
Extent of Pilot Area - Tigres Bay and Mountcollyer

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**2.1** The project brief specifies that the Action Plan for Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer should be constructed in four stages:

**Stage 1 (Understanding the Place)** – An analysis of the economic, social, physical and environmental needs of the area by collating and analysing the baseline and dialogue with key stakeholders

**Stage 2 (Setting the Priorities)** – This includes a synopsis of the priorities and goals for Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer 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 to be tested through engagement with the local community

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

## Report Structure

**2.2** This 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.
- 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.



Image of cleared lands along Alexandra Park Avenue - this site was formerly part of the residential fabric of the street until properties were demolished.  
Source: Turley

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# Stage 1 - Understanding the Place

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## The Rationale for Intervention

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

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

**3.2** The pilot area is within close proximity to the city centre, but the structure and hierarchy of the streets makes it difficult to navigate without having a good local knowledge of the area. This creates a perception that the area is closed to outsiders and serves to exacerbate a negative image of the area.

**3.3** There are large tracts of cleared and undeveloped lands which are detracting from the environmental quality of the area, and also provide a gathering point for anti-social behaviour.

**3.4** The housing stock is limited to mostly terraced properties, and parts of the pilot area could benefit from remodelling/improvement works to improve the quality of residential properties.

**3.5** Collectively, these aspects are having an adverse impact on the overall perception of the area and the wellbeing of people living in Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer.

**3.6** The area is largely characterised by four distinct areas:

- **Lands along Jellicoe and Skegoneill Avenue** – this area focuses on the residential properties along Jellicoe and Skegoneill Avenue and includes the Grove Playing Fields and Grove Wellbeing Centre along the Shore Road.
- **York Road to Arosa Park** – this area focuses on the streets east of the Shore Road which abut onto the M2 from Skegoneill Avenue to Derby Street.
- **Alexandra Park Avenue to Limestone Road** – this area focuses on the residential streets south of the Grove Playing Fields, along York Road and includes Alexandra Park, Currie Primary School and surrounding residential areas up to the Limestone Road.
- **Limestone Road to Duncairn Gardens** – this area focuses on the lands south of the Limestone Road to Duncairn Gardens and includes the streets which form Tigers Bay - Halliday's Road to North Queen Street, and the streets east of North Queen Street to York Road.

## Collecting the Data

3.7 Stage 1 comprised a detailed assessment of Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer to understand the issues impacting on the communities in this area. The main findings of the analysis are presented.

## Themes Emerging from Socio-Economic Profile Analysis

3.8 The pilot area has an estimated resident population of 2,839<sup>1</sup> persons of which 1,380 (49%) are male and 1,459 are female (51%). The area has a slightly lower proportion of younger working age persons (16 – 24) in comparison to the Belfast average and a slightly higher proportion of older persons (those aged 65 and over). The proportion of older persons is also higher than the Belfast and the Northern Ireland averages demonstrating trends of an ageing population.

3.9 Nearly 45% of the households in Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer consist of single person households with just under one third being non-pensioner households, i.e. the residents living on their own under the age of 65.

3.10 Currently, there is a high dependency on social housing, with the majority of residents unable to afford other housing tenure options. Further future demand could arise from:

- Newly forming households (children under the age of 16 currently, who decide as they grow up that they wish to live in the area).
- New households who are priced out of the private rented housing market or not able to afford to buy their own homes.



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

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

## Themes from the Urban Spatial Analysis

### Land Use

**3.11** The predominant land use within the pilot area is residential, mainly in the form of two storey terraced properties followed by semi detached properties and flats located on the northern edge of the pilot area along Skegoneill Avenue.

**3.12** There are a significant number of commercial premises located along York Road; between York Road and the motorway. Elsewhere within the pilot area commercial activity is focused on Duncairn Gardens; there are a number of commercial properties including the North City Business Centre (as shown in Figure 3.2).

**3.13** Nursery, primary and post primary schools are easily accessible to residents. There are three GP surgeries and other health services and facilities in the area including the Grove Wellbeing Centre.

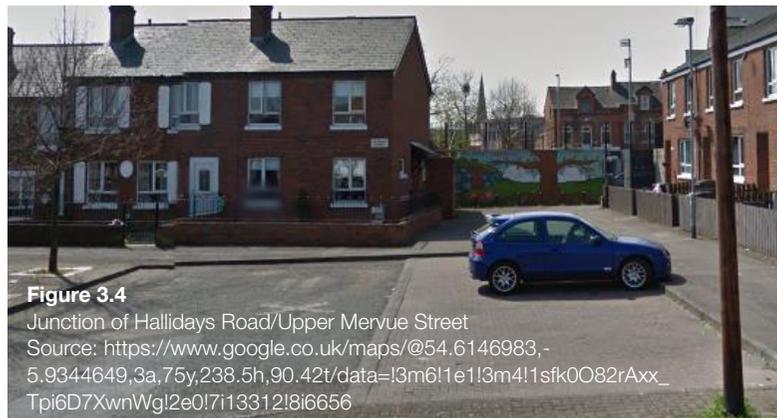
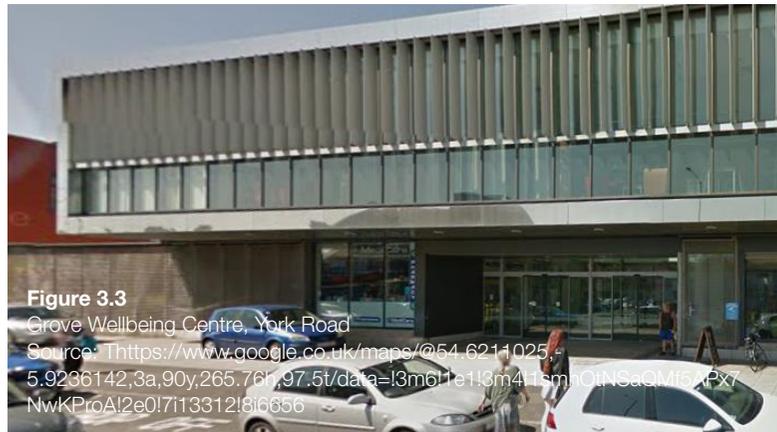
**3.14** There is also a range of community centres and facilities, including the Duncairn Community Centre, the North Belfast Partnership, the Mountcollyer Youth Club and the Basement Youth Club amongst others. The Midland Social and Recreation Centre is the base for many social clubs and associations.

**3.15** The Grove Wellbeing Centre (as shown in Figure 3.3) and Alexandra Park provide opportunities for local residents to engage in a range of recreation based activities as well as providing a focal point for community groups and other leisure activities.

### Legibility and Access

**3.16** There are physical features which have shaped the structure and layout of the area and define how people move around within the pilot area. These features include:

- the main road network: Skegoneill Avenue, York Road, North Queen Street, Duncairn Gardens and Limestone Road.
- the Peaceline which impacts on the pilot area in two locations (along the southern and western boundaries - Duncairn Gardens, Hallidays Road and lands close to western side of Mountcollyer Street).



**3.17** The area has a clearly defined main road network, and the area north of Limestone Road to Skegoneill Avenue has a reasonable good secondary network of streets which link into each other and can be traced back to the original street pattern of the area. Navigating this part of the pilot area is reasonably easy as there is a structured street pattern/network which can be followed.

**3.18** This makes it easy for residents to move around and access services and facilities within their area. It also ensures that anyone who is not familiar with the area could easily navigate their way around the pilot area.

**3.19** Within the area south of Limestone Road there is no clearly defined secondary network of streets which makes navigating difficult, without having local knowledge of the area. This is particularly noticeable within the Tigers Bay area where there is a high number of closed streets and cul de sac developments which have replaced the previous grid iron street pattern as illustrated in Figure 3.4. It is worth noting that a major factor in shaping this area has been the presence of the Peaceline. Figure 3.4 illustrates how access to Duncairn Gardens has been closed off, and the street reconfigured into a cul de sac development.

**3.20** The majority of the pilot area is within 5 minutes' walk of a bus stop. The minor streets provide cycling and walking routes, although it is accepted that improvements can still be made.

### **Built Form**

**3.21** The quality, character and condition of housing and the wider environment varies from traditional narrow fronted Belfast terraces along Alexandra Park Avenue (Figure 3.5) to more recent semi-detached and terraced properties located in the area residential area from York Road to Arosa Park.

**3.22** Within Tigers Bay, most of the housing was built during the 1980s and consists of two storey red brick terraced properties with some bungalows pepper potted throughout the area.



**3.23** The environmental quality of the area is poor in parts due to the relationship of houses to the street and the level of blight resulting from the high number of cleared sites, particularly within Tigers Bay, and along Mileriver Street, Gainsborough Drive and parts of Alexandra Park Avenue (Figure 3.7).

**3.24** Parts of the pilot area exhibit a good built form with residential properties fronting onto the street (as shown in Figures 3.5 & 3.6) and the back of the house, backing onto its neighbour in the adjacent street. This is in comparison to parts of the pilot area which have been designed in a different way which changes how it feels to be in the street and walk around the nearby streets. Large parts of the Tigers Bay estate have been designed to Radburn design principles.

**3.25** The Radburn design is based on having the garden of a house facing the street and the fronts of houses facing each other over communal spaces mostly in the form of a cul de sac (Figure 3.8). The Radburn design results in residential courts and cul-de-sac areas accessed off a series of main and secondary roads. A number of secluded backstreets and alleyways were originally meant to allow residents to easily move throughout the area, but essentially encourage anti-social behaviour and rat running. Across the majority of this area, there are issues with the lack of natural surveillance overlooking streets and spaces, disconnected streets and spaces, poor legibility and a disjointed streetscape.

### **Public realm and green space**

**3.26** There are two main areas of public green space. The Grove Playing Fields at the heart of the pilot area provides for recreational facilities and amenities.

**3.27** Alexandra Park is also an area of accessible public open space, in the form of woodland, play spaces and a small lake. The park extends beyond the pilot area boundary and connects Deacon Street with Alexandra Park Avenue and Castleton Gardens.



## **Community Narrative - An enclave preserving its identity, and overcoming its circumstance**

**3.28** The community of Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer pilot area resides in a physically and socially defined “enclave”. Bounded by the M2 motorway to the west and an enduring “peace line” to the south, physical barriers have, to date, defined and limited the extent of housing and commercial redevelopment.

**3.29** Likewise, political and social barriers continue to define both the areas physical boundaries and its community aspirations.

**3.30** The Tigers Bay estate was constructed by the Housing Executive in the 1980s. However, the “enclave” on upper North Queen’s Street, owes its origins in the nineteenth century. Then it was an area of low quality housing constructed for the many unskilled labourers employed at the Harland and Wolff Shipyard, on the opposite shore of Belfast Lough.

**3.31** The community today continues to face significant challenges to overcome its high levels of poverty and very low educational attainment. Across the Duncairn ward levels of attainment of 5 GCSEs are some 34% below the NI average, with 82% of children in Currie Primary School receiving free school meals, figures sources from Census.

**3.32** The trauma and violence the community withstood during the “troubles” has compounded historical social disadvantage in the area. Tensions that exist between residents of Tigers Bay estate and the adjoining areas of New Lodge and Newington have had a negative impact on the success of both private and public led regeneration projects.

**3.33** The resultant legacies of lower economic activity, high unemployment and high incidences of reported crime have driven down housing demand, yet the community is seeking to address the impact of dereliction, housing stress and a lack of significant private sector investment. Improvement in housing, to deliver a greater mix of housing stock that meets the current and future needs of the area is a key aspiration; regardless of whether it is delivered through Housing Executive, Housing Association or private investment.

**3.34** To many, local hero Carl Frampton’s background and success are an allegory that resonates with the community’s own ambitions. The World Champion boxer’s success serves as a reflection of the communities own growing aspirations. They are confident in their identity, whilst growing in respect for others, and increasingly determined to work to overcome the adversities of their circumstance.

**3.35** As such the community continues to actively pursue change and is attempting to overcome its adversities. Addressing poor physical wellbeing and mental health, the Grove Wellbeing Centre opened in 2007 as a ‘one stop shop’ for leisure, health and library facilities. It continues to serve as an example of aspiration led social regeneration that directly improved the inner city area, and met a clear and ongoing community need.

**3.36** People continue to take pride in the area and have sought to improve the aesthetic through removal or paramilitary murals at the estates gateways. Inter-community dialogue has resulted in growing trust and confidence between community representatives and partnerships.

**3.37** The Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer area community, home to the Midland Boxing Club where Carl Frampton trained, is seeking to overcome its own circumstance, achieve its aspirations, whilst preserving the values that formed its unique identity.

# Stage 2 - Setting Priorities

## Community Priorities

4.1 Following 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.



### Perception

- The need to improve the image, legibility and perception of Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer for people living in the area, and for people wanting to live and work in the area.



### Housing

- Deliver new housing, improve the quality of existing housing and provide a range of accommodation suited to the needs of families and older people.
  - Focus on restructuring the existing layout through rebuilding or remodelling of existing properties to design out anti-social issues and design weaknesses.
  - Developing new social and affordable housing on cleared sites and using selective demolition to redevelop the area.

4.2 The following priorities were prepared and agreed by the Forum for the Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer:



### Environment, Recreation & Open Space

- Improve the quality of the street and the wider landscaped environment.
  - Examine the potential for small scale environmental improvements, improved street lighting and other enhancement which would improve the overall appearance of the area.



### Access

- Improve access within and signpost the Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer as a neighbourhood on the edge of the City Centre.
  - Consider the creation of new streets to improve street pattern and make it easier to move around.



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# 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 the Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer pilot area. 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 Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer sets out a framework to address the variety of issues relating to the urban environment which have contributed to the decline of the area.

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

These are identified as:



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



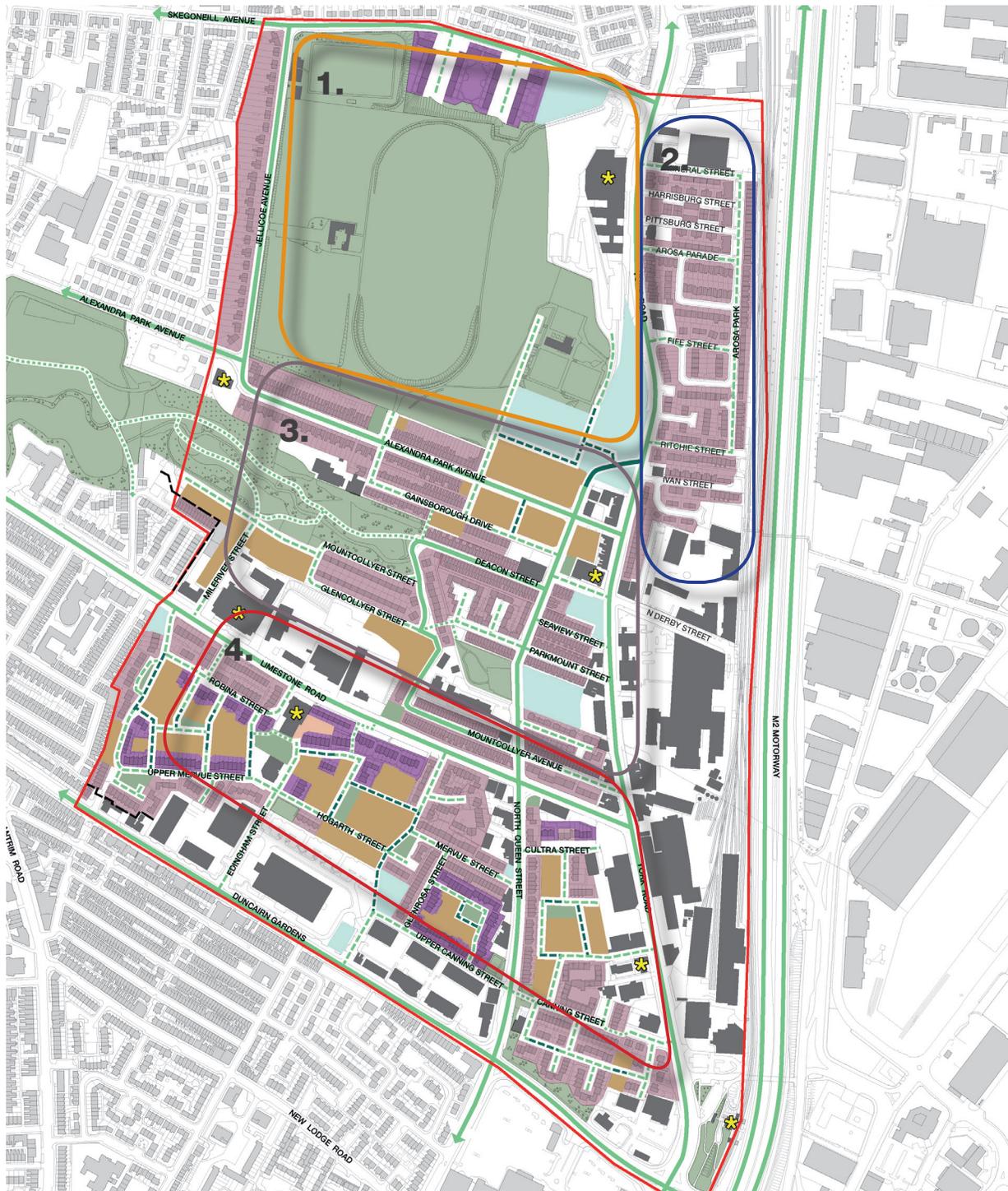
Improving the existing residential stock through improvements to their appearance and/or remodelling of their current layout; and



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

5.4 To help explain how the interventions contribute to shaping a place, case study examples are provided. The case study will provide a brief understanding of an area experiencing similar problems and how, through use of the interventions outlined the place was regenerated.

5.5 It is intended that the interventions will 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 the Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer are based on the interventions above.



**Key**

- Pilot area boundary
- Buildings in the area not affected by proposals
- Houses identified for improvement works. In some instances remodelling might occur \*
- Houses identified for upgrading works / remodelling
- Proposed new residential development on cleared sites and selective demolition
- Improvements to rear courtyards
- Proposals by others / potential redevelopment sites
- Public open space
- Existing primary streets with environmental improvements
- Existing secondary streets with environmental improvements
- Existing improved pedestrian / cycle paths
- Proposed new primary streets
- Proposed new secondary streets
- Proposed new pedestrian & cycle paths
- ✦ Existing facilities
- Peace line

\* These are high level proposals and the exact nature of the improvement works will be determined as projects emerge.

**Figure 5.1:**  
Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer Action Plan

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## 1. Lands along Jellicoe and Skegoneill Avenue

### The Action Plan proposes:



Remodelling of Skegoneill Flats; a programme of improvement works to properties along Jellicoe Avenue.



Environmental improvement works to the grounds around the Skegoneill Flats.

## 2. York Road to Arosa Park

### The Action Plan proposes:



Improvement works and refurbishment of houses within this area.



Environmental improvement along key streets to enhance the appearance of the area.



### Case Study 1

Improvements/remodelling to existing properties and environmental improvements

#### Plymouth Grove, East Manchester

Plymouth Grove, in south east Manchester, was built in the 1970s and consisted of 1,090 local authority two-storey flats and houses. The original design was based on a Radburn layout which segregated pedestrians and vehicles, confining cars to access roads, cul-de-sacs and parking areas and pedestrians to separate footpaths. The layout was synonymous for rat runs and alleyways, encouraging anti-social behaviour and exacerbating a sense of social exclusion and mistrust.

The layout meant that cars were vulnerable as they were parked far from homes. Cul-de-sacs and poorly overlooked walkways and green spaces discouraged walking through the estate. The proportion of public to private space was high, but the density of housing remained low. These problems meant it was hard for any shops or services to survive within the estate.

A regeneration strategy for the area was undertaken, which included improvements to the levels of street frontage by 'reversing' existing properties so their front doors addressed the street; adding windows to blank gables to increase natural surveillance and creating private outside space with fencing of gardens, car parking courts and bin storage areas.

Manchester City Council set up a steering group of council officers, members, local tenants and residents associations who led consultation with the wider community to identify opportunities and residents' priorities for the area. Having established the overall vision and priorities, they successfully bid for over £15million government funding through the Private Finance Initiative.



Left: Properties prior to improvements



Right: Refurbished & remodelled housing

Images sourced from Plymouth Grove promotion information



### Case Study 1

Improvements/remodelling to existing properties and environmental improvements

#### Relationship to Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer Pilot Area

Before the improvement works were undertaken Plymouth Grove was based on a similar layout design to the pilot area and experiencing similar problems. The interventions to Plymouth Grove have transformed the place and provided an opportunity to address core design weaknesses while improving the quality of the housing stock.

The quality of the housing stock varies within this pilot area. Improvements to the exterior of the existing housing stock (recladdings; adding porches; new windows) can improve the appearance of a place, creating more welcoming residential environments.

## 3. Alexandra Park Avenue to Limestone Road

### The Action Plan proposes:



Construction of new housing on cleared sites – Alexandra Park Avenue, Mileriver and Mountcollyer Street.



Delivery of a programme of improvement works to other properties within this area.



Enhance the image of the area by undertaking Environmental Improvements to street lighting, signage, street furniture and tree planting to improve the visual appearance of the area creating a more consistent image and assist in defining spaces.



Creation of new streets to improve access within the pilot area to facilities and make it easier to navigate the network of streets.

## 4. Limestone Road to Duncairn Gardens

### The Action Plan proposes:



Construction of new housing on cleared sites.



Delivery of a programme of improvement works to other properties within this area – remodelling and selective redevelopment.



Enhance the image of the area by undertaking Environmental Improvements to street lighting, signage, street furniture and tree planting to improve the visual appearance, create a more consistent image and assist in defining spaces.



Creating a network of interconnecting streets through selective demolition (long term action with further consultation with the local community required).



## Case Study 2

New residential development and restructuring

### New Islington, East Manchester

The New Islington estate was originally built in the late 1970s. By the 1990s, the estate's community was suffering from the effects of massive depopulation, poor services and high levels of crime. Located in inner city Manchester the estate was one of the most deprived residential areas in the city with over half of the 204 homes occupied when the area was identified for intervention.

The focus of the project was to regenerate the area by reinventing it through a combination of new homes (a mix of new build and remodelled properties) set in an improved environment which has a clearly defined street network, landscaped area and green spaces. While the scheme contains bold architectural styles in parts, it serves as a good example of a holistic approach to estate regeneration which provides for a mix of housing options in an inner city environment.

### Relationship to Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer Pilot Area

The problems currently being experienced in the pilot area are similar to how New Islington was prior to the estate being restructured. Within the pilot area, the quality of residential development and its relationship to the streets and spaces around it needs to be improved through a combination of rebuilding, initially on cleared sites in tandem with the restructuring of the area.

Alongside new developments, restructuring can improve an area by:

- changing the image through physical improvements to the appearance of the area;
- improving the appearance and quality of the streetscape by ensuring that new development addresses the street; and
- making it easier to move and understand how to navigate through and around the pilot area. This in turn assists in changing perceptions of a place.



Another example of reconfiguring an existing terrace street. Properties were rotated 90 degrees, accommodating the required parking and garden space alongside the house rather than in front or behind.

Images sourced from New Islington promotional information

# Stage 4 - Next Steps: Delivering Change

06

## A Catalyst for Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer

**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 area for future generations.

**6.2** The Action Plan for Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer reflects this longer-term ambition for investment and change. Whilst it is apparent that the neighbourhood has benefitted from and continue to benefit from investment in new housing and its social infrastructure, engagement with the communities and the forums have continued to highlight the need to build greater levels of capacity within the community to realise the implications of regeneration.

**6.3** In order to demonstrate commitment and realise the long-term plan for regeneration a catalyst is required. The catalyst will build on existing investment and contribute to fundamentally changing perceptions of the area and engaging and building confidence amongst the community.

**6.4** The catalyst will need to demonstrate a level of commitment to the programme from key stakeholders and partners. These projects will therefore need to challenge a number of existing perceptions of the community and stakeholders and contribute towards generating new perspectives of the area providing distance from existing stigmas.

**6.5** These projects are intended to deliver in the short-term recognising the commitment of DfC to the BSC programme. Delivery responsibilities and risks are identified against each of the projects. It will be critical that progress is monitored for each of the projects. 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 area is sustained.

### Introducing the Catalyst Project

**6.6** One catalyst project has been identified for the pilot area which focuses on delivering housing in four locations across the pilot area:

- Hallidays Road
- Hogarth Street
- Lands at Alexandra Park Avenue
- Mileriver Street / Mountcollyer Street

**6.7** This project 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 they present a solid foundation from which to deliver the priorities for the Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer pilot area.

## **Rationale for the Catalyst Project**

**6.8** To the east of the York Road there have been a series of more modern housing over recent years with development most recently occurring in the northern parts of this area in the area around Harrisburg Street. The provision of new housing has brought into sharper definition the impact new housing can have and the stock condition issues in other parts of the neighbourhood. This underlies a clear aspiration within the community for the delivery of new social housing within the heart of the area.

**6.9** The review of housing need evidence summarised in earlier sections of this report highlights that the neighbourhood demonstrates signs of an ageing population with comparatively low proportions of younger age groups represented. Importantly the area also shows a comparatively low level of residual existing housing need using the 'need' definition defined by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). These factors form an important backdrop to the objectives of the BSC programme for intervention.

**6.10** In this context the catalyst project presents an opportunity to demonstrate a clear intention to bring forward vacant sites in the heart of the pilot area. A central rationale for the project is to deliver new social and affordable housing to meet the changing needs of the existing resident community but also to enable the population of the area to return to a picture of growth. The introduction of new development is intended to change market perception of the area generating greater interest in other identified development site opportunities which offer the potential to continue to increase the amount of new and higher quality housing in the area.

**6.11** The development of additional sites potentially for a range of tenures of housing will present an opportunity to derive planning gain within the area 'seeding' other identified housing and environmental projects within the wider regeneration plan.

**6.12** The identified project has been selected in recognition of the fact that BSC places community led intervention at the heart of its objectives. The selected project is considered to reflect the community's priorities as presented by the Forum.

**6.13** The delivery of this catalyst project is intended to not only present a physical symbol and foundation of change but also to lift the community's confidence in the process of regeneration. The project is therefore one which the community has supported and as a result of the advancing of this as a priority is aimed at ensuring that the community feels empowered to embrace further change.

## **Delivering Regeneration**

**6.14** The catalyst project identified for the Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer area presents a strong foundation upon which to deliver the objectives of the BSC programme and realise the priorities identified by the Forum. Using examples from elsewhere we have identified delivery mechanisms which could be used in order to realise the regeneration potential. A core component to delivering the catalyst projects will focus on partnership working, and may require new joint working groups/partnerships to be established.

**6.15 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.

**6.16 Master Developer** – In this instance the local authority/landowner becomes the developer, allowing them to retain control of the process and let construction contracts.

### Case Study 3 Joint Venture Partnership Sheffield Housing Company

Joint Venture Partnerships (JVP) –Represents a JVP between Sheffield City Council, Keapmoat 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 to 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.

In Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer it is recognised that the largest landowner is NIHE. It may be possible for NIHE, as the landowner to have a JVP with a Housing Association. NIHE could de-risk the lands by readying them for development (undertake enabling works) with the Housing Association taking on responsibility for the construction of the new homes. In preparing the lands for development, the BSC programme may need to provide funding to support the enabling works. NIHE and the Housing Association would both have an equal share of the profit generated by any residual land value.



Image: Sheffield Housing Company

### Case Study 4 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.

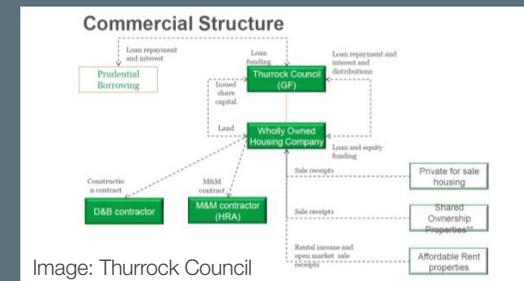


Image: Thurrock Council

In the case of Tigers Bay & Mountcollyer, NIHE fulfil the 'master developer' role as the as the main landowner. NIHE would be responsible for appointing a contractor to develop the land, whilst also being the applicant for any planning applications. They would then be able to retain any uplift in land value achieved as a result of the development, which could be invested back in to the local area for other improvement works. This is a mechanism which could be used to deliver subsequent projects following delivery of the catalyst.

### Case Study 5 Community Land Trust

Stoke on Trent Council acquired a 1 acre site and divided it into 6 individual self-build plots (355 sqm to 955 sqm.). Council undertook all enabling works required to ready the sites for development and secured outline planning permission for 6 residential dwellings.

Having secured planning permission, Stoke on Trent Council held a Self Build fair at which they raised awareness of what they had done; provided planning and architectural advice on the next steps in securing a reserved matters permission from which the property could be build; and signposted information to specialist self build mortgages.

The 6 dwellings were sold at auction at a reserve price of £75,000 per plot, raising a total of £591,000.

Self build homes could be delivered within the pilot area through a highly collaborative working arrangement as outlined in Case Study 3. A regeneration company would be established to act as the delivery vehicle consisting of NIHE and a Housing Association. Ownership of the lands would be transferred to the regeneration company. Enabling works required to pump prime the site would be undertaken by statutory bodies, funded by BSC. Outline planning permission for the dwellings would be obtained from Belfast City Council, with BSC covering the costs of securing planning permission.

The regeneration company would hold a self-build fair to explain the approach and outline the mortgage product available. Unlike the previous example, the sites would not be sold on the open market. Using the principles of co ownership, the regeneration company would provide finance to perspective tenants based on a buy/rent model. The property would be valued based on a new build completion value. The mortgage product would cover the costs associated with building the new home. BSC would fund the costs of securing reserved matters permission. The regeneration company would own the site and the property until such time as the owner brought the property outright.



Enabling building works

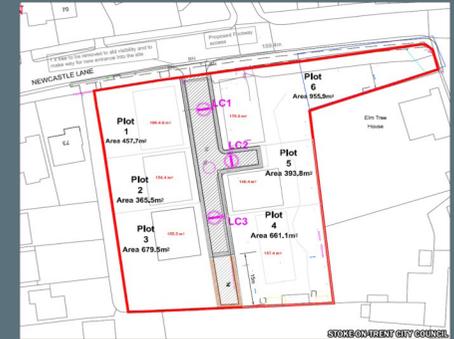


Image of approved plots

Images sourced from Stoke on Trent Council

**6.17 Self Build –** Self-build projects provide an opportunity to create a new level of interest in the area by providing a form of housing which will enable people to ‘invest in living’ in the pilot area and can create a level of interest of attracting new residents to the area.

#### Addressing the Priorities

**6.18** Table 6.1 demonstrates how the catalyst projects address the four priorities identified by the community.

**Table 6.1:** Addressing the Priorities

Project	Proposals	Community Priorities Met
<b>A package of new housing sites:</b>	Provision of new housing stock	Changing perceptions through physical change
<b>Hallidays Road</b>	Improvements to streets: landscaping, street lighting and creation of new streets	Delivering new housing; different tenures and house types
<b>Hogarth Street</b>		
<b>Lands at Alexandra Park Avenue</b>		Improving access within and through the area
<b>Mileriver / Mountcollyer Street</b>		

# 1. A Package of New Housing Sites

## Project Rationale

**6.19** The catalyst project is intended to deliver a sufficient scale of new housing within the area to demonstrate a significant commitment to the re-provision of new social and affordable housing within areas of Tigers Bay and Mountcollyer.

**6.20** A package of four new housing sites has been identified to deliver an initial wave of new housing. These sites are referred to as:

- Hallidays Road
- Hogarth Street
- Lands at Alexandra Park Avenue
- Mileriver / Mountcollyer Streets

**6.21** Further detail on the sites is included under the following sub-section. The first two of these sites will deliver social housing, however, it is understood that the current schemes emerging have identified funding gaps. The third site has been identified as being located within a context of more recent new build housing and adjacent to more stable residential areas. The site is therefore considered to represent a comparatively commercial opportunity for new development with the intention being for value to be generated from its sale. The development of new housing at Mileriver provides an opportunity for affordable housing within the area.

**6.22** Delivering new social housing will form an important early intervention in demonstrating a demand and need for housing in the neighbourhood. The comprehensive development of the sites will also enable core structural weaknesses (design flaws) within the urban fabric to be addressed.

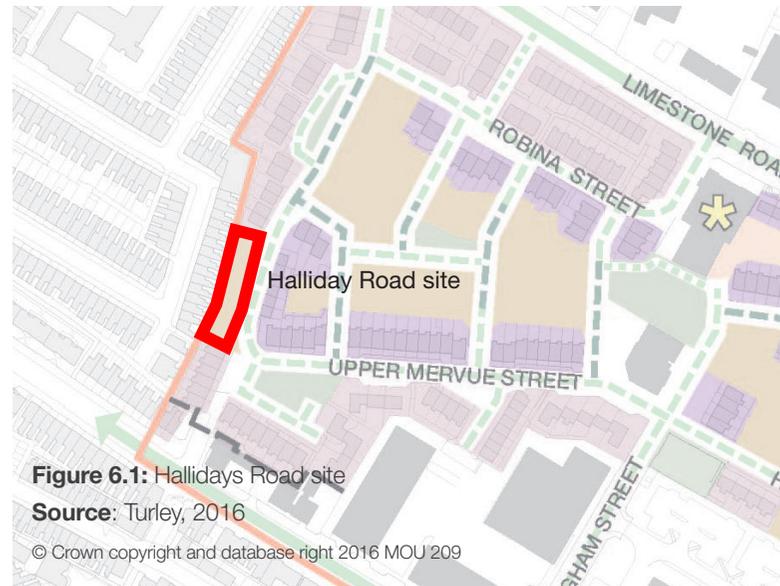
**6.23** Enabling the projects to progress will be vital in improving market confidence and ensuring that future development sites which are brought to market attract further improvements to sales values to ensure their viability and assist in cross-subsidising further social housing development and wider environmental improvements.

## Form of Intervention

**6.24** As set out within the rationale four separate sites/ areas have been identified for new housing. Collectively these sites will deliver approximately 107 new homes within the pilot area.

**6.25** Each site is introduced along with anticipated numbers of homes and information on their current development position.

**6.26** The Hallidays Road site is currently being progressed by Apex Housing Association. The site is anticipated to deliver 6 new units of social housing (3 person / 2 bedroom). The estimated cost is £550k.

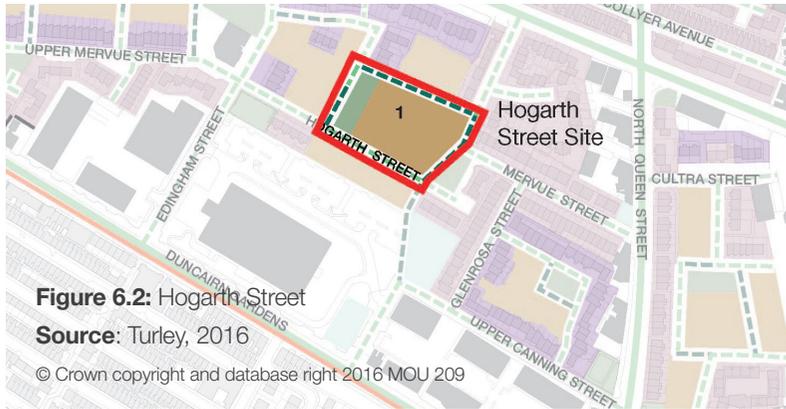


**Figure 6.1:** Hallidays Road site

**Source:** Turley, 2016

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**6.27** Apex Housing Association is currently progressing plans for a social housing scheme of 20 new social housing units on the site. It is understood that Apex has estimated that land/development and professional fees costs are in the region of £2.5m. The award of Housing Association Grant for the scheme is currently unknown.



**6.28** The identified residential sites are in the ownership of NIHE and are currently cleared ex-housing sites. The site is approximately 0.93 ha in size and is estimated to have the capacity to accommodate approximately 57 new units, including a mix of terraced and semi-detached homes. This assumes a net density of approximately 64 dwellings per hectare broadly reflecting the surrounding residential areas and recent newer housing development in the area.



**6.29** As shown on the plan it is assumed in order to improve the inter-relationship of housing on the site a new road access is delivered linking Alexandra Drive Avenue and Gainsborough Drive.

**6.30** Apex Housing Association has developed plans for a phased affordable housing scheme of 24 units on the site. The estimated cost per unit would be £125k.



### Resource Plan

**6.31** The project envisages these sites being developed broadly in alignment with one another in order to demonstrate a critical mass of new housing delivery including a mix of tenures.

**6.32** Planning applications have been submitted for both Hallidays Road and Hogarth Street for social housing.

**6.33** As regards the lands at Alexandra Park Avenue and Mileriver / Mountcollyer Street, feasibility studies will be required to ascertain in greater detail the scale and mix of housing which can be accommodated on the sites and the level of infrastructure required to meet the design expectations set within the wider plan for the area. This exercise will be supplemented with an economic appraisal including a full viability testing of the lands at Alexandra Avenue. This will need to take account of the independent viability testing undertaken for the two social housing sites.

**6.34** Following on from these feasibility studies a development brief will be prepared for both sites. For further comments refer to enclosed page:

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

**6.35** The development brief will be issued to a shortlist of developer / Housing Associations via a mini-competition to assess potential bids for the land.

**6.36** The identified developer partner will be required to work with the community and other stakeholders to refine the scheme and submit a planning application for the site.

### **Delivery Partners / Stakeholders**

**6.37** All the lands at Alexandra Park Avenue and Mileriver/Mountcollyer Street are understood to be in the ownership of NIHE. The potential for NIHE to provide the land at nil cost to facilitate development needs to be confirmed. On this basis NIHE will therefore assume a lead role in progressing the project. This will include the preparation of a development brief for the sites and the issuing of the brief to potential developers / Housing Associations by shortlist.

**6.38** DfC will provide supportive expertise as required to prepare the development brief. DfC will lead on working with the community forum and/or the wider community in contributing to the development brief. It is also recommended that DfC undertake a headline development viability study 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. The extent to which additional monies can be leveraged from the Developer / Housing

Association to fund wider environmental improvements for the area will need to be assessed.

**6.39** Belfast City Council will provide expertise and support with regards to obtaining planning permission for the site in partnership with the NIHE in the setting of the brief and subsequently with the appointed Housing Association.

**6.40** On award the Developer / Housing Association will need to continue to engage with the local community in refining the design for the scheme and the proposed housing mix prior to the submission of a planning application.

### **Risks**

**6.41** The viability of the sites will need to be assessed at a high level to ensure deliverability and the identification of any resulting funding required.

**6.42** The schemes are subject to planning approval with support required from Belfast City Council. The full extent of the funding gap needs to be validated to ensure best value of public sector funding intervention.

**6.43** The land at Alexandra Avenue has previously been considered by NIHE and DfC as part of the Development Study for the Former Grove Leisure Centre & Surrounding sites (2014). It is understood that the recommended approach from this study did not include the full retention of the identified lands for residential use. The impact on the redevelopment of adjacent sites will need to be considered in order to manage any risks in longer-term delivery and to manage the expectations of stakeholders.

## Benefits

**6.44** Collectively the package of sites has the potential to bring forward 26 social housing units and a further 81 new homes of a mix of tenures in the area. This will have a wider positive benefit on demonstrating a further commitment to new housing development in the area setting a strong precedent for releasing future available development sites into the market.

**6.45** The development of new homes will provide employment opportunities resulting from their construction. Local labour / supplier agreements should be utilised where appropriate to ensure the maximum impact of employment opportunities generated.

**6.46** The re-growth of the population initiated through the catalyst project will increase the area's household spending capacity. This will benefit local shops and services. This will be further elevated through the longer-term plan to introduce a range of tenures of housing through the longer-term re-development programme on other vacant lands envisaged.

## Timetable and Next Steps

**6.47** The Hallidays Road planning application (ref: LA04/2016/0194/F) has the benefit of full planning permission. A planning application for Hogarth Street (ref: LA04/2016/0706/F) is currently under consideration.

**6.48** The production of a development brief for land at Alexandra Park Avenue and at Mileriver and Mountcollyer Street should be undertaken by the end of 2016/17. This will allow sufficient time to engage the community forum and wider community as considered appropriate.

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

## Complimentary Projects

**6.50** 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.

**Table 6.2:** Estimated project schedule for the Catalyst Project

Year	Tasks	Stakeholder	Time
<b>Year 1</b>	Approval of Hallidays Road application	BCC / Apex / DfC / NIHE	Granted May 2016
	Submission and approval of Hogarth Street application		6 months
	Feasibility studies and development briefs for Alexandra Park Avenue and Mileriver/Mountcollyer Street		6 – 12 months
	Hallidays Road site under development		Oct 2016 (40 weeks construction)
	Hogarth Street on site		Est April 2017
<b>Year 2</b>	Hallidays Road site complete	Apex / DfC / BCC	Est July 2017
	Mini – competition for Alexandra Park Avenue and procurement of development partner		6 months
	Mini – competition for Mileriver/Mountcollyer Street and procurement of development partner		6 months
	Alexandra Park Avenue application submitted		6 months
	Mileriver / Mountcollyer Street application submitted		6 months
<b>Year 3</b>	Hogarth Street site complete		
	Alexander Park Avenue development commences		
	Mileriver/Mountcollyer Street commences		

# Stage 4 Next Steps - Monitoring the Impact of Intervention

07

**7.1** A baseline has been prepared for each area and provides an objective assessment against which change can be measured and tracked over time.

**7.2** Each of the catalyst projects 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 neighbourhoods, 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 Outcomes

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
<b>Socio Economic</b>	NIHE waiting list (count)
	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

**For further information contact**

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