

GREATER MONKSTOWN

PLACESHAPING PILOT





Monkstown



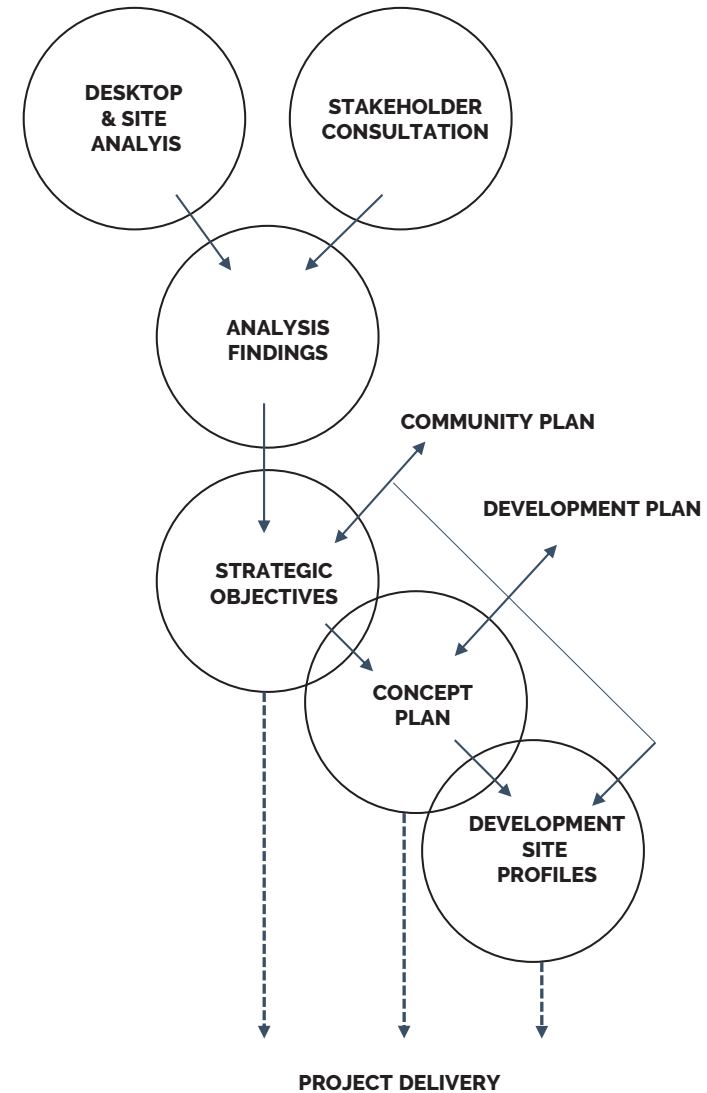
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A. Introducing.







Introducing THE PILOT



The Greater Monkstown Placeshaping Pilot was commissioned by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and The Housing Executive in April 2016.

It seeks to examine how the assets of these two organisations can be developed and maximised in the future as part of a place shaping/ community planning process.

Importantly, this Place Shaping/Community Planning exercise offered an opportunity for forward planning advanced on a partnership basis and rooted within a local community. This represents the fresh, people focussed approach to planning being taken by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council as it prepares both the Community Plan and a Development Plan for the area.

The Pilot was delivered by PLACE, Northern Ireland's Built Environment Centre, in partnership with The Paul Hogarth Company Urban Design Consultancy and Ulster University. The team implemented a highly collaborative methodology centred around a series of workshops and events. The findings of this process can be found in this strategy document and an accompanying report on the pilot's engagement activities.

This Placeshaping Pilot will be used to inform the forward planning processes, as well as investment decisions in support of regeneration and development in Greater Monkstown.

Introducing THE PEOPLE



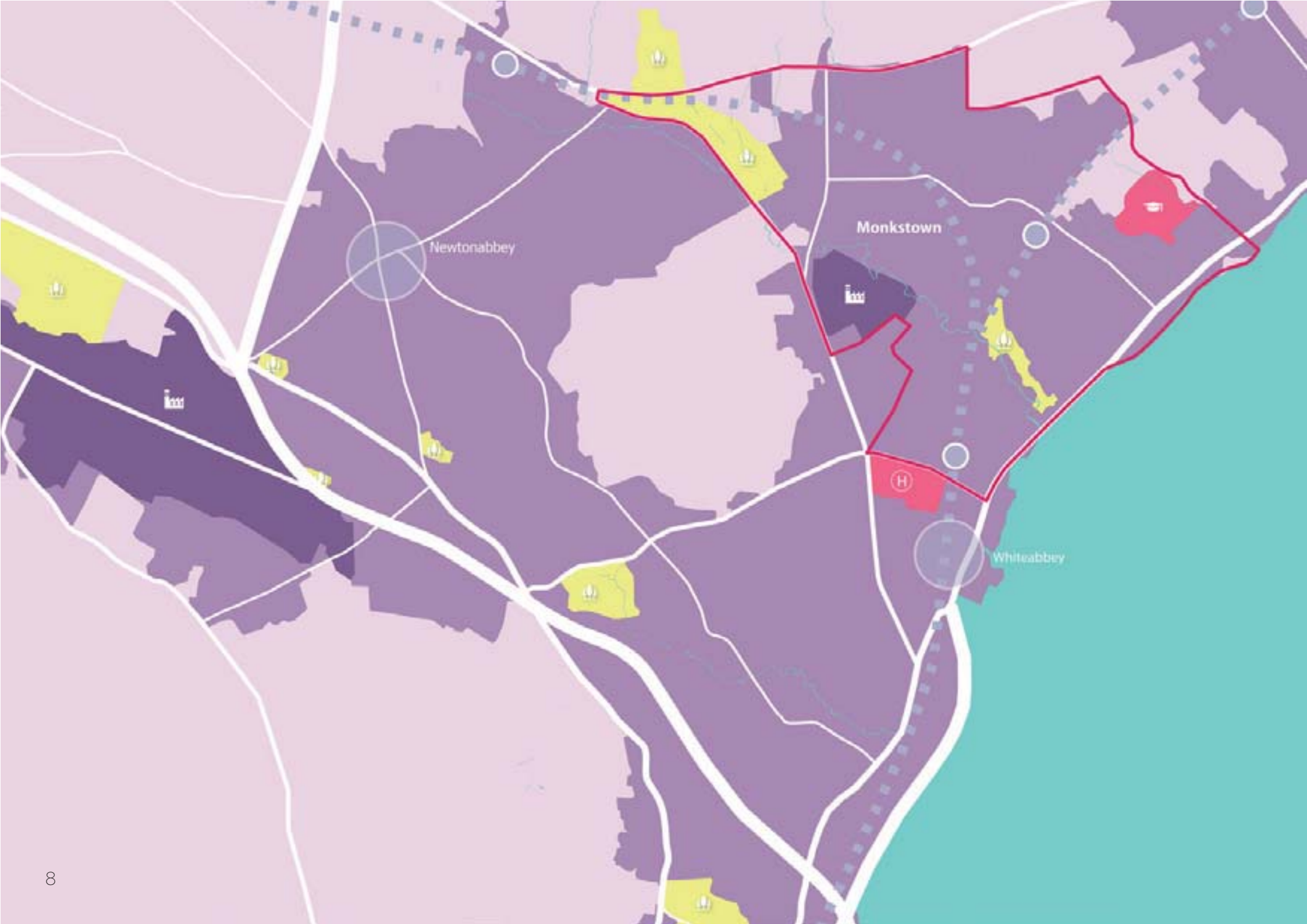
Introducing THE PLACE



B. *Understanding...*







Understanding CONTEXT

The Greater Monkstown area is located in Newtownabbey, a settlement of around 62,000 people to the immediate north of Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Its extents are defined by the electoral ward boundaries of Monkstown, Jordanstown and Rostulla, shown in red on the adjacent map. Greater Monkstown is bounded by Shore Road and the Belfast Lough to the east and by Doagh Road and Carmoney Hill to the west. To the south are the neighbourhoods of Whiteabbey and Rathcoole, and to the north is the Ulster University Campus at Jordanstown.

The Greater Monkstown area is bisected by two prominent linear features. The first is the Threemile Water, a river flowing to the south east through a deep wooded glen. The second is the mainline railway north from Belfast. At the Whiteabbey Viaducts within the study area, the railway splits into two lines destined for Ballymena to the north west and Larne to the north east.

Whilst initially a small rural hamlet, the name Monkstown is now associated with the Monkstown Estate, a large area of originally social housing built in the 1960s. It sits North of the Threemile Water where the Monkstown Road and Jordanstown Road meet. Three distinct housing areas are located on Cashel Drive and to the north and south of Devenish Drive.



Notable features within the Monkstown area are the Abbey Community College (formerly Monkstown Community School), the 'Village Centre' and Hollybank Primary School. To the south of the river lies the large Monkstown Industrial estate, home to a number of major employers including Caterpillar and Bombardier.

The socio-economic context of Greater Monkstown is one of contrasts. Explored further in the following analysis, Monkstown sits as a concentration of relatively lower income households in an otherwise affluent area. The area has also a strong unionist and loyalist political identity, contrasting with more politically mixed neighbourhoods to the north and east.



Jordanstown

Monkstown

Rostulla

Understanding CONTEXT

The following statistics from the most recent census data highlight socio-economic characteristics of the three electoral wards that comprise Greater Monkstown.

They show a sharp contrast between the Monkstown ward and the wards at Jordanstown and Rostulla.

This information provides the context for a range of issues highlighted through the analysis process that informs this study.

Jordanstown Ward

Economically Active

6.8% higher than NI average

Degree/Higher qualifications

16.15% higher than NI average

No/low qualifications

16.6% less than NI average

Health (reported good/very good)

8.39% higher than NI average

Multiple Deprivation Measure	577
Income Deprivation	572
Employment Deprivation	566
Health Deprivation and Disability Deprivation	562
Education Skills and Training Disability	561
Proximity to Services Deprivation	353
Crime and Disorder	499
Living Environment	573

Jordanstown Ward ranks well in relation to a number of indicators most notably living environment and income deprivation resulting in a healthy MDM of 577 (out of 582). It's weakest ranked indicator relates to proximity to services.

Monkstown Ward

Age Profile

3.35% more under 16 years than NI average

Degree/Higher qualifications

8.4% less than NI average

Housing

Almost 32% of households don't have access to car/van

Multiple Deprivation Measure	143
Income Deprivation	130
Employment Deprivation	161
Health Deprivation and Disability Deprivation	155
Education Skills and Training Disability	78
Proximity to Services Deprivation	424
Crime and Disorder	317
Living Environment	123

Monkstown Ward is ranked as one of the most deprived wards in relation to education skills and training disability. The area also ranks poorly in relation to a number of indicators resulting in a below average MDM of 143. The area does however perform reasonably well in relation to proximity to services ranking 424 out of

Rostulla Ward

Age Profile

7.4% less under 16 years than NI average

28 years was average median age

Degree/Higher qualifications

10.12% higher than NI average

No/low qualifications

20.68% less than NI average

Multiple Deprivation Measure	507
Income Deprivation	491
Employment Deprivation	534
Health Deprivation and Disability Deprivation	510
Education Skills and Training Disability	473
Proximity to Services Deprivation	438
Crime and Disorder	100
Living Environment	330

Rostulla Ward fairs well across the board performing well under indicators such as employment and health/disability resulting in an above average MDM of 507. The area does not perform well however in relation to crime and disorder ranking 100 out of 582.

A full summary of the socio-economic profile for Greater Monkstown can be found in the Appendix document that accompanies this report..

Understanding COMMUNITY

The first finding of the analysis process conducted for this study was the strong sense of community that can be found in Monkstown.

Local people who participated in the project expressed affection for the area and a clear sense of pride. Many residents have lived in Monkstown since the estate was built, leading to a desire for younger generations to remain in the area.

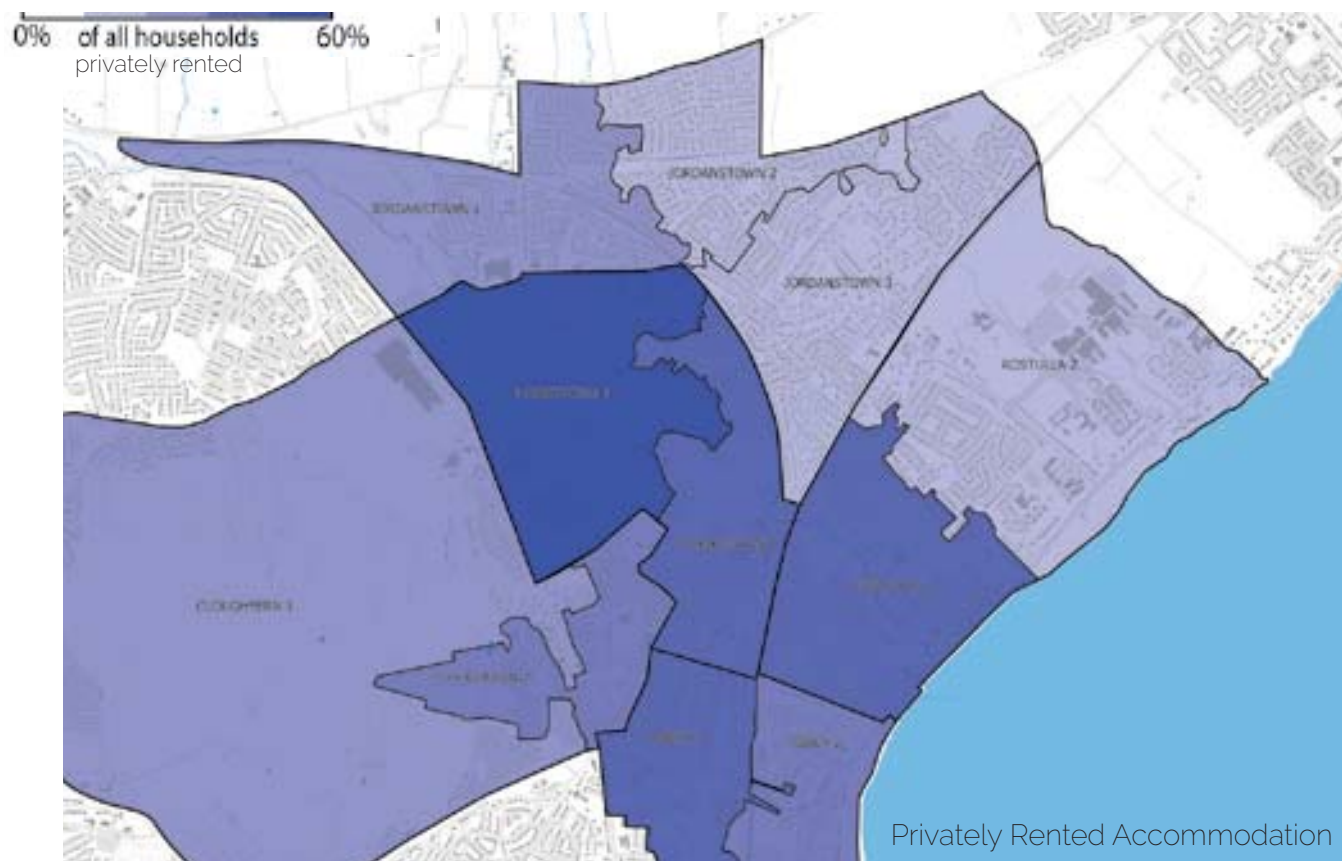
Key to the sense of community is a number of organisations and institutions. These include community centres at The Village Centre and Jubilee Hall; schools at Abbey Community College, Hollybank Primary School; and churches centred around the the local Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and Baptist congregations.

This strong community spirit and sense of identity is a strength that will be key to regeneration efforts that take place in the Greater Monkstown area.



A clear sense of identity and affinity with Monkstown amongst its residents

Understanding HOUSING



Housing is a key issue for Greater Monkstown, evidenced in desktop research and consultation with the local community.

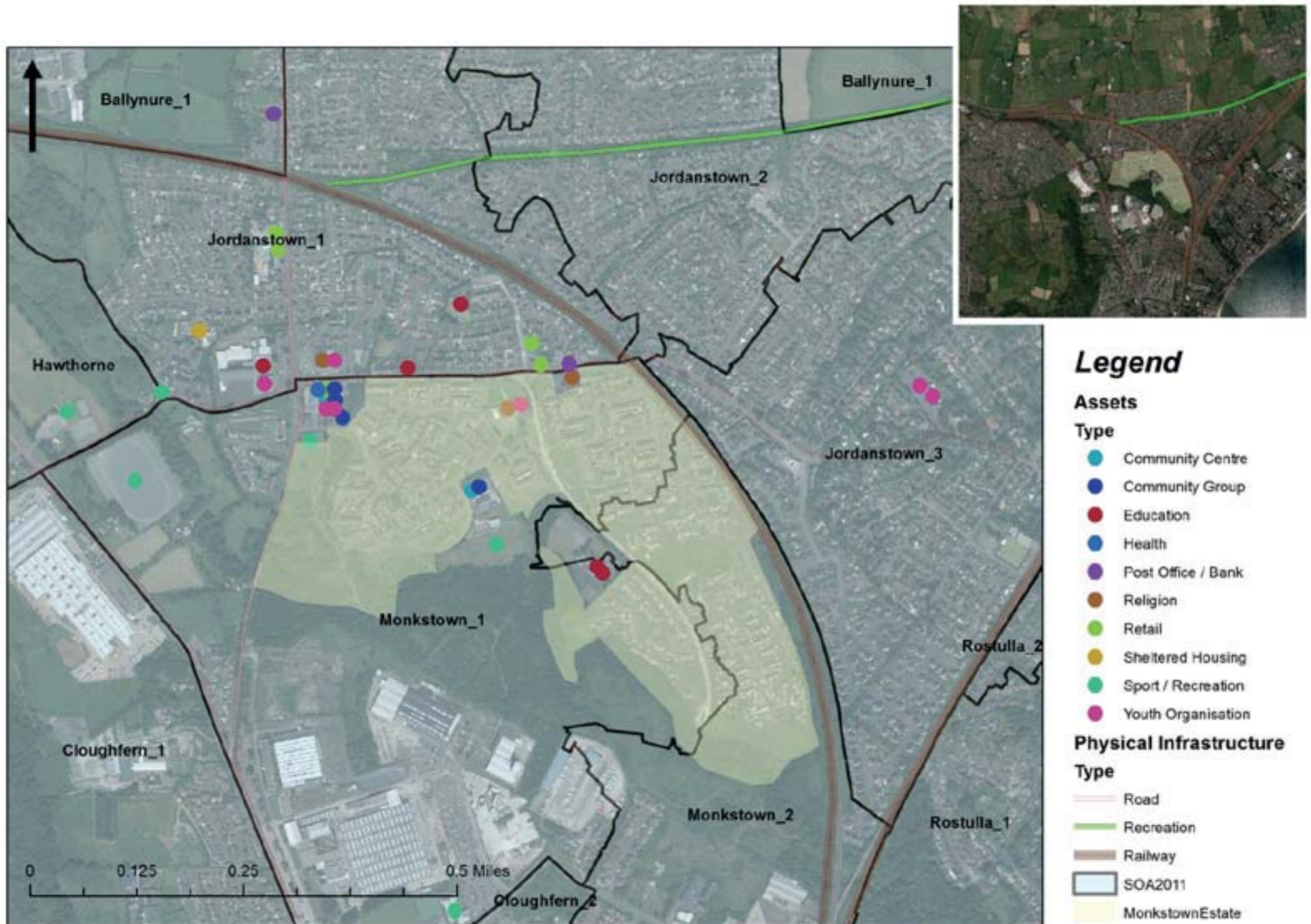
The Monkstown ward consists of a far higher number of social houses than neighbouring areas. As shown in the adjacent map, it also contains many more privately rented units than Jordanstown or Cloughfern.

Both the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and respondents from the local community report a shortage of social housing. In 2014 there were 71 social housing applicants in 'housing stress' and only 35 allocations made in the previous 12 months. NIHE relates this issue to the sale of 597 properties and highlights a number of sites suitable for the construction of new housing units.

In planning new housing areas for the future of Monkstown, care is needed to ensure that a sustainable level of density is achieved and that an appropriate mix of both housing type and tenure is secured.

A real and a perceived housing need to include a more sustainable mix of type





Understanding FACILITIES

A variety of facilities exist within, on the margins of, and a short distance from Monkstown estate. This includes public sector (schools), private sector (shops; bank), and community organisations (health support group; sports clubs; churches). The adjacent map shows the clustering of activities at Monkstown Village Centre, at the Jordanstown Road / Monkstown Road / Bridge Road junction. Here there is a mix of retail – including hairdressers and food outlets – as well as community organisations based in the upper floor of the Village Centre building. Observation shows that this is a popular, successful hub used by the Monkstown community, residents in surrounding areas, and people transiting through the area to other locations such as Ulster University and local factories. A second cluster is clearly visible at the Jordanstown Road / Jennings Park shops. In addition, the hardware store (Andy's Stores) and filling station, both located on the Monkstown Road, provide further retail facilities for the Monkstown area and beyond.

Education infrastructure in the area includes provision across pre-school, primary and secondary level comprising Monkstown Nursery, Hollybank Pre-School, Hollybank Primary, and Abbey Community College. In addition, two other secondary level schools are located within a 5 mile radius of Monkstown : Belfast High School (2.3 miles road distance from Ards Drive) and Glengormley High School (4.1 miles road distance from Ards Drive). Further and higher education facilities are located outside of the immediate Monkstown area at Northern Regional College (Shore Road) and Ulster University. Monkstown is richly endowed with regard to sport and recreation facilities both within and next to the estate (Three Mile Water), and the Newtownabbey Way. With three churches in the immediate area and a range of community organisations using the Village Centre and Jubilee Centre, Monkstown has an active community sector.

There is no GP surgery located within Monkstown or the immediate area. However, there are two surgeries in proximity to the estate located at Notting Hill Medical Practice (2.3 miles road distance from Ards Drive) and Greenisland Health Centre (3.6 miles road distance from Ards Drive). A minor injuries unit at Whiteabbey Hospital closed on 1st December 2014.

In summary, Monkstown estate and the surrounding area has a rich range of community assets, which is supported by the presence of day-to-day essential services (grocery shops; banking) and other facilities that have a contributing role in defining quality of life experience including recreation and education provision.

A relatively good range of services and facilities in comparison to adjacent, predominantly residential suburban areas. Some notable absences however (eg Health, Large Supermarkets)



Understanding CENTRES



An important component of the Monkstown area are its centres. Not only nodes of commercial activity, they also act as social hubs where residents from the wider area meet one another, contributing to community cohesion and identity.

Interestingly the 'centres' of Monkstown have evolved over the years. The original rural hamlet of Monkstown was concentrated at the junction of Monkstown and Jordanstown Road. This was until construction of the Monkstown estate, within which Abbeytown Square became the focal point for social and commercial activity.

Now the two key centres of Monkstown are located back on the Jordanstown Road, effectively abandoning Abbeytown Square.

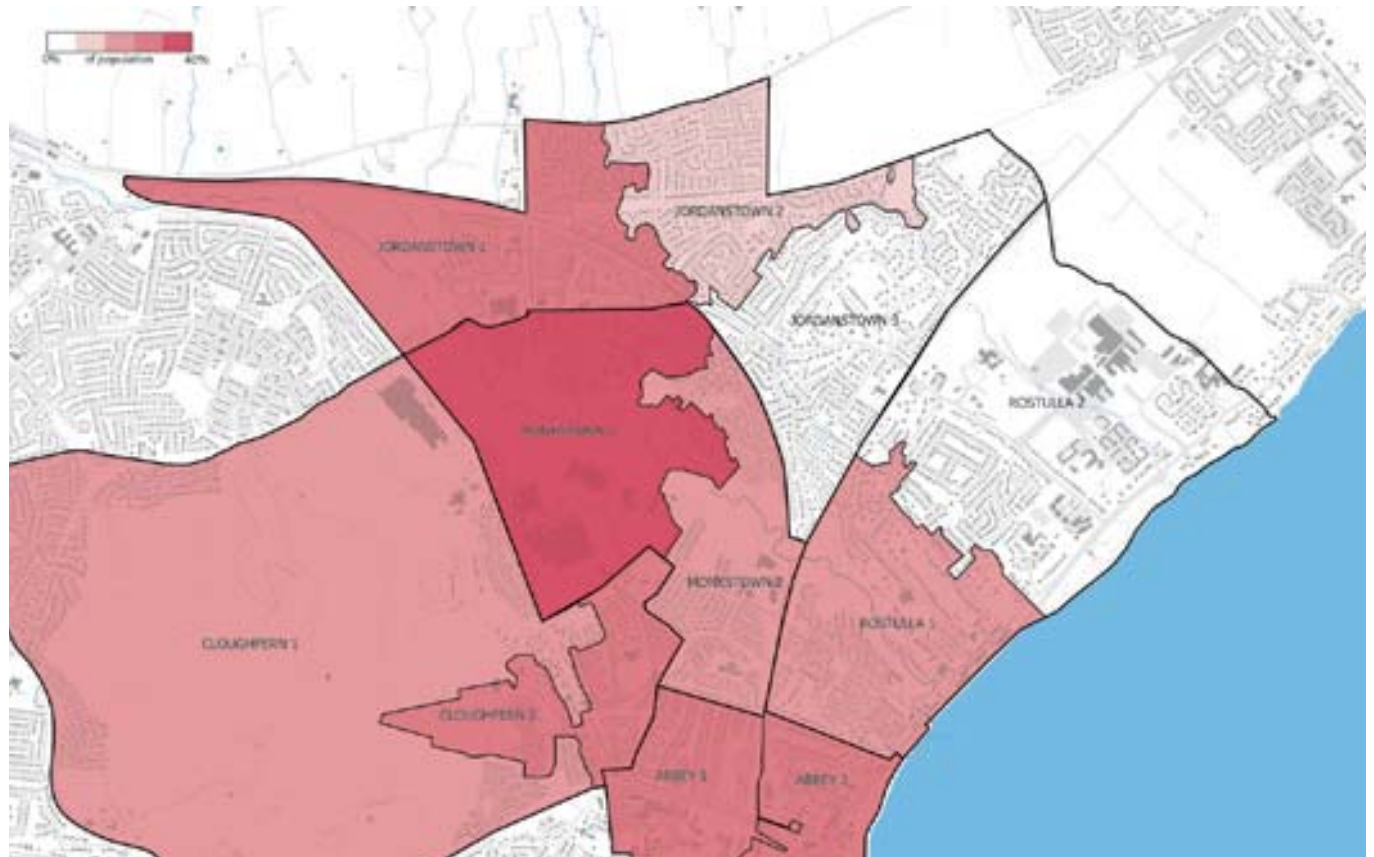
To sustain both commercial activity and a sense of community in the Monkstown area, it will be important that these centres on the Jordanstown Road are supported and improved. This comes in the face of uncertainties, including the potential relocation of Abbey Community College.

An evolution of small but important neighbourhood centres, currently the 'Village Centre' and Jennings Park and previously Abbeytown Square. Future sustainability of these a key issue.

Understanding HEALTH

The inequalities of the Greater Monkstown area are perhaps most strikingly clear within the census data relating to health. One such example can be found on the adjacent map that shows a much higher percentage of the population in Monkstown reporting a long term health complaint or disability compared to neighbouring wards. Drug and alcohol abuse has been cited as a particular concern of residents, which brings with it antisocial and criminal behaviour.

Successfully tackling health issues be they physical or mental, requires a multifaceted approach. In addition to improving access to good quality healthcare, preventative measures are also required to grow a happier and healthier community. In the context of this strategy, the quality of the local environment will have an important role to play.



Concern over health issues, including addiction and associated behaviours



Understanding PERCEPTIONS



The residents of low income urban neighbourhoods can often find themselves faced with negative external perceptions of their area. This affects the confidence of local people, as well as the viability of services and facilities like shops and schools. Monkstown is no different, with its proximity to high income areas and a turbulent past associated with the Troubles contributing to such stigma.

An influential factor that feeds negative perceptions is the quality of the physical environment. Improvements over the years have made a difference. However, prominent vacant buildings and the signs of antisocial behaviour, be they litter or graffiti, are unhelpful. The adjacent maps show the key routes where physical environment is most prominent to those passing through.

Furthermore Monkstown retains many symbols of a paramilitary presence. Continuing the ongoing work to remove or replace intimidating murals and flags is therefore essential to positively influencing wider perceptions of the area and its people.

Negative, largely external perceptions of Monkstown influenced by historical events, perceived antisocial behaviour and the physical environment (vacant buildings & spaces, litter and paramilitary symbols)

Understanding FRAGMENTATION

An important finding of the analysis process conducted for this study is the complex issue of fragmentation. Greater Monkstown is socially, economically and physically fragmented, affecting its ability to prosper as a place to live and work.

The socio-economic fragmentation of Monkstown is evidenced in census data that shows sharp contrasts in levels of income, health and education for example. Historic tensions between loyalist paramilitary groups have also contributed to issues of social fracture.

Physical fragmentation of Monkstown is related to barriers to movement formed by railway lines, the river and landuse as shown on the adjacent map. These barriers impact upon the way in which people can move through the area and access facilities. This places importance on the few points of linkage, shown here by circles.



A complex dynamic of spatial and social division occurring across socio-economic factors (income, health, education etc), housing tenures and loyalist identities. Physical barriers caused by transport infrastructure, street networks, natural features and landuse.



Fragmentation within Greater Monkstown has also been affected by the way in which the area was planned and designed. Large residential areas of cul-de-sac with no linking routes have the impact of cutting residents off from one another and key services. The impacts of such layouts are widespread, including lower levels of walking and increased car usage, which in turn impact upon community cohesion, environmental quality and the commercial viability of shops and services.

To illustrate this issue, the plans here show how cut-off residents of Blackthorn Road are from nearby shops and services at Jennings Park. Since a bridge was removed across the railway line, residents must travel 2.5km to access shops that are only 110 metres away. The maps show how reinstating a bridge in this location would significantly impact upon journey times and therefore, the related factors outlined above.

Houses on Blackthorn Road are 110 metres from Jennings Shops as the crow flies. But due to the way in which the area is planned, residents must make a 2.5km journey to get there. If the bridge at Joe's Lane was to be reinstated, this would be reduced to 530m - a 5 min walk.

Understanding LANDSCAPE

Greater Monkstown has an abundance of green space. The extent of this landscape can be seen in plans, photographs and satellite imagery of the area. Much of this is publicly accessible, with the adjacent map clearly showing the Threemilewater Park and Carmoney Hill. Recent improvements to these and other spaces, such as the Loughshore Park, have made a considerable difference.

Through consultation with local people, the extent to which this landscape is accessed by residents is difficult to quantify. Perceptions of antisocial behaviour in the park deter some people from using it. Significant potential exists to help local people access this extensive natural resource more effectively. Opportunities also exist to open up new routes and spaces, such as the abandoned railway line. This will help to overcome physical fragmentation whilst providing further recreational amenity for local people, as well as visitors to the area.



A major natural resource on the doorstep of Monkstown, although local usage influenced by perceptions of safety

Understanding OPPORTUNITIES



Specific sites with development potential, including housing areas, Moylinney House, Abbeytown Square and Village Square allotment site.

Through analysis and consultation a number of sites with development potential have been highlighted.

These include designated housing sites within the Monkstown Estate including Cloyne Crescent and Hollybank Park. They also include vacant buildings, such as the prominent Moylinney House and shop units at Abbeytown Square.

Whilst impacting negatively in their current state, these and other development sites are an important asset for the Greater Monkstown area. They offer an opportunity to bring forward development that underpins the sustainability of the area, creating new places to live, work and visit.

It will therefore be important to ensure that these sites are fully considered as part of a strategic approach to the regeneration of Greater Monkstown.



C. Placeshaping...



HESSIVE



GROWING THE GREENWAY



IMPROVING COMMUNICATION



WELCOMING GATHERING



POSITIVE
CONNECTION

This is Workspan

LOVING THE LANDSCAPE



BUILDING SKILLS

MAKING DESTINATIONS



ENRICHED
LANDSCAPE

This is Workspan

HARNESSING CREATIVITY



Placeshaping INTRODUCTION



What makes a great place? Finding the answer to this deceptively simple question underpins the movement of Placeshaping or Placemaking.

Placeshaping has become an integral component of planning and architecture, amidst recognition that individual buildings or policies do not necessarily result in the creation of good places. The way in which we manage our places is as important as their design.

Living Places: An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland sets out the Placeshaping agenda. These principles and the 10 qualities of Living Places are therefore central to the Placeshaping Pilot for Greater Monkstown.

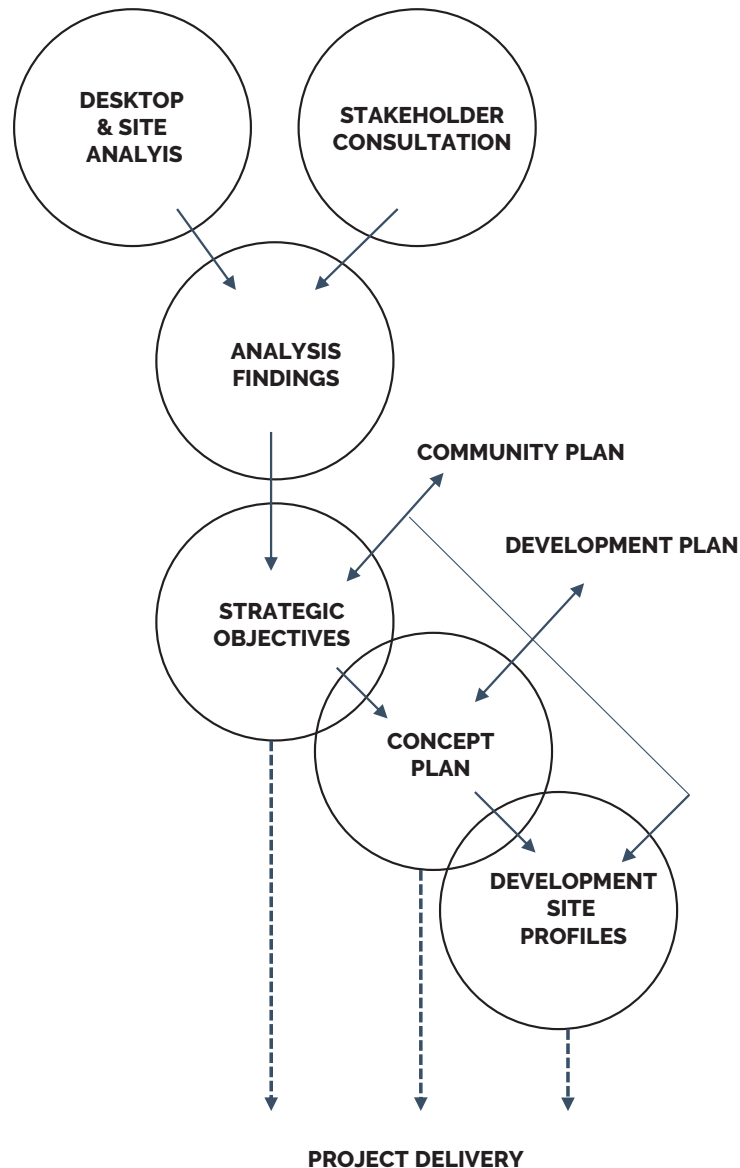


http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/supplementary_guidance/guides/living_places_urban_stewardship_and_design_guide.htm

"This document is about good urban places. We can all think of one. Perhaps it is the city, town, village or street in which you live. Perhaps it is where you visit, where you play, where you work, shop, or go to school. It may be somewhere that has now changed or long since gone, or even somewhere that you have never been."

"Good places are important to all of us. As individuals, we are drawn to them and their ability to provide for our needs, to make us feel safe and even happy. As a society, good places are a focal point of social and economic activity, and help to define our collective sense of identity."

Placeshaping OBJECTIVES



The Greater Monkstown Placeshaping Pilot is founded on an extensive process of desktop and site analysis, as well as consultation with residents and other stakeholders.

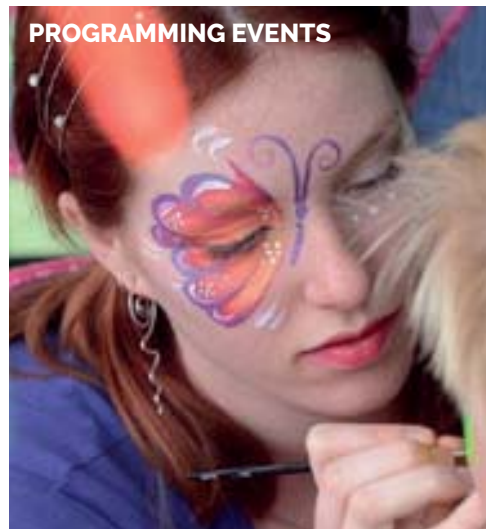
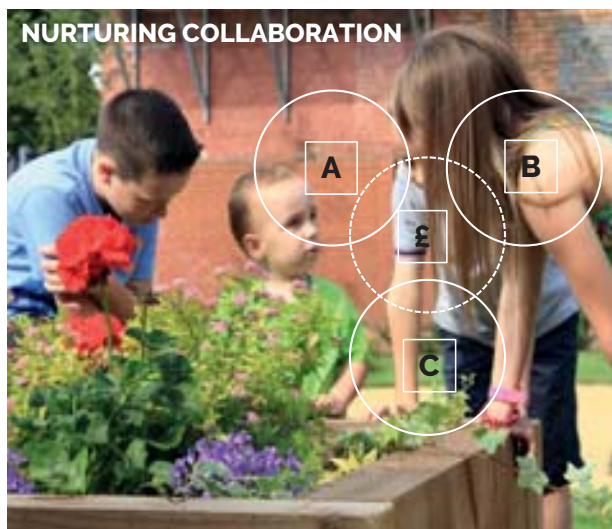
The subsequent proposals outlined in this report consist of three distinct but inter-related components.

- 1) Strategic Objectives: A series of priorities for the future of Greater Monkstown are presented. These respond to the issues and opportunities identified through the analysis stage and seek to bring about sustained social, economic and physical benefits. All development projects in the area should seek to fulfil as many of these objectives as possible.
- 2) Concept Plan: A plan of the Monkstown area sets out key physical proposals for the strategic regeneration of the area. These concepts should be used to inform long term plan making and short term opportunities for planning and placemaking.
- 3) Development Site Profiles: The way in which Monkstown's various development sites are taken forward will have a significant impact on the future of the area. Therefore guidance is provided to encourage the incorporation of the key principles of placemaking in these projects.



COHESIVE COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE ONE



The first strategic objective for Greater Monkstown is to grow a more cohesive community. This will help to overcome issues of fragmentation and build upon the locally strong community spirit. Work to tackle negative perceptions of the area must continue with the 're-imagining' of murals and other negative features.

Nurturing collaboration between groups, organisations and residents from different localities should be prioritised. Sustaining support for long term programmes over short term initiatives will help to underpin long term change. Events that bring people together in the Monkstown area need supported and housing, a key ingredient for the future, must be strategically planned to benefit the entire area.

STRENGTHENED CORE

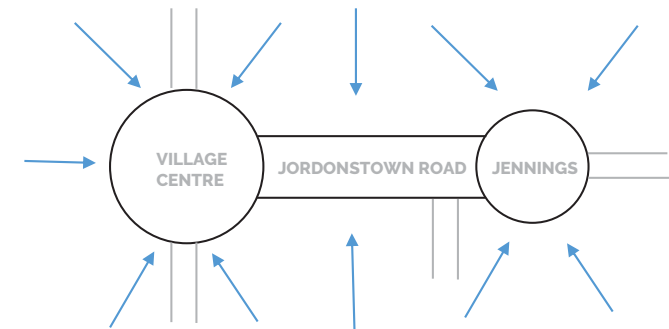
OBJECTIVE TWO



GROWING SERVICES & INVESTMENT



PLANNING THE FUTURE



Sustaining and growing the social and commercial centres on the Jordanstown Road is another key objective for the future of Greater Monkstown. This should involve planning to ensure appropriate density and uses, including mixed use development and the provision of civic public realm.

Attracting and retaining services to this central core should be a priority. The provision of flexible spaces both indoor and outdoor can help to provide for new commercial opportunities (e.g. Incubator spaces, pop up shops) and more community events (e.g. markets, concerts). Furthermore, appropriate promotion of Monkstown should seek to challenge negative stereotypes and attract investment.



LOVING THE LANDSCAPE



BUILDING SKILLS



MAKING DESTINATIONS

OBJECTIVE THREE

ENRICHED LANDSCAPE

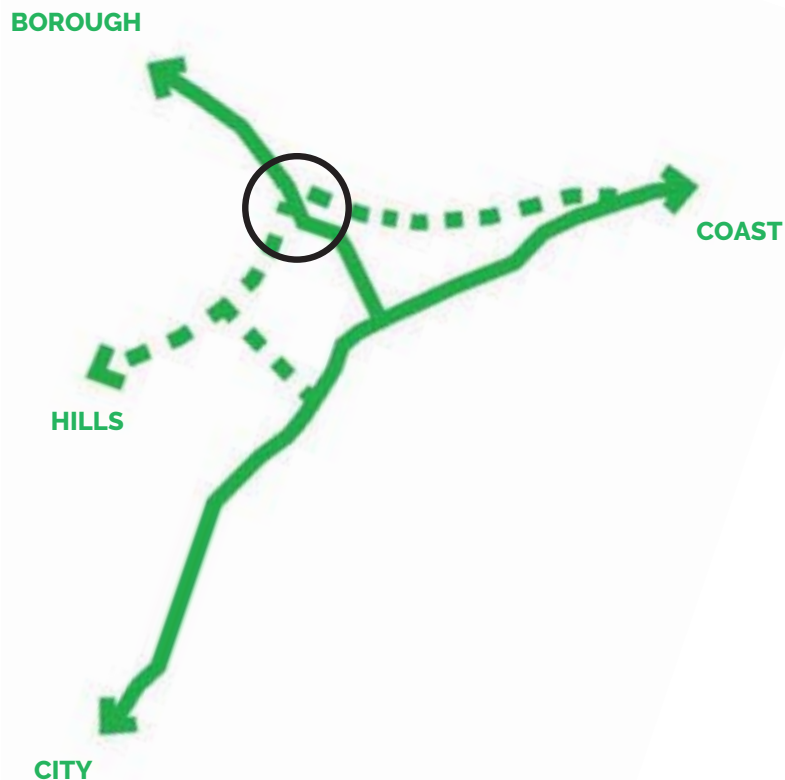


HARNESSING CREATIVITY

Greater Monkstown is fortunate to have extensive green space on its doorstep. Work is now needed to strengthen the relationship between it and local residents, 'learning to love' the landscape through educational and recreational initiatives.

The Threemile Water, Carmoney Hill and other assets should be strategically planned to realise further benefits. These should include the building of local skills and the development of specific destinations that provide entrepreneurial opportunities and visitors attractions. In doing so, creativity should be embraced through the arts as a means to enliven the landscape.

GROWING THE GREENWAY



OBJECTIVE FOUR

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION



WELCOMING GATEWAYS



IMPROVING LINKS



LINKING OPPORTUNITY



POSITIVE CONNECTIONS

Finally, it will be important for Greater Monkstown to continue improving connections to between its neighbourhoods and with surrounding areas, with an emphasis on walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel. This will include the strengthening of physical and economic links to places of employment and transport nodes.

It will also include the development of the greenway network, providing invaluable green infrastructure for Newtownabbey as a whole. Within this structure an opportunity exists to enhance gateways. Lastly improving communication between the local authority, groups, businesses and residents should be a constant objective helping bring people and places together.



Placeshaping CONCEPT

The Placeshaping Concept Plan sets out key strategic principles for the Greater Monkstown area. This shows where the Strategic Objectives should be applied to the physical layout of the area, including its routes, key sites and neighbourhoods. The plan should be used to inform long-term plan making, as well as the shorter term briefing of individual development sites.

Neighbourhood Centres and Key Street Connections

These locations and especially the Jordonstown Road should be supported as the focus for facilities and services. This will involve retaining existing occupants and attracting new ones that can provide for the local area. Planning must support this by encouraging appropriate mixed use development, fronting onto civic public realm.

Public Green Space, Monkstown Gateways and Potential New Green Links

The landscape of the area is a considerable asset that should be capitalised upon for the benefit of local population. Strategically planned, This should involve improving access to green spaces for local communities by providing key gateways. This will also act to provide a positive welcome to the area.

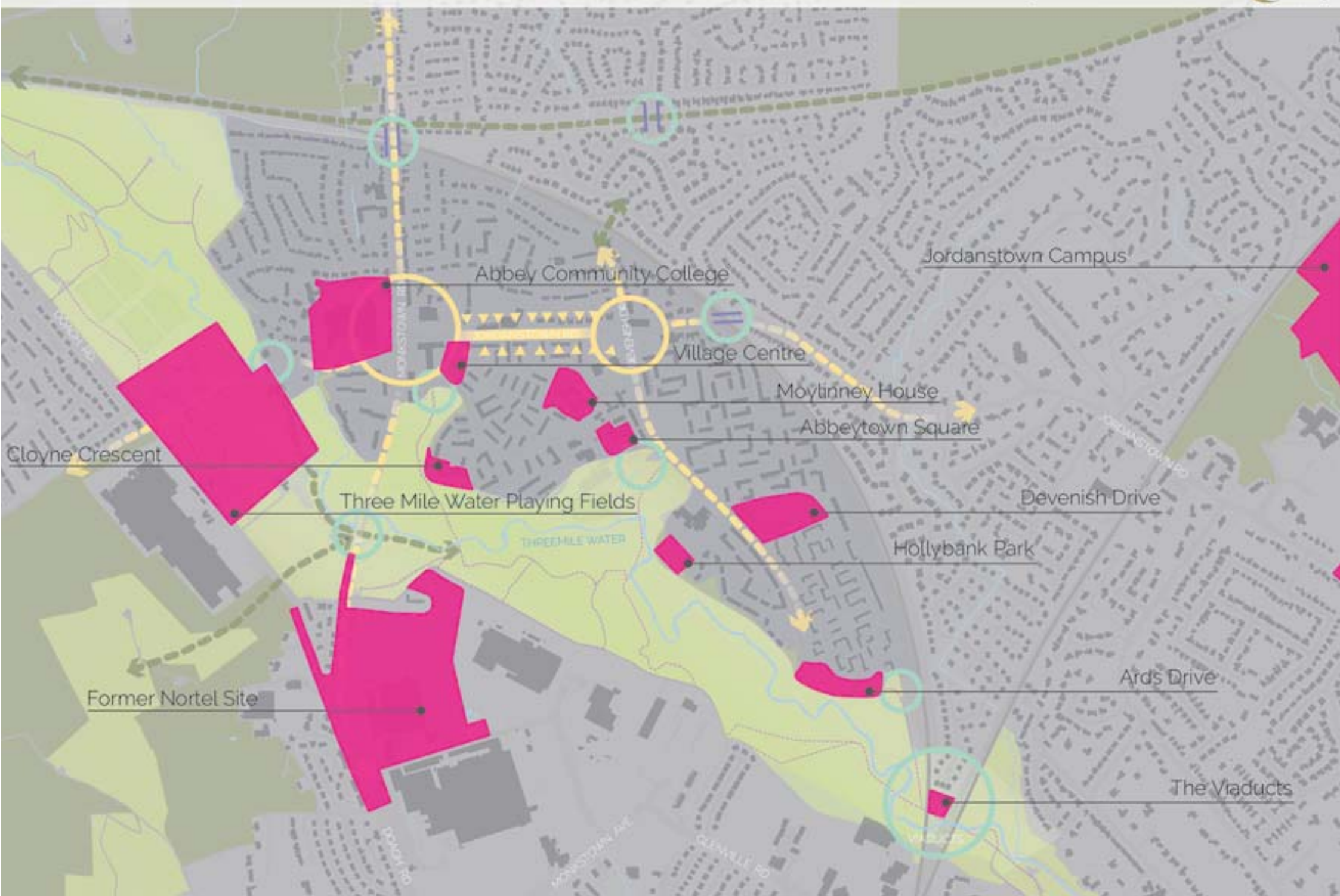
A specific opportunity exists to sensitively develop the Whiteabbey Viaducts area into a destination for events and activities, welcoming visitors to the area.

New green links should also be implemented to further connect the landscape. These include along the Threemilewater, particularly in the vicinity of the Monkstown Road and Woods. Links should also be forged between the River and Carmoney Hill, whilst a new greenway connection explored along the abandoned railway line. Finally a foot and cycle bridge at Joe's Lane (Jennings Park to Blackthorn Road) would help reconnect residential neighbourhoods, reducing vehicle usage and helping to support services and facilities.

Development Opportunity Sites

It will be important that the development opportunities around the Greater Monkstown area are taken forward in a manner that fulfils the objectives set out in this strategy. Summarised on the following pages and detailed in the appendix, a series of placeshaping guidelines should be used to help inform their planning and design.





Placeshaping SITES

The adjacent plan shows site with development potential at the time of preparing this Placeshaping Pilot. Some are sites long designated for housing, others the subject of specific proposals. In this section and the accompanying appendix, placeshaping guidance is providing to help ensure all developments contribute positively to fulfilling the Placeshaping Objectives for Greater Monkstown.

Three Mile Water Playing Fields - Works are underway to develop a football training site in this location. The project should connect physically and socially with surrounding neighbourhoods as much as possible.

Former Nortel Site - Proposals for a supermarket, housing and business units on this site have been in existence for a number of years. Care is needed to ensure such development integrates with surrounding areas and complements existing neighbourhood centres.

Abbey Community College - Considerations regarding the future of the school in this location are ongoing. For Greater Monkstown, retaining the school here is a priority. Should it be relocated, other educational and community uses must be found that can contribute positively to community life.

Village Centre - Land adjacent to the Village Centre has been partially developed with a popular allotment area. The remainder of the site has potential to provide built frontage to the Jordanstown Road of benefit to sustaining the central core.

Cloyne Crescent - A prominent site on the edge of the Monkstown estate, residential development here must seek to front onto the river park, helping provide a positive gateway between it and the estate.

Moylinney House - This vacant building impacts negatively on the area in its current state. The centrally located site is well suited to mixed use development incorporating community uses and residential accommodation.

Abbeytown Square - Once the centre of the Monkstown estate, this area has lost its commercial viability. Consideration should be given to a comprehensive redevelopment that provides a range of modern residential of units.

Hollybank Park - Care is required to ensure this site allocated for residential development relates well to the adjacent river park.

Devenish Drive - A large residential development that with plans progressing at the time of writing. New housing must adopt the principles of good urban design, adding attractive streets and spaces to the area.

Ards Drive - Another large and relatively exposed site on the edge of the estate. This site must also seek to front onto the river park, whilst providing better foot and cycle connections that link it with the estate.

The Viaducts - This special location has been improved over the years amidst concerns over its role as interface between neighbourhoods. Considerable potential exists to further transform this location into a destination for events and activities.

Jordanstown Campus - With the relocation of the Ulster University to Belfast City Centre, this large redevelopment site will impact upon the entire Newtownabbey area. The provision of amenities and good physical connections to and from the north west of the site will be important for Greater Monkstown.

GREATER MONKSTOWN

PLACESHAPING PILOT