

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

Local Development Plan: Lands for Consideration

Response on behalf of:

Mr David Wilson

September 2019

Introduction

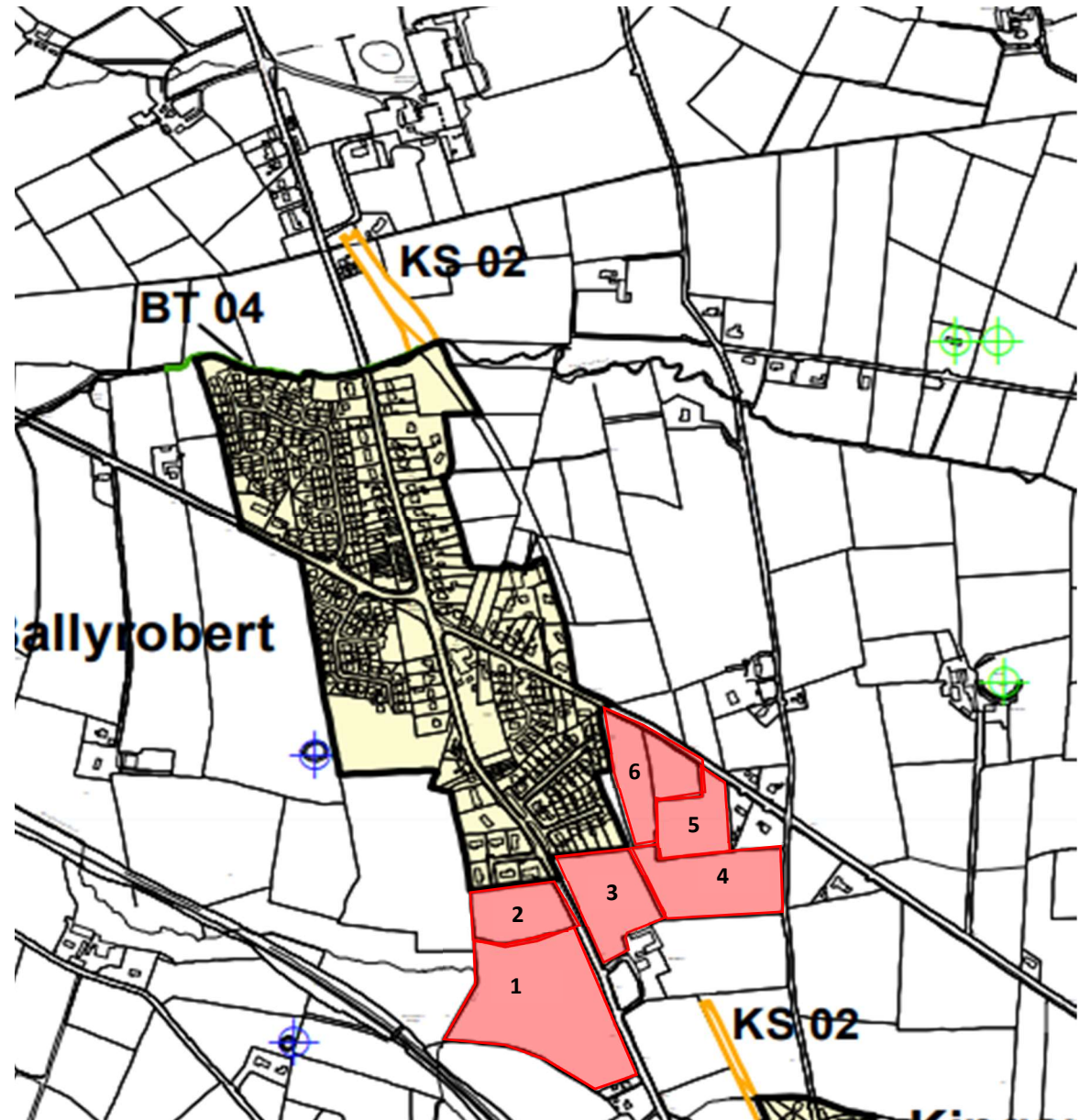
This Statement is submitted for consideration by the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Local Development Plan team on behalf of our client, Mr David Wilson.

Mr Wilson owns six parcels of land outside the designated settlement limit of Ballyrobert. He is interested in the development of housing on these lands to help meet the local housing need within Ballyrobert. To this end we present all six parcels of land as deliverable and available housing sites that comprise a total of 10.9ha.

Ballyrobert Primary School is located in the heart of the village. The school has expanded in recent times but does not have a car park to facilitate parents/guardians dropping off and picking up school children. The absence of a car park is causing very significant congestion issues and, more worryingly, serious highway safety concerns. To alleviate these issues, Mr Wilson has agreed to gift a portion of his land to the local Primary School for the use as a school car park as part of any forthcoming development proposal on the identified lands.

The Draft Plan Strategy allocates 35 dwellings for the village of Ballyrobert across the plan period. This allocation will be delivered exclusively through the provision of previous allocations and committed sites meaning no new housing land is proposed for Ballyrobert up to 2030. This is an unsustainable level of housing provision, which does not meet the demands of the local community. On this basis we contend that the Draft Plan Strategy is unsound on the basis that it fails the Coherence and Effectiveness test CE2.

Figure 1: BMAP 2015 Map No.1 Newtownabbey Countryside



Site and Surroundings

The proposed development lands are located on the southern side of Ballyrobert, just beyond the designated settlement limit. Ballyrobert is a desirable and highly sought after village owing to its highly sustainable location only 20-minutes' drive from Belfast and 10 minutes from Ballymartin Park and Ride. It is also in close proximity to the A8 with onward connectivity to the M2.

All 6no. parcels of land are currently green field sites defined by mature and established hedgerows which would be suitable for much desired new housing developments in Ballyrobert.

Figure 2: General Location of Ballyrobert

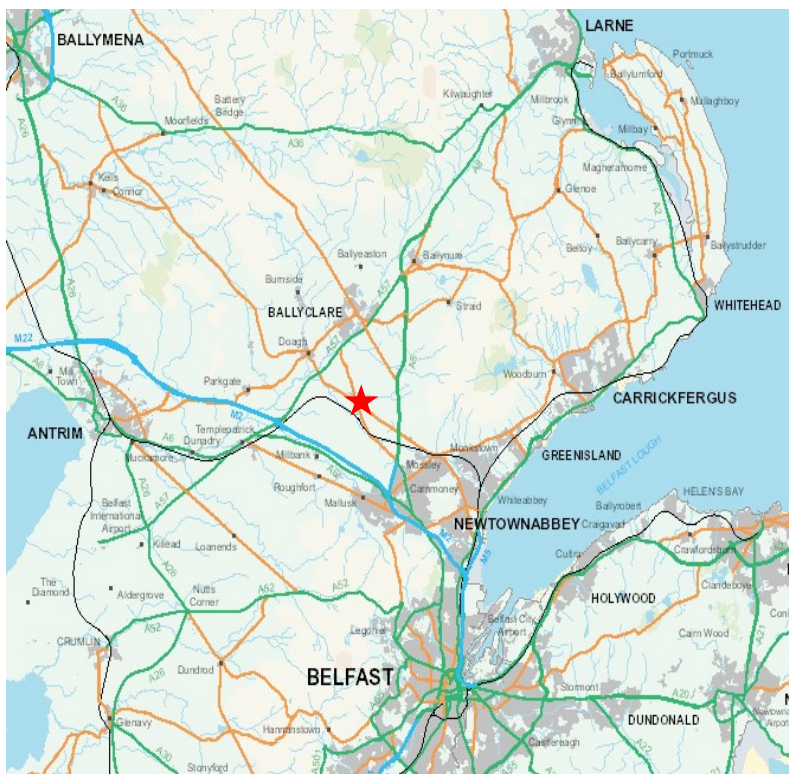


Figure 3: Views into each of the 6 parcels of land (see page overleaf for corresponding photographs)



View 1: View into site 1 from Ballyrobert Road



View 2: View into site 2 from Ballyrobert Road



View 3: View into site 3 from Ballyrobert Road



View 4: View into site 4 from Horseshoe Road



View 5: View into site 5 from Mossley Road



View 6: View into site 6 from Mossley Road



Figure 4: Site Analysis



Accessibility & Connectivity

The proposed development lands are all open green fields, in agricultural use. They have no watercourses or other natural or built heritage features that would otherwise restrict development potential. Access to the lands is available via Ballyrobert Road and Mossley Road. None of the access points are protected routes.

Footpaths are located along the Ballyrobert Road and Mossley Road which have a direct link between the nearby Thompson Primary School and parcels No. 3 and 6. These parcels of land would be the most suitable for any new primary school car park.

A Translink Ulsterbus stop is located along the Ballyrobert Road, which is less than a 5 minute walk from all proposal lands. It provides regular services to Mossley, Templepatrick, Ballymartin and Larne. Mossley train station is also located 3 miles away from Ballyrobert, providing services to Derry / Londonderry, Belfast, Coleraine, Portadown etc. Additional new housing developments in Ballyrobert would therefore support alternative forms of travel to the private car and more sustainable travel patterns.

Figure 5: Accessibility & Connectivity

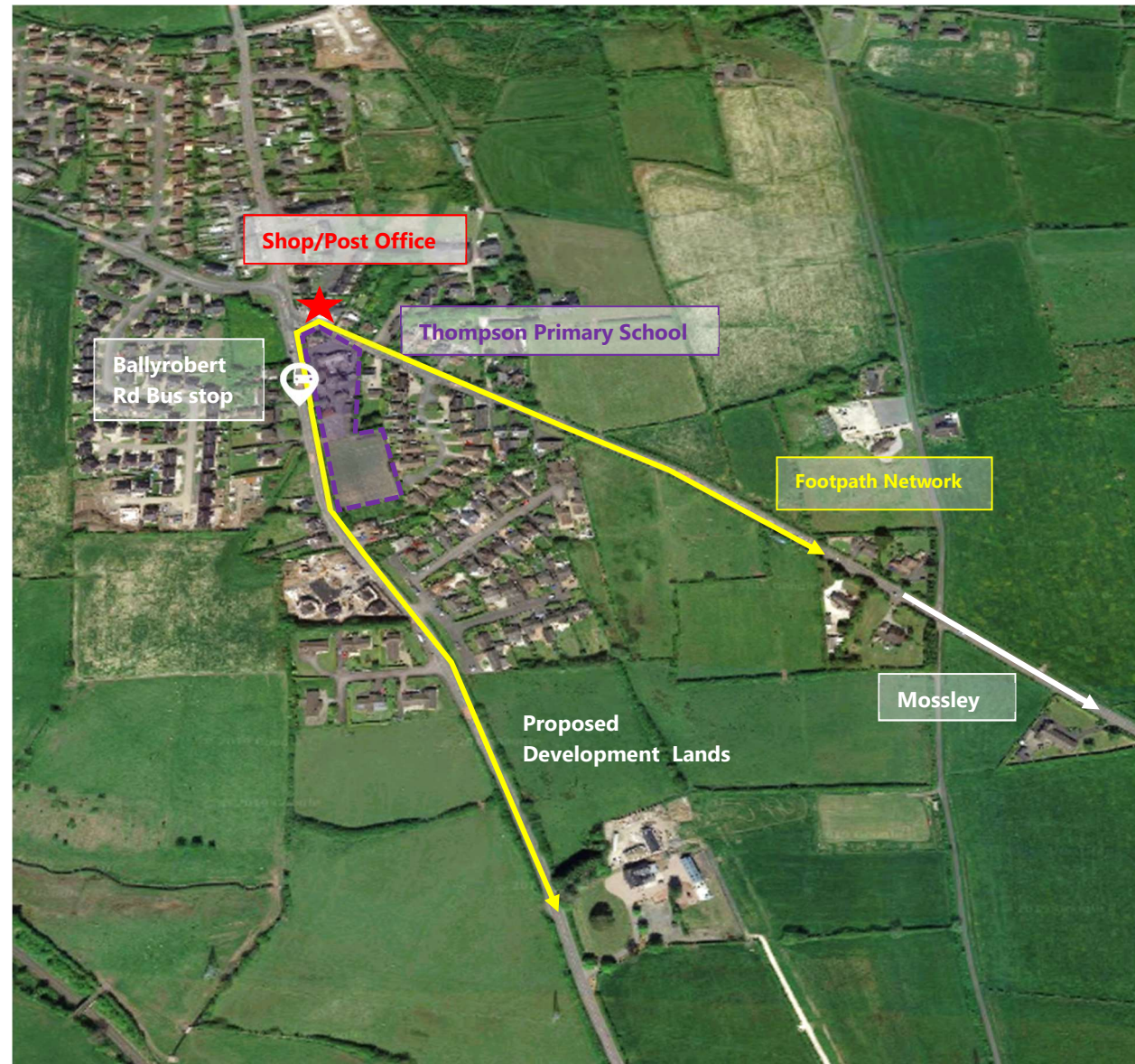


Figure 6: Flooding

Flooding

The Rivers Agency flood maps show that the site is not within any fluvial flood plains and that there is no watercourses within the sites.

Some surface water has been found within the site. Such surface water flooding would be resolved through the installation of an appropriate drainage system.

Proposed
Development Lands

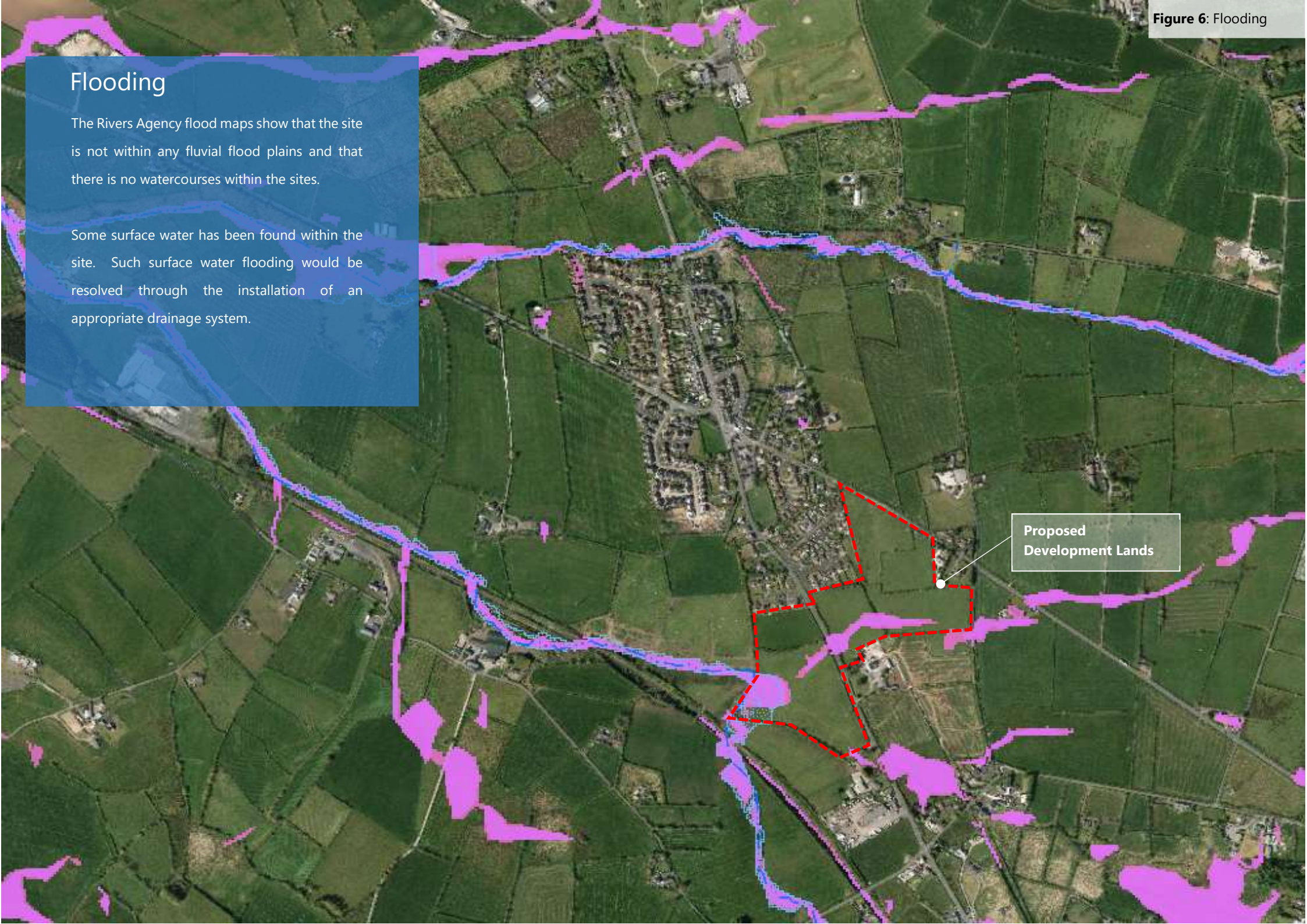
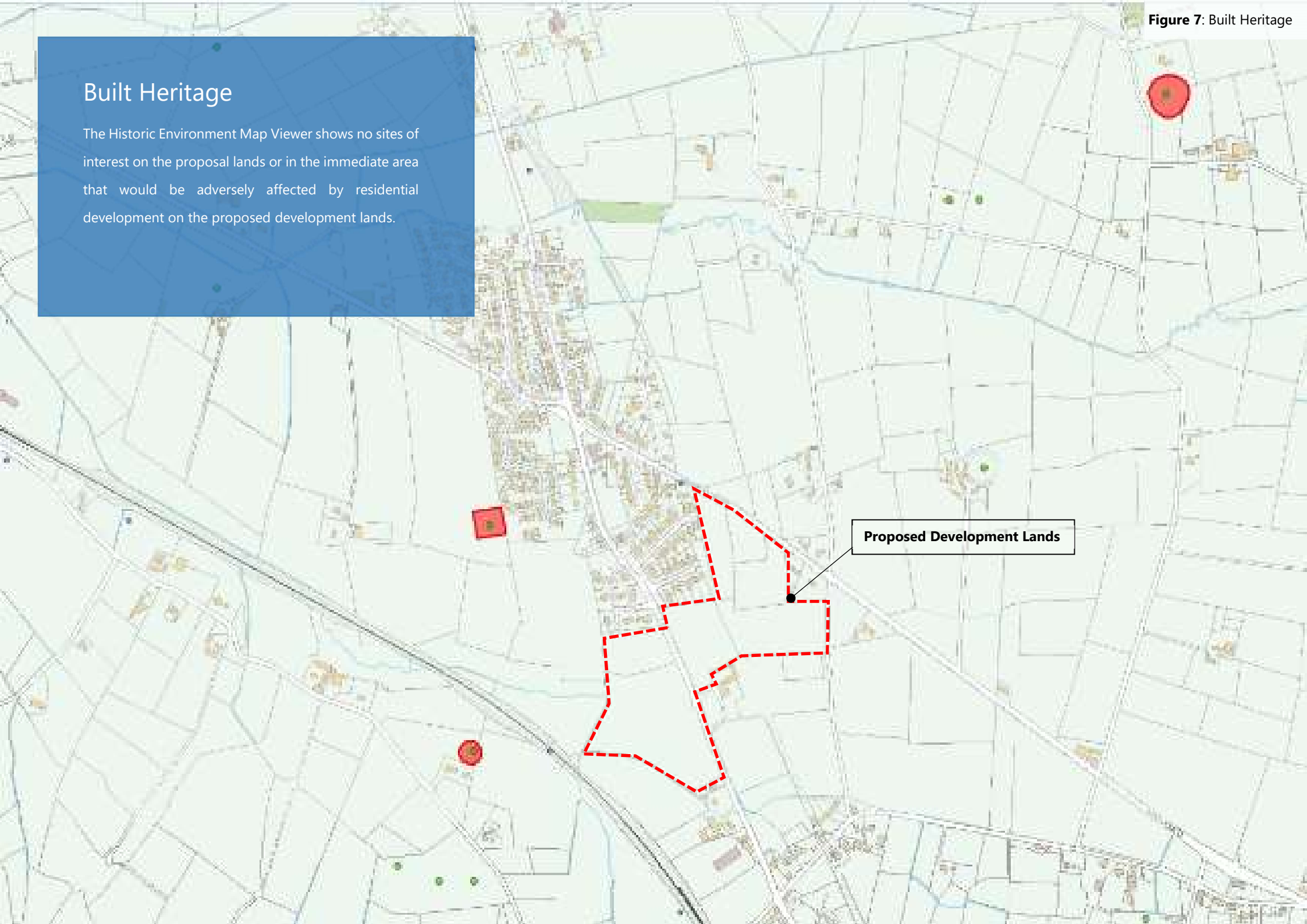


Figure 7: Built Heritage

Built Heritage

The Historic Environment Map Viewer shows no sites of interest on the proposal lands or in the immediate area that would be adversely affected by residential development on the proposed development lands.



Car Parking and Congestion Issues within Ballyrobert

Thompson Primary School is located on a constrained site and has no car park for the use of parents\guardians dropping children off to school. Aside from entrance markings immediately outside the school gate, there are no parking restrictions along Mossley Rd in this general location. Those dropping off their children have to park or abandon their car along the busy Mossley Road resulting in serious safety concerns for children and parents and exacerbating longstanding congestion issues within the village.

To compound matters the village shop/post office is located directly opposite the school. The shop operators have had to place parking restriction signs around the shop forecourt as cars were being abandoned there during school drop-off and pick-up times hindering the convenience of local shoppers. Large HGV's and refuelling tankers that facilitate the shop have to manoeuvre across the highway, which further adds to the congestion at peak times.

Photographs opposite and at **Appendix 2** taken on Thursday 12 Sept 2019 show the congestion created in the heart of Ballyrobert at peak times during school pick-up.

The absence of a school car park is resulting in chronic congestion and presents a legitimate highway safety concerns. This issue must be addressed as a matter of urgency in order to prevent any serious injuries occurring and to ameliorate the longstanding congestion problems within Ballyrobert village.



The images below show the close proximity between Thompson Primary School, the local shop/post office and the Mossley Rd/Ballyrobert Rd intersection.



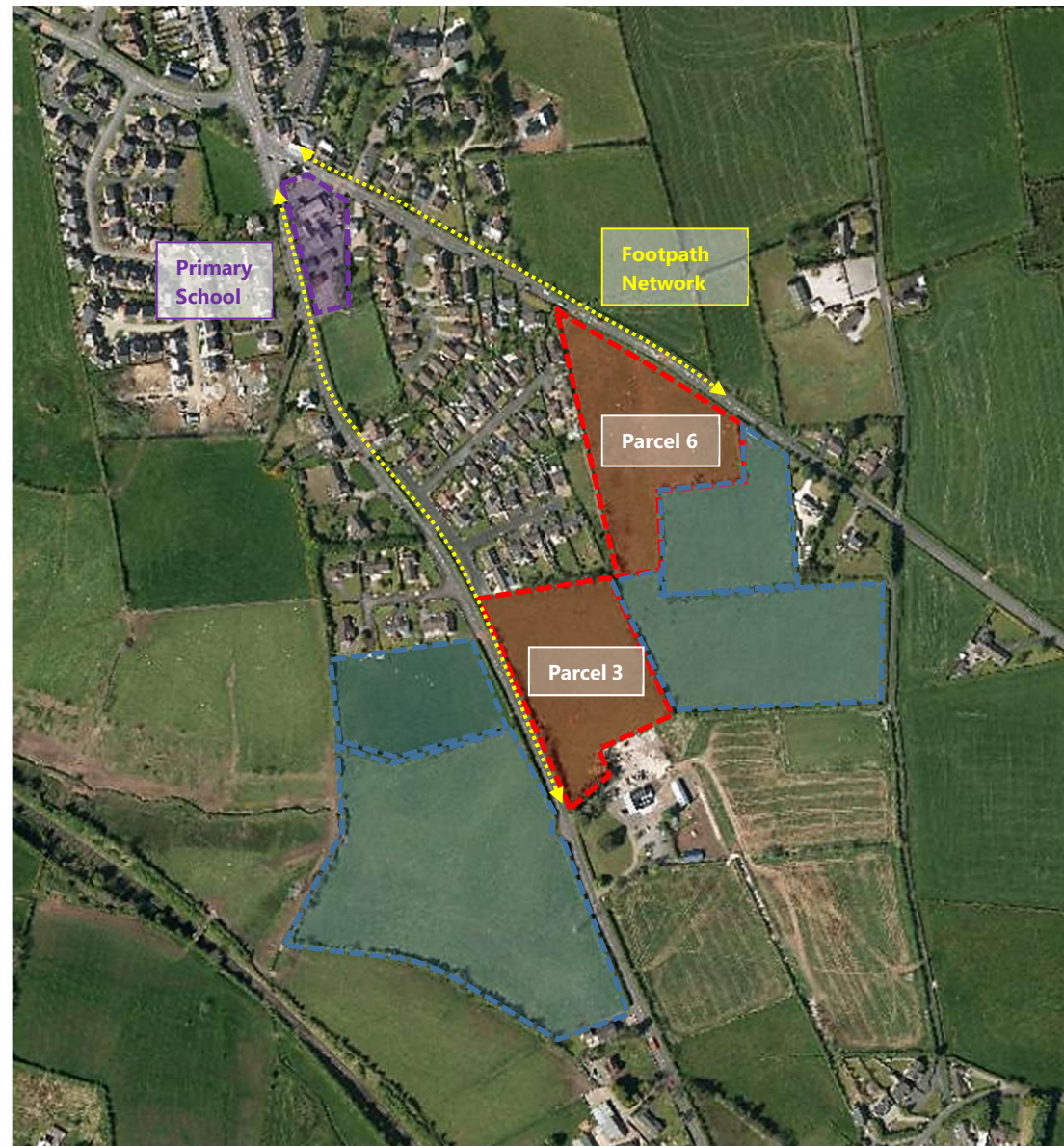
To alleviate the congestion and highway safety issues, Mr Wilson has agreed to gift a portion of his land to Thompson Primary School for the use as a school car park as part of any forthcoming development proposal on the identified lands. Parcels 3 and 6 (see Figure 9 opposite) appear to be the most appropriate for delivering a school car park as they are located closest to the primary school and are connected directly to it via the existing footpath network, meaning children and parents/guardians would not need to cross the busy Mossley or Ballyrobert Roads to get to school.

Thompson Primary School is acutely aware of these highways' issues and the impact that they are having upon the community. To this end, the School's Board of Governors has furnished Mr Wilson with a letter setting out their full support for any forthcoming residential development on the identified lands in return for a much needed car park (see **Appendix 1**).

In addition to this Mr Paul Girvan MP has also provided Mr Wilson with a letter of support (see **Appendix 3**). Mr Girvan is the elected MP for the South Antrim constituency and understands the pressing congestion and highway safety issues present in Ballyrobert., As a public servant, Mr Girvan believes that a car park would go some way to solving the abovementioned problems.

It is evident that there is community support in favour of a proposal for development within the village that would secure a car park for use by the local primary school.

Figure 9: Sites proximity to adjoining footpaths



Draft Plan Strategy 2030 - Soundness

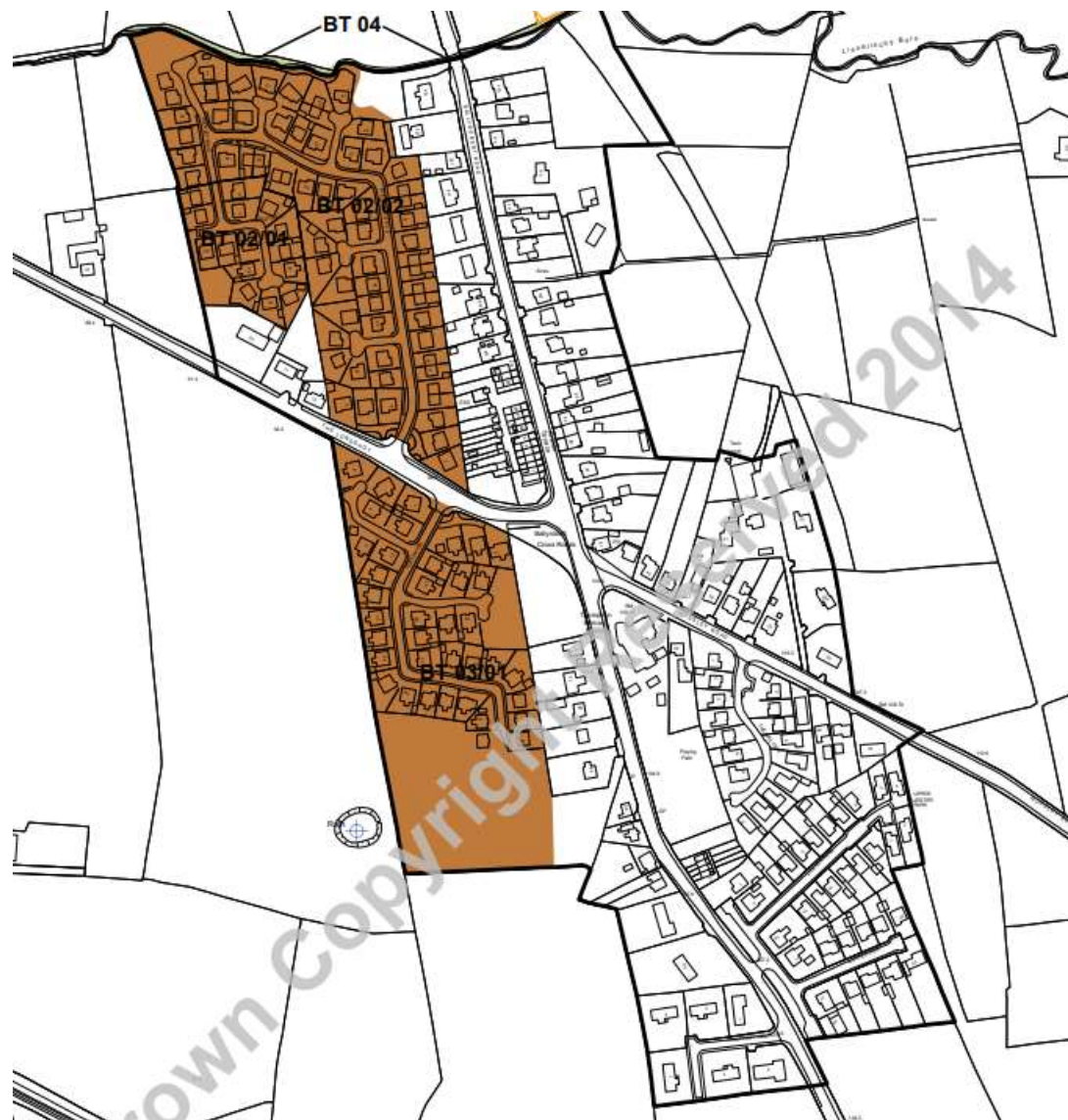
Strategic Objective 8 of the Draft Plan Strategy seeks to “ensure a sufficient supply of land for new homes, provide a diverse choice of housing and strengthen community cohesion”

Table 6 of the Draft Plan Strategy identifies a total allocation of 35 dwellings within Ballyrobert across the plan period 2015-2030. Evidence Paper 6: Housing, shows that this figure will be delivered exclusively through the committed supply of housing already in the village. In short, the Draft Plan suggests that there is an ample supply of land within Ballyrobert to meet the needs of the community and therefore no new land will be zoned for residential development within the settlement in the forthcoming Local Policies Plan.

The majority of committed sites within Ballyrobert are on land zoned for housing within BMAP 2015 (see figure 10 opposite). Most of this housing has already been built out and it is highly likely that the 35no. dwellings planned for Ballyrobert for the period 2015-2030 will be completed and occupied within the next 2-3 years. The corollary is that very little new residential development will take place over the next 10 years within Ballyrobert.

Ballyrobert is a highly desirable place to live due to its sustainable location in close proximity to Belfast and the A8 and M2 road networks. It is also serviced with nearby bus routes and a train station located 5 minutes away in Mossley. The figure of ‘35’ new dwellings proposed for Ballyrobert up to 2030, much of which has already been constructed, does not meet the needs of the local community. On this basis, the Draft

Figure 10: BMAP 2015 Map No. 6- Ballyrobert



Strategy fails to meet 'Soundness Test CE2 of Development Plan Practice Note 6 'Soundness' which states: **'The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust evidence base'**.

Mr David Wilson is presenting six parcels of land as available and deliverable housing sites to meet this overriding demand for housing in Ballyrobert. He is also willing to gift Thompson Primary School a portion of land as part of any future residential development for use as a much needed car park, which will greatly benefit the local community. This car park has support from local residents, the primary school, and local MP Paul Girvan who all feel the congestion issues are causing serious health and safety concerns and that it is urgent that action is taken quickly to ameliorate these longstanding issues.

We urge the Council to revisit its allocated figure of 35 dwellings and propose that it must be revised upwards in order to meet the needs of Ballyrobert and its residents.

Conclusion

Our client, Mr David Wilson, is interested in the development of housing on his lands located along Ballyrobert and Mossley Road. This new housing would help satisfy any increase in housing need that may be projected by the Antrim and Newtownabbey Local Development Plan presently being prepared by the Council.

The total combined area of the parcels of land amounts to 10.9ha.

Mr Wilson is also proposing to gift a portion of land to the local primary school to be used as a car park to help alleviate the congestion and parking problems within the heart of Ballyrobert village. This has been well received by the primary school, local residents and Paul Girvan MP.

The parcels of land abuts the designated Ballyrobert settlement limit to the south, with parcels 1, 3 and 6 being situated between a cluster of dwellings and Ballyrobert. If the settlement boundary was to be extended and zoned for development, it would conclude a natural rounding off the settlement.

There are no natural or built heritage features on the land that would preclude or constrain development. The site is not subject to fluvial flooding and any surface water can be resolved through the integration of a suitable drainage scheme.

Access to the sites will be available along Ballyrobert Road, Mossley Road and Horseshoe Road. Public transport is available within less than a 5 minute walk from any of the proposal sites via a bus stop which provides regular services to Mossley, Templepatrick, Ballymartin and Larne.

The Draft Plan Strategy allocates 35 dwellings for the village of Ballyrobert across the plan period. This allocation will be delivered exclusively through the provision of previous allocations and committed sites meaning no new housing is proposed for Ballyrobert up to 2030. This is an unsustainable level of housing provision, which does not meet the demands of the local community.

The Draft Plan Strategy fails to meet Soundness Test CE2 of Development Plan Practice Note 6 'Soundness' as the strategy is not realistic or appropriate.

The proposed lands are highly suitable to accommodate housing development. We therefore request that they are all considered to be included within a revised settlement limit for Ballyrobert and zoned for housing in the emerging Local Development Plan.

APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF SUPPORT - THOMPSON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Education Authority | North Eastern Region

The Thompson Primary School

The Thompson Primary School
42 Mossley Road
Ballyrobert
Ballyclare
Co Antrim
BT39 9RX
Tel: 028 9335 2361
Fax: 028 9332 4791
E-mail: info@thompsonps.ballyclare.ni.sch.uk

25th June, 2019

Re: Planning request submitted by Mr David Wilson, Ballyhartfield Road,
Templepatrick

To whom it may concern,

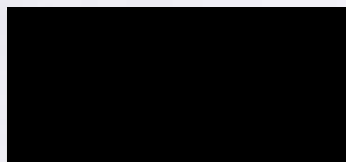
We understand that Mr Wilson intends to apply for planning development purposes.

He has advised us if he is successful in obtaining planning, he would gift a portion of the land to the school for parking and/or sports pitch.

The Board of Governors would be happy, in such circumstances, to accept such a gift if planning was granted as this would considerably help in alleviating parking problems and providing sports facilities.

Yours faithfully

On behalf of the Board of Governors of The Thompson Primary School



Mrs R. A. Purdy
Principal



Principal | Mrs R.A. Purdy B.Ed. (Hons) P.Q.H.(N.I.), L.T.C.I.

APPENDIX 2

PHOTOS OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



APPENDIX 3

LETTER OF SUPPORT - PAUL GIRVAN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Date: 13th September 2019
Ref: PG/2019/General

Sharon Mossman
Planning Department
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Mossley Mill
Newtownabbey

Dear Miss Mossman,

Further to our meeting at your office and our joint discussions with Mr David Wilson regarding his lands at Ballyrobert Village.

You will recall that Mr Wilson confirmed he wished his land to be considered within the current Local Area Development Plan and was also prepared to gift The Thompson Primary School a carpark, in an effort to alleviate the chronic traffic congestion surrounding the school.

It has become even more obvious to myself and the residents, that over the years, as the school has grown in popularity and expanded, that the absence of a school car park is not only a serious problem, but potentially a very dangerous problem and one which Mr Wilson's proposal is set to address.

Mr Wilson confirmed to us, and has since met with the schools Board of Governors, and reiterated his intention to include with his plans a carpark that he will gift to The Thompson Primary School, on the portion of land closest to the school on the Mossley Road. Once established, it would ensure that any serious congestion is eliminated, thus ensuring that no child or parent would have to cross any of these busy roads and could walk their children on the established adjoining footpath safely to school.

I believe, as a public servant, this proposal is one that we can no afford to overlook, and it should receive a positive response.

Could I suggest Mr Wilson and his Planning Consultant might be granted a PAD meeting, when the details of his proposal can be further discussed. I would of course be happy to attend.

I remain
Yours sincerely

Paul Girvan MP

Paul Girvan MP, 29A The Square, Ballyclare, BT39 9BB
Tel: 028 9334 0111 Email: paul.girvan.mp@parliament.uk