

# Antrim and Newtownabbey Local Development Plan 2030

Preferred Options Paper









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A prosperous place  
Inspired by our people  
Driven by ambition





# Foreword

We are delighted to launch the Preferred Options Paper for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

This is the first formal stage in the preparation of our Local Development Plan and is a significant milestone for the Council in exercising its new planning responsibilities. It is also an exciting time for our citizens, who have the opportunity to positively shape their area and influence how Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough should look by 2030.

The Council, through its Corporate Plan, has set out an ambitious vision for the Borough to be "A prosperous place, inspired by our people, driven by ambition."

The emerging Local Development Plan will be an essential tool in working towards the realisation of that vision and will set the framework for the future planning and sustainable development of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough.

The Preferred Options Paper has identified what we consider to be the key planning issues within the Borough and have presented options on how to address them, alongside our Preferred Option. The issues highlighted in this document are important but are by no means exhaustive.

Public engagement is woven through the Local Development Plan process and importantly, at this first stage, the Preferred Options Paper seeks to stimulate a wide-ranging, yet focused, debate on issues of strategic significance which are likely to influence the shape of future development within the Borough.

We are committed to a meaningful engagement with the local community throughout the Local Development Plan process and we are aware that plans can only be truly successful if they are rooted in local knowledge and an appreciation of what is important to our people.

Your views are very important to us and we look forward to hearing what you have to say.

Together, through an efficient planning process that promotes positive development, we can create and maintain vibrant and welcoming towns, villages, neighbourhoods and rural areas, whilst improving our environment and encouraging and supporting economic growth.



*John Scott*

**John Scott**  
Mayor



*Jacqui Dixon*

**Jacqui Dixon** BSC MBA  
Chief Executive



*Fraser Agnew*

**Fraser Agnew** MBE  
Chair of Planning Committee



# Have your say

## Responding to this Consultation Document

You are invited to submit your comments on our Preferred Options Paper and associated documents on line at [www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/Council/Planning/Local-Development-Plan](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/Council/Planning/Local-Development-Plan)

The period of consultation is 12 weeks beginning on 18 January 2017 and closing at 4:30pm on 12 April 2017. Alternatively if you wish to make a response in writing please contact the Forward Plan Team at the address below and we will issue you with hard copy questionnaire for your response.

### How to contact us

**By e-mail to:** [planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

**By post to:** Planning Section, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey BT36 5QA.

**By phone:** 0300 123 6677

**Text phone:** 18001 0289034 0000.

## Planning Events

We are holding a series of drop in meetings where you will be able to speak to a planner about this consultation. Full details are available on our website or by contacting the Forward Plan Team.

## Keeping the Community Involved

The Council wishes to encourage the ongoing involvement of the local community in the planning process, in particular with the formulation of the new Local Development Plan. Any individual or organisation wishing to be included in this process is invited to complete the Community Involvement Form at Appendix 1 of this document. This form is also available on the Council website or from Mossley Mill or Antrim Civic Centre. The completed form should be sent to the Planning Section at the above address.

## Alternative Formats

Should you require a copy of this consultation document in an alternative format, it can be made available on request in large print, audio format, DAISY or Braille. It may also be made available in minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

Only the submitted comments regarding the Councils Preferred Options Paper and associated documents may be published by the Council and no personal details will be disclosed unless your permission is given. The Council will comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.









# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Preferred Options Paper (POP) is the first formal document to be produced in the preparation of the Council's new Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP).
- 1.2 The purpose of the new LDP will be to inform the public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of how the Borough should develop in the years ahead. The Plan will balance competing demands and aim to ensure that good development occurs in the right place, at the right time. It will contain policies and proposals that will be used in determining planning applications. A good plan will lead to decisions that are consistent and people will know what to expect in terms of change, and the locations where development will be encouraged.

## Getting Involved

- 1.3 The purpose of this POP document is to promote debate on issues of strategic importance that will influence the shape of future development in our Borough up to 2030. The POP sets out a number of planning issues that we want to engage with you on. It contains options for the strategic direction that our new LDP might take and we wish to seek your views on these.

- 1.4 Consultation on the POP is intended to provide all stakeholders with the opportunity to put forward their views and influence the direction of our new Plan from the outset. It provides a key opportunity for everyone with an interest in our Borough to have a say in shaping the future.

## Plan Area

- 1.5 The new LDP will apply to the entire Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council area which covers 728 square km<sup>2</sup> stretching from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the shores of Belfast Lough in the east. This is an area with an attractive and varied landscape centred on the South Antrim hills and the Six Mile Water valley which is also endowed with a rich historic and archaeological heritage.
- 1.6 Over 140,000 people live in the Borough with the majority of the population concentrated in the two main urban areas of Metropolitan Newtownabbey and Antrim and the towns of Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown.
- 1.7 The Borough occupies an important strategic position within Northern Ireland with three major transport corridors traversing the area (the M2/A6, the A8 and the A26) as well as the rail lines to Derry/Londonderry and Larne.

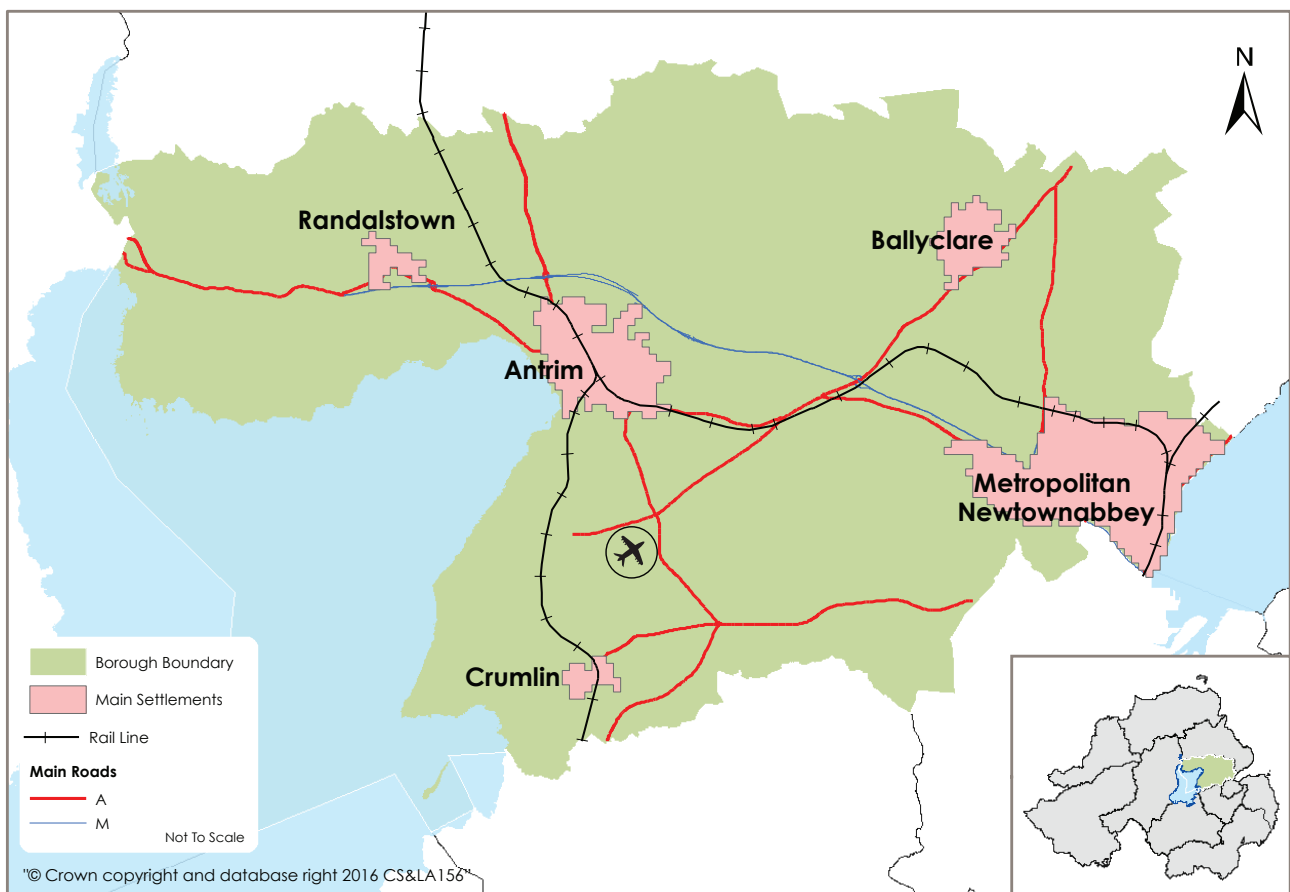




1.8 We are home to Belfast International Airport, one of Northern Ireland's busiest gateways with over four million people arriving and departing every year.

1.9 Given its strategic advantages the Borough has been successful in attracting high profile businesses, such as Randox and Canyon Europe. The continued creation of jobs and prosperity for our residents is a key priority for the Council.

*Figure 1: The Plan Area*





## What is the Local Development Plan?

- 1.10 The Local Development Plan is a spatial land use plan which primarily is about place. It will guide future development and use of land in our towns, villages and rural areas by addressing the spatial implications of social, economic and environmental change. The LDP will balance competing demands and aim to ensure that good development occurs in the right place and at the right time. It is therefore a powerful tool for place-shaping.
- 1.11 Under the new Planning System introduced in 2015, the LDP will comprise of two documents, a Plan Strategy and a Local Policies Plan that will be prepared in sequence.
- 1.12 The **Plan Strategy** will set out our vision and objectives for the development of the Borough. It will include a range of strategic and Borough wide policies to facilitate and manage development and a Spatial Growth Strategy that will indicate in broad terms, the locations where different types of development will be facilitated. It will be subject to public consultation and an Independent Examination before it is adopted.
- 1.13 The **Local Policies Plan** will be prepared once the Plan Strategy is adopted. It will include site specific proposals and local policy designations required to deliver the vision, objectives and Spatial Growth Strategy set out in our Plan Strategy. It will also be subject to public consultation and an Independent Examination before it is adopted.
- 1.14 Importantly, once the Plan Strategy is adopted, it will replace the corresponding parts of the existing development plans for the Borough (the Antrim Area Plan and the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan) and those regional operational planning policies that are currently retained by the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (DOE 2015). The remaining relevant parts of the existing plans, such as land use zonings, designations and local policy, will then be replaced upon adoption of the Local Policies Plan.
- 1.15 The new Planning System has introduced what is commonly referred to as the “plan-led” system. As a consequence our new LDP will be the primary consideration for decision making on all new development schemes and proposals will be required to accord with its provisions unless, exceptionally other material considerations indicate otherwise.



1.16 In summary our new Local Development Plan is intended to:

- 📍 Provide a Plan framework that will support the economic and social needs of our Borough, taking into account regional strategies and policies, whilst providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
- 📍 Facilitate sustainable growth by co-ordinating public and private investment that will encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the well-being of our community;
- 📍 Allocate sufficient land to meet the needs of the Borough;
- 📍 Provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision making;
- 📍 Help deliver the spatial aspects of our Community Plan; and
- 📍 Provide an opportunity for all stakeholders and in particular our residents to have a say about where and how development within our Borough should take place.

## What is the Preferred Options Paper?

- 1.17 This Preferred Options Paper (POP) is a consultation document that considers key strategic planning issues arising in the plan area. For a number of the issues it sets out a range of possible options as well as the Council's preferred option or approach and the reasoning for this.
- 1.18 Options for the overall pattern of new development throughout the Borough up to 2030 are provided as well as options for the planned allocation and distribution of housing growth across our main settlements. Following the consultation these matters will then be taken forward in the preparation of our Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan.
- 1.19 The new Planning System introduced the POP in order to front load community and stakeholder involvement in the plan process. As a Council, we decided to involve the public pre-publication, through a series of local engagement events, to establish the key matters which needed to be addressed.
- 1.20 Publication of the POP allows us to engage with you further now in this process. Public and stakeholder participation at the start of the plan making process is essential to identifying relevant issues and capturing your views from the outset.





It allows for more meaningful participation and better informed plan preparation. We have already published our Statement of Community Involvement to set out how we intend to engage with everyone in the new planning process and we will continue this commitment to engage with you as we undertake ongoing preparation of our new LDP.

1.21 The structure of the POP is as follows.

**Page 7-13** **Part One** provides an introduction to the POP.

**Part Two** sets the context in which our new LDP will be prepared including a profile of our Borough. **Page 16-28**

**Part Three** sets out our proposed Plan Vision and Objectives. **Page 30-32**

**Part Four** considers a number of key issues that have contributed to our proposed Spatial Growth Strategy. **Page 34-76**

**Part Five** sets out information on housing including our preferred option for the allocation and distribution of housing growth across our settlements; and **Page 77-95**

**Part Six** sets out our proposed direction in relation to planning policy. **Page 98-134**

## How did we get here?

1.22 The Forward Planning Team responsible for preparing the new LDP has been meeting those of you with an interest in the future of our Borough, both at our own planning events and also through attendance at events associated with the Council's emerging Community Plan.

1.23 A series of public engagement meetings took place across the Borough at the start of 2016 and with the support of PLACE an on-line questionnaire was developed at this time. We have also been asking those with an interest in our new LDP to register with us to be kept up to date on key stages of the LDP. We would like to thank everyone who has participated to date. We really appreciate you getting involved as your voice matters.

1.24 There has also been direct engagement with the elected Members of the Council who are well placed to provide local insight into the issues that matter most to you and this has helped inform and shape this POP document.



1.25 Finally, we have been liaising with and meeting consultees in Government Departments and other statutory bodies and have also made contact with neighbouring Councils. Our Borough doesn't exist in isolation and it is important that we work closely with key stakeholders as our new LDP emerges.

1.26 In bringing forward this POP document we have also prepared and are publishing a number of evidence and background papers to help everyone understand the issues in our Borough and to inform our decisions. These papers contain baseline information on our Borough and will continue to evolve as we continue to prepare our LDP. They have been prepared under the following key themes:

- 📍 **Facilitating Economic Development;**
- 📍 **Meeting the Needs of Society; and**
- 📍 **Shaping Our Environment.**

1.27 We have also carried out a preliminary review of current operational planning policy which has informed our planning policy options.

1.28 We are also making available the **Antrim and Newtownabbey Housing Monitor Report** for the period of 2014-2015 to accompany the POP. This Report indicates how much housing has been built in our Borough and how much land remains available to accommodate further housing development.

1.29 A number of assessments have also been undertaken. Our POP has been subject to an initial **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment**. The SA is an ongoing process which will run in parallel with the preparation of the LDP. An Interim Report, containing the appraisal of alternatives, along with the SA Scoping Report has been published alongside this document and is available for public consultation.

1.30 In addition, initial screening for the Habitats Regulations has also been carried out and is available for public consultation. A **Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)** aims to assess the possible adverse effects of our proposals on Natura 2000 sites (these comprise Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites). Similar to SA the HRA is an ongoing process which will take place at key stages during preparation of the LDP.





- 1.31 Another important consideration is the impact that our proposals may have on Section 75 groups and the promotion of good relations between persons of different religions belief, political opinion or race. At this early stage of the plan we have therefore published an interim progress report on **equality issues** in relation to our proposals. This process will be ongoing and will be reviewed at key stages during preparation of our new Plan. Our initial assessment has been published alongside our POP and again is open to a 12 week period of public consultation.
- 1.32 These papers are all available to view on our website or by contacting the Forward Planning Team.











## 2 Setting the Context

### Regional Policy Context

#### Programme for Government

2.1 The outcomes and objectives defined in the Northern Ireland Executive's forthcoming Programme for Government (PfG) will be important considerations in the preparation of our LDP and we will need to consider how the Plan will contribute to achieving these outcomes. As the PfG is still at the stage of public consultation, the Council will consider any required outcomes as part of preparation of the next key stage of the Plan, the Plan Strategy.

- 📍 Achieving a sustainable economy;
- 📍 Promoting good governance;
- 📍 Using sound science responsibly; and
- 📍 Promoting opportunity & innovation.

2.3 The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 requires that all Councils, in exercising their functions, act in a way that will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is reinforced by Section 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 which requires that the Council in exercising its functions in relation to a development plan must do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. The Council must also take account of any policies and guidance issued by Government Departments and any other matters that appear to be relevant.

#### Principles of Sustainable Development

2.2 The Executive's Sustainable Development Strategy - 'Everyone's Involved' (May 2010) brings forward a vision of Northern Ireland developing in a sustainable way. It aims to put in place measures to ensure that we can continue to grow our economy, improve our society and communities and utilise our natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. Delivery of the Strategy is based upon the following six guiding principles:

- 📍 Living within environmental limits;
- 📍 Ensuring a strong, healthy, just and equal society;

2.4 The 2011 Planning Act also requires that a Sustainability Assessment (SA) be undertaken for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan respectively to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the plan preparation process.





2.5 As the SA will incorporate an assessment of environmental effects it must also comply with the provisions of European Directive 2001/42/EC (commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive) which seeks to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the plan preparation process with a view to promoting sustainable development. The SEA Directive has been transposed into Northern Ireland legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (NI) 2004.

## Regional Development Strategy 2035

2.6 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 'Building a Better Future' (March 2012), provides a strategic and long term vision on the future development of Northern Ireland up to 2035.

2.7 The RDS vision is for "An outward-looking, dynamic and liveable Region with a strong sense of its place in the wider world; a Region of opportunity where people enjoy living and working in a healthy environment which enhances the quality of their lives and where diversity is a source of strength rather than division."

2.8 The RDS contains eight aims:-

- 📍 Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland;
- 📍 Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West;
- 📍 Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential;
- 📍 Promote development which improves the health and well-being of communities;
- 📍 Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places;
- 📍 Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake;
- 📍 Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change; and
- 📍 Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.



2.9 The RDS contains regional guidance which provides policy direction in relation to the economy, society and environment as well as spatial framework guidance tailored to each component of the spatial planning framework it identifies. It seeks to influence the future distribution of development throughout the region and sets out a Housing Growth Indicator for each Council area as a guide for those preparing Local Development Plans. It also provides the context in which to make policy and development decisions aimed at achieving sustainable development throughout Northern Ireland.

## Regional Transportation Strategy

2.10 Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future (ESTF) – ‘A New Approach to Regional Transportation’ (June 2011) complements the RDS and contains high level aims and strategic objectives to support the growth of the economy, enhance the quality of life for all and reduce the environmental impact of transport. It sets out the approach to regional transportation and is used to guide strategic investment decisions beyond 2015.

2.11 Work is progressing on the implementation of the ESTF, and we will work closely with the Department for Infrastructure to ensure that any future transportation projects affecting the Borough are appropriately reflected in our new Local Development Plan.

## Regional Water Strategy

2.12 ‘Sustainable Water – A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015 – 2040)’ sets out a range of initiatives to deliver the Executive’s long term goal of a sustainable water sector in Northern Ireland. The Strategy recognises how planning can impact on flood risk and water quality and aims to ensure that existing water and sewerage infrastructure and investment proposals inform future planning decisions and the preparation of Local Development Plans.

2.13 The Strategy sets out a number of matters that our new LDP will need to take into account which are summarised below:

📍 Ensuring planning decisions are informed by up to date information on the risk from all significant sources of flooding;

📍 Prevention of inappropriate development in high flood risk areas and ensuring that future development does not increase flood risk;





- 📍 Exceptional development within high flood risk areas must make provision for adequate mitigation measures;
- 📍 Ensure surface water drainage is adequately addressed; and
- 📍 Planning policy should promote sustainable water and sewerage services by making appropriate space for water and sewerage infrastructure including sustainable drainage systems.

## The Strategic Planning Policy Statement

2.14 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), published in September 2015, is one of the most significant documents in terms of policy context for our new LDP. The SPPS both outlines and provides strategic direction on the new Planning System introduced in April 2015. Critically, it defines regional strategic policy objectives for a range of topics, including housing, economic development, transportation and town centres, that will inform the LDP and in particular the development of new operational planning policies for the Borough.

2.15 The SPPS sets out five key core planning principles that underpin the planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development which are:

- 📍 Improving Health and Well-being;
- 📍 Creating and Enhancing Shared Space;
- 📍 Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth;
- 📍 Supporting Good Design and Positive Place Making; and
- 📍 Preserving and Improving the Built and Natural Environment.

## Planning Policy Statements

2.16 Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) address particular aspects of land use planning and provide policies that apply across Northern Ireland. As indicated in the SPPS the existing suite of retained PPSs (set out in Appendix 3 of this document) will cease to have effect when the Council adopts its new Plan Strategy for the whole of the Council area.



## A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

2.17 A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (1993) provided a compendium of planning policies that have gradually been replaced by PPSs and the subsequent SPPS. However, a small number of its provisions, such as planning policy for overhead cables, are still in operation. As with PPSs these remnant policy provisions will cease to have effect when the Council adopts its new Plan Strategy for the whole of the Council area.

## Supplementary Guidance

2.18 A range of supplementary guidance supports the regional policies and as indicated in the SPPS these are to be retained as material planning considerations. Details of the current retained guidance are also set out in Appendix 3.





## Local Policy Context

### Corporate Plan – Our Borough Your Vision 2015-2030

2.19 Our Corporate Plan sets out the Council’s vision for the Borough and identifies what we need to do between now and 2030 to achieve this.

2.20 The Corporate Plan also sets out a number of objectives in relation to place, people and prosperity. Our Local Development Plan has a key role to play under the objective of ‘place’ and the Corporate Plan states that, “The preparation of a Local Development will enable us to plan positively for the future of our Borough. We will ensure that lands are appropriately zoned and that our infrastructure is enhanced to develop the Borough for future generations.”







## Community Plan

2.21 The Council's Community Plan is another key consideration in the preparation of the LDP. Community planning is a new power for local Councils within Northern Ireland and each Council is required to publish a Community Plan. Working with a wide range of partners, including representatives from the statutory, business, higher education, community and voluntary sectors, the Council will publish a long-term plan to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the Borough.

2.22 The Local Development Plan will consider any land use spatial planning aspects of the Community Plan. Our draft Community Plan is also published for public consultation and is available to view on our website.

2.23 A number of draft outcomes have been identified for our Community Plan. These have been considered in the preparation of our Preferred Options and are identified below:

-  Our citizens enjoy good health and well-being;
-  Our citizens live in connected, safe and vibrant places;
-  Our citizens benefit from economic prosperity; and
-  Our citizens achieve their full potential.

## Existing Development Plans

2.24 The existing development plans that apply to the Borough comprise the Antrim Area Plan (AAP) 1984-2001 (as amended) and the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015. These plans provide the starting point for the review of spatial planning options for the LDP and have therefore been a key consideration in the preparation of this POP document.

## Council Masterplans

2.25 A number of non-statutory town and village masterplans have been produced over the past number of years and work is ongoing by the Council to review and update these, including the preparation of several new village plans. At this stage there are a number of common themes emerging which will continue to influence our thinking as preparation of the Plan Strategy and our Local Policies Plan proceeds.

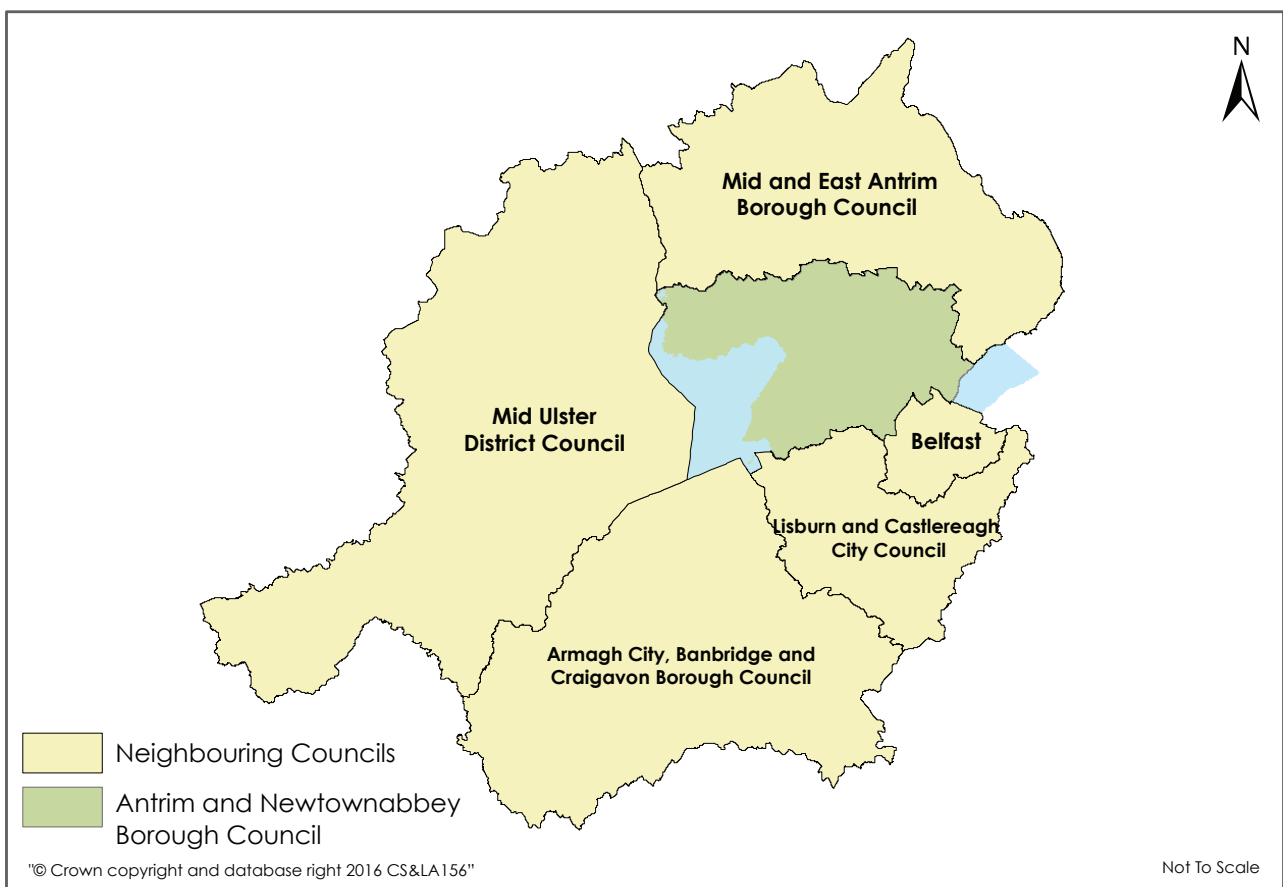




## Neighbouring Councils

- 2.26 Our Council area adjoins the boundaries of five neighbouring local Councils both by land and water - Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, Belfast City, Lisburn and Castlereagh City, Mid and East Antrim Borough and Mid Ulster District Councils. It is a requirement that each Council, in preparing its new LDP, engages with neighbouring Councils at specific stages in the plan process.
- 2.27 We have already begun to liaise with our neighbouring Councils to consider cross cutting issues and how these can be best taken forward as part of the plan process. This is particularly important in relation to the delivery of key elements of the Regional Development Strategy. We are also formally consulting all adjoining Councils on our current POP publication.

*Figure 2: Neighbouring Councils*



## Profile of our Borough

2.28 This section provides a strategic overview of the Borough today. It considers current facts relating to the spatial characteristics and geography of the Borough and incorporates information from our evidence papers. It helps set the scene for issues that our new LDP will need to consider.

### Population and Society

2.29 Between 2001 and 2011, census figures indicate that the population of the Borough increased by 7.95% from 128,361 to 138,567. The population is estimated to have increased by a further 1.37% by mid-year 2015 to 140,467. By the end of the Plan period (2030), the population of the Borough is predicted to increase, albeit at an overall reduced rate, by 3.51% to 145,401.

2.30 The population of the Borough is ageing with those aged 65 and over set to increase from 15.9% to 21.88%. This trend is likely to place additional demands on housing, health, community services and transport. The Plan must be responsive to these changes and also ensure that any new developments are easily accessible to the ageing population.

2.31 The working age population (16-64) is estimated to decline from 63% to just under 59%, with those aged between 0-15 expected to fall from 21% to 19.13%. This latter reduction may have implications on school provision in the Borough.

2.32 Whilst the average household size is expected to decrease throughout the Plan period from 2.51 persons in 2012 to 2.41 persons in 2030, the number of one or two person households is likely to increase. The overall number of households in the Borough is predicted to increase from 54,243 in 2012 to 59,814 in 2030. These changes highlight the need to not only ensure an adequate supply of land for housing, but also a range of housing types to help meet the varying needs of the population.

2.33 The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2010 illustrates that there are considerable inequalities throughout the Borough and according to the 2011 Census, approximately 19% of the Borough's residents suffer from a long-term health problem or disability which limits their daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months.





## Economy

2.34 In September 2014, the number of employee jobs in the Borough amounted to 55,682, representing an increase of 2.4% from 54,387 in 2011. The private sector accounted for 74% of employee jobs in the Borough.

2.35 The Borough's local economy is dominated by the tertiary (service) sector employing a total of 82% of the Borough's residents. The vast majority of businesses in the Borough are classified as micro (87%), whereby they employ up to nine persons and 61% of businesses in the Borough are related to distribution and other services. The Plan will endeavour to support the variety of employment sectors within the Borough and also help facilitate emerging technologies through the provision of an adequate supply of land and the delivery of new planning policies.

2.36 Between 2011 and 2014, employment in the public sector decreased by 10.4% from 16,220 to 14,537, equating to a fall from 30% to 26% of all employee jobs over the period.

2.37 The 2011 Census indicates that 45% of residents who were in employment, worked at locations within the Borough, with the remainder commuting to other Council areas.

2.38 The Borough has proved to be an attractive location for investment and is home to several of Northern Ireland's high profile companies including Randox Holdings, Shrader Electronics, Canyon Europe, the Henderson Group, Brett Martin and Bombardier. The new Plan can help facilitate growth of the local economy and job creation by identifying key sites in accessible locations for future employment generation.

2.39 The Borough is home to a number of key tourist attractions, including the award winning Antrim Castle Gardens and Lough Neagh. The tourism industry makes a significant contribution to our local economy, with an inflow in excess of £34.2 million in 2015. The financial contribution that the tourism industry provides to the Borough equates to over 4% of the Northern Ireland total. The plan will have an important role in supporting the growth of the Borough's tourism sector.



## Environment

2.40 The diversity of the landscape within the Borough provides a unique resource of significant environmental quality. Metropolitan Newtownabbey has an impressive natural setting situated along the western shore of Belfast Lough with the Carrickfergus Escarpment to the west forming a magnificent backdrop. The rural area towards Antrim, contains very attractive and contrasting countryside through the Maine, Six Mile Water and Crumlin River valleys to the Lough Neagh shoreline in the west, to the South Antrim Hills, including Tardree Forest, to the north east and the Belfast Hills in the south east of the Borough.

2.41 This natural landscape provides a rich resource of productive agricultural land and habitats important for nature conservation. It has also been modified considerably by man and contains numerous sites of historic and archaeological importance. These features of the natural and built heritage will need to be afforded appropriate protection through the policies of the new LDP.

2.42 At present there are a range of natural heritage sites designated for their international and regional significance, including Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) with a particular focus on Lough Neagh.

2.43 Built heritage forms an important part of the character and appearance of the Borough and includes archaeological sites and monuments; historic and vernacular buildings; industrial and military remains; historic parks, gardens and demesnes; conservation areas and areas of townscape character (ATC).

2.44 Within our Borough there are 6 State Care Monuments, 101 Scheduled Monuments and approximately 312 Listed Buildings.

2.45 There are 4 registered historic parks, gardens and demesnes in the Borough at Antrim Castle, Shanes Castle, Ram's Island and Drumadarragh House, Burnside. There are 3 Conservation Areas in Antrim, Randalstown and Merville Garden Village as well as a number of places that have been designated for their local townscape character. This physical evidence of our past is an important asset providing valuable benefits to our local economy through environmental activities, tourism and recreation.

2.46 The rivers that run through our Borough are important environmental assets and resources, but they are also a source of flood risk. This will be an important consideration in identifying future development land in our settlements. With increasing incidents of flooding occurring due to the effects of ongoing climate change it is essential that the policies of the new LDP address flood risk matters.





## Infrastructure

- 2.47 The Borough is home to Belfast International Airport, one of several key employers and the foremost gateway to Northern Ireland. It welcomed 4.4 million passengers during 2015-2016 and handled over 40,000 tonnes of cargo in 2013.
- 2.48 The Borough occupies a key strategic location with regard to Northern Ireland's transport network, with major road and rail links providing easy access to regional gateways such as Belfast, Larne and Derry/Londonderry. This transport network provides high quality links to the rest of Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and to the rest of the United Kingdom and mainland Europe.
- 2.49 In addition, to the operational rail lines the Knockmore link between Antrim and Lisburn extends through the Borough and currently operates on a non-passenger basis. There is also a disused former rail line at the Back Line between Monkstown and Greenisland. This is currently being considered as a potential community greenway offering opportunities for walking and cycling linking Antrim and Newtownabbey with Mid and East Antrim Borough. The Plan has a role in recognising the importance of these lines.
- 2.50 Road transport links in the Borough are based upon accessibility to the Eastern Seaboard, Northern and North Western Key Transport Corridors (KTCs) and consists of single and dual carriageway A-class roads such as the A2, A6, A8, A26, and A52, supported by a vast network of single carriageway B-class and minor roads. A significant proportion of Northern Ireland's motorway network is located in the Borough, consisting of the M2, M5, M22, and A8 (M), thus underlining the strategic location of the Borough in the context of transportation.
- 2.51 The only strategic road improvement (SRI) scheme in the Borough is the A6 Randalstown – Castledawson dualling scheme, which is currently in planning, and has been announced for implementation by the Department for Infrastructure. Non-strategic road improvement schemes in the Antrim and Newtownabbey area include the Ballyclare Relief Road and the Hightown Road Link.
- 2.52 Whilst a small minority (20%) of the Borough's residents have no access to a private car, the majority of residents in the Borough (74.9%) opt to use the private car as a preferred mode of travel to their place of work.



2.53 Public transport services in the Borough are provided by Translink through its Metro, Ulsterbus, and Northern Ireland Railways offerings. The existing infrastructure and connecting services allow travel between locations within the Borough and subsequent onward travel to other parts of Northern Ireland including Derry/Londonderry, Coleraine, Ballymena, Larne and Lisburn. There are also frequent bus services between Belfast Centre and Belfast International Airport (BIA), and an additional service between Lisburn to BIA via Crumlin.

2.54 The issue of public transport provision will remain as a key issue in the Antrim and Newtownabbey area, especially for those inhabitants who are elderly, economically and/or socially disadvantaged.

2.55 In terms of broadband connectivity, the Borough has excellent superfast broadband speeds in urban areas compared to the other Council areas. Mobile telecommunications network in the Borough is generally acceptable; however, some pockets still remain in our rural area where connection may be unavailable or intermittent.

2.56 The provision of waste water treatment within the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough is the responsibility of NI water. NI water has identified the following sites with no remaining capacity: Cranfield and Moneyglass waste water treatment works (WWTW). Whitehouse WWTW will reach capacity with a 10% growth rate in population.











## 3 Proposed Plan Vision and Objectives

- 3.1 Our new Local Development Plan requires a clear vision as to what Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough should look like in 2030.
- 3.2 Based on our engagement with the public, our elected Members and taking into account the objectives of our Corporate Plan, the emerging Community Plan and the key priorities for our Borough, it is proposed that our Plan Vision is as follows:

### Plan Vision

**In 2030 Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough will have a reputation as an excellent, attractive and diverse place in which to live and work. It will be a place that all citizens can take pride in and that is appealing to new residents, investors and visitors alike, with improved job opportunities, housing availability and connectivity that meets the needs of our community. Development will be sustainable and of high quality and will address the ongoing challenges of climate change. Our built and natural environment will continue to be high quality and well looked after and will support prosperity and economic development and provide for a wide range of recreational and leisure activities.**

- 3.3 In order to support and help achieve our Plan Vision, we also need to consider what the main objectives of our Plan should be. Again, we have considered this carefully in light of our engagement to date and the context in which our Plan is being prepared.
- 3.4 Business land and premises are essential to the future economic prosperity and growth of the Borough. The identification of a wide range of suitable opportunities is therefore a key role for the Plan and will support the Council's future economic strategy. In addition, it is important that those employment/business sites that perform a strategic function are given strong protection from being lost to other development uses.
- 3.5 The attractiveness of our commercial and town centres is also a vital component of economic and social activity within the Borough. Their continued vitality and viability is therefore essential to the area's future competitiveness and wellbeing. Allied to this is the need to promote the delivery of regeneration opportunities in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and across our local towns and villages focused upon our key commercial centres where the benefits are most significant.





- 3.6 The promotion of high quality and environmentally sustainable development will help create quality places across the Borough, places that promote prosperity and new investment, places that are successful to live in and places that bring communities together.
- 3.7 The provision of 21<sup>st</sup> Century transport and digital connectivity is also a prerequisite to the future economic success of the Borough and in particular will assist the promotion of a vibrant rural area. The provision of a first class digital network will also provide important benefits towards reducing the impact of climate change by reducing the need to travel.
- 3.8 The provision of a sufficient supply of land for housing is a core ingredient of the Plan. There is currently an ample supply of land already identified in existing plans, and future growth will need to take account of the Housing Growth Indicator for the Borough set out in the Regional Development Strategy. The Plan will also seek to encourage the delivery of affordable housing opportunities to help meet local need and ensure a diverse choice of housing for an ageing and changing population. It is recognised however, that the recent economic downturn is continuing to present challenges to the delivery of new housing by the development industry.
- 3.9 Whilst the Council wishes to facilitate new growth and development through the Plan it is important to ensure that adequate infrastructure provision accompanies this and where necessary development proposals will be required to deliver and bear the costs of any infrastructure works necessary to accommodate them.
- 3.10 The environment of our Borough is a special quality. The Plan must seek to protect and improve this legacy for future generations as it is a key aspect of the area's attraction for inward investment, tourism, recreation and quality of life in general.
- 3.11 In addition, to the protection and enhancement of our built and natural heritage it is also important to protect our open spaces, and to promote the creation of green networks within, around and linking settlements to promote health and well-being through accessible leisure and sports provision. Creating a healthy, diverse and accessible environment, will in particular support sustainable tourism and other economic diversification opportunities.
- 3.12 The promotion of heat and power generation from renewable and sustainable sources will help to address the effects of climate change and encourage the adaptation to a low carbon economy. The Plan can also help to encourage ways of addressing the impact of climate change by promoting new development in areas not impacted upon by flood risk.



3.13 The provision of land to deal with waste is also a role for the Plan. Where this involves facilities for recycling or waste reduction, then this in turn will also help to reduce dependence on landfill sites.

3.14 Therefore, it is proposed that we need to target the following interlinked objectives to deliver the Plan Vision.

## Plan Objectives

- ✓ To provide an adequate range and quality of land and premises for business and industry.
- ✓ To protect strategically important business and employment opportunities.
- ✓ To promote the development and regeneration of our town and commercial centres.
- ✓ To promote high quality environmentally sustainable design.
- ✓ To provide a sufficient supply of land for mainstream and affordable housing and ensure a diverse choice of housing.
- ✓ To ensure that necessary new infrastructure accompanies new development.
- ✓ To accommodate necessary community facilities.
- ✓ To encourage better connectivity by transport and digital networks.
- ✓ To protect and enhance the natural and built environment.
- ✓ To protect open spaces of public value and promote green network linkages around our larger settlements.
- ✓ To promote sustainable tourism and economic diversification.
- ✓ To integrate climate change adaptation requirements such as flood prevention and sustainable renewable energy production.
- ✓ To make adequate provision for waste management.

Do you agree  
with our Plan Vision  
and Objectives?











## 4 Proposed Spatial Growth Strategy

- 4.1 Spatial Planning is about how we manage space and development to meet the needs of society, the economy and the environment and create better places for people to live and work in. To this end our new Local Development Plan will contain a strategy indicating how future growth will be accommodated across the Borough.
- 4.2 The Spatial Growth Strategy will provide a strategic framework for taking forward the vision and objectives of our LDP and will steer the distribution of new housing and employment opportunities across the Borough up to 2030. Ultimately it will provide the basis for the allocation of land for future development in the Local Policies Plan element of our LDP.
- 4.3 The Spatial Growth Strategy will focus on the role of our settlements, ranging in size from Metropolitan Newtownabbey down to small hamlets such as Moneyglass and Tildarg, in accommodating future growth and development. It will need to take account of the provisions of the Regional Development Strategy and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement as well as the direction provided by and commitments arising from the existing statutory development plans for the Borough and emerging evidence as set out in our associated published evidence papers.
- 4.4 The Strategy will consider where growth should go, especially in terms of housing and will also consider our key commercial centres and strategic employment locations located within settlements. It will also acknowledge the importance of Belfast International Airport as a regional gateway for Northern Ireland and take account of the important role of our countryside.
- 4.5 Development of our Spatial Growth Strategy has therefore been informed by the following factors which are examined in greater detail in the following section:-

### **Regional Development Strategy**

### **Existing Statutory Development Plans**

### **Hierarchy of Settlements**

### **Hierarchy of Centres**

### **Strategic Employment Locations**

### **Belfast International Airport**

### **Countryside**



## Regional Development Strategy 2035

4.6 The Regional Development Strategy 2035 identifies a hierarchy of settlement types across Northern Ireland and provides Spatial Framework Guidance that is a key factor influencing the future distribution of development across the Region.

This has been taken into account in developing our Spatial Growth Strategy. The RDS Framework is summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: RDS Hierarchy of Settlement and Spatial Framework Guidance**

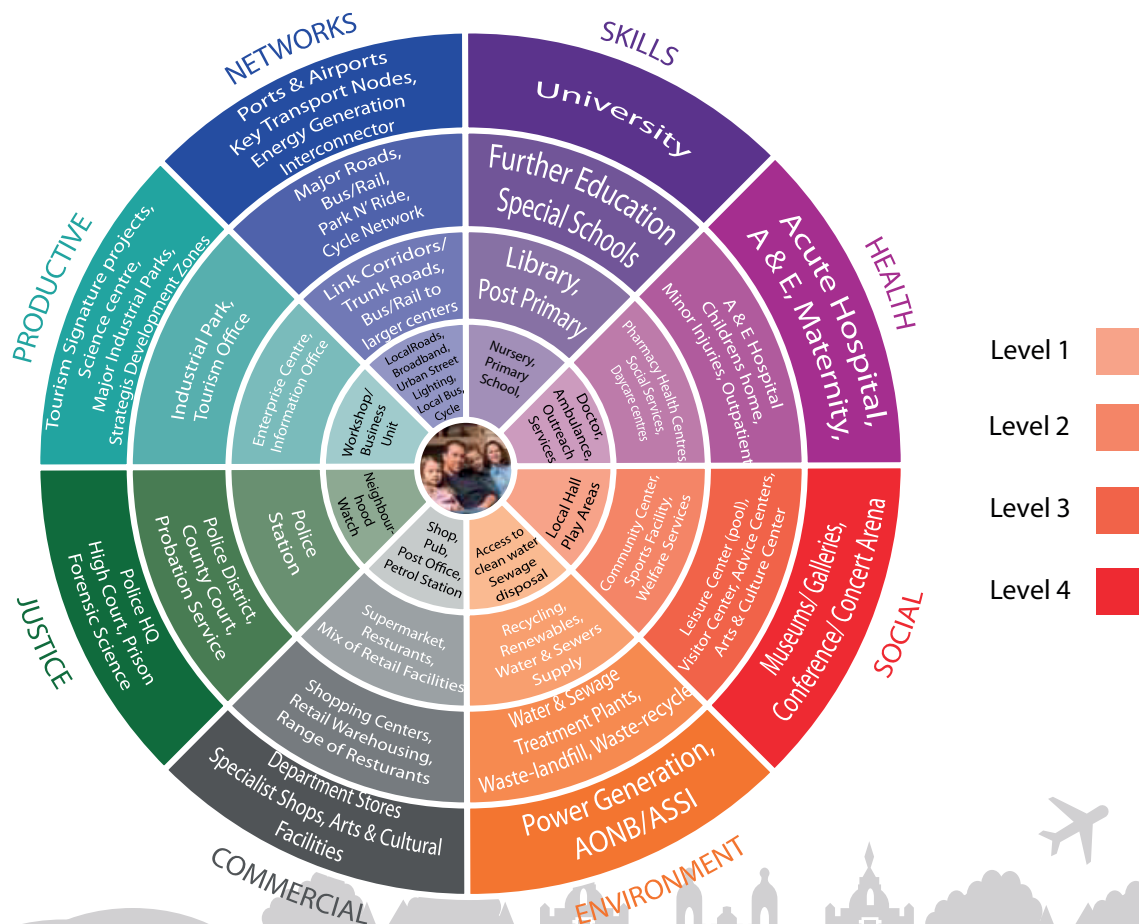
Hierarchy	Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG)
Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA)  (includes Metropolitan Newtownabbey)	<p>SFG1: Promote urban economic development at key locations throughout the BMUA and ensure sufficient land is available for jobs.</p> <p>SFG2: Grow the population of the City of Belfast.</p> <p>SFG4: Manage the movement of people and goods within the BMUA.</p> <p>SFG5: Protect and enhance the quality of the setting of the BMUA and its environmental assets</p>
Hubs and Clusters of Hubs  (includes Antrim)	<p>SFG10: Identify and consolidate the roles and functions of settlements within the Clusters.</p> <p>SFG11: Promote economic development opportunities at Hubs.</p> <p>SFG12: Grow the population in the Hubs and cluster of Hubs.</p>
Small towns;  Villages;  Hamlets; and  Open countryside	<p>SFG13: Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside.</p> <p>SFG14: Improve accessibility for rural communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the role of multi-functional town centres as the prime locations for business, housing, administration, leisure and cultural facilities both for urban and rural communities.</li> <li>Revitalise small towns and villages.</li> <li>Facilitate the development of rural industries, businesses and enterprises in appropriate locations.</li> </ul>
International Airport	SFG15: Strengthen the Gateways for Regional competitiveness



4.7 Metropolitan Newtownabbey is identified in the RDS as part of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area with Antrim identified as a Main Hub. All remaining settlements in our Borough are considered to form part of the rural area where “small towns, villages and hamlets perform an important function for rural communities”. In particular, it is noted that “a strong network of smaller towns supported by villages helps to sustain and service the rural community”.

4.8 The RDS also directs that settlements should be the primary location for accommodating future development needs. The scope and type of development should generally relate to the size and function of each settlement. This approach is illustrated by the RDS Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure Wheel (Figure 3) where larger settlements have a greater range of services and infrastructure.

Figure 3: Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure Wheel



Source: Strategic Investment Board Limited, 2008 (cited in RDS, 2010)



## Existing Statutory Development Plans

- 4.9 The existing statutory development plans for the Borough are the Antrim Area Plan 1984-2001 (as amended) and the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 both of which were prepared by the then Department of the Environment. While our new Plan is the first to be prepared by the Council following the transfer of planning powers in April 2015 the influence of the existing plans and planning permissions that have been granted based on their provisions cannot be overlooked.
- 4.10 The existing Plans identify the current range of settlements and centres for their respective plan areas and therefore provide the starting point for the review of these matters in the new Plan. In addition both Plans contain land use zonings and other proposals which could be carried forward into the new LDP. There are also a substantial number of unimplemented development schemes which benefit from planning permission on land that is not specifically zoned in these plans which needs to be considered.

- 4.11 Importantly, our evidence base indicates, that the settlements of the Borough benefit from a housing land supply sufficient to accommodate approximately 13,900 dwellings. This level of 'committed' housing and its location needs to be taken into account in developing our Spatial Growth Strategy. This issue is also discussed in more detail in part five.

## Hierarchy of Settlements

- 4.12 Our new Plan will need to define a settlement hierarchy for the Borough as the position of a particular settlement in this hierarchy will be an important factor that will inform our decisions about where new growth and development should take place.
- 4.13 The RDS provides a sound basis for defining our local settlement hierarchy. As indicated previously in Table 1 it has already classified our largest places, Metropolitan Newtownabbey and Antrim. However, it is for the Local Development Plan to classify and identify the remaining settlements within the Borough taking account of matters such as population size, function and service provision.



4.14 In reviewing the local settlement hierarchy account has been taken of the matters set out below and further information on this is contained within our associated evidence papers.

- 📍 The Classification of Settlements in the existing development plans (see Appendix 2);
- 📍 An assessment of the role and function of settlements;
- 📍 The Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements published by NISRA in March 2015; and
- 📍 The changed circumstances since publication of the Antrim Area Plan.

4.15 Based on this review three alternative options are proposed in relation to the local settlement hierarchy and are illustrated overleaf.



## OPTION 1:

Retain the existing hierarchy of settlements set out in the existing development plans (BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan)

Tier	Existing Classification	Settlement within this classification
1	Metropolitan Urban Area	Metropolitan Newtownabbey
2	District Town	Antrim
3	Small Town	Ballyclare
4	Local Town	Crumlin Randalstown
5	Village	Ballyeaston Ballynure Ballyrobert Burnside (Cogry/Kilbride) Doagh Parkgate Straid Templepatrick Toome
6	Small Settlement	Ballycor Ballycraigy (Newtownabbey) Bruslee Craigarogan Hillhead Kingsmoss Lowtown Millbank Roughfort Tildarg
7	Hamlet	Creggan/Cranfield Dunadry Groggan Kilead Milltown Moneyglass

4.16 Option 1 is based on our existing settlement hierarchy as set out in the existing development plans (the AAP and BMAP). This option would lead to an inconsistent approach to the classification of settlements across our Borough. The current plans were prepared at different times and used different settlement classifications. This option does not take account of how our settlements have evolved since the publication of the Antrim Area Plan in 1984 and would cause difficulties in considering the potential designation of new settlements. This option would also not take into account the provisions of the RDS which identifies Metropolitan Newtownabbey as part of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area and Antrim as a main hub. Given its current population size and growth potential it is also viewed as inappropriate that Ballyclare should be classified as a small town.





## OPTION 2:

Reclassify our existing settlements within 5 tiers

Proposed Tier	Proposed Classification	Settlement within this classification
1	Metropolitan Urban Area	Metropolitan Newtownabbey
2	Major Town/ Main Hub	Antrim
3	Town	Ballyclare Crumlin Randalstown
4	Village	Ballynure Ballyrobert Burnside (Cogry/Kilbride) Doagh Dunadry Parkgate Straid Templepatrick Toome
5	Hamlet	Ballycor Ballycraig (Newtownabbey) Ballyeaston Bruslee Craigarogan Hillhead Kingsmoss Lowtown Millbank Roughfort Tildarg Creggan/Cranfield Groggan Killead Milltown Moneyglass

4.17 Option 2 is based upon the reclassification of our settlements based upon five tiers namely: Metropolitan Urban Area, Major Town/ Main Hub, Town, Village and Hamlet. This reclassification would take into account the direction of the RDS in terms of settlement hierarchy. In terms of our existing settlements, Metropolitan Newtownabbey would sit within the top tier as the largest populated area within our Borough (2011 Census population just over 65,000) and the designation of Antrim as a Major Town/Main Hub as the second tier (2011 Census population just over 23,000). The third tier would consist of the remaining towns in our Borough with Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown all in the same grouping. The fourth and fifth tiers would consist of villages and hamlets for the Borough's smaller settlements using a population threshold of some 250 to distinguish between a hamlet and a village. As a consequence, this would result in the reclassification of Dunadry as a village and Ballyeaston as a hamlet. This option would be regarded as consistent with the RDS, but it does not take account of the differences in our three towns of Ballyclare, Randalstown and Crumlin in terms of role and function.



### OPTION 3:

Reclassify our existing settlements within 6 tiers

Proposed Tier	Proposed Classification	Settlement within this classification
1	Metropolitan Urban Area	Metropolitan Newtownabbey
2	Major Town/Main Hub	Antrim
3	Large Town	Ballyclare
4	Town	Crumlin Randalstown
5	Village	Ballynure Ballyrobert Burnside (Cogry/Kilbride) Doagh Dunadry Parkgate Straid Templepatrick Toome
6	Hamlet	Ballycor Ballycraig (Newtownabbey) Ballyeaston Bruslee Craigarogan Hillhead Kingsmoss Lowtown Millbank Roughfort Tildarg Creggan/Cranfield Groggan Killead Milltown Moneyglass

4.18 Option 3 is similar to Option 2, but based upon 6 tiers. Metropolitan Newtownabbey and Antrim remain as the top two tiers. However, this option then makes a distinction between the towns identified in Option 2 by reclassifying Ballyclare as a large town (Tier 3) and maintaining Crumlin and Randalstown as towns (Tier 4).

### OPTION 3 is our Preferred Option

4.19 This option takes account of the RDS with the definition of Metropolitan Newtownabbey as the largest settlement and in the top tier, followed by Antrim which is recognised in terms of the RDS as a Main Hub.

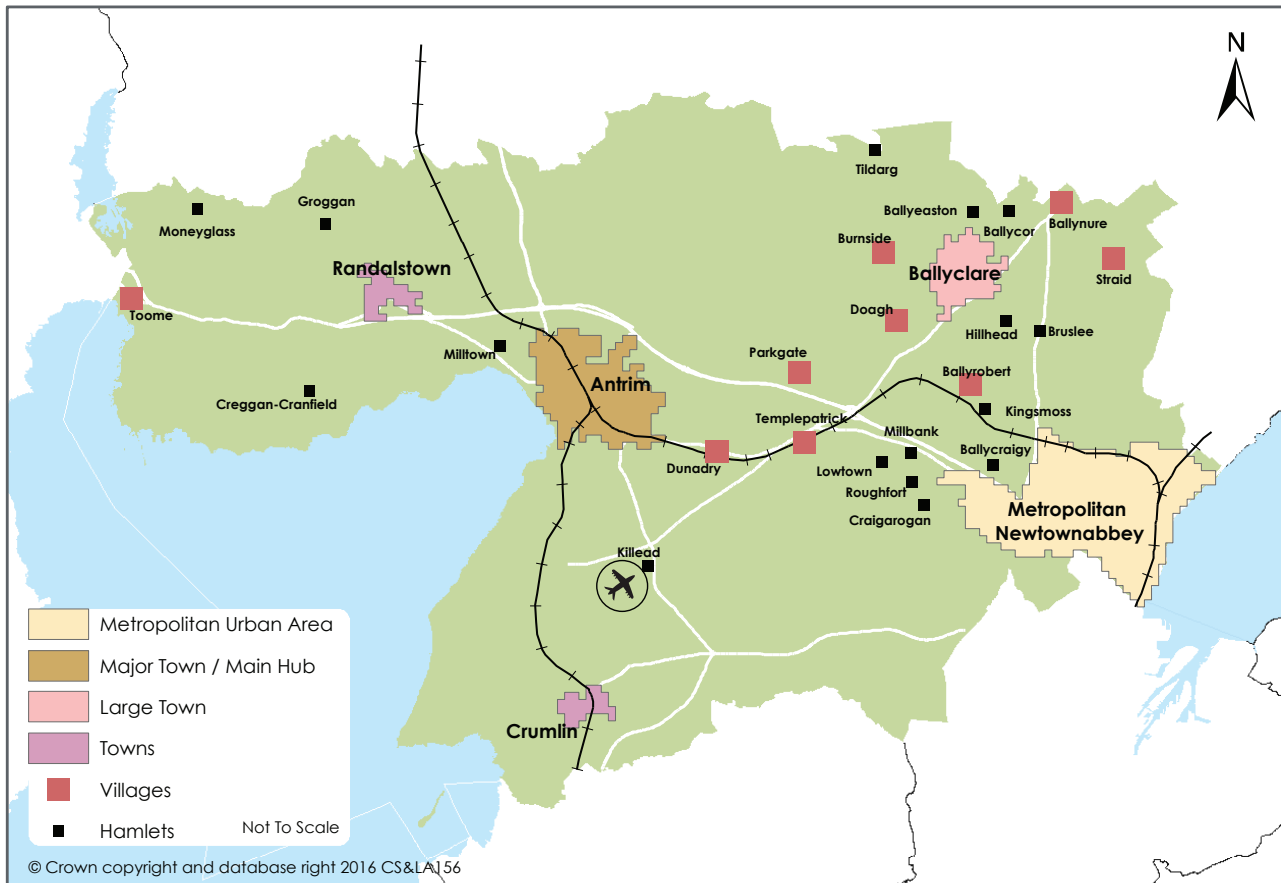
4.20 This option also allows for the role of our three towns to be recognised according to their size and function. Again, this is considered to take account of the direction of the RDS.

4.21 Ballyclare provides a large range of services and was identified in BMAP as serving a large rural hinterland. It also has a population of nearly 10,000 people. Crumlin and Randalstown are classified as towns with a good range of services and a population base of just over 5,000 each in the 2011 census.

4.22 Tiers 5 and 6 are the villages and hamlets, with Dunadry again reclassified as a village and Ballyeaston as a hamlet due to their size and role.



Figure 4: Preferred Option for Settlement Hierarchy



Do you agree with our Preferred Option for our Settlement Hierarchy?





## Potential for new villages

- 4.23 In our reclassification and settlement hierarchy options in the preceding section, Dunadry is now proposed as a village. In addition to those settlements already identified we are proposing an additional village designation.
- 4.24 This proposal relates to that part of Mallusk that is located on land west of Hydepark Road and incorporating Tudor Park and Hydepark Manor, Newtownabbey. This neighbourhood which is distinct from the larger Mallusk industrial area lies at the edge of Metropolitan Newtownabbey and currently forms part of this area in BMAP. The residents of this area have expressed views that this area should be defined in the Plan as a village.
- 4.25 Our options in relation to the future of Mallusk are as follows.

### **OPTION 1:**

**Retain Mallusk as part of Metropolitan Newtownabbey**

### **OPTION 2:**

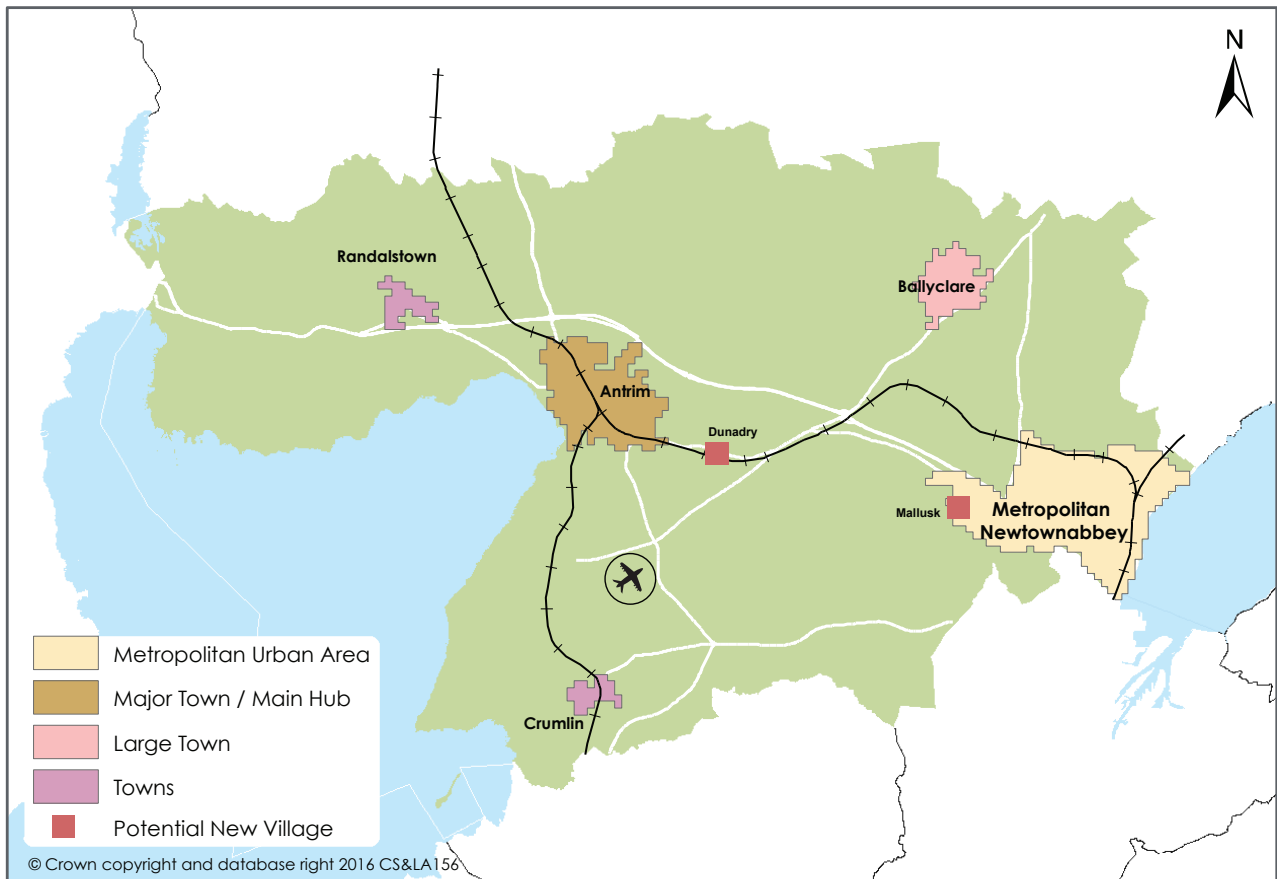
**Reclassify Mallusk as a village**

## **OPTION 2 is our Preferred Option.**

- 4.26 Metropolitan Newtownabbey itself is an agglomeration of a number of urban villages that over time have coalesced together. It is however acknowledged that the core residential area of Mallusk to the west of Hydepark Road is for the greater part separated from the other nearby suburban residential neighbourhoods by the large industrial and commercial area at this location. Therefore, Mallusk lies at the edge of the large urban area and is viewed as locally distinct from it. The remaining former villages that have merged to form Metropolitan Newtownabbey are viewed as an essential part of the fabric of the larger urban area.
- 4.27 It is considered that the Mallusk residential neighbourhood displays the characteristics of a self-contained village community and as a consequence it is considered reasonable for this part of Mallusk to be designated as a village, although it is acknowledged that part of any future village limit will sit contiguous to the settlement limit of the larger Metropolitan Newtownabbey area.



Figure 5: Location of Potential Reclassified New Villages



Do you agree with our Preferred Option for the designation of Mallusk village?



## Potential for new hamlet designation

4.28 The review of our local settlement hierarchy has provided an opportunity to consider the potential for identification of a number of new hamlets within our Borough.

4.29 The RDS does not identify criteria for the identification of new hamlets. The Antrim Area Plan did set out criteria for the identification of hamlets which related to the size of the existing settlement; the availability of public sewage disposal facilities; and the existence of facilities other than housing e.g. shop, pub, church etc. The more recent BMAP did not set out any such criteria, therefore, there is a mismatch in terms of the existing plans and clarity is needed.

4.30 The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) in its Report on the BMAP Strategic Plan Framework indicated that "it would appear that in order to constitute a settlement there should be a concentration of buildings displaying an obvious sense of cohesion and place and offering one or more community facilities."

### OPTION 1:

Use criteria for new hamlets based on guidance by the AAP

### OPTION 2:

Use criteria for new hamlets based on the rationale used by the PAC

## OPTION 2 is our Preferred Option.

4.31 The rationale used by the PAC at the Public Examination process into BMAP is the most up to date interpretation of what may constitute a hamlet. Therefore, it is the most logical source of guidance on which to base our selection of new hamlets.

Do you agree with our Preferred Option in relation to identifying new hamlets?

4.32 Our initial evidence and consultation with the public and Member engagement suggests that there are several places in our Borough not currently designated as settlements in the existing development plans that would possibly fulfil the rationale accepted by the PAC and merit designation as hamlets in our new LDP. Most of these places are located in the rural area of the legacy Antrim Borough Council area. Such a designation may provide local opportunities for development e.g. the clustering of small housing groups that would help sustain our rural area while helping to protect the wider countryside in line with the RDS.

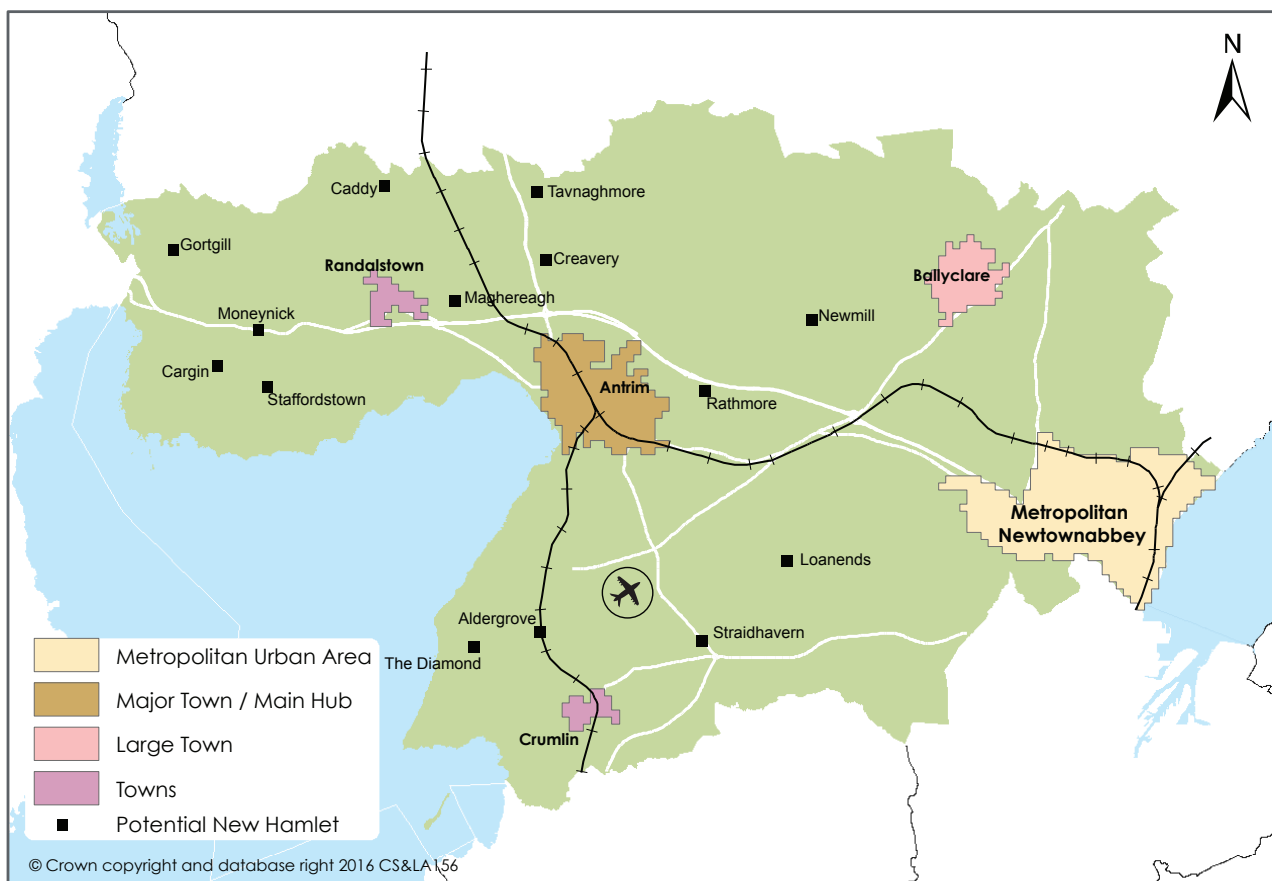




4.33 Potential areas that could be designated as new hamlets in our Plan include: -

- |              |              |                 |               |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| ○ Aldergrove | ○ Gortgill   | ○ Newmill       | ○ Tavnaghmore |
| ○ Caddy      | ○ Loanends   | ○ Rathmore      | ○ The Diamond |
| ○ Cargin     | ○ Maghereagh | ○ Straidhavern  |               |
| ○ Creavery   | ○ Moneynick  | ○ Staffordstown |               |

Figure 6: Location of Potential New Hamlets



Do you agree with this list of potential new hamlets?

Are there any other areas that should be considered as a new hamlet?

## RAF Aldergrove

4.34 The Ministry of Defence site at RAF Aldergrove is located on land situated to the south east of Belfast International Airport. The site continues to operate as a military base, but also contains land and buildings that may in the future become surplus to Ministry of Defence (MoD) requirements. This includes potential brownfield redevelopment opportunities and approximately 300 houses that were previously used to accommodate military personnel.

4.35 We will liaise with the Ministry of Defence in relation to the future of this site.

What are your views in relation to the future of this site?

## Hierarchy of Centres

4.36 Another key factor influencing our Spatial Growth Strategy is the hierarchy of centres. In planning terms our 'centres' are those shopping and local commercial areas which play an important socio-economic role within our Borough.

4.37 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement indicates that each LDP should define a hierarchy of centres. Similar to the hierarchy of settlements, this is the process of classifying our centres according to their role and function. This will inform decisions about where new commercial growth and development should take place.

4.38 The existing Antrim Area Plan and BMAP contain a range of different centres, including our traditional town centres. Our Borough also contains a number of district centres which provide a range of shopping such as the Abbey Centre, and other centres which are usually smaller scale and serve the needs of the local community and finally neighbourhood centres (which were identified only in AAP which serve the local population). Our existing hierarchy of centres is set out in Table 2.



**Table 2: Existing Hierarchy of Centres**

Tier	Classification	Location	Relevant Plan
1	Town Centre	Antrim Town Centre	AAP
		Ballyclare Town Centre	BMAP
		Crumlin Town Centre	AAP
		Randalstown Town Centre	AAP
2	District Centre	Abbey Centre	BMAP
		Northcott	BMAP
3	Local Centres	Glengormley village Centre	BMAP
4	Neighbourhood Centres	Ballycraigy Antrim Greystone Antrim Parkhall Antrim	These are all located in Antrim under the AAP. BMAP did not designate any Neighbourhood Centres

4.39 These centres not only provide necessary shopping facilities but also support business services and leisure facilities along with access to key public services. This mix of uses also provides important opportunities for employment and social interaction. It is important that the role and function of these locations is reflected in our Spatial Growth Strategy.

4.40 The SPPS recognises the importance of these centres and requires a 'centres first' approach to accommodating development of main town centre uses including retail, cultural and community facilities, leisure, entertainment and business uses. The SPPS also sets the objective of protecting and enhancing the diversity in the range of uses appropriate to the role and function of centres.

4.41 As the population continues to grow, particularly in terms of the elderly and those living on their own, our centres in the future will also have an increasingly important role in preventing social isolation and helping our communities to continue to flourish and thrive. They will also help to assist in the promotion of health and wellbeing within our communities as they have a key role in helping communities stay connected.

4.42 A key element of our Spatial Strategy will be to set a clear and distinct vision which defines the range of uses and scope of development that is expected within these centres which could aid regeneration and provide both public and private sector developers with the certainty required when making investment decisions.





4.43 The SPPS indicates that Local Development Plans should define a network and hierarchy of centres for their area – town, district and local centres, acknowledging the role and function of rural centres. LDPs should also set out appropriate policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in the hierarchy of centres and other locations.

4.44 Our new LDP therefore provides the opportunity to reassess the existing hierarchy of centres and potentially make adjustments to the classifications that currently apply. We have the ability to define the scope and purpose of each of our centres, describe an appropriate vision and define local policy and proposals accordingly.

4.45 It is acknowledged that in combining the existing classifications derived from BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan set out in Table 2 these do not recognise the present roles performed by our various commercial centres across the Borough in terms of the range and quantity of shops and services that they provide; nor do they reflect the potential for village centres as suggested by the SPPS.

4.46 It is considered that a simple 'town, district and local' hierarchy would not accurately reflect the relative role and function of the Borough's various commercial centres. It is therefore proposed that the Plan should contain a revised hierarchy which better reflects both the existing relative importance and the future development potential of our centres.



4.47 The starting point is to define the role and function of our centres. We propose the following classifications in our new hierarchy:

**Table 3: Proposed Classifications for the Hierarchy of Centres**

Tier	Classification	Role
1	Large Town / District Centre	Provides (or has the potential to provide) a range of shops, businesses and community facilities to a significant hinterland which includes smaller neighbouring towns or many suburbs.
2	Town / District Centre	Provides (or has the potential to provide) a range of shops, businesses and community facilities to a hinterland which includes neighbouring villages or a few surrounding suburbs.
3	Local Centre / Village Centre	Provides (or has the potential to provide) a range of shops, businesses and community facilities to a village and surrounding hamlets or to a surrounding suburban community.
4	Neighbourhood Centre	Provides (or has the potential to provide) a range of shops and services to a surrounding community.

**Do you agree with our proposed classification for our centres?**



4.48 The next step is to look at how our centres sit within the proposed new tiered classification and consider options for the new LDP.

## Classification of Centres

### OPTION 1:

Retain and reclassify our current centres based upon our new classifications with Glengormley and Northcott identified as one District Centre

Tier	Classification	Location
1	Large Town Centre/ Large District Centre	Antrim Town Centre Abbey Centre
2	Town Centre/ District Centre	Ballyclare Town Centre  Crumlin Town Centre  Randalstown Town Centre  Glengormley District Centre (Incorporating the Northcott Centre)
3	Local Centre/ Village Centre	To be considered by new plan
4	Neighbourhood Centre	Greystone Antrim Parkhall Antrim Ballycraig Antrim

4.49 Option 1 is based upon our new tiered classification and retains our current centres. The Abbey Centre is a major commercial centre containing an agglomeration of retail and related uses in the shopping centre itself and the surrounding retail parks, along with a limited range of other uses. The area is designated as a district centre in BMAP, however, it should be noted that the area overall does not present the full range of uses that would be expected in a thriving large district centre. The area contains many development and redevelopment opportunities which could be managed to enhance the centre's role as the primary commercial and service centre within Metropolitan Newtownabbey that also serves a wider hinterland extending across much of the Borough and into neighbouring authorities. It is therefore proposed that it is reclassified as a Large District Centre.

4.50 Antrim town centre boundary as designated in the AAP encompasses an area of almost 30 hectares that contains a vibrant mix of uses that would be expected in the centre of a Major Town/ Main Hub. The boundary of the town centre will be reviewed as part of the new LDP. Antrim town centre provides a broad range of shops and facilities that serve a large hinterland which includes the neighbouring local towns. It is therefore recommended that it be designated as a Large Town Centre in the LDP to reflect its current size and significant future development potential.





4.51 BMAP designates Northcott as a District Centre and the centre of Glengormley as a Local Centre. These two centres are located in relatively close proximity and together provide for a wide range of shops and services. Option 1 would allow these two centres to merge into one new District Centre given their close proximity to one another.

4.52 The towns of Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown all have designated town centres as indicated in BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan respectively. Under this option it is proposed that their central areas are still classified as Town Centres given their performance and function serving their local communities. The boundaries of each of these town centres will be reviewed as part of the plan preparation process.

4.53 Option 1 would allow the identification of any new Local Centres/village centres in our new Plan and retains the three Neighbourhood Centres in Antrim currently identified in the Antrim Area Plan. This option is regarded as broadly consistent with the provisions of the RDS.

## OPTION 2:

**Retain and reclassify our current centres based upon our new classifications with Glengormley and Northcott as separate centres**

Tier	Classification	Location
1	Large Town Centre/ Large District Centre	Antrim Town Centre Abbey Centre
2	Town Centre/ District Centre	Ballyclare Town Centre Crumlin Town Centre Randalstown Town Centre Northcott District Centre Glengormley District Centre
3	Local Centre/ Village Centre	To be considered by new plan
4	Neighbourhood Centre	Greystone Antrim Parkhall Antrim Ballycraig Antrim

4.54 Option 2 proposes the same classification and justification for our centres as set out in Option 1, with the exception of seeking to maintain distinct District Centres in Glengormley and at the Northcott Centre.

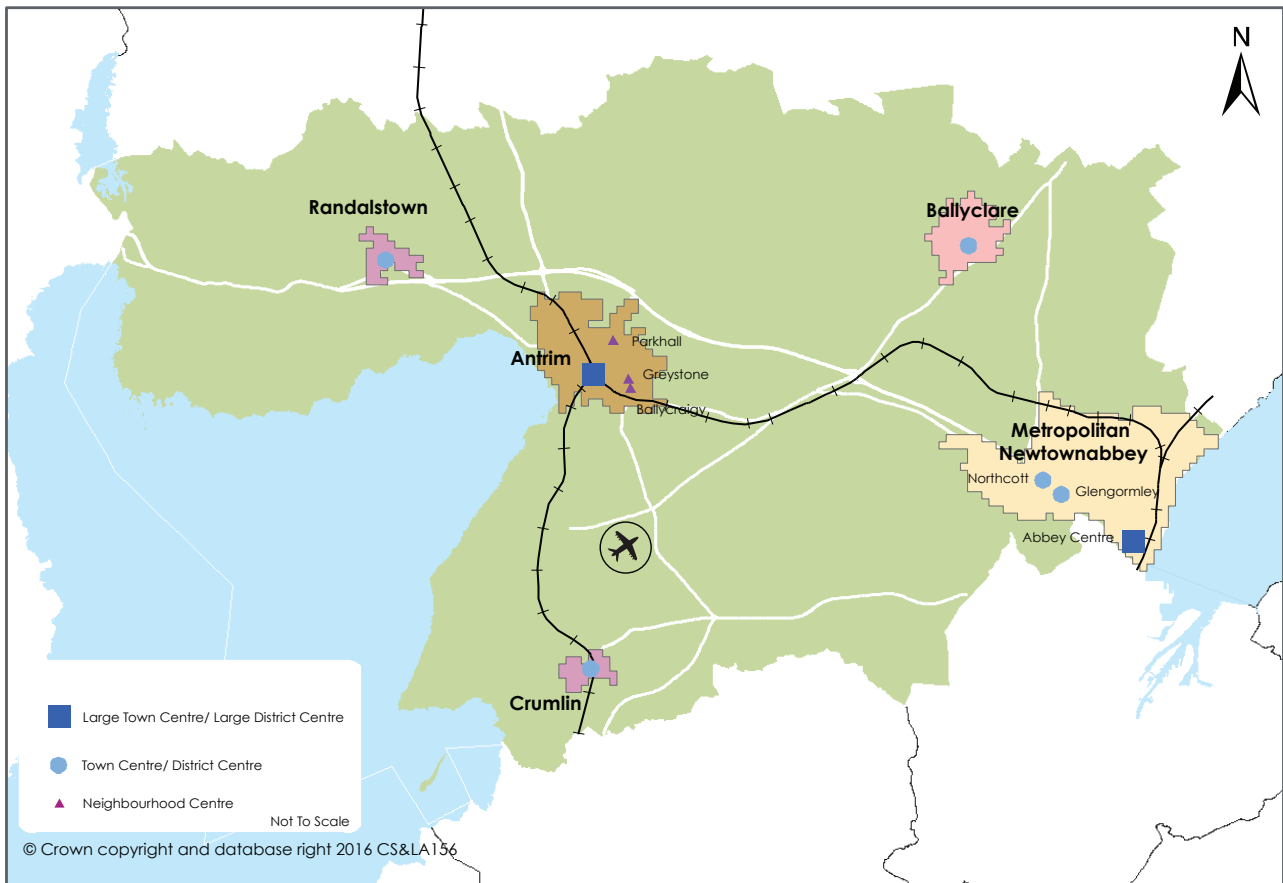


## **OPTION 2 is our Preferred Option**

- 4.55 The classification of our centres on the basis of the 4 tiers is viewed as acceptable in terms of our objectives and also the strategic direction of the RDS.
- 4.56 In addition, the location of Abbey Centre and Antrim Town Centre given their role and function as large Town Centres/large District Centres is also viewed as meeting these objectives.
- 4.57 In terms of Town/District Centres, Option 2 maintains Glengormley and Northcott as two separate centres. It is recognised that both these centres have somewhat different functions in terms of the services they provide. Furthermore, it is considered that the potential merger of both centres by the Plan could lead to a proliferation of retail and other uses away from the heart of Glengormley thereby detracting from its vitality. This option is also regarded as broadly consistent with the provisions of the RDS.
- 4.58 Finally, this option also allows for the identification of new Local Centres and Village Centres as well as retaining our existing Neighbourhood Centres.



Figure 7: Preferred Option for Centres Hierarchy



Do you agree with our Preferred Option for our Hierarchy of Centres?





## New Centres

4.59 Following our classification of existing centres, our new LDP will provide the opportunity for new centres to be identified where appropriate. This can include existing areas where there is already a concentration of shops and services that serve a local population. It can also include areas which we believe have the potential to act as new centres based on their location and specific circumstances.

4.60 Our initial review has indicated the potential to develop:

- 📍 A new District Centre at Mossley West;
- 📍 A new Local Centre at Mallusk;
- 📍 Potential for new Village Centres; and
- 📍 Potential for new Neighbourhood Centres.

## New District Centre

4.61 We believe that the area around Mossley West rail station on the outskirts of Metropolitan Newtownabbey as seen in figure 8 presents significant development potential. Our options in relation to Mossley West are:

### OPTION 1:

**Do not consider the designation of Mossley West as a District Centre**

### OPTION 2:

**Consider the designation of Mossley West as a District Centre**

## OPTION 2: is our Preferred Option

4.62 The area around Mossley West is well located in relation to the strategic road network and is in close proximity to the cultural, civic and leisure facilities at Mossley Mill and Ballyearl.

4.63 Mossley West also lies in close proximity to Global Point which comprises a large area of land owned by Invest NI to promote major investment. BMAP zoned over 90 hectares of land for industry and employment uses including provision for up to 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of office floor space.

4.64 The north-east corner of this Invest NI site lies close to Mossley West rail station and may be suitable for high density development containing a concentration of office based jobs and a range of support services including retail and leisure facilities. This office development coupled with an appropriate scale of new retail /leisure development and the existing adjacent civic and community facilities could evolve into a new District Centre based around a local transport hub at the rail station.



4.65 If this area were to be designated as a new District centre under Option 2 it may be possible to increase the amount of office development proposed at the Global Point site. It may also be possible to accommodate a range of other uses suitable for location in a centre such as retail, commercial leisure, tourist accommodation and community facilities. Such a District Centre could boost the attraction of the wider Global Point / Ballyhenry site as a place to invest in. Under Option 1 we would simply maintain the status quo and the potential of this area would not be maximised in terms of its excellent location and the potential employment boost for the area.

4.66 The current station platform at Mossley West is located on part of the former track bed alongside a single line railway. If this line were doubled in the future, the station will have to be redeveloped. This itself may present an opportunity for the development of a larger transport interchange comprising bus facilities and further park and ride provision along with improved linkages to Mossley Mill, Ballyearl and Global Point. Additionally, new bus connections from the interchange to employment locations at Mallusk and the Abbey Centre could significantly enhance access to jobs for people located along the rail line.

**Do you agree with our Preferred Option in relation to Mossley West?**

**Are there any areas you think should be identified as a new District Centre?**



*Figure 8: Location of Mossley West Potential District Centre*





## New Local Centres

4.67 There are a range of shops and facilities clustered in the centre of the wider Mallusk industrial and commercial area that serves the needs of surrounding businesses (Figure 9). This area forms part of a larger area zoned for employment purposes, but is not specifically identified as a centre within the current BMAP. There exists an opportunity to consolidate the mix of uses at the heart of this large existing employment area through its designation as a local centre. Our options in relation to Mallusk are:

### OPTION 1:

Do not consider the designation of a local centre at Mallusk

### OPTION 2:

Consider the designation of a local centre at Mallusk

## OPTION 2 is the Preferred Option

4.68 In view of the scale and range of shopping available at this location it is proposed that the commercial part of Mallusk centred on the existing cluster of services including shops and eateries should be designated as a Local Centre to accommodate ongoing development at this location.

Are there any other areas you think should be considered as a new Local Centre?



Figure 9: Location of Mallusk Potential Local Centre



Do you agree that the commercial area of Mallusk should be identified as a Local Centre?



## New Village Centres

4.69 Our initial evidence suggests that there are several places in our Borough not currently designated as centres in the existing development plans that may benefit from designation. This would entail consideration of the villages identified in our local settlement hierarchy to assess if a readily identifiable centre exists that would benefit from local planning policy to protect its commercial function and the current mix of uses as well as considering the need for potential expansion. There are currently no defined centres identified within our villages.

Are there any particular villages that would be suitable to have a defined village centre?

## New Neighbourhood Centres

4.70 New centres could also include neighbourhood centres. No Neighbourhood Centres were identified in BMAP for Metropolitan Newtownabbey and again initial evidence suggests that there are several places in the Metropolitan area that may benefit from such designation. Three such centres were identified in the Antrim Area Plan at Greystone, Parkhall and Ballycraigy. Our options in relation to Neighbourhood Centres are:

### OPTION 1:

Remove Neighbourhood Centres from the local hierarchy of centres

### OPTION 2:

Retain the existing Neighbourhood Centres and identify new ones drawn from the Top 2 tiers of our settlement hierarchy

**OPTION 2 is our Preferred Option**





4.71 Neighbourhood Centres can provide an important function in our large urban areas. They provide a local facility for people in terms of shopping and other uses. By retaining and identifying Neighbourhood Centres in our new plan, these facilities are likely to be protected from other forms of development, thereby retaining and enhancing such local facilities. This will also help sustain local communities.

4.72 Option 1 would allow development in these locations to be assessed on their individual merits under prevailing planning policy. This could allow these areas to be used for other uses which could result in a loss of facilities for local people. It could also result in a loss of employment, albeit small scale, for local communities.

4.73 On balance it is considered that local Neighbourhood Centres are important and therefore should be afforded more protection. From our initial evidence, there are a number of areas that may be considered as a new Neighbourhood Centre in Metropolitan Newtownabbey.

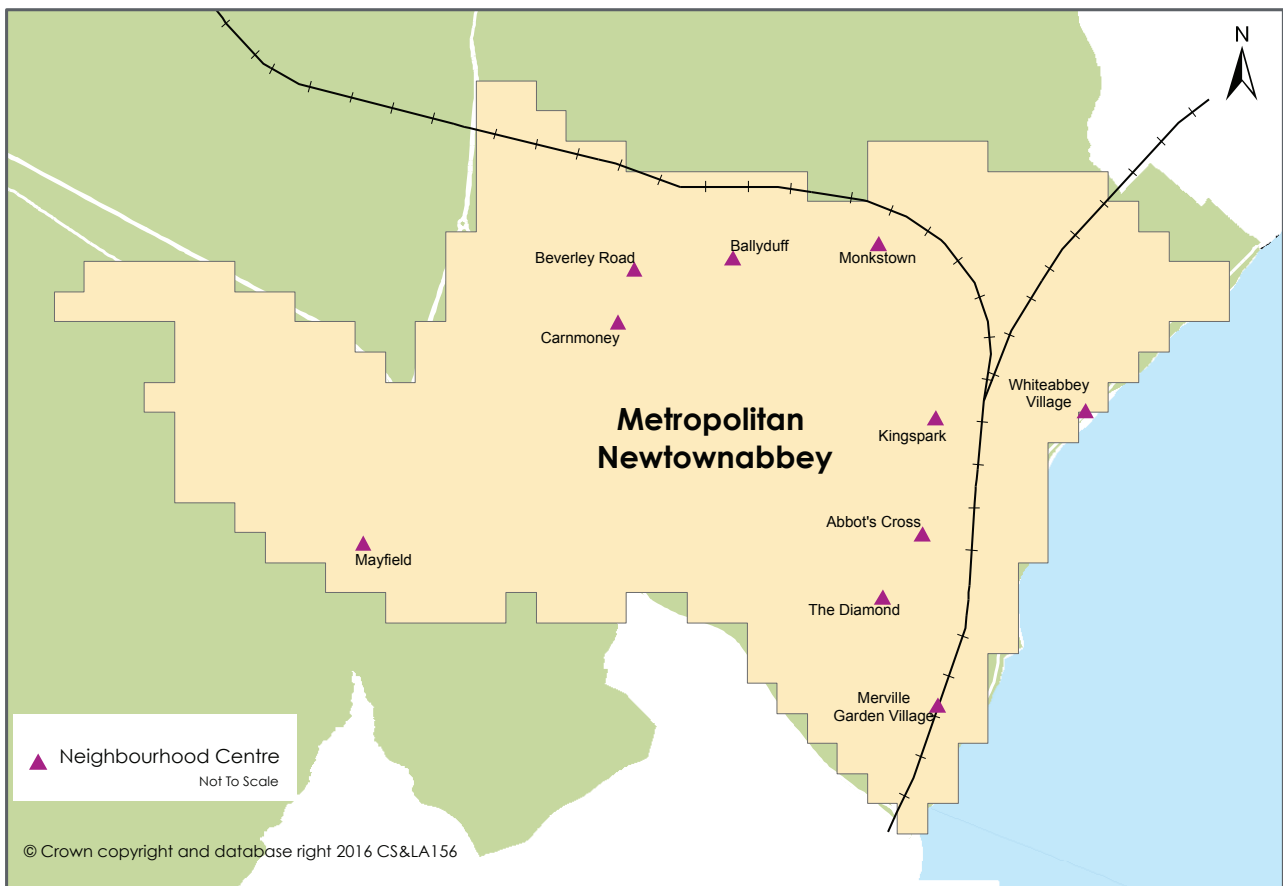
These are listed below and illustrated in Figure 10:

- Abbot's Cross
- Ballyduff
- Beverley Road
- Carnmoney
- Kingspark
- Mayfield
- Merville Garden Village
- Monkstown
- The Diamond, Rathcoole
- Whiteabbey Village

Do you agree with our preferred option in relation to Neighbourhood Centres?



Figure 10: Location of Potential New Neighbourhood Centres



Do you agree that the areas we have identified should be considered as new local Neighbourhood Centres?

Are there any other areas that you believe should be considered as a new Neighbourhood Centre?



## Out of Centre Shopping Areas

4.74 Our Borough's most prominent out of centre retail locations are sited at Junction One Retail Outlet and Leisure Park, and outside the current boundary of the Abbey Centre District Centre at Valley Retail Park, Shore Road Retail Park, and at Mill Road, Newtownabbey.

4.75 Given their location beyond our hierarchy of centres, development proposals at these centres will be assessed on their merits against prevailing policy.

4.76 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement sets out the current operational policy for retailing in Northern Ireland. It advises that a town centre first approach should be adopted for retail and other main town centre uses (which is defined in the SPPS as including cultural and community facilities, leisure, entertainment and other businesses). The SPPS also indicates that a sequential approach should be taken for the identification of retail and main town centres uses in LDPs.

4.77 In addition the SPPS advises that LDPs should include a strategy for town centres and retailing and contain appropriate policies and proposals that should promote town centres first for retail and other main town centre uses. This includes appropriate policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in the hierarchy of centres and other locations, and the factors that will be taken into account in making decisions.

4.78 Further information in relation to retail policy is set out in part six.

Do you agree with our approach to Out of Centre shopping areas?





## Role of the Plan relating to Retail and Other Uses

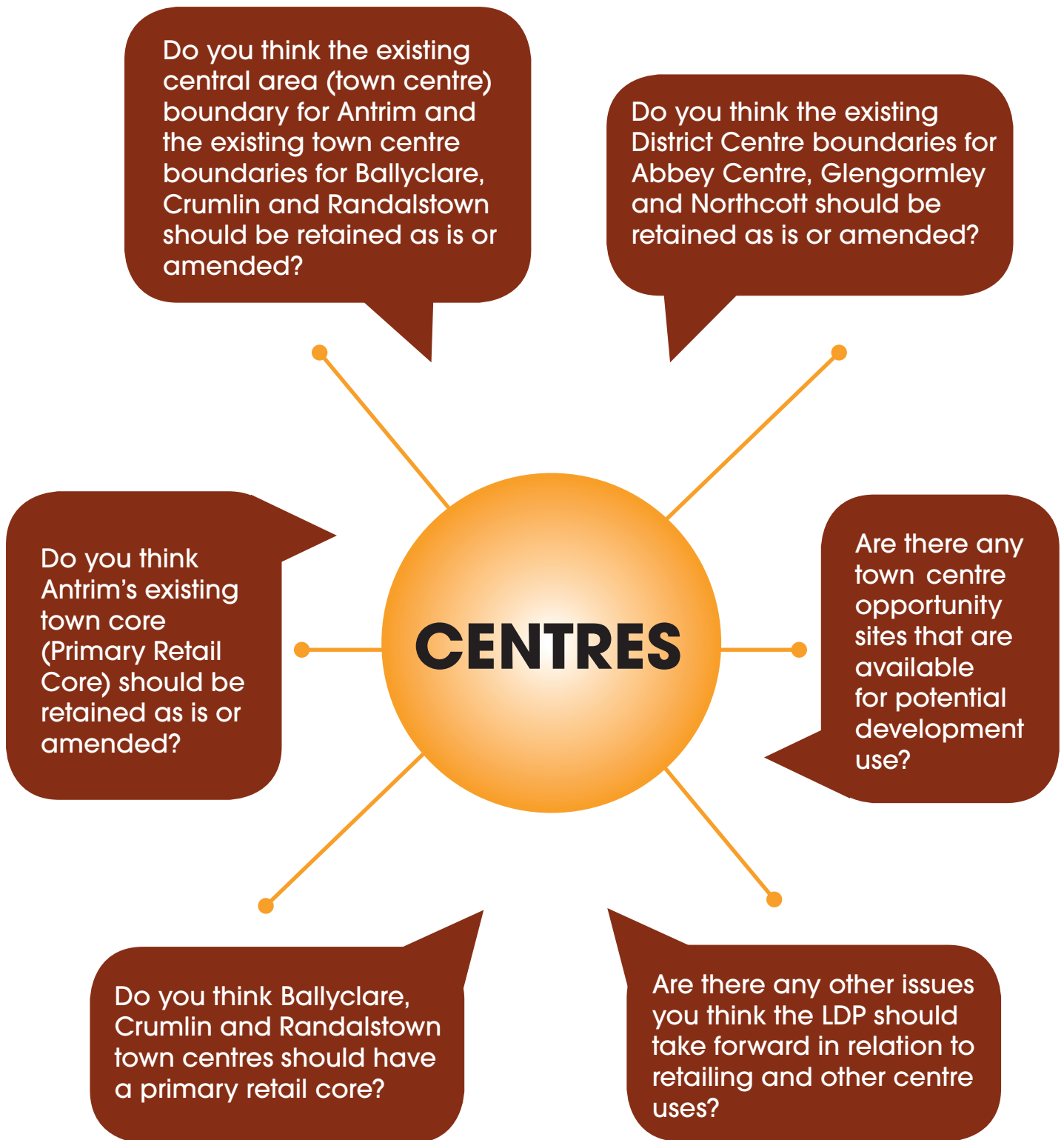
4.79 As well as defining and identifying a hierarchy of centres and bringing forward new planning policy, our new Plan will be required to define the spatial extent of our centres. Our centres should provide for a diverse retail offer and mix of uses which reflect local circumstances and as part of the Plan preparation process, we will carry out a number of assessments to inform our future decisions.

4.80 The starting point for our town centres is to consider how they have been dealt with in our two current development plans and the differences between them. The current boundaries of our town and district centres are shown in Appendix 4.

4.81 The LDP will have the option to identify primary retail cores within our town centres. A primary retail core is an area which is identified in the LDP as the central shopping area and where the loss of shops to other competing uses will be controlled through planning policy. However, in a changing retail environment this may be seen as inflexible in certain locations and could simply result in a high proportion of vacant premises.

4.82 We would like to hear your views on the current boundaries of our commercial centres before we review and define them in our new Plan. We have therefore set out a number of questions overleaf to generate discussion on the matter.





## Strategic Employment Locations

4.83 Another key component of our Spatial Growth Strategy is where and how the new LDP should facilitate future employment growth.



4.84 Employment and economic growth is a key priority for our Council. Our Corporate Plan describes the Borough as a place where residents prefer to live and work and businesses choose to locate and grow.

4.85 The LDP has a key role to play in facilitating employment in our Borough whether through the zoning of land or the development of planning policy to support business development and job growth. It is also important to sustain the jobs already located within our Borough.

4.86 It is expected that our commercial centres will continue to play an important role in accommodating employment generating development, particularly in the service sector. Their position in this regard has become more significant in recent years as employment has moved off the factory floor and into offices and services. Retaining and creating jobs in our commercial centres will also help support the vitality and viability of these important mixed use locations.

4.87 However, not all employment generating development is suitable within our existing commercial centres. Based on our Plan Objectives it will be essential that existing strategic employment and industrial sites are afforded adequate protection from competing land uses and that, where necessary, new strategic locations are identified for businesses and other economic developments in order that large scale investment can continue to be attracted to and accommodated within our Borough.

### Proposed Plan Objectives relating to employment

-  To provide an adequate range and quality of land and premises for business and industry.
-  To protect strategically important business and employment opportunities.



4.88 The preparation of our LDP therefore provides the opportunity to safeguard existing employment sites and locations identified in our current plans and to identify the need for new employment locations in the Borough, with specific sites being brought forward at Local Policies Plan stage.

4.89 As part of our plan preparation we are required to review our employment locations in accordance with the Employment Land Evaluation Framework described in the RDS and set out in Table 4 below. The outworking of this process will be carried forward in the preparation of our new Plan.

**Table 4: The Employment Land Evaluation Framework**

<b>Stage 1</b> <b>Taking Stock of the Existing Situation</b>	An initial assessment of the 'fitness for purpose' including the environmental implications of the existing employment land portfolio. This is principally in order to identify the 'best' employment sites to be retained and protected and identifying sites that should clearly be released for other uses.
<b>Stage 2</b> <b>Understanding Future Requirements</b>	Quantify the amount of employment land required across the main business sectors during the development plan period. This is achieved by assessing both demand and supply elements and assessing how they can be met in aggregate by the existing stock of business premises and by allocated sites. Account should also be taken of turnover of existing sites due to relocation or closures. Both short/medium term and strategic provision need to be considered in this process.
<b>Stage 3</b> <b>Identifying a 'New' portfolio of sites</b>	Devise qualitative site appraisal criteria to determine which sites meet the occupier or developer needs. Confirm the existing sites to be retained, replaced or released, and any gaps in the portfolio. In this allocation, consideration should be given to previously used sites, and in the reallocation, the environmental impact of one site relative to others should be included. The results of Stage 2, together with this site-appraisal should provide a robust justification for altering allocations for employment land.

Source: RDS 2010





4.90 In BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan there are approximately 614 hectares of land zoned for employment/industry purposes in the Borough. Of this total area 366 hectares of land relates to lands currently developed for employment and industry purposes and 248.3 hectares is zoned for future industry/employment use.

4.91 Of the 248.3 hectares of lands for future industry/employment use, 155 hectares remains undeveloped. The majority of the undeveloped areas are located in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and Ballyclare. This includes 91 hectares at Global Point which was designated as a major employment location in BMAP, 53 hectares off the Antrim Road in Mallusk and a 12 hectare site east of the Hillhead Road, Ballyclare. In comparison, the lands zoned within Antrim are almost at capacity. Further information in relation to employment is set out in our evidence paper "Facilitating Economic Development".

4.92 At this POP stage, it is anticipated that most of our larger employment and industrial locations will be found suitable to continue in this use whilst some smaller and older sites may be considered more suitable as potential redevelopment opportunities for alternative use. The RDS Employment Land Evaluation Framework will inform this process.

4.93 To facilitate future employment growth, it is considered the new LDP should ensure that a ready supply of economic land for strategic business use and industry is maintained. As part of this process it is considered that there would be merit in identifying those larger strategically located sites in the Borough that should be protected for employment purposes and where as a consequence future proposals for alternative uses would be resisted. It is considered that such sites would generally be 10 hectares or greater in size and that these should be defined in the new Plan as Strategic Employment Locations (SELs). These sites once identified should be protected for employment purposes and as a consequence proposals for alternative uses would be resisted.



Our options for SELs are:

### **OPTION 1:**

Maintain status quo and do not identify Strategic Employment Locations (SEL)

### **OPTION 2:**

Identify existing employment sites of over 10 hectares in the Borough's largest settlements (Metropolitan Newtownabbey, Antrim and Ballyclare) as SELs

#### **SUB-OPTION 2a:**

Only identify existing employment sites of over 10 hectares as SELs

#### **SUB-OPTION 2b:**

Identify existing sites as in Option 2a and consider designation of new SELs in Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown with the specific sites to be brought forward in Local Policies Plan

### **OPTION 2 with SUB-OPTION 2b is our Preferred Option**

4.94 This approach would allow the Council to provide and maintain appropriate protection to those larger strategically located employment sites in the Borough and consider the need for additional sites to promote job creation and employment prospects throughout the key settlements of the Borough.

4.95 It is considered that this approach would meet the requirements of the RDS in terms of securing employment land in our most accessible locations and in key locations to support our population in terms of access to work. This would also provide certainty for both existing occupiers and prospective developers of those locations which are considered suitable for future employment generation uses.

4.96 In relation to existing employment zonings, the Regional Development Strategy explicitly identifies the Invest NI site at Global Point / Ballyhenry as a key location for economic growth within the greater Belfast Metropolitan area. Additional sites in Metropolitan Newtownabbey that would fulfil the SEL criteria (10 hectares or over in accessible locations) are found at Mallusk, Antrim Road, Church Road and Monkstown (Doagh Road / Cloughfern Avenue).



4.97 The RDS notes that the economic drivers in Antrim “revolve around construction, distribution, transport and hospitality” and that “the area’s principal strength literally revolves around a well-developed transport infrastructure that provides easy access to all the main external gateways for Northern Ireland, as well as easy access to all parts of the Province”.

4.98 Current sites in Antrim that would fulfil the criteria for identification as SELs are found at Kilbegs Road, Rathenraw, Newpark, Steeple, Enkalon and Antrim Technology Park. There are two locations in Ballyclare that provide more than 10 hectares of employment land and these are found at Avondale Drive and Hillhead Road. There are currently no areas of employment land greater than 10 hectares in either Crumlin or Randalstown. Our proposals for SELs are shown in Figure 11.

4.99 In terms of identifying new sites it is proposed that any future SEL should be situated in or near to our largest settlements and in a favourable position in relation to key transport infrastructure. The need for new SELs would be taken forward as part of the Plan Strategy, whilst specific sites would then be identified and zoned as part of the subsequent Local Policies Plan.

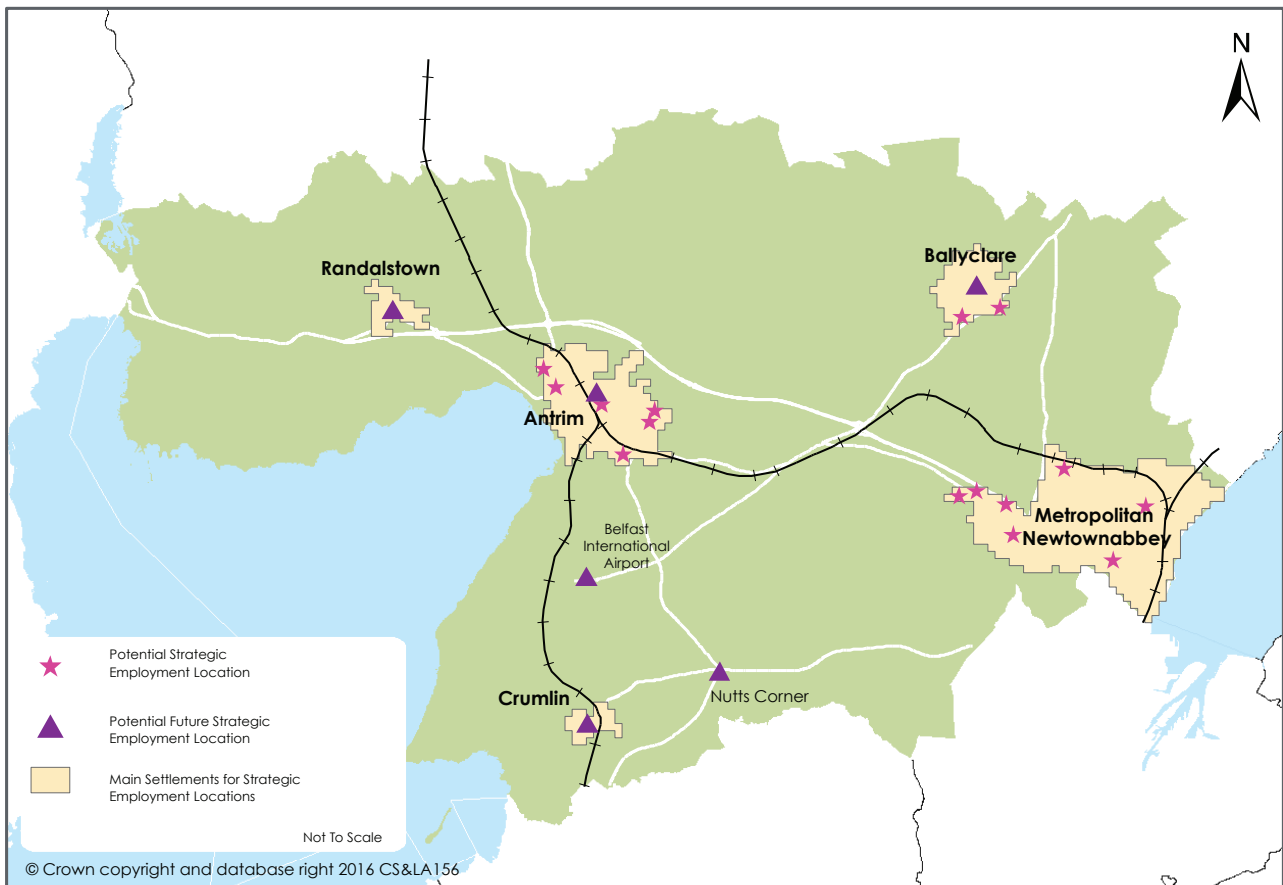
4.100 Given there is already a large range of possible SELs in Metropolitan Newtownabbey, several of which remain to be developed, it is anticipated that consideration of new SELs is likely to focus on the settlements of Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown.

4.101 The proposed SELs to be identified by the LDP will be complemented by a range of smaller non-strategic industrial and business areas that will continue to provide for a wide range of local employment opportunities in other places across the Borough.

Do you agree with our Preferred Option for Strategic Employment Locations?



Figure 11: Proposed Strategic Employment Locations



Are there any areas of land in and around Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown that could be identified as a potential Strategic Employment Location?





## Belfast International Airport

- 4.102 Belfast International Airport (BIA) is defined by the Regional Development Strategy as a regional gateway to Northern Ireland, something that needs to be recognised in our Spatial Growth Strategy.
- 4.103 BIA welcomed 4.4 million passengers in 2015-2016 and handled over 40,000 tonnes of cargo in 2013. It plays a significant role in the economy of our Borough and accommodates a large number of jobs. The Antrim Area Plan recognised this fact by identifying land to accommodate the development of a number of airport related uses and setting out planning policy for the airport.
- 4.104 As a strategically important transport interchange BIA will remain an important driver for economic development, freight distribution activities and generating additional employment over the Plan period. Our new LDP will therefore have a key role to play in facilitating ongoing development of this strategic gateway.

- 4.105 Policy for Belfast International airport is primarily set out in the Antrim Area Plan. Our LDP will contain new airport policy taking into account the strategic direction for major gateways set out in the SPPS and will also retain the current airport public safety zones as identified in the DOE Publication Airport Public Safety Zones (2007).
- 4.106 The SPPS states that LDPs should zone land for known requirements for future expansion of airports where appropriate and that development proposals adjacent to such facilitates which would seriously jeopardise their future expansion should not be permitted. This will include land required for any improvements or infrastructure required in relation to any transport improvements.
- 4.107 In seeking to facilitate the further growth and development of the Airport there are a number of options as set out below.

### OPTION 1:

**Facilitating growth by zoning – this option will involve the identification of land to meet the future needs of the airport and would occur at the second stage of our Plan, the Local Policies Plan.**

- 4.108 Option 1 broadly maintains the status quo of the position set out in the Antrim Area Plan. It could potentially hinder the development needs of the airport as we are not proposing to bring forward land for zoning until the Local Policies Plan stage of the LDP.



## OPTION 2:

Facilitate growth through planning policy – this option would allow proposals to be assessed in relation to policy set out in our new Plan and would apply at the first stage of our Plan, the Plan Strategy Stage.

4.109 Option 2 would allow the airport to continue to be supported until such times as land is zoned at the Local Policies stage.

## OPTION 3:

Consider a Strategic Employment Location at Belfast International airport – this option would allow for the development of a range of suitable uses that would complement the operations of the airport.

4.110 Option 3 gives greater recognition to the strategic role and function of the airport and the need to facilitate growth of the airport through the identification of a Strategic Employment Location. This could widen the potential scope of uses permitted at the airport beyond the airport related uses indicated in the current Antrim Area Plan.

Are there any other planning issues that need consideration in relation to the Airport?

## OPTION 4:

A combination of Options 2 and 3.

4.111 Option 4 would allow the growth of the airport to be facilitated at an early stage of the new plan preparation process and would also allow for its strategic significance to be protected within our new Plan. A planning policy would be developed at our Plan Strategy stage to facilitate the growth of BIA. The airport and its environs would also be identified as a Strategic Employment Location with the boundary of the SEL to be identified in the Local Policies Plan including any key site requirements and infrastructure requirements.

**OPTION 4 is our Preferred Option.**

Do you agree with our Preferred Option for a Strategic Employment Location to be located at Belfast International Airport along with up-to-date planning policy?



## Countryside

4.112 Beyond the settlements identified in our local settlement hierarchy and other strategic locations that may be identified in the LDP, the remaining land in the Borough comprising all areas outside designated settlements or the airport will be part of the countryside.

4.113 Most development in the countryside will continue to be considered in light of relevant planning policies that will be brought forward in the new LDP which will be required to be in broad conformity with the provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement. Further information on this is set out in part six of this POP document.

4.114 One strategic issue that has arisen, based on feedback from initial consultation events, has been the need to address the future potential of the former Nutts Corner airfield site that is currently located within the countryside.

4.115 The Nutts Corner site benefits from excellent access to key transport links being situated almost midway between the M1 and M2 Motorways. Whilst the Antrim Area Plan 1984-2001 restricts development at this location, it is clear that its position on a key transport corridor has been attractive to developers and some large scale commercial development has taken place here in recent years, mainly in the form of large warehouses and a major distribution centre.

4.116 Preparation of the new LDP provides the opportunity to review how the potential for future employment growth at this strategic location could be taken forward. In view of the POP proposal to consider Strategic Employment Locations at our larger settlements and also Belfast International Airport it is considered that Nutts Corner may provide the potential to identify a rural SEL. Our options in relation to Nutts Corner are overleaf.



## OPTION 1:

### Retain Nutts Corner within the countryside

4.117 Option 1 could maintain the status quo and proposals at the Nutts Corner location would simply therefore continue to be assessed on an ad hoc basis against relevant planning policy. This is likely to result in a piecemeal approach to the development of the area which may prove unsustainable.

Do you agree with our Preferred Option that Nutts Corner should be identified as a Strategic Employment Location?

## OPTION 2:

### Consider a Rural Strategic Employment Location at Nutts Corner

4.118 Conversely it is considered that the identification of Nutts Corner as a rural Strategic Employment Location would encourage suitable employment opportunities at this key location. This would allow a co-ordinated approach to development of the site, seek to ensure new development does not despoil the local countryside and allow the Plan to consider what range of uses would be appropriate and whether there are any key site requirements that would be required in association with such a designation.

What types of employment use would be suitable on the site?

**OPTION 2 is our Preferred Option**





## Spatial Growth Strategy

4.119 Having considered the key components that have a key role to play in the growth and development of our Borough the following Spatial Growth Strategy is proposed for the new Local Development Plan.

### Spatial Growth Strategy

- ▶ Focus core growth on the Metropolitan Newtownabbey Area and Major Town/ Main Hub of Antrim building upon existing committed development allocations and strengthen their roles as the primary locations for growth and investment in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy.
- ▶ Consolidate and strengthen the role of the towns of Ballyclare, Crumlin and Randalstown as centres for employment, facilities and services to support the network of surrounding villages and the rural hinterland.
- ▶ Sustain and maintain the role of our villages as local service centres providing opportunity for housing and employment taking account of the benefits of accessibility to our key transport routes.
- ▶ Sustain and maintain our countryside through the accommodation of suitable employment and housing in the rural areas.
- ▶ Promote sustainable development and strengthen the role of our regional gateways such as Belfast International Airport with the development of Strategic Employment Locations on our key transport routes.

Do you agree with our proposed Spatial Growth Strategy?









## 5 Housing Allocation and Distribution

- 5.1 Planning for future housing growth across the Borough is one of the core functions of the Local Development Plan. There are two key stages in the process of planning for this growth. The first is to decide the total number of new dwellings that have to be accommodated through the Plan and the second is to allocate this housing growth to different places in the Borough.
- 5.2 The level and distribution of future housing growth are strategic matters that need to be incorporated into our new Plan Strategy. This will then inform the identification and zoning of land in settlements as part of the Local Policies Plan. As part of this process a full and detailed housing land supply analysis will be carried out incorporating urban capacity studies.

### Stage One – Determining the Amount of Housing Growth

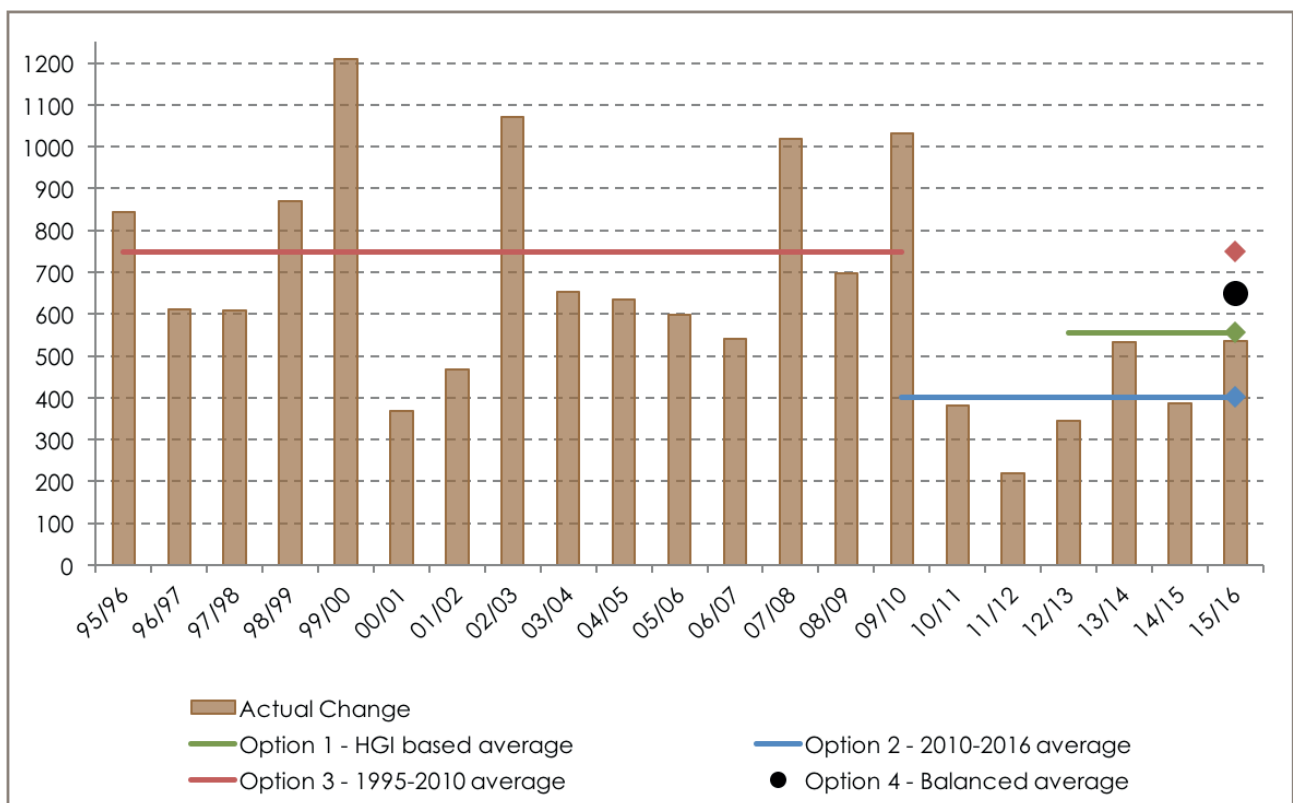
- 5.3 It is essential that the anticipated level of housing growth to be accommodated during the Plan period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2030 is clearly defined. However, it is important to understand and accept that once the level is defined it is neither a target to be met nor a cap which cannot be exceeded. The estimation of future housing growth is not an exact science and a degree of judgement is considered essential in formulating an appropriate level of housing growth for the years ahead. Notwithstanding this uncertainty there are a number of factors which have been considered to assist in the formulation of a reasoned judgement on the amount of housing growth that is reasonable and appropriate over the Plan period.
- 5.4 The total housing growth provided for in the Plan should comprise the anticipated number of dwellings that may be needed for a growing population during the 15 year period of the Plan plus the maintenance of a 5 year housing land supply in settlements at the Plan end date.
- 5.5 The revised Housing Growth Indicator (HGI) for the 13 year period from 2012 to 2025 forms an important part of the guidance defined by the Department for Infrastructure in the Regional Development Strategy. The HGI for Antrim and Newtownabbey is 7,200 dwellings which equates to an annual average build rate of 554 dwellings per annum.



5.6 An analysis of past house completions derived from NISRA housing stock statistics (Figure 12) indicates that there is a high degree of variability in the number of dwellings built in each year across the Borough; however these can be averaged across a range of timescales. The average number of dwellings completed in the 20 year period from 1995-2015 was 655 dwellings per annum.

The highest number of completions during this period was in the year ending 31 March 2000 in which over 1,200 new dwellings were recorded as being completed in the Borough. This contrasts sharply with the year ending 31 March 2012 in which only 220 new dwellings were recorded.

Figure 12: Past Housing Growth and Future Growth Options





5.7 The number of house completions is significantly affected by prevailing economic conditions affecting both the private housing market and in the amount of funding available for new-build social housing. This is illustrated by the significant fall in annual average completions for the 6 year period from 2010 to 2016 during which the annual average build rate was only 420 dwellings per annum. This compares to the previous 15 year period from 1995 to 2010 when the annual average build rate was 748 dwellings per annum.

5.8 Based on the factors outlined above four options are proposed in relation to the amount of housing growth that the new Plan should seek to accommodate in our Borough. These are set out below and illustrated in Figure 13

### OPTION 1:

#### **11,080 Dwellings (average of 554 per annum)**

5.9 Option 1 is defined by rigid adherence to the annual average build rate of 554 dwellings that is derived from the HGI figure in the RDS. This would provide for growth of 8,310 dwellings during the plan period and a 5 year housing land supply of 2,770 dwellings at the end of that period. While this would comply with the RDS it is considered that this would not allow for flexibility as the housing market recovers.

The HGI is derived from household projections which are themselves based upon statistical trends during a period when household formation was suppressed by market conditions. It is considered that the slow rate of growth experienced in the recent past may not continue into the future and that there is in all likelihood a suppressed latent demand for household formation which may increase the rate of housing growth required to meet the needs of society.

### OPTION 2:

#### **8,020 Dwellings (average of 401 per annum)**

5.10 Option 2 is defined by maintaining the recent 2010-2016 annual average build rate of 401 dwellings. This would provide for growth of 6,015 dwellings during the plan period and a 5 year housing land supply of 2,005 dwellings at the end of that period. While this would meet the HGI requirement to 2025, it is considered that it does not allow for any potential future increase in build rate and may not provide for sufficient housing during the Plan period to 2030 or maintain a 5 year housing land supply at the Plan end date.



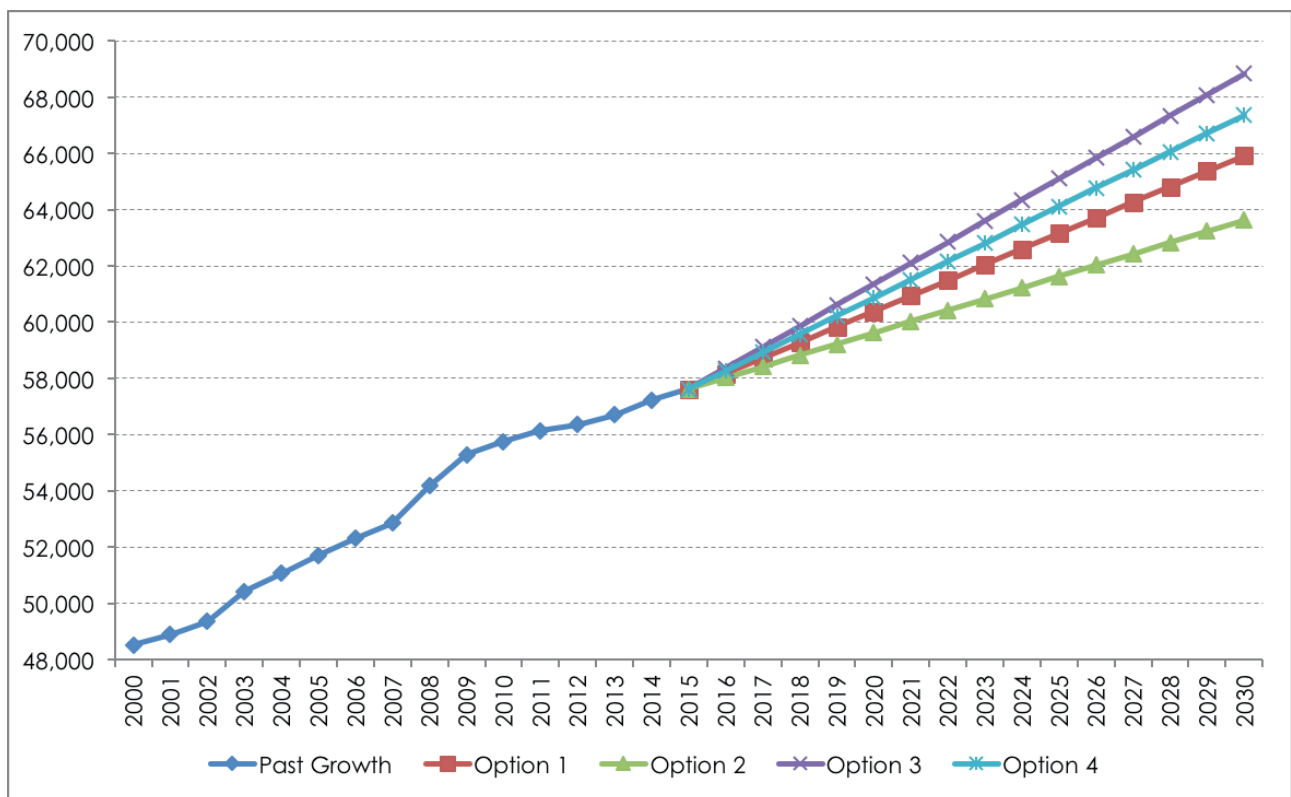
### OPTION 3:

**14,960 Dwellings** (average of 748 per annum)

5.11 Option 3 is defined by maintaining the pre-recession 1995-2010 annual average build rate of 748 dwellings. This would provide for growth of 11,220 dwellings during the Plan period and a 5 year housing land supply of 3,740 dwellings at the end of that period.

This would provide a high degree of flexibility within the Plan but it is acknowledged that it is significantly higher than the growth indicated in regional guidance (RDS-HGI). Furthermore, this option does not take account of the deceleration of housing growth witnessed in recent years.

*Figure 13: Past Housing Growth and Future Growth Options*



## OPTION 4:

**13,000 Dwellings** (average of 650 per annum)

5.12 Option 4 of 13,000 dwellings is predicated on an assumed annual average build rate of 650 dwellings, which is derived from an average of the HGI growth rate of 554 dwellings per annum and the pre-crash build rate of 748 dwellings per annum. This would provide for growth of 9,750 dwellings during the Plan period and a 5 year housing land supply of 3,250 dwellings at the end of that period.

Do you agree with our preferred option of 13,000 dwellings required for Housing Growth ?

## OPTION 4 is our Preferred Option.

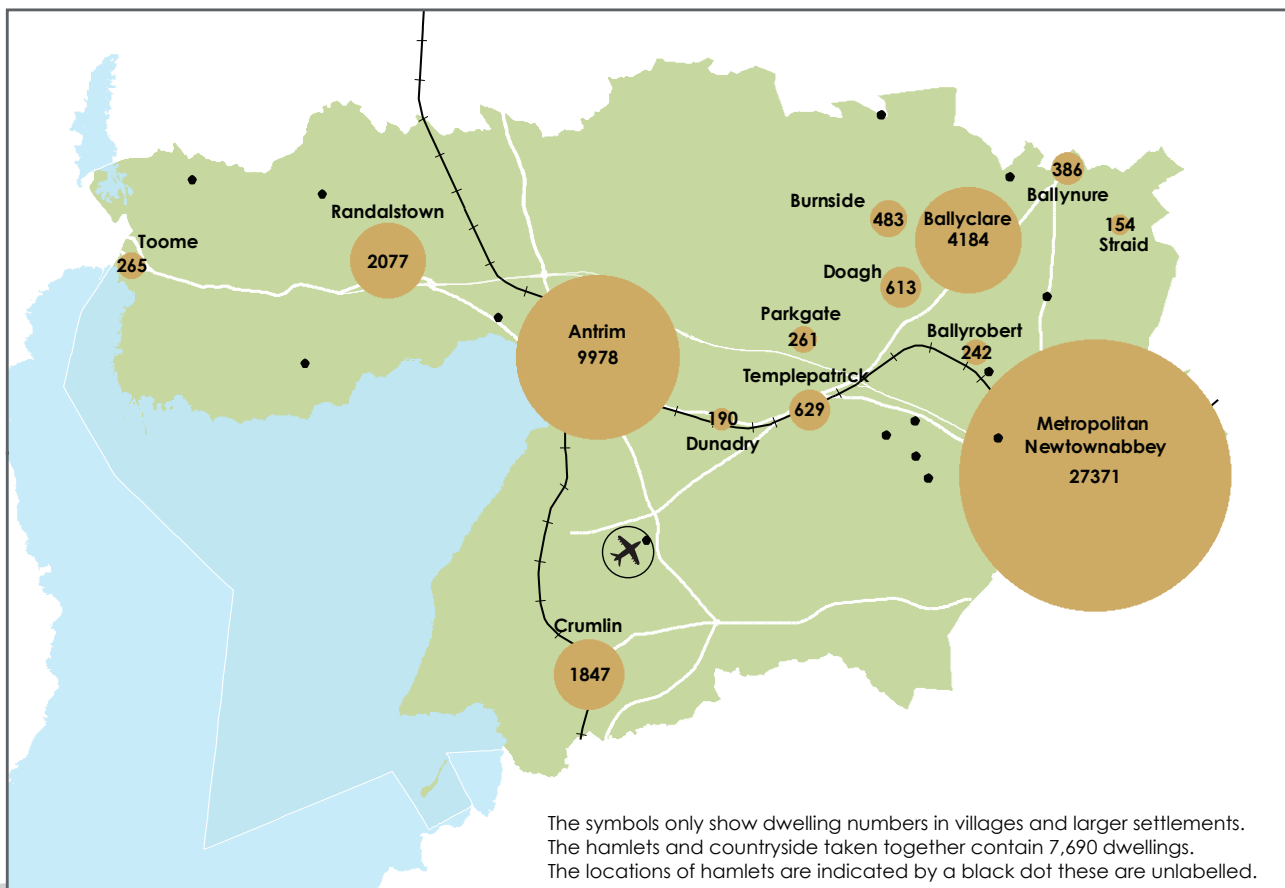
5.13 A housing growth of 9,750 dwellings during the Plan period and a 5 year housing land supply of 3,250 dwellings at the end of that period is considered as a balanced approach and the most appropriate option for the Borough. It does not depart too significantly from the HGI indicated in regional guidance, but will afford reasonable flexibility and a potential increase in build rates from those seen over the last 5 years as the housing market recovers.



## Stage Two – Housing Growth Allocation

- 5.14 A core element of the Plan is the allocation of housing growth to individual places in the Borough. This is shaped significantly by the hierarchy of settlements described in the overall Spatial Growth Strategy and influenced by the factors defined in the regional policy context contained in the RDS and SPPS.
- 5.15 The distribution of existing homes across the Borough is illustrated in figure 14 and provides an important baseline from which to plan for future housing growth. Almost half (48.56%) of all homes in the Borough are located in Metropolitan Newtownabbey. Antrim contains 17.70% of all homes, our three towns 14.38%, our nine villages 5.72%, and our hamlets and countryside 13.64% of all homes.
- 5.16 The Council's Annual Housing Monitor provides information on housing land supply for the settlements in the Borough (see Table 5 overleaf). It provides a broad indication of housing land supply within each settlement. A full and detailed housing land supply analysis for each settlement in the Borough will be carried out as the LDP progresses in accordance with the requirements of the SPPS.

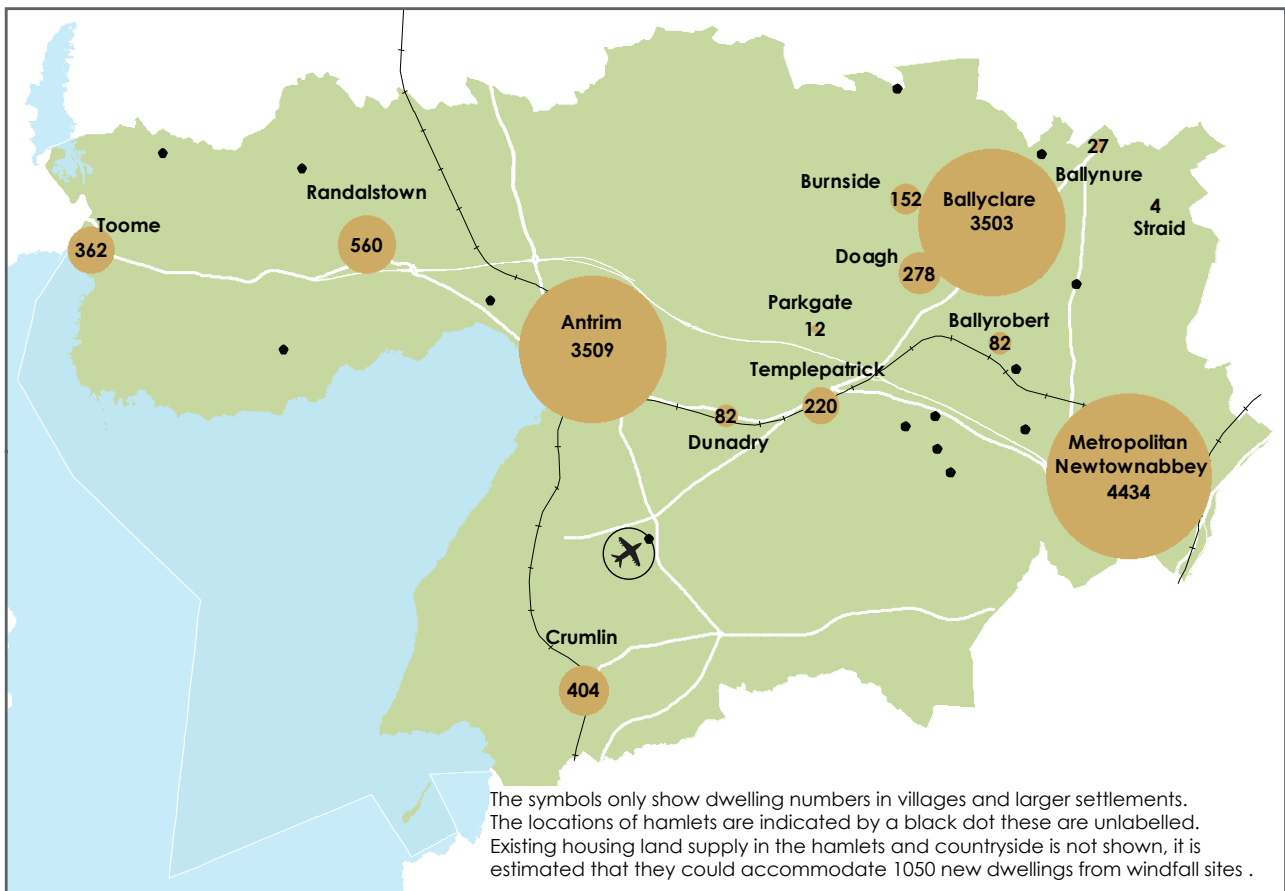
*Figure 14: Distribution of Existing Homes (Census 2011)*





5.17 The housing land supply at the Plan base date of 1 April 2015 could accommodate over 4,400 new homes in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and over 3,500 new homes in Antrim. The very large zoning of housing land to the west of Ballyclare added to other smaller sites in the town could accommodate over 3,500 new homes. Most of the nine villages can accommodate at least 80 new homes; however supply is more limited in Ballynure, Parkgate and Straid as illustrated in Figure 15. It is estimated that the Borough's hamlets may accommodate almost 300 new homes during the Plan period based upon existing planning permissions and potential windfall sites. The figures in Table 5 overleaf include an estimated supply of 250 new dwellings for the countryside (based upon a 5 year supply at an average of 50 dwellings granted planning permission per annum).

*Figure 15: Distribution of Housing Land Supply at 1 April 2015*



5.18 The housing land supply at the Plan base date of 1 April 2015 would allow for a Borough wide 25% increase in dwellings from the number recorded by the 2011 Census. However, the housing land supply is not distributed in the same proportions as the existing number of dwellings (as illustrated in Table 5). The rate of growth achievable on the existing housing land supply in each location varies considerably. For example, the 3,503 supply in Ballyclare allows for 84% growth, while the 404 supply in Crumlin would only allow for 22% growth. In Straid, land supply would achieve only 3% growth, whereas Toome could more than double in size with the existing supply of 362 providing for 137% growth.

**Table 5: Existing homes and housing land supply with resultant growth rate**

Location	Existing number of dwellings (Census 2011)	Percentage of housing stock (Census 2011)	Existing housing land supply (1 April 2015)	Growth rate achievable on existing housing land supply
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	27,371	48.56%	4,434	16%
Antrim	9,978	17.70%	3,509	35%
Ballyclare	4,184	7.42%	3,503	84%
Crumlin	1,847	3.28%	404	22%
Randalstown	2,077	3.68%	560	27%
Ballynure	386	0.68%	27	7%
Ballyrobert	242	0.43%	82	34%
Burnside	483	0.86%	152	31%
Doagh	613	1.09%	278	45%
Dunadry	190	0.34%	82	43%
Parkgate	261	0.46%	12	5%
Straid	154	0.27%	4	3%
Templepatrick	629	1.12%	220	35%
Toome	265	0.47%	362	137%
Other settlements [1]	549	0.97%	274	50%
Inside existing settlements	49,229	87.33%	13,903	28%
Outside existing settlements	7,141	12.67%	250	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,370</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>14,153</b>	<b>25%</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Comprising Ballyeaston, BMAP small settlements and existing AAP hamlets (except Dunadry)



## Preliminary Housing Growth Allocation Options

- 5.19 The following key principles and assumptions have been used to shape the formulation of the options for housing growth allocation.
- 5.20 Each of the options is based upon the preferred option for growth across the Borough of 13,000 dwellings.
- 5.21 The distribution of the existing housing land supply is an important factor to consider, however it should not be the determining factor. It is assumed, based on past trends, that development of the existing land supply in some settlements is unlikely to be fully completed during the 2015-2030 Plan period. In such circumstances the existing housing land zonings will not necessarily be removed, rather they should be considered as a long-term land reserve beyond the Plan end date. Consequently, the high level of housing land supply in some settlements will not be allowed to unduly constrain the allocation of housing growth to other areas.
- 5.22 Metropolitan Newtownabbey has been allocated growth of 4,400 dwellings in all four of the options. It is considered that this maintains the existing significant level of growth already planned while consolidating the amount of housing in this part of the Belfast Metropolitan Area. This is in broad accordance with the RDS guidance that aims to focus metropolitan population growth in the City of Belfast.
- 5.23 Antrim has been allocated growth of 3,500 dwellings in all four of the options. It is considered that this maintains the existing significant level of growth already planned and achieves above-average growth in line with the town's role as a Main Hub in the RDS.
- 5.24 Various options have been presented for Ballyclare, however, each of them results in a significant oversupply of housing land. This land allocated in BMAP and subject of an existing extant permission is considered as a long-term housing land reserve for the town.



- 5.25 Housing growth is not allocated to specific hamlets, however an overall housing growth allocation for all the hamlets is based on an estimate of existing housing land supply and a rough estimate of possible windfall sites. This results in an allocation of 300 dwellings for all options.
- 5.26 Housing growth in the countryside will be managed by the new policy provisions of the LDP as derived from the SPPS. An assumed annual average growth rate of 50 dwellings is considered appropriate based on recent trends. This results in an allocation of 750 dwellings for all options.
- 5.27 The above-mentioned factors mean that the options primarily consider the level of growth appropriate to each of the Local Towns and Villages.

## OPTION 1:

### Grow local towns and selected villages

- 5.28 Option 1 as shown in Table 6 is predicated upon maintaining the high levels of growth already planned for Metropolitan Newtownabbey (4,400 new homes) and the Major Town/Main Hub of Antrim (3,500 new homes), alongside focussed higher growth in local towns and in three growth villages. It is considered that the villages of Ballynure, Templepatrick and Toome are able to accommodate a higher rate of growth (approximately 45%) than other villages because they are better located in terms of connection to the key transport corridors as defined in the RDS. This option envisages only moderate or low growth in each of the remaining villages (approximately 32% in Ballyrobert, Burnside, Doagh and Dunadry which can be accommodated by existing land supply; 23% in Parkgate and 16% in Straid reflecting their existing size and land supply). This growth allocation option may eventually lead to new land being identified for housing in the Local Policies Plan for Crumlin, Randalstown, Ballynure, Parkgate, Straid and Templepatrick.





Table 6: Growth allocation Option 1

Location	Growth Allocation Option 1	Existing Housing Land Supply (01/04/2015)	Balance of Allocation and Supply	Existing number of dwellings (Census 2011)	Option 1 Growth Rates
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	4,400	4,434	34	27,371	16%
Antrim	3,500	3,509	9	9,978	35%
Ballyclare	1,600	3,503	1,903	4,184	38%
Crumlin	650	404	<b>-246</b>	1,847	35%
Randalstown	650	560	<b>-90</b>	2,077	31%
Ballynure	175	27	<b>-148</b>	386	45%
Ballyrobert	80	82	2	242	33%
Burnside	150	152	2	483	31%
Doagh	200	278	78	613	33%
Dunadry	60	82	22	190	32%
Parkgate	60	12	<b>-48</b>	261	23%
Straid	25	4	<b>-21</b>	154	16%
Templepatrick	280	220	<b>-60</b>	629	45%
Toome	120	362	242	265	45%
Hamlets	300	274	<b>-26</b>	7,690	13%
Countryside	750	250	<b>-500</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>14,153</b>	<b>1,153</b>	<b>56,370</b>	<b>23%</b>



## OPTION 2:

### Growth focussed on local towns

5.29 Option 2 as shown in Table 7 maintains the high levels of growth already planned for Metropolitan Newtownabbey (4,400 new homes) and the Major Town/Main Hub of Antrim (3,500 new homes), alongside higher growth in each of the local towns (approximately 35-40%). It allows for continued growth in each village based upon the Borough-wide average growth of 23%. This growth allocation option may eventually lead to new land being identified for housing in the Local Policies Plan for Crumlin, Randalstown, Ballynure, Parkgate and Straid.

**Table 7: Growth allocation Option 2**

Location	Growth Allocation Option 2	Existing Housing Land Supply (01/04/2015)	Balance of Allocation and Supply	Existing number of dwellings (Census 2011)	Option 2 Growth Rates
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	4,400	4,434	34	27,371	16%
Antrim	3,500	3,509	9	9,978	35%
Ballyclare	1,800	3,503	1,703	4,184	43%
Crumlin	755	404	<b>-351</b>	1,847	41%
Randalstown	755	560	<b>-195</b>	2,077	36%
Ballynure	90	27	<b>-63</b>	386	23%
Ballyrobert	55	82	27	242	23%
Burnside	110	152	42	483	23%
Doagh	140	278	138	613	23%
Dunadry	45	82	37	190	24%
Parkgate	60	12	<b>-48</b>	261	23%
Straid	35	4	<b>-31</b>	154	23%
Templepatrick	145	220	75	629	23%
Toome	60	362	302	265	23%
Hamlets	300	274	<b>-26</b>	7,690	13%
Countryside	750	250	<b>-500</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>14,153</b>	<b>1,153</b>	<b>56,370</b>	<b>23%</b>



## OPTION 3:

### Grow local towns and all villages

5.30 Option 3 as shown in Table 8 maintains the high levels of growth already planned for Metropolitan Newtownabbey (4,400 new homes) and the Major Town/Main Hub of Antrim (3,500 new homes). Growth proposed in each of the local towns is the same as that proposed in Option 1 and lower than that proposed in Option 2. This option maintains the overall level of growth for the villages proposed in Option 1, but does not select specific growth villages and allows for approximately 36% growth in each village. This growth allocation option may eventually lead to new land being identified for housing in the Local Policies Plan for Crumlin, Randalstown, Ballynure, Ballyrobert, Burnside, Parkgate and Straid.

**Table 8: Growth allocation Option 3**

Location	Growth Allocation Option 3	Existing Housing Land Supply (01/04/2015)	Balance of Allocation and Supply	Existing number of dwellings (Census 2011)	Option 3 Growth Rates
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	4,400	4,434	34	27,371	16%
Antrim	3,500	3,509	9	9,978	35%
Ballyclare	1,600	3,503	1,903	4,184	38%
Crumlin	650	404	<b>-246</b>	1,847	35%
Randalstown	650	560	<b>-90</b>	2,077	31%
Ballynure	135	27	<b>-108</b>	386	35%
Ballyrobert	85	82	<b>-3</b>	242	35%
Burnside	170	152	<b>-18</b>	483	35%
Doagh	220	278	58	613	36%
Dunadry	70	82	12	190	37%
Parkgate	95	12	<b>-83</b>	261	36%
Straid	55	4	<b>-51</b>	154	36%
Templepatrick	220	220	0	629	35%
Toome	100	362	262	265	38%
Hamlets	300	274	<b>-26</b>	7,690	13%
Countryside	750	250	<b>-500</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>14,153</b>	<b>1,153</b>	<b>56,370</b>	<b>23%</b>



**OPTION 4:****Growth based on existing housing land supply**

5.31 Option 4 as shown in Table 9 is presented primarily for illustrative purposes and does not comply with the principle of the existing housing land supply not constraining a more balanced allocation of growth. It is predicated upon the amount of housing growth that can already be accommodated in each settlement. This is based on the existing housing land supply comprising planning permissions and existing plan zonings. It acknowledges that Ballyclare benefits from a significant oversupply which maintains a long term reserve of housing land for the town. The resultant growth rates for the villages vary significantly from 0% for Straid to 136% for Toome. This growth allocation option is likely to result in no new housing land or zonings needing to be identified for any of the settlements in the Local Policies Plan.

**Table 9: Growth allocation Option 4**

Location	Growth Allocation Option 4	Existing Housing Land Supply	Balance of Allocation and Supply	Existing number of dwellings (Census 2011)	Option 4 Growth Rates
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	4,400	4,434	34	27,371	16%
Antrim	3,500	3,509	9	9,978	35%
Ballyclare	1,890	3,503	1,613	4,184	45%
Crumlin	400	404	4	1,847	22%
Randalstown	560	560	0	2,077	27%
Ballynure	25	27	2	386	6%
Ballyrobert	80	82	2	242	33%
Burnside	150	152	2	483	31%
Doagh	275	278	3	613	45%
Dunadry	80	82	2	190	42%
Parkgate	10	12	2	261	4%
Straid	0	4	4	154	0%
Templepatrick	220	220	0	629	35%
Toome	360	362	2	265	136%
Hamlets	300	274	-26	7,690	13%
Countryside	750	250	-500		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>14,153</b>	<b>1,153</b>	<b>56,370</b>	<b>23%</b>





5.32 For comparative purposes each option is shown in the table below.

**Table 10: Options for the allocation of housing growth**

Location	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400
Antrim	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Ballyclare	1,600	1,800	1,600	1,890
Crumlin	650	755	650	400
Randalstown	650	755	650	560
Ballynure	175	90	135	25
Ballyrobert	80	55	85	80
Burnside	150	110	170	150
Doagh	200	140	220	275
Dunadry	60	45	70	80
Parkgate	60	60	95	10
Straid	25	35	55	0
Templepatrick	280	145	220	220
Toome	120	60	100	360
Hamlets	300	300	300	300
Countryside	750	750	750	750
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>

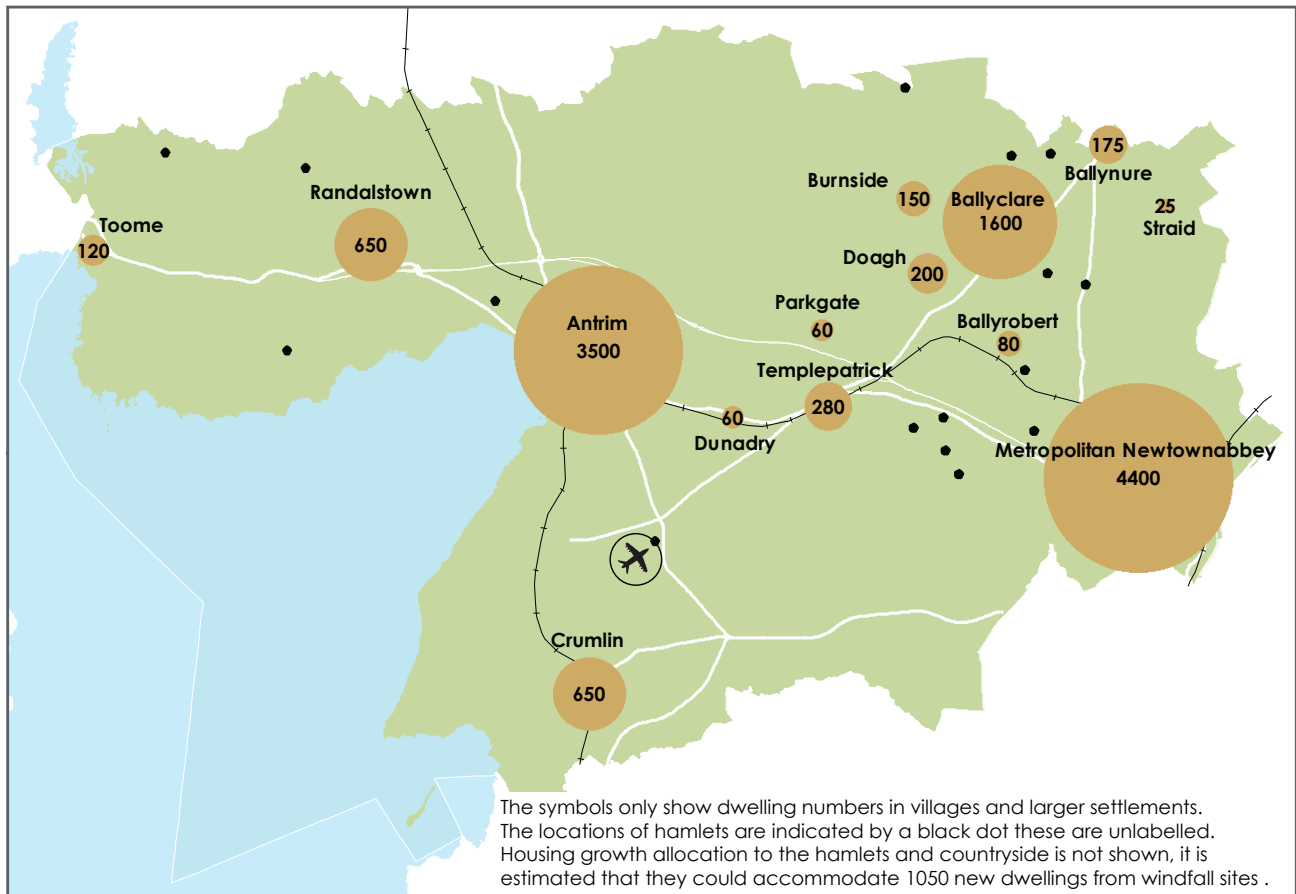
### **OPTION 1** is our Preferred Option.

5.33 Option 1 as illustrated in Figure 16 consolidates the growth planned in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and focusses enhanced growth in the towns and selected villages based upon key transport locations.

5.34 This option fulfils the proposed Strategic Growth Strategy of the Plan and will adhere to the strategic aims of the RDS in consolidating growth in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and sustaining rural towns and villages.



Figure 16: Housing Growth Allocation – Preferred Option



Do you agree with our preferred allocation of housing growth option, which consolidates the growth planned in Metropolitan Newtownabbey and focusses enhanced growth in selected towns and villages?



## Implications of existing housing commitments

5.35 In considering the allocation of new housing growth across the Borough in the new Local Development Plan it should be noted that there remains a considerable amount of land zoned for housing in BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan (381.87 hectares) that has still to be developed. These zoned sites have the potential to deliver an estimated 9,194 units (see Table 11).

Do you agree that unimplemented housing zonings in BMAP and the AAP should be carried forward into our new LDP?

5.36 A number of these zoned housing sites already benefit from the grant of planning permission and indeed some are partially constructed. Several other sites, including some of the larger zonings are currently the subject of live planning applications. To provide certainty going forward for the development industry it is considered that the existing zoned housing sites identified in BMAP and the Antrim Area Plan should be carried forward into the new LDP. As a consequence it is proposed that there should be no de-zoning of housing land unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of a specific site being delivered.



**Table 11: Uptake of zoned housing land at March 2015**

Location	Zoned through the extant plan (hectares)	Area Remaining on zoned land (hectares)	Remaining potential on zoned land (units)	% of zoned land remaining
Metropolitan Newtownabbey	270.4	124.22	3,169	46.2
Antrim Town	177	77.18	2,164	43.6
Ballyclare	183	149.17	3,082	81.5
Crumlin	45	6.24	168	13.8
Randalstown	45	10.65	269	23.6
BMAP Villages	44.22	14.41	342	32.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>763.62</b>	<b>381.87</b>	<b>9,194</b>	<b>50</b>

## Carnmoney Hill Housing Zonings

5.37 Another possible exception to the retention of zoned housing lands was raised during our engagement; namely the future of two proposed housing zonings in BMAP for Carnmoney Hill which involve a Council interest.

5.38 BMAP includes two housing zonings on the lower slopes of Carnmoney Hill (reference MNY 04/27 and MNY 04/29), but their development is conditional on a previously agreed transfer of a significant area of remaining agricultural/open land comprising the upper slopes of Carnmoney Hill to the legacy Newtownabbey Borough Council thereby creating the potential for the development of a Country Park in conjunction with lands already in the ownership of the Council.

5.39 Given these zonings are conditional on a transfer of land to the Council there is a need for the new Council to confirm its position in relation to this matter.





### OPTION 1:

De-zone the current BMAP housing zonings MNY 04/27 and MNY 04/29 and protect all remaining open land at Carnmoney Hill from alternative development, but with the land remaining in private ownership

### OPTION 2:

Retain the current BMAP housing zonings MNY 04/27 and MNY 04/29 conditional on the previously agreed transfer of a significant area of remaining open land at Carnmoney Hill to Council ownership

Do you agree with our Preferred Option for Carnmoney Hill?

**OPTION 2** is proposed as our Preferred Option

5.40 It is considered that the proposed transfer of land would provide significant public benefit that outweighs the loss of some of the open aspect of Carnmoney Hill. This is consistent with the position taken by the Planning Appeals Commission when considering objections regarding this proposal at the inquiry into BMAP. This Option would offer the long-term potential for the Council to develop a large country park, extending from O'Neill Road along Glebe Road to Ballyduff Road and the existing Millennium Park at Knockenagh Avenue.









## 6 Planning Policy

- 6.1 Our new Local Development Plan will contain new planning policy.
- 6.2 Once our new Plan is adopted, the new planning policy will be used to determine all planning applications within our Borough, along with any relevant material considerations.
- 6.3 The policy contained within our new Local Development Plan is required to take account of Central Government policy, including strategic planning policy set out in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement.
- 6.4 Current planning policy is set out in a range of documents including the current plans that apply to our area, the SPPS and the current suite of Central Government Planning Policy Statements and The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland. All these documents will need to be considered in the development of any new planning policy for our Borough.
- 6.5 The SPPS consolidates some twenty separate policy publications into one document and sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. The SPPS aims to set out the strategic direction for the new councils to bring forward detailed operational policies within future local development plans. The SPPS applies at present in tandem

with the remaining Planning Policy Statements and supplementary planning guidance.

- 6.6 Of particular importance at this early stage of the plan process is what will happen to the existing Departmental operational planning policy when we publish our LDP. The SPPS sets out transitional arrangements to explain this. In summary, once the Plan Strategy is adopted and published, all the current existing Planning Policy Statements that are used to determine planning applications will no longer apply within our Borough and the planning policy contained within our new Plan will apply instead.
- 6.7 Therefore, at the Plan Strategy stage, Borough wide policies will be required. Our Local Policies Plan will also contain policy. However, this policy will be tailored to the needs of new zonings. As the Local Policies Plan is required to be consistent with the Plan Strategy, policies at the local level will flow directly from our overarching Plan Strategy.
- 6.8 The Council has considered how to take forward the issue of the current operational planning policy no longer existing once we publish our Plan Strategy.



## Options for retained operational planning policy

6.9 We have set out our options in relation to how we will bring forward the current operational policy within our new plan below.

### Planning Policy Option 1:

Do nothing scenario.

6.10 This option is based upon maintaining the status quo. We would bring forward our new Plan Strategy and at this stage the existing Departmental operational planning policies would no longer apply within our Borough.

6.11 This option would result in a policy vacuum as there would be a lack of policy detail to determine applications which could hinder the planning process and lead to poor quality decisions.

### Planning Policy Option 2:

Retain existing Departmental Planning Policy Statements at the Plan Strategy stage.

6.12 This option would allow the existing operational planning policy as set out in the range of PPSs and remainder of the Planning Strategy for Rural Strategy for NI to be retained and brought forward as part our new Plan Strategy.

6.13 However, this option would mean that we would be continuing to operate existing and out of date legacy policy for our Borough. Some of the current operational planning policy is over 20 years old. Furthermore, by retaining the current policies there would be a risk that they would not have been subject to a range of assessments including Sustainability Appraisal.

### Planning Policy Option 3:

Review existing operational policies with a view to developing succinct up to date tailored policies to meet the needs of the Borough.

**Option 3 is our Preferred Option.**

6.14 This option would include a review of the existing operational policies taking forward those policies that are considered to be working effectively. Option 3 would also allow the development of more up to date and succinct planning policy tailored to the needs of our Borough, taking account of the SPPS and any other guidance. It would also ensure that our new policy is robust and has been subject to any necessary assessments.

Do you agree with our Preferred Option for the current operational policy?





## Developing New Policy

- 6.15 We have taken two key steps at the Preferred Options stage in relation to developing new policy. The first is to develop a number of overarching primary principles. These will set the context in which we will develop our new planning policy and will apply to all development proposals once our Plan Strategy is published.
- 6.16 Our overarching principles reflect and support common themes emerging from our Plan Vision and Objectives, our Corporate Plan and our emerging Community Plan. They also reflect and support Central Government Guidance including the SPPS.

### Overarching Primary Principle 1 – Sustainable Economic Growth

- 6.17 The LDP will identify land and shape planning policy to support the requirements of our Borough whilst taking account of the need for sustainability and the direction of the Regional Development Strategy. Development proposals that contribute to sustainable economic growth and support our Growth Strategy will be supported subject to meeting relevant key site requirements and/or planning policy.

### Overarching Primary Principle 2 – Climate Change

- 6.18 The need to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change and improving air quality will be a key primary principle in shaping our new Local Development Plan. Development proposals that can demonstrate a reduction in greenhouse emissions will be supported subject to meeting relevant key site requirements and/or planning policy.

### Overarching Primary Principle 3 – Quality of Life

- 6.19 To ensure that the wellbeing of our society and the needs of our most vulnerable are at the forefront of our plan making process, proposals for residential and commercial developments should demonstrate accessibility for all and be designed to factor out crime and anti-social behaviour. They should also be well connected in terms of walkability and designed to encourage social interaction and healthier lifestyles.



## Overarching Primary Principle 4 – Quality of Place

- 6.20 To ensure our settlements and countryside benefit from high quality developments that reinforce distinctive and vibrant places and conserve our built and natural heritage. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate a design led approach.

## Overarching Primary Principle 5 – Environment

- 6.21 To ensure that we maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the countryside and natural environment, including areas of important landscape and biodiversity value. Proposals that demonstrate no detrimental impact on these areas will be supported where they meet key site requirements/planning policy.

## Overarching Primary Principle 6 - Energy and Resources

- 6.22 To support the transition to a low carbon society, proposals will be encouraged to demonstrate the efficient use of natural resources such as energy in their design.

## Overarching Primary Principle 7 – Community Benefits

- 6.23 Developers will be expected to meet the costs of infrastructure and other works required to facilitate and sustain their development proposals and in appropriate cases community benefits will also be sought, in particular where these contribute to the implementation of Council led community initiatives or schemes.

Do you agree with our overarching primary principles?

- 6.24 The second step is to carry out a preliminary review of the current operational policy retained by Central Government (set out in Appendix 3). Full details are contained in our associated evidence paper "Review of Operational Planning Policy" which is published on our web site.



## Preliminary Policy Review

6.25 At this stage we have concluded that the broad thrust and direction of the majority of these policies are acceptable and working effectively. A summary of our findings is set out below under the following headings:

### Facilitating Economic Development

- 📍 Economic Development
- 📍 Environmental Resources
- 📍 Retail and Commercial Development

### Meeting the Needs of Society

- 📍 Residential Development
- 📍 Transport and Accessibility
- 📍 Open Space and Recreation
- 📍 Community Development and Facilities
- 📍 Telecommunications and Public Utilities

### Shaping our Environment

- 📍 Natural Environment
- 📍 Built Environment
- 📍 Environmental Protection
- 📍 Design

6.26 We have also set out a number of fact boxes containing summary information about our Borough from our evidence papers. These provide an insight into the key facts we know about our area.

### Facilitating Economic Development

6.27 Economic development is wide ranging in terms of planning policy. In this section we will examine the policy base and issues from our evidence paper entitled "Facilitating Economic Development", including employment and industry; tourism; agriculture; fishing and forestry; environmental resources (minerals, energy and waste); and retail/commercial leisure.

6.28 Growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future is a key strategic priority for enhancing the overall prosperity of the Borough. It is important that the Borough strives to achieve long term economic growth by improving competitiveness, promoting job creation and also through rebalancing the economy to meet the challenges of a highly competitive global environment. As well as identifying Strategic Employment Locations and protecting strategically important business and employment opportunities, our LDP will support economic development through planning policy.





## Factbox



### General Employment

- ▶ The service sector is the biggest employment sector in our Borough with over 80% of Antrim and Newtownabbey residents employed in the service sector in 2011 and over 60% of VAT/PAYE businesses registered in this sector in 2014.
- ▶ The Borough has the largest employment share for health and social work in Northern Ireland – 11,978 jobs (22%) of the workforce (Census of Employment, 2013).
- ▶ The manufacturing sector in the Borough employs 6,407 people – 12% of the workforce (Census of Employment, 2013).
- ▶ Our working age population is decreasing with our younger population in decline but an increasing older population. Fewer residents projected to be in employment by 2030.
- ▶ Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council maintain the 5<sup>th</sup> highest Economic Activity Rate in NI (2015) (i.e. those who are generally able to work), the 5<sup>th</sup> highest Employment Rate in NI (2015) i.e. those that are employed and the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest Claimant Count Rate in NI (May 2015) i.e. those who claim benefit.
- ▶ Employment and Industry Zonings in the Antrim Area Plan and the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan identify approximately 614 hectares of land with regard to employment and industry uses with 366 hectares identified as Areas of Existing Employment and Industry and 248.30 hectares identified as areas for future employment and industry.
- ▶ 155.26 hectares are identified as remaining land zoned for future Employment and Industry use. 93.7% of the remaining land for employment and industry is located within Metropolitan Newtownabbey & Ballyclare.

### Airport and Nutts Corner

- ▶ Belfast International Airport and Nutts Corner is the largest transportation and storage hub within Northern Ireland, providing 4,973 jobs within the Borough (Census of Employment, 2013).
- ▶ Belfast International Airport is an important regional airfreight centre in addressing the relative isolation of NI from mainland UK and Europe, and providing critical access for local businesses to domestic and international markets.







### Agriculture

- ▶ In 2015 our Borough had 890 working farms.
- ▶ Farm areas are located primarily on low less favoured lands which are disadvantaged and severely dis-advantaged in terms of farming activity.
- ▶ There has been a reduction in the amount of land cropped from 2013 until 2015.

### Fishing

- ▶ Recreational fishing activities occur along the Borough's four main rivers, Lough Neagh and Toome Canal.
- ▶ At present there are two fish farms within our Borough supporting the aquaculture of trout species.

### Tourism

- ▶ Our Borough has an advantageous geographic location, centrally located between Belfast and the gateway to the Antrim Glens.
- ▶ Belfast International Airport is a key asset within our Borough, bringing in tourists from around the world.
- ▶ Our Borough is a significant tourism hub with over 80 attractions comprising places to visit or things to do and over 60 places to stay in our Borough. Activity-based tourism is significant accounting for half of all visitor attractions.
- ▶ Existing accommodation stock is of high quality and is improving year on year. However, the range of stock is limited to traditional forms of provision and there are currently no facilities in emerging categories, like glamping, eco-cabins and bunk houses.
- ▶ The Borough is popular for touring caravans and our sites are often at capacity during peak season.
- ▶ Lough Neagh is a key tourism destination at a strategic level and has further potential for sustainable tourism opportunities.



## Employment and Industry

6.29 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policies relating to employment in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 4 Planning and Economic Development, PPS 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside and the relevant provisions of PSRNI. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

- 📍 Promoting sustainable economic development;
- 📍 Tackling disadvantage through job creation;
- 📍 Safeguarding a generous supply of land suitable for economic development;
- 📍 Promoting mixed-use development;
- 📍 Encouraging better integration between economic development, transportation and other uses;
- 📍 Safeguarding existing or approved economic development from incompatible development;
- 📍 Encouraging the re-use of previously developed economic development land and the conversion/re-use of existing buildings;

- 📍 Sustaining a vibrant rural economy by supporting economic development that is appropriate with regards to nature, scale and quality of design;
- 📍 Supporting rural economic development and agricultural enterprise including farm diversification, the fishing and forestry industries;
- 📍 Encouraging sympathetic design, character and scale of development so as it integrates appropriately to its location; and
- 📍 Ensuring no adverse impact upon residential dwellings, the natural and built environment.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new employment policy?

Are there any other issues in relation to employment and planning that you would like us to consider in our new plan?



## Tourism

6.30 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational planning policy relating to tourism in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 16 Tourism. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

- 📍 Protecting our existing tourism assets within the Borough to ensure their continued attraction for visitors;
- 📍 Allowing for the provision of new tourism facilities subject to a criterion based approach including design and general planning considerations;
- 📍 Encouraging appropriate tourism opportunities in rural areas of our Borough, whilst ensuring the integration of such facilities into the landscape;
- 📍 Encouraging major tourism facilities to be located within the designated settlements of the Borough;
- 📍 Ensuring that tourism facilities can grow and evolve with changing markets but requires them to remain appropriate to the local context of the areas in which they are located; and

- 📍 Providing an adequate range of accommodation types appropriate to the local context and respectful of protected landscapes and the natural and built environment.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new tourism policy?

Are there any other issues in relation to tourism and planning that you would like us to consider in our new plan?





## Environmental Resources

- 6.31 Our environmental resources are both a source of economic employment and energy creation. Our LDP will have a key role in bringing forward policies to ensure the sustainable use of these resources.
- 6.32 In this section we will examine the current policy relating to minerals, energy and waste.
- 6.33 **Minerals** -The minerals industry makes an essential contribution to Northern Ireland's economy generating an estimated turnover of £630 million accounting for 3% of Northern Ireland's GDP. Mineral extraction in the form of quarrying plays an important part in Antrim and Newtownabbey's economy, employing a large number of people in the industry itself as well as in the manufacturing process, including the production of asphalt and concrete.
- 6.34 **Energy** - Renewable energy comes from a variety of sources including wind, rain, tides, waves, sun and geo-thermal heat. Greater use of renewable energies in our Borough will reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels which in turn will help to reduce consumer costs and lessen climate change.
- 6.35 Energy from waste is an increasingly popular alternative source of energy as well an alternative way to deal with the disposal of waste.
- 6.36 **Waste** - Waste is often regarded as the unwanted byproduct of industrial, commercial and domestic activities. Treated in the right way, it can actually be a valuable resource used to (re) produce goods, energy, and fuel that can also reduce our reliance on landfill. However, it also has the potential to have an adverse impact on our environment and therefore there a need to manage its use sustainably and effectively.





## Factbox



### Mineral Resources

- ▶ Antrim and Newtownabbey's position on top of the 'Antrim Lava Group' gives it an abundant stock of igneous and meta-igneous rocks useful for aggregate supplies.
- ▶ Lough Neagh is one of the main sources of good quality sand and gravel.
- ▶ Extensive supply of 250 million tonnes of lignite located outside of Crumlin, potentially providing a 20 year supply of electricity. A lignite policy area is currently zoned in the Antrim Area Plan on the eastern shores of Lough Neagh.
- ▶ 500km<sup>2</sup> of Lough Neagh clay of which 300km<sup>2</sup> lie within the Lough Neagh Basin.
- ▶ Estimated 200 million tonnes of iron-rich clay and ironstone identified in the Crumlin area at depths of 60m.
- ▶ Other mineral resources within our Borough include Lough Neagh Carboniferous organic rich shales; salt and gold.

### Energy

- ▶ The Lough Neagh basin holds prospective potential for intermediate and deep geo-thermal energy.
- ▶ There is an extensive electricity network of 33kv and 11kv lines in our Borough.
- ▶ Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) heat maps show that the majority of our Borough is at the lower end of the saturation scale and therefore we have the potential to accept further small scale connections. However, a significant pocket of network saturation does exist between Toome and Randalstown.
- ▶ Within our Borough we have 5 primary substations 3 of which have reached their capacity limit and require investment to facilitate further generation on the 11kV system.







- ▶ The total energy consumption for our Borough for the period 2013-2014 was 236,524,556 kWh for domestic properties and 366,208,560 kWh for non-domestic properties.
- ▶ In 2011, 65% of households in the Borough heated their homes using heating oil.
- ▶ In 2011, 19% of the Borough's households heated their homes using natural gas.
- ▶ Renewable energy approvals have been drawn to the south of the Borough with clusters of wind turbines focused on the eastern upland areas.
- ▶ Currently there are 2 rapid charge points and 21 fast charge points across the Borough of which 7 of these are located on Council premises.
- ▶ The South North gas pipeline runs through our Borough, parallel with the eastern shore of Lough Neagh, to east of Nutts Corner and north east past Antrim to a hub north of Ballyeaston.

### Waste

- ▶ The Council has a target to recycle 50% of the Borough's municipal waste by 2020. Municipal waste is collected by the Council and non-municipal waste is processed by a number of private operators, licenced by DAERA.
- ▶ There are 5 operating recycling centres in our Borough.
- ▶ Our Borough has no waste processing plants therefore municipal waste goes to Alpha Resource Management's Mullaghliss Landfill near Lisburn.
- ▶ The Council provides a bulky household waste collection service.
- ▶ Northern Ireland's only treatment and incineration facility for clinical waste is located at Antrim Area Hospital.
- ▶ Since 2011 there has been 6 Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plants approved.
- ▶ In 2014, 53.1% of municipal waste collected by Antrim Borough Council was recycled and composted and in Newtownabbey Borough Council the statistic was 44.1%



## Environmental Resources

6.37 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policies in a number of planning policy documents relating to these topics including the relevant provisions of PSRNI, PPS 18 Renewable Energy and PPS 11 Planning and Waste Management. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

### Minerals

- 📍 Encouraging sustainable mineral and energy developments;
- 📍 Ensuring no adverse impacts upon local communities, landscape quality, water, built and natural heritage and character of an area ;
- 📍 Taking account of the safety and amenity of neighbouring residential areas and road users;
- 📍 Ensuring appropriate restoration of sites; and
- 📍 Protecting areas of mineral resource through policy e.g. Lignite.

## Energy

- 📍 Ensuring siting and design of energy developments in our Borough integrate sympathetically with their surroundings;
- 📍 Ensuring developments have no adverse impact on the appearance or amenity of the area;
- 📍 Encouraging new developments which integrate renewable energy technologies; and
- 📍 Ensuring measures are in place to minimise and mitigate energy developments that are likely to result in avoidable damage during its installation, operation or decommissioning.

## Waste

- 📍 Preventing unacceptable adverse impact on natural/built environment, human health and visual amenity, water, soil and air;
- 📍 Ensuring adequate access provision to the site is available, taking account of the public road network;
- 📍 Ensuring proposed waste management developments adhere to relevant locational criteria;
- 📍 Ensuring suitable and practical restoration and aftercare measures are in place for waste management facilities;



- 📍 Application of a precautionary approach to all waste management proposals;
- 📍 For waste disposal including landfill that there are appropriate measures/ criteria for any such facilities and an identified need;
- 📍 Ensuring adequate measures for the disposal of inert waste for land improvement; and
- 📍 Ensuring proper consideration of any new developments in the vicinity of existing waste facilities.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new policy in relation to minerals, energy and waste?

Are there any other issues in relation to environmental resources and planning that you would like us to consider in our new plan?

## Retail and Commercial Development

- 6.38 Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council recognises the importance of having accessible, vibrant centres that can offer more local choice for retail, social activity, recreation and commercial leisure. Adapting a town centre first approach for retailing and other complementary functions such as commercial leisure can make a significant contribution to a town centre's vitality and viability.
- 6.39 Retail can be broken down into two distinct areas, namely convenience and comparison. Convenience retail relates to the sale of food, drinks, tobacco, newspapers, magazines, cleaning products and toiletries. Comparison retailing involves the sale of clothes, electrical goods, furniture, etc. Comparison retailing is further subdivided into bulky and non-bulky categories. Bulky comparison relates to the likes of electrical goods, DIY products, furniture and carpets, whereas non-bulky includes clothes and shoes.
- 6.40 Through our LDP we aim to ensure that a good provision and choice of retail, leisure facilities and other appropriate town centre uses can help to increase 'dwell times', footfall and turnover in centres, with significant benefits for our daytime and evening economies.





## Factbox



### Retail

- ▶ Retail provision in the Borough is distributed throughout the current settlement hierarchy, which consists of:
  - 1 Primary Retail Core (Antrim);
  - 4 Town Centres (Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin, Randalstown);
  - 2 District Centres (Abbey Centre, Northcott); and
  - 1 Local Centre (Glengormley).
- ▶ Prominent out-of-centre retail locations include:
  - Junction One Outlet, Antrim;
  - Valley Retail Park, Newtownabbey;
  - Shore Road Retail Park, Newtownabbey
  - Mill Road, Newtownabbey
- ▶ The Abbey Centre is the largest retail shopping area in Northern Ireland outside of Belfast City Centre.
- ▶ There are a number of convenience retailers operating in the Borough, including Asda, Tesco, Marks and Spencer, Lidl and Iceland.
- ▶ There are 6 large superstore format convenience retail outlets.
- ▶ Vacancy is a prevalent issue, particularly in Antrim, Ballyclare and Crumlin Town Centres, and in Glengormley Local Centre.
- ▶ Online-only retailers are showing interest in acquiring a physical presence on the high street in order to provide click-and-collect style services.







- ▶ Consumer expenditure in the UK for convenience shopping has declined for each of the past 9 years and is now estimated to be 14 % below its 2005 peak.

- ▶ Convenience Retail Trends:

- Market still dominated by larger convenience retailers such as Asda, Sainsbury and Tesco.
- Consumer habits are changing with a move away from the traditional weekly shop, and towards more frequent, smaller quantity purchases.
- The Centre for Retail Research predicts that the number of retail stores in the UK will have fallen by 22% between 2012 and 2018.
- The number of supermarkets and superstores is likely to increase by 10% between 2012 and 2018, whilst smaller convenience retailers will have fallen by 60%

- ▶ Comparison Retail Trends:

The comparison retail market continues to be unstable despite increased consumer expenditure being directed towards comparison retailing.

According to the Centre for Retail Research, the number of comparison retail stores in the UK may have fallen by 29.1% between 2012 and 2018.

- ▶ Online Retail Trends:

The growth of online retailing will impact upon traditional retail formats; resulting in fewer stores and a lower level of employment in the retail sector.

Accounting for 33.4% of all online sales in 2015, the UK dominates the online retail sector in Europe.

- ▶ Location of Future Retailing:

- The Centre for Retail Research predicts that the number of out-of-centre stores in the UK will have increased by 2.7% between 2012 and 2018.
- Town Centre stores will have fallen by 19.9%.
- Neighbourhood retailing will observe the greatest decline, estimated to be 26.2%.



### Commercial Leisure Facilities

- ▶ We have a significant number of commercial leisure facilities within our Borough.
- ▶ We have 19 indoor sport/recreation facilities.
- ▶ Venues for entertainment, such as cinemas, concert halls and theatres account for just over 3% of all existing provision with five establishments located throughout the Borough.
- ▶ Antrim and Glengormley provide the Borough's only offer in terms of cinema, with two theatres being located in Metropolitan Newtownabbey, and a third sited in Antrim at Junction One

6.41 At present, retail planning policy is set out in the SPPS. When it was published in September 2015 the operational planning policy set out in Planning Policy Statement 5 'Retailing and Town Centres' was superseded. The PSRNI sets out the policy applicable to Roadside Service Facilities.

6.42 The SPPS directs a town centre first approach for retailing and other uses (including cultural and community facilities, retail, leisure, entertainment and businesses) with a general exception to the overall policy approach where some retail facilities

may be considered acceptable outside of settlement limits such as farm shops, craft shops and shops serving tourist or recreational buildings. All policies must ensure that there will be no unacceptable adverse impact on the vitality and viability of an existing centre within the catchment.

6.43 The SPPS also directs that a sequential test should be applied to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date LDP. Where it is established that an alternative sequentially preferable site or sites exist within a proposal's whole catchment, an application which proposes development on a less sequentially preferred site should be refused.



- 6.44 The SPPS also directs the establishment of a threshold for applications where the proposal is not in a town centre location and not in accordance with the LDP. It will be up to the Council to consider an appropriate threshold. This will be informed from further retail studies.
- 6.45 Our new LDP will bring forward new policy taking into account the provisions of the SPPS in relation to retailing and commercial development.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new retail policy?

## Meeting the Needs of Society

- 6.46 In this section we will examine the policy base and main issues from our evidence paper entitled “Meeting the Needs of Society”, including residential development, transport and accessibility, open space, community facilities, telecommunications and public utilities.

### Residential Development

- 6.47 Good quality adequate housing is a fundamental need of society and one that can make a significant positive contribution to the character of our built environment. Access to good quality housing can enable the population of our Borough to live sustainably and pursue positive progress in their quality of life.
- 6.48 As the composition of our society changes, it is important to recognise evolving needs and remain responsive to them. By offering a choice of housing types, sizes and tenures in sustainable locations throughout our Borough, the LDP will endeavour to meet these needs. As well as managing housing growth to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development and ensuring an adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs of everyone through zoning of land and key site requirements, our Plan will bring forward new planning policy in relation to residential development.





## Factbox



- ▶ There are currently 30 settlements defined in the Borough.
- ▶ The total housing stock is 58,270 dwellings.
- ▶ Three-quarters of all dwellings in our Borough are privately owned.
- ▶ There is a greater proportion of semi-detached dwellings and a lesser proportion of detached dwellings than the Northern Ireland average.
- ▶ There are 7,875 social housing dwellings in total. 6,583 Housing Executive and 1,292 housing association.
- ▶ There were 2,628 general social housing waiting list applications at March 2015. 70% of these applications are in housing stress.
- ▶ Single elderly and small adult households comprise approximately 70% of those under housing stress on the waiting list.
- ▶ There is a requirement for 803 new social housing units between 2015 and 2020.
- ▶ NIHE has indicated that the greatest social housing need is concentrated in Antrim town, Glengormley and Crumlin.
- ▶ The level of unfit dwellings in Antrim and Newtownabbey Districts rose from 2.9% to 4% and 1.3% to 3% respectively in the years 2001 to 2011.
- ▶ The Housing Growth Indicator figure is 7,200 dwelling units from 2012 to 2025.
- ▶ From 2012 to 2015, 698 dwellings were built within the 30 settlements, with a build rate of 233 per annum.
- ▶ 51% of the land zoned for housing in the existing area plans remains undeveloped, with a potential for 8,852 dwellings. There is significant variation between settlements in terms of land zoned for housing remaining.







- ▶ 32% of land designated as Housing Land Use Policy Areas within villages remains undeveloped with a potential for 342 dwellings. There is significant variation between settlements in terms of housing land use policy areas remaining.
- ▶ Overall (zoned housing land, housing land use policy areas and un-zoned land with extant or expired residential approvals) there is remaining potential within the 30 settlements for 13,903 dwellings, on 570 hectares of land.
- ▶ There has been a substantial decrease in the number of dwelling approvals in the rural area since 2010.
- ▶ From 2012 to 2015, 183 dwellings were built within the rural area, equating to a build rate of 61 per annum.
- ▶ It is considered that the rural build rate is on a downward trend as reflected in approval rates and an estimate of 50 dwelling completions per annum would be at the upper end of the spectrum. This would result in a rural housing supply of 750 units over the lifetime of the Plan.

6.49 Our Plan will bring forward policy for housing in settlements and also in our countryside. The aim will be to ensure sustainable development whilst maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness of the countryside as a place to live and work in. We will also aim to ensure high quality residential housing within our urban and rural areas.

6.50 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policy set out in a number of planning policy documents relating

to housing including PPS 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside and PPS 7 Quality Residential Development and its addendums. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

- 📍 Providing for identified housing need;
- 📍 Ensuring a mix of housing types, tenures and size in settlements; and
- 📍 Facilitating appropriate housing in the countryside.



6.51 In terms of housing in the countryside, there are a range of circumstances based on the provisions of the SPPS where housing is considered acceptable in principle. These include farm dwellings, replacement dwellings, dwellings in a rural cluster and infill development. The detail of these policies will be tailored to the particular circumstances of our Borough and will seek to protect the countryside from ribbon development and urban sprawl.

### Transport and Accessibility

- 6.52 Transportation and its integration with land use will play a key role in our new Plan. It can help reduce the impact of climate change, encourage accessibility for all and improve health and wellbeing, as well as improving social inclusion.
- 6.53 Our LDP will also have a role in bringing forward transport proposals, protecting land for future transport uses and promoting sustainable forms of transport in new proposals. In addition, our new Plan will also contain policy in response to our transport and accessibility needs.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new housing policy, including housing in the countryside?

Are there any other issues in relation to housing and planning that you would like us to consider in our new Plan?





## Factbox



- ▶ We occupy a strategic position on and connecting to the Belfast Metropolitan Area's transport network, providing easy access to regional gateways via Northern Ireland's Key Transport Corridors and trunk road network.
- ▶ Our Borough enables ease of access to the Eastern Seaboard, Northern, and North Western Key Transport Corridors.
- ▶ The existing motorway network (M2/M22/M5) forms the backbone of the Borough's transportation infrastructure. This accounts for over 30% of the motorway network in Northern Ireland.
- ▶ Within our Borough we have 12 protected routes totalling 311.10Km which contribute significantly to our Borough's economic prosperity.
- ▶ Our Borough has 2 disused transport routes (Back Line and Knockmore Link).
- ▶ Belfast International Airport occupies a key strategic location within our Borough.
- ▶ South Antrim Community Transport (SACT) provides our residents living in rural areas the means of a community transport service via the 'Dial-A-Lift' scheme. SACT has over 325 members who use this service and 100 community groups.
- ▶ The use of the private car dominates modal choice in the Borough with almost 75% of all residents of the Borough travel to work by car.
- ▶ 20% of all residents in the Borough do not own a car, highlighting the importance of public transport provision.
- ▶ 7.3% of all residents of the Borough use public transport (i.e. bus and train) to travel to work. When students are included, this increases to 13.6% of residents travelling to work or place of study via public transport.
- ▶ Within our Borough there are 3 community Greenways with the feasibility of new greenways being considered. The National Cycle Network (NCN) routes 93, 94 and 96 traverse through our Borough.







- ▶ The number of car parking spaces operated by the Council and Translink total 2,906 spaces.
- ▶ Across our Borough we have 12 park and ride facilities providing public transport connections.

6.54 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policy relating to transport in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 3 Access Movement and Parking and PPS 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

- 📍 Encouraging active travel by promoting existing and new transport routes, ensuring accessibility for all by means of walking, cycling and public transport;
- 📍 Reducing reliance on private vehicle travel by promoting sustainable forms of transportation throughout our Borough and encouraging our residents to use more sustainable modes of transport, including walking and cycling;

- 📍 Ensuring acceptable transport provisions are in place for new developments i.e. walking and cycling;
- 📍 Discouraging the reliance on the private car to help tackle growing congestion within our hierarchy of settlements and centres; and
- 📍 Restricting the number of new accesses and controlling the level of use on existing accesses onto Protected Routes.

Are there any factors you consider we should address in our new transport policy?

Are there any other issues in relation to transport and planning that you would like us to consider in our new Plan?



## Open Space and Recreation

6.55 Open space is currently defined in planning policy as all open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.

6.56 Open space is important for its contribution to the quality of urban life by providing important green lungs, visual breaks and wildlife

habitats in built-up areas. Open space can enhance the character of residential areas, civic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeological sites. It can help to attract business and tourism and thereby contribute to the process of urban and rural regeneration.

6.57 The role of the Plan will be to identify any new areas of open space and to safeguard existing areas. It will also bring forward new planning policy in relation to open space.

## Factbox

- ▶ There are a significant number of high quality parks within the Borough.
- ▶ The Borough has approximately 183 acres of pitch provision (excluding educational grass pitches).
- ▶ There are 9 allotment sites within the Borough.
- ▶ There are 4 rivers within the Borough providing opportunities for fishing.
- ▶ The Council area offers a wide range of recreational activities to include horse-riding, flying, karting and birdwatching.
- ▶ There are currently 3 community greenways identified in BMAP within the Borough.
- ▶ The Borough has 11 Public Rights Of Way, with a total length of 6.5 km
- ▶ The Borough is home to 9 golfing facilities providing great recreational facilities but also beneficial in terms of ecology and the wider environment.



6.58 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational planning policy in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 8 Open Space, Sport and Recreation. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised as :

- 📍 Protection of existing open space;
- 📍 Providing for new public/private open space in residential developments;
- 📍 Encouraging outdoor recreational development in the countryside;
- 📍 Encouraging intensive sports facilities within settlements;
- 📍 Ensuring no adverse amenity from noise generating sports and outdoor recreation and from floodlighting; and
- 📍 Encouraging ancillary facilities to support water sports.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in our new policy for open space?

## Community Development and Facilities

6.59 Community facilities can be defined as those undertakings which provide necessary services for the wellbeing of society which include educational facilities, libraries, health and social services, cultural facilities and arts infrastructure. It is important to note, that the provision of such facilities lies with Central Government. The LDP will reflect any requirements identified by zoning land and/or through planning policy.

Are there any areas of open space that you consider should be identified in our new Local Plan?

Are there any other issues in relation to open space/ recreation and planning that you would like us to consider in our new Plan?





## Factbox



- ▶ Within our Borough there are 3 Higher and Further Education campuses, 11 Post Primary Schools, 53 Primary Schools and 5 special schools.
- ▶ There are 7 stand-alone nursery schools and 10 nursery units within existing primary schools.
- ▶ There are 378 registered childcare providers offering a range of childcare facilities in our Borough.
- ▶ The Northern Health Trust offers a full range of healthcare facilities in our Borough.
- ▶ There are 17 GP surgeries, 23 dental surgeries and 30 pharmacies in the Council area.
- ▶ There are 2 theatres, 10 community centres, 2 pavilions and a range of other cultural facilities provided by our Council.
- ▶ There are 168 places of worship and 54 halls in the Council area.
- ▶ The 2 main civic buildings are Antrim Civic Centre and Mossley Mill.
- ▶ There are 8 libraries and 20 mobile library stops in the Council area.
- ▶ There are 2 police stations and 4 fires stations within the Council area.
- ▶ There are 2 Jobs and Benefits Offices within the Council area.
- ▶ There are 23 post offices within the Council area.

6.60 The role of the Plan in relation to community development and facilities will be to promote and encourage a centre first approach through a sequential test and to ensure any land identified by key providers is protected in our new Plan.

6.61 The current policy in relation to community development and facilities is set out in a range of operational policy statements. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable.





This is summarised as:

- 📍 Supporting communities through the provision of community facilities; and
- 📍 Ensuring adequate provision is made for the integration of community facilities into new residential developments.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in a new policy for community facilities?


Are there any other issues in relation to the provision of community facilities and planning that you would like us to consider in our new Plan?

## Telecommunications and Public Utilities

- 6.62 Public Utilities are those undertakings which provide necessary services to society which include electricity, gas, telecommunications, clean water and waste water infrastructure. They are important not only because they provide the basic infrastructure for the proper function of society, but also contribute to the economic competitiveness of Northern Ireland. The Local Development Plan will have a role in zoning any land needed to support such utilities.
- 6.63 The Plan will also have a role in zoning land needed for airport expansion and to ensure that the provisions of Airport Public Safety Zones are highlighted in our new Plan. As well as zoning land the Local Development Plan will be required to bring forward new planning policy in relation to these aspects.



## Factbox

- 
- ▶ Belfast International Airport continues to expand and passenger numbers are continuing to grow.
  - ▶ There are 2 distribution networks supplying gas in the Council area, Greater Belfast operated by Phoenix (Newtownabbey) and Ten Towns operated by Firmus. (Antrim, Ballyclare, Doagh and Templepatrick)
  - ▶ Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council took an active role in promoting the subsidies available under the Better Rural Broadband Antrim banner.
  - ▶ Only 9% of premises within the Borough are not able to download at speeds greater than 10Mbps.
  - ▶ The Council area has excellent 'superfast broadband' speeds within urban areas, only second to Belfast City Council.
  - ▶ There is significant variation in mobile reception among the 4 providers operating in the Council area.
  - ▶ There are reception problems, especially indoors, in areas southwest of Randalstown, around Loanends and west of Crumlin.
  - ▶ The majority of the network is free from saturation in the Council area, except for a pocket of saturation in the Toome/Randalstown area.
  - ▶ There are 6 Waste Water Treatment Works within our Borough.
  - ▶ There is a diminishing cemetery provision in our Borough.

6.64 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policies relating to telecommunications and utilities in a number of planning policy documents including the relevant provisions of PSRNI, PPS 10

Telecommunications and PPS 11 Planning and Waste Management. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable.



This is summarised below:

- 📍 In relation to telecommunications protecting visual amenity;
- 📍 Ensuring no adverse impact on environmentally sensitive features or locations;
- 📍 Minimising interference to radio spectrum users;
- 📍 Ensuring consideration is given to siting and design; and
- 📍 Encouraging underground utility provision where possible.
- 📍 In relation to airports, ensuring that policy supports any necessary expansion.
- 📍 For Waste Water Treatment Works that there is a need, no detrimental impact on environment, residential and visual amenity and it is based in a suitable location.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in a new policy for telecommunications and public utilities?

## Shaping our Environment

6.65 In this section, we will examine the policy base and issues from our evidence paper entitled “Shaping our Environment” including natural environment, built environment, environmental protection and design.

### Natural Environment

- 6.66 Our Borough given its unique location between Lough Neagh and Belfast Lough is home to a wide range of rich and diverse natural heritage assets and cultural landscapes. Natural Heritage can be defined as habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features, many of which are of such importance that they are designated under International/ European legislation. Landscape involves the interplay of these elements of the natural and built environment, contributing to the special landscapes that are part of our culture and heritage.
- 6.67 The diversity of landscape within the Borough combines to provide a unique resource of significant environmental quality. Our natural heritage and





are part of our local and community identity. The Plan will have a role in considering the impact of any development on our natural heritage and landscape. It will also have a role in applying new designations such as Areas of High Scenic Value, Local Landscape Policy Areas and Rural Wedges.


6.68 The SPPS makes provision for the designation of Special Areas of Protection to areas of the countryside that exhibit exceptional landscapes such as mountains, stretches of the coast or lough shores, and certain views or vistas, wherein the quality of the landscape and unique amenity value is such that development should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Where designated the Council will have the power to bring forward policies to ensure their protection from unnecessary and inappropriate development.

## Factbox

- ▶ Under the International/European/National statutory designations there are 2 Ramsar sites, 2 Special Protection Areas (SPA), 1 Special Area of Conservation, 9 ASSIs and 4 Nature Reserves in our Borough.
- ▶ Under local designations our Borough has 2 Local Nature Reserves and 28 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI).
- ▶ There are at present 3 Areas of High Scenic Value which lie within or partly within the Borough. These are Carrickfergus Escarpment, Carnmoney Hill and Belfast Basalt Escarpment.
- ▶ There are 38 Local Landscape Policy Areas designated through BMAP however there are none identified within the former Antrim Borough Council.
- ▶ Our Borough has 3 Rural Landscape Wedges both north and south of Ballyclare and between Jordanstown and Greenisland.
- ▶ The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA) identifies 16 Landscape Character Areas in the Borough.





- 
- ▶ The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape (NIRLCA) 2015 identifies 5 Regional Landscape Areas. The majority of the Borough is within the 'South Antrim Hills and Six Mile Water' RLCA and the 'Lough Neagh Basin' RLCA.
  - ▶ Most of our Borough has been identified as having 'High to Medium' sensitivity to wind energy development and change and the 'Expansive Crumlin Farmland' which takes up much of the Borough is identified as 'Medium' sensitivity.

6.69 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policies relating to natural environment in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 2 Natural Heritage. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised below:

- 📍 Protecting, conserving, enhancing and restoring the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of our natural heritage;
- 📍 Encouraging sustainable development;
- 📍 Assisting in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities;
- 📍 Contributing to rural renewal and urban regeneration;
- 📍 Reducing our carbon footprint and facilitating adaptation to climate change; and
- 📍 Securing of built heritage through the enabling of development. policy supports any necessary expansion.

Are there any areas of landscape in our Borough you regard as worthy of protection?

Are there any factors you believe we should consider in a development of a policy for natural heritage?




## Built Heritage


6.70 Our Borough has a rich built heritage which forms an important part of the character and appearance of our towns, villages, small settlements and countryside. Built heritage can take many forms including tombs, forts, castles and churches, townhouses, farmhouses, grand and vernacular architecture and parklands. It is important that we recognise and protect these features within our built environment as they contribute to the enhancement of our quality of life, benefit our economy through their regeneration and they help to create unique identities and a sense of place.

6.71 The role of the Plan will be to ensure that these assets are protected from inappropriate development. This will be taken forward in the consideration of the zoning of any new land for development and also through planning policy. The Plan will also be able to bring forward protection for areas of character such as areas of townscape character and areas of village character. Other forms of protection will be enacted through central government such as listed buildings.

## Factbox

- 
- ▶ We have approximately 312 Listed Buildings within our Borough.
  - ▶ Our Borough (out of the 11 Council areas) has the lowest number of what are considered to be historic 'Buildings at Risk'.
  - ▶ We have 6 State Care and 101 Scheduled Monuments.
  - ▶ There are presently no Areas of Special Archaeological Interest however our Borough contains 2 Areas of Archaeological Potential.
  - ▶ Our Borough has a rich industrial heritage primarily associated with the various waterways in the area.



- 
- There are 4 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes, as well as 7 supplementary sites within our Borough.
  - The Borough has a rich defence heritage, primarily associated with the 3 former wartime airbases at Nutts Corner, Langford Lodge and Aldergrove.
  - There are 3 Conservation Areas in the Borough at Antrim, Randalstown and Merville Garden Village. Our Borough also contains 10 Areas of Townscape Character and 3 Areas of Village Character.

6.72 As part of our policy development, we have reviewed the current operational policies relating to the built heritage in a number of planning policy documents including PPS 6 Planning Archaeology and Built Heritage. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable. This is summarised as:

- 📍 Safeguarding historic and/or architectural integrity of built environment assets;
- 📍 Protecting, conserving and, where possible, enhancing our built and archaeological heritage; and
- 📍 Promoting sustainable development and environmental stewardship.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in a new policy for protecting our built environment?

Are there any other issues in relation to the built environment and planning you would like us to consider in our new Plan?






## Environmental Protection

- 6.73 It is important for the Local Development Plan to recognise and provide a responsive policy framework related to those areas of activity that could have an adverse impact on the environment. This includes dealing with waste, water supplies and drainage, river engineering and flooding, pollution, air quality and contamination. Noise also has a detrimental impact on the environment in terms of amenity.
- 6.74 The need to ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the environment and amenity is reflected in a number of current planning policy statements, which we have reviewed in the preceding sections of this document.
- 6.75 We are of the opinion that this policy principle is acceptable and we propose to take it forward in our new planning policy.
- 6.76 In addition to the policies covered already in our review, there remains the policy as set out in PPS 15 Planning and Flood Risk.

## Factbox

- 
- ▶ There are 4 main types of flooding: fluvial flooding (rivers); coastal flooding; pluvial flooding (surface water); and flooding from impounded water bodies i.e. reservoirs.
  - ▶ There are four rivers flowing through our Borough – the Six Mile Water River, the Crumlin River, the River Maine and the Lower Bann; and
  - ▶ We have 12 controlled reservoirs in our Borough.





6.77 We have reviewed the current operational policies relating to flooding as set out in PPS 15 and concluded with one exception that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy is generally acceptable. This is summarised as:

- 📍 Application of a precautionary approach in relation to flood risk;
- 📍 Presumption against development in flood plains except in exceptional circumstances;
- 📍 Protection of existing flood defences;
- 📍 Protection of areas outside of flood plains which are known to be at risk of flooding or would likely increase the risk of flooding;
- 📍 Restrictions on the culverting or canalisation of watercourses; and
- 📍 Requirement of mitigation measures/ flood risk assessments/drainage assessments.

6.78 In relation to development proposals in proximity to reservoirs concerns have been raised regarding the policy approach set out in PPS 15 which places considerable burdens on planning applicants. Discussions are currently underway with the Department of Infrastructure to ascertain whether forthcoming reservoirs legislation is a more appropriate mechanism to deal with this matter.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in a new flooding policy?

Are there any other issues in relation to environmental protection you consider the Plan should address?



## Design

- 6.79 Design is one of the key elements for place making and will be one of the core planning policies of our new Plan. Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings and spaces that look good and meet the needs of current and future generations.
- 6.80 Our Plan will aim to raise the bar in the standard of how new development will look and feel. We will also set out to

ensure that policy continues to protect our current space, especially in relation to our built and natural heritage. A poorly designed environment has the potential to exert significant long-term negative impacts on the health, safety, prosperity and wellbeing of those who live and work within it. Design therefore has the potential to contribute greatly in tackling these issues contributing towards places that people have pride in and are proud to live in.

## Factbox

- ▶ Within our Borough there are 13 Areas of Townscape/Village Character.
- ▶ Ballyclare town centre has an urban design criterion as set out in Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan.
- ▶ There is no design guidance within the Antrim Area Plan.
- ▶ There are currently 3 Conservation Areas Merville Garden Village, Antrim and Randalstown within our Borough each with their own design guide.

- 6.81 As well as protecting areas of character and identifying new ones, the role of our Plan will be to promote high quality, environmentally sustainable design that will help create quality places across our Borough. Such places help to promote prosperity and new investment, places that are successful to live in and places that bring communities together.

- 6.82 Current policy for good design is set out in a range of current planning documents. We have found that the broad thrust and direction of current operational planning policy to be generally acceptable.



This is summarised as:

- 📍 Proposals should exhibit a level of appropriateness to the location, the character of the settlement, the rural setting, and the appearance of local area and to adjacent land uses or buildings.
- 📍 Proposals should not harm the rural character, appearance of the local area, visual amenity or local traditions of form, materials and detailing.

Are there any factors you consider that we should take into account in a new policy for design?

Are there any areas in our built environment that you consider the Plan should consider protecting because of its unique or special/ character?

Are there any other factors in relation to design you consider the Plan should address?



# Appendix 1 - Community Involvement Form

To have your say on the future development of the Borough and for latest news please visit our website [www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk).

To keep informed about the progress of our new Local Development Plan please complete this form and either email a copy to [planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk), or post to **Planning Section, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey, BT36 5QA.**

By submitting this form you are consenting to the processing of your data – including sensitive personal data – by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council for these purposes.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select your preferred method of contact:

Email

☐

Post

☐

If you require assistance in the completion of this form, [telephone 0300 123 6677](tel:03001236677) or by [text phone 18001 028 9034 0000](tel:1800102890340000) for advice.

To have your say on the future development of the Borough and for latest news please visit our website [www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk).



## Appendix 2 - Existing Settlement Designations and Population/ Household Statistics

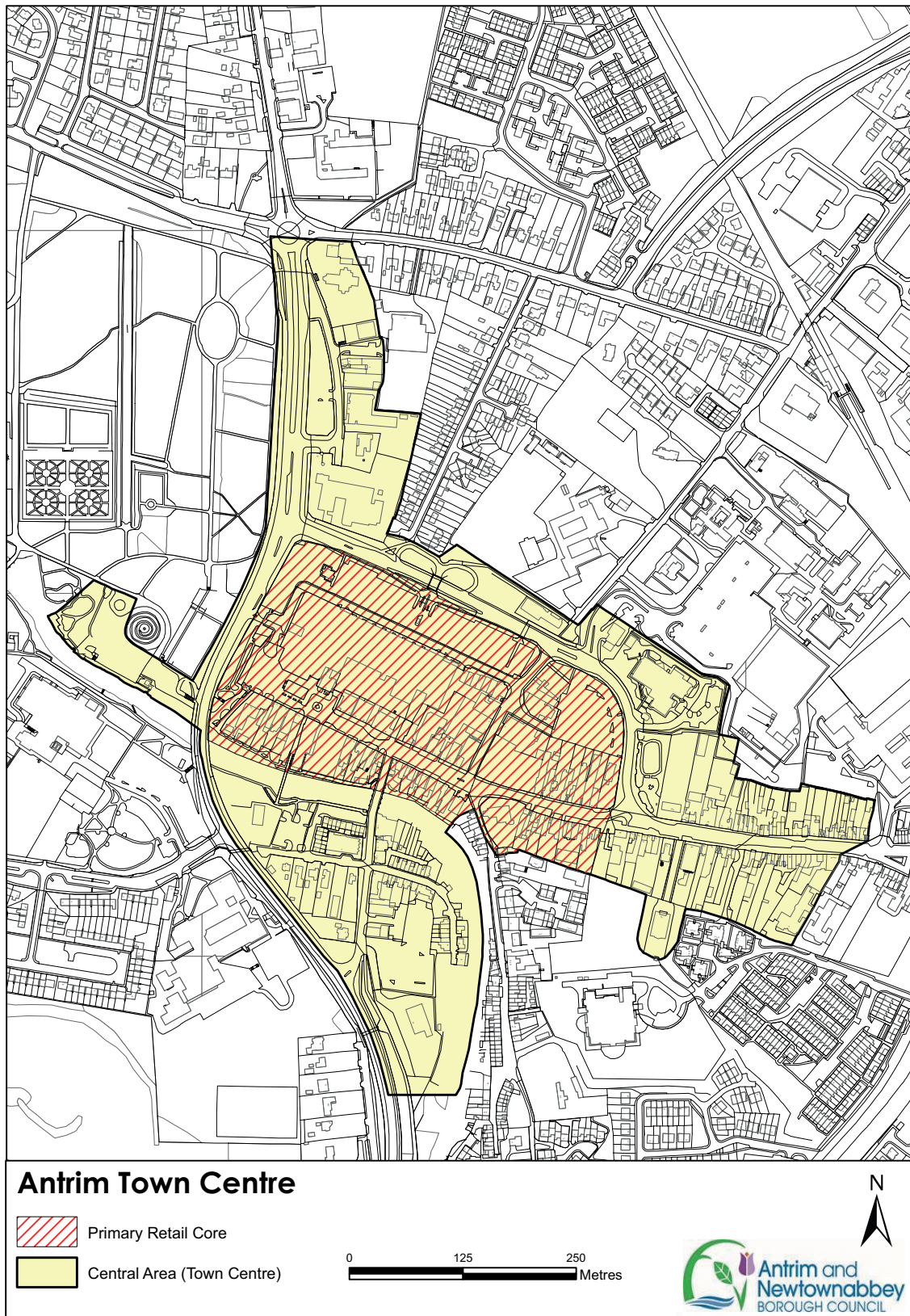
Settlement Name	Development Plan	Existing Settlement Designation	Population 2011	Households 2011
Metropolitan Newtownabbey (a)	BMAP	Metropolitan Urban Area	65,703	26,263
Antrim	AAP	District Town	23,353	9,576
Ballyclare	BMAP	Small Town	9,919	4,026
Crumlin	AAP	Local Town	5,099	1,763
Randalstown	AAP	Local Town	5,099	1,991
Ballyeaston	BMAP	Village	99	41
Ballynure	BMAP	Village	977	380
Ballyrobert	BMAP	Village	659	231
Burnside (Cogry / Kilbride)	BMAP	Village	1,246	467
Doagh	BMAP	Village	1,390	592
Parkgate	AAP	Village	676	256
Straid	BMAP	Village	384	154
Templepatrick	AAP	Village	1,437	605
Toome	AAP	Village	781	263
Ballycor	BMAP	Small Settlement	92	32
Ballycraigy	BMAP	Small Settlement	72	22
Bruslee	BMAP	Small Settlement	17	6
Craigarogan	BMAP	Small Settlement	58	27
Creggan/ Cranfield	AAP	Hamlet	110	34
Dunadry	AAP	Hamlet	430	190
Groggan	AAP	Hamlet	135	54
Hillhead	BMAP	Small Settlement	150	59
Killead	AAP	Hamlet	81	32
Kingsmoss	BMAP	Small Settlement	44	16
Lowtown	BMAP	Small Settlement	23	8
Millbank	BMAP	Small Settlement	140	47
Milltown	AAP	Hamlet	115	39
Moneyglass	AAP	Hamlet	103	38
Roughfort	BMAP	Small Settlement	215	86
Tildarg	BMAP	Small Settlement	22	8

- (a) For the purposes of this paper, Metropolitan Newtownabbey includes that part of Greenisland transferred to the Borough of Antrim and Newtownabbey in April 2015 which has an estimated 2011 population of 148 persons in 60 households.

## Appendix 3 – Existing Suite of Retained Planning Policy and Supplementary Guidance

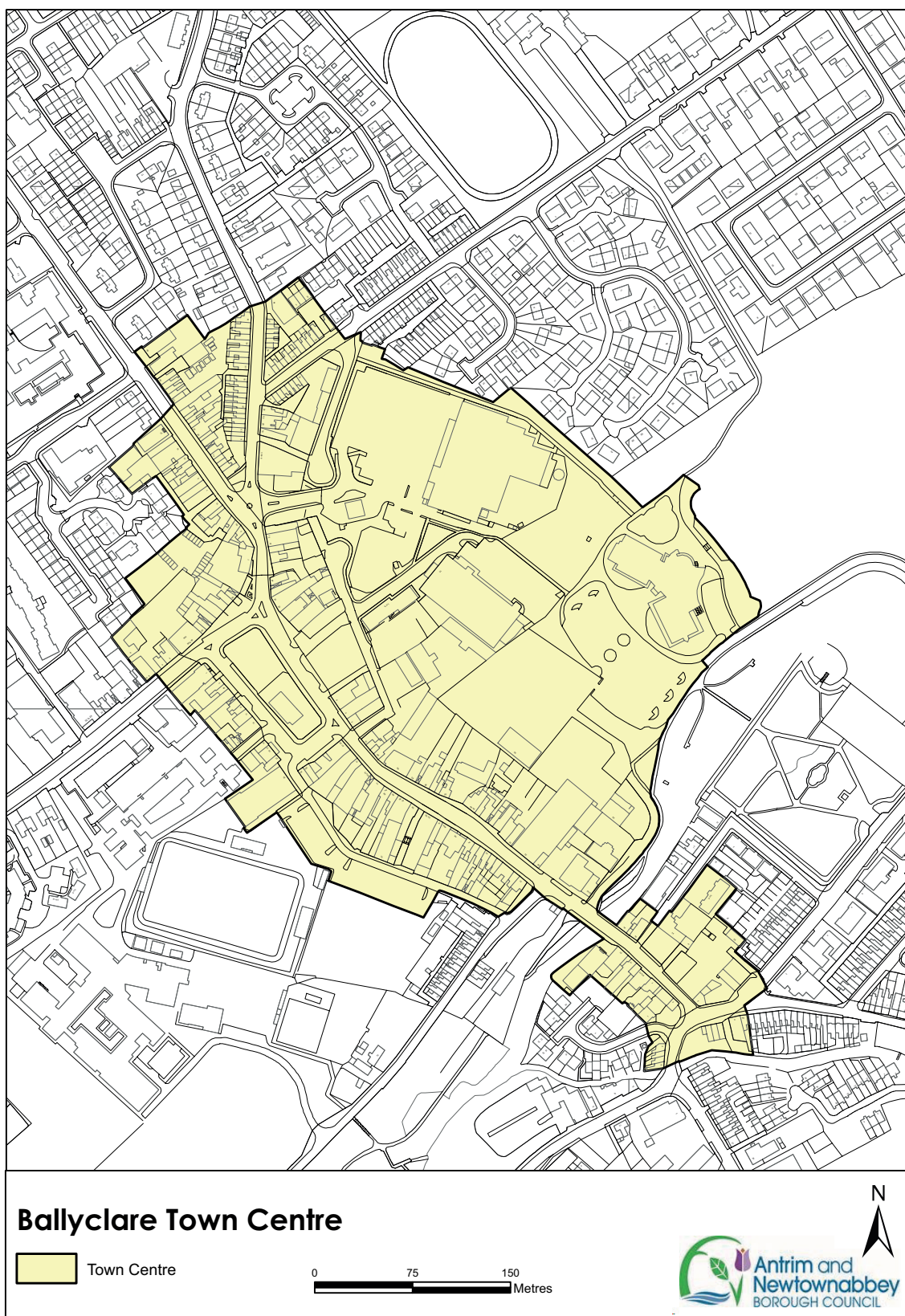
- 📍 PPS 2: Natural Heritage
  - 📍 PPS 3: Access, Movement and Parking
  - 📍 PPS 3 (Clarification): Access, Movement and Parking
  - 📍 PPS 4: Planning and Economic Development
  - 📍 PPS 4: Clarification of PED 7
  - 📍 PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and The Built Heritage
  - 📍 PPS 6 (Addendum): Areas of Townscape Character
  - 📍 PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments
  - 📍 PPS 7: (Addendum): Residential Extensions and Alterations
  - 📍 PPS 7: (Addendum): Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas
  - 📍 PPS 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
  - 📍 PPS 10: Telecommunications (Policy TEL 2 is cancelled)
  - 📍 PPS 11: Planning and Waste Management
  - 📍 PPS 12: Housing in Settlements
  - 📍 PPS 12: Policy HS 3 (Amended) 'Travellers Accommodation'
  - 📍 PPS 13: Transportation and Land Use
  - 📍 PPS 15 Revised: Planning and Flood Risk
  - 📍 PPS 16: Tourism
  - 📍 PPS 17: Control of Outdoor Advertisements
  - 📍 PPS 18: Renewable Energy
  - 📍 PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside
  - 📍 PPS 23: Enabling Development
  - 📍 Relevant provisions of "A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland"
- Departmental planning documents which will continue to be treated as material considerations during the transitional period (or as the case may be after the expiry of the transitional period) are listed on the Department's website, and include:**
- 📍 Airport Public Safety Zones (2007)
  - 📍 'Living Places' - An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland
  - 📍 'Building on Tradition' – A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside
  - 📍 'Creating Places' – Achieving quality in residential developments'
  - 📍 'Best Practice Guidance to PPS 18 'Renewable Energy'
  - 📍 Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland Landscapes (August 2010)
- Departmental publications cancelled by the introduction of the SPPS are:**
- 📍 PPS 1: General Principles
  - 📍 PPS 5: Retailing and Town Centres
  - 📍 PPS 9: The Enforcement of Planning Control Development Control Advice Notes

## Appendix 4 - Current Town Centre Boundaries



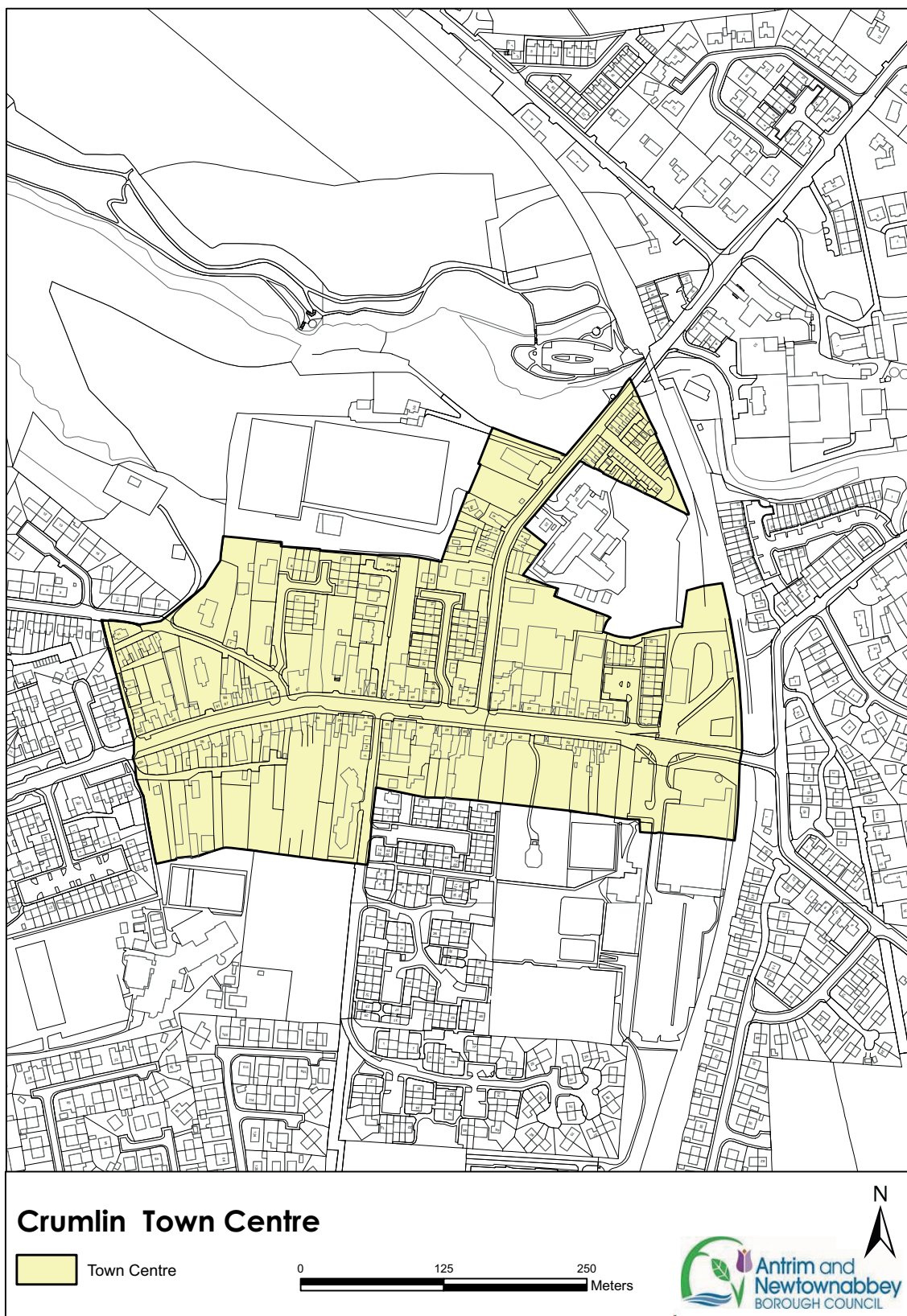
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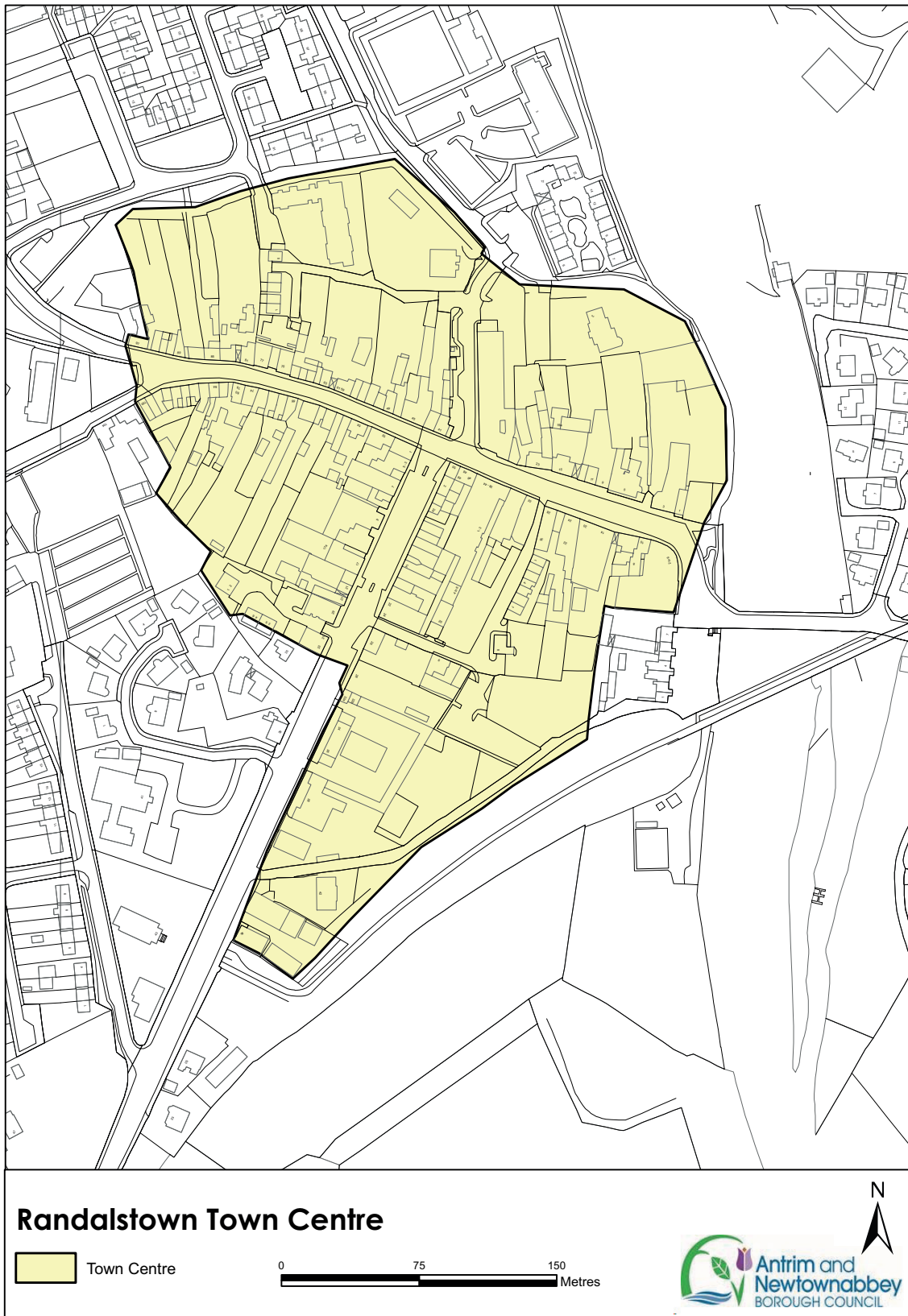


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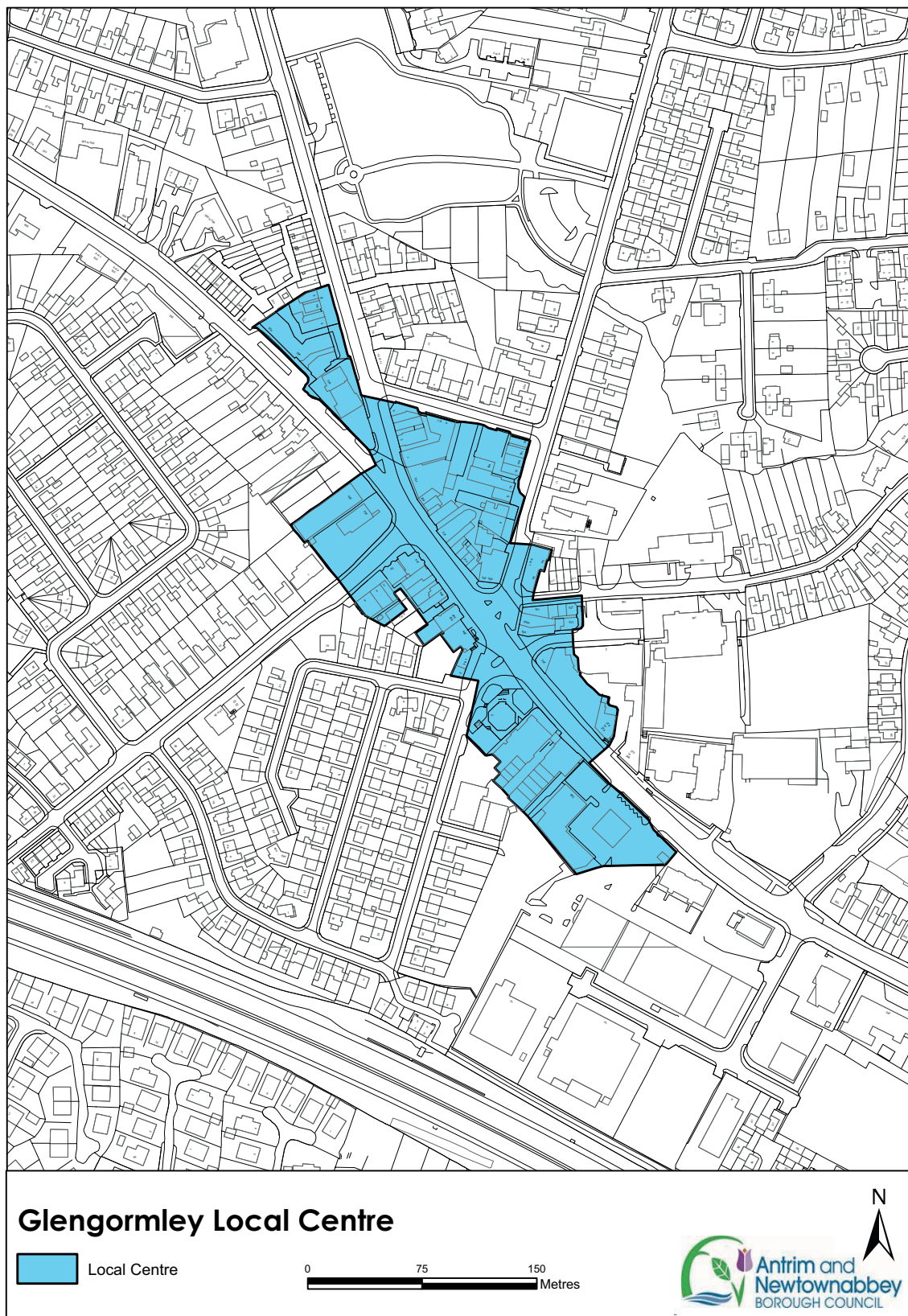




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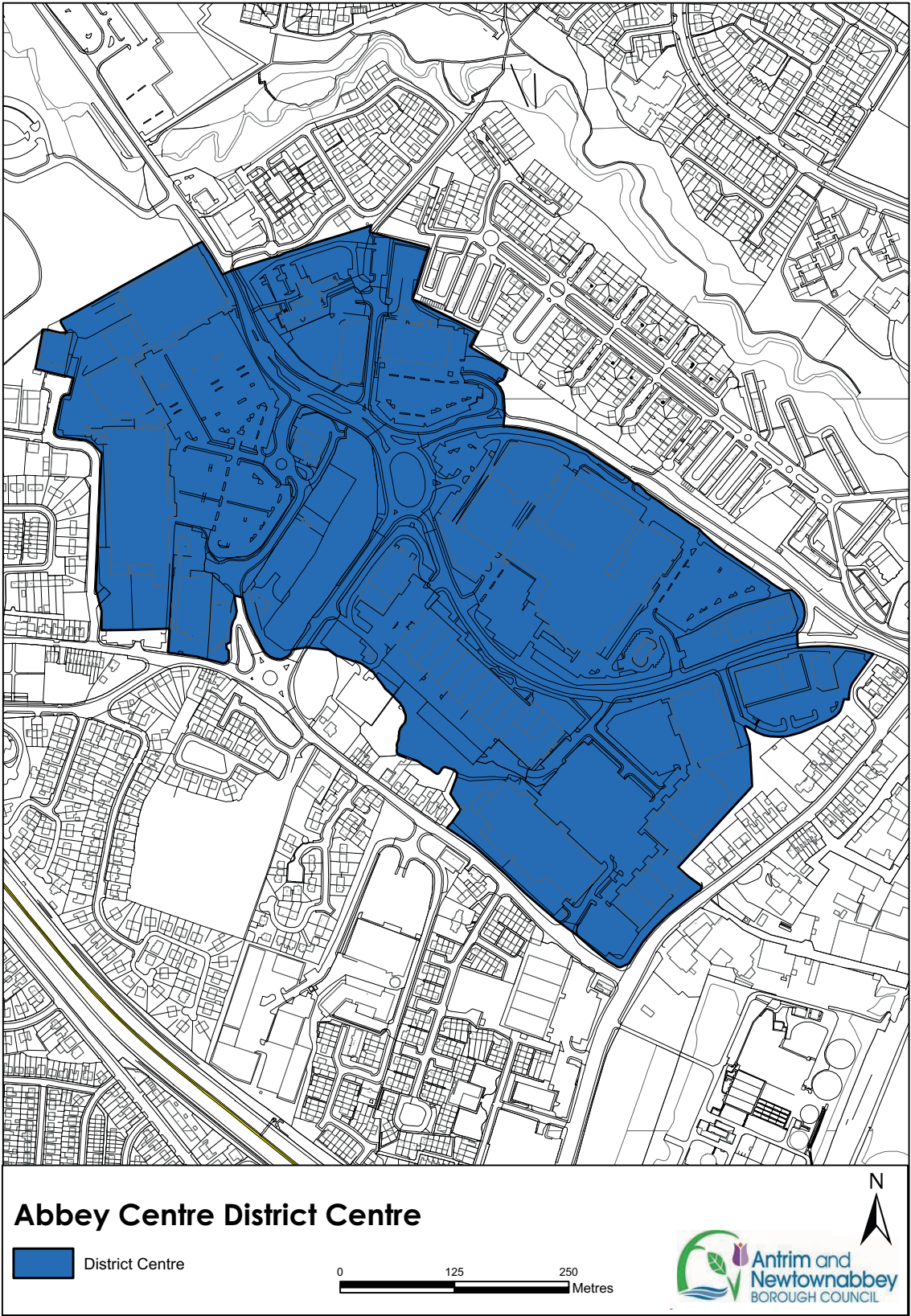


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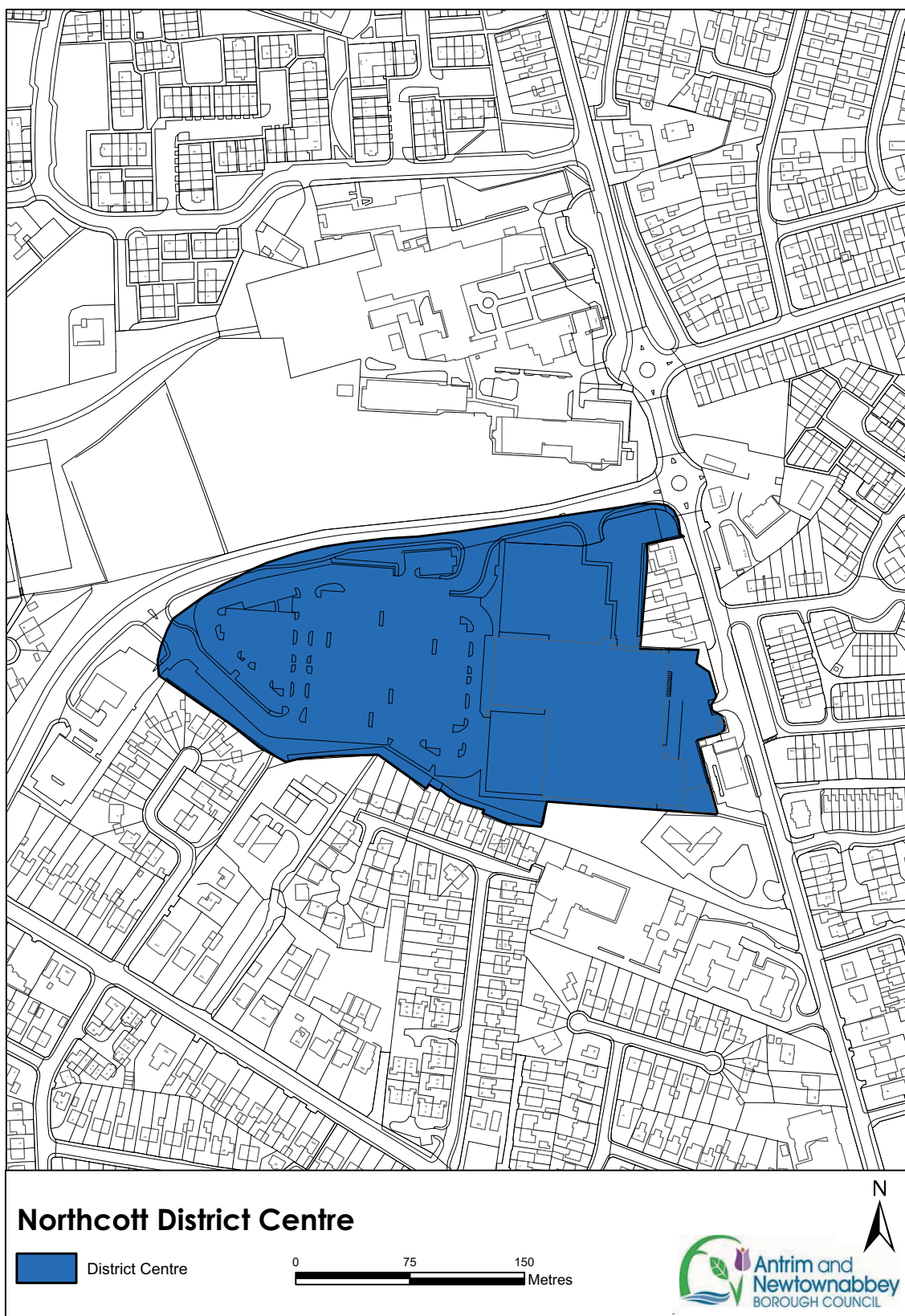
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## FIGURES

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Figure 2 – Neighbouring Councils

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Figure 5 – Location of Potential Reclassified New Villages

Figure 6 - Location of Potential New Hamlets

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Figure 9 – Location of Mallusk Potential Local Centre

Figure 10 - Location of Potential New Neighbourhood Centres

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Figure 12 - Past Housing Growth and Future Growth Options

Figure 13 – Past Housing Growth and Future Growth Options

Figure 14 - Distribution of Existing Homes (Census 2011)

Figure 15 - Distribution of Housing Land Supply at 1 April 2015

Figure 16 - Housing Growth Allocation – Preferred Option

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Table 2 – Existing Hierarchy of Centres

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Table 9 – Growth allocation Option 4

Table 10 – Options for the allocation of Housing Growth

Table 11 – Uptake of zoned housing land at March 2015

Should you or someone you know require a copy of this document in an alternative format please contact **E** [comms@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:comms@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk) or the contact details below.

### **ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE**

50 Stiles Way Antrim BT41 2UB  
**T** 028 9446 3113 **F** 028 9448 1324

### **MOSSLEY MILL**

Carnmoney Road North Newtownabbey BT36 5QA  
**T** 028 9034 0000 **F** 028 9034 0200

## **Planning Section**

**T** 0300 123 6677

**E** [Planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

**[www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)**

 **@ANBorough**

January 2017

