

## Proposals for Overall Study Area

The Proposal Schedule was generally divided into the following six categories:

- routes and access;
- housing;
- community facilities;
- landscape/open spaces
- Stewartstown road; and
- Colin Town Centre.

### Routes and Access

It was concluded that how the Colin area had developed over the years i.e., four areas with only one main link road, had created a sense of physical disconnectedness across the area. The main link road was the Stewartstown Road and it reflects poorly in terms of the overall layout, presentation of commercial premises, and attractiveness for pedestrians.

It was therefore proposed that the following measures should be considered as a means of contributing to and to complementing the proposal to develop a Colin Town Centre.

The Stewartstown Road strip (including the Dairy Farm) from the Teeling roundabout to the Becketts Public House should become the Colin Town centre. This area should become the primary focus of all key commercial and statutory developments within the Colin area;

- establishment of a series of entrance features/environmental improvements in relation to the entrances to the Colin area and the specific neighbourhoods;
- reduction of the dominance of the car by introducing traffic calming and making provision for cycle networks;
- formation of new road and path connections where appropriate to improve the linkages throughout the area; and
- provision of a circuit bus route which passes the local neighbourhood centres, the schools, the Town Centre, and the Railhalt at Dunmurry.

### Housing Proposals

One of the key findings of the consultation process was the general finding that the quality of housing in the Colin area, there were undoubtedly issues relating to the needs of particular groups e.g., the homeless and these were to be recognised and addressed. However, the consultation concludes that the social housing stock within Colin was of good quality, regularly maintained, and access to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive was good. It is important to note that increasingly residents were choosing to purchase their houses and this could be seen as adding significant social capital and commitment to the Colin area.

The findings of our consultation and analysis of housing issues concluded the need to:

- enhance the distinctiveness between different housing areas;
- provide guidance on siting of housing, particularly in relation to the Stewartstown Road;
- provide environmental improvements to existing housing areas including possible renewal of “back alleys”;
- demolish unsuccessful flatted accommodation and replace it with new build housing for sale to improve the tenure mix; and
- new build houses on appropriate, available sites.

### Community Facilities\_

One of the recurrent issues which were raised throughout the strategy process was the general lack of facilities across the Colin area. During the various consultations across the local neighbourhoods, focus group consultation and responses in written submissions highlighted the lack of community facilities. The issue was significant at several levels:

- **Firstly**, at a broad Neighbourhood level, the main significant community facility is the Dairy Farm, perceived broadly as a failure;
- **Secondly**, in terms of other significant community facilities in the area, the Brook Activity Centre and more recently the development of the pitches on the 21 Acre site were viewed as important leisure and recreation facilities. However, the Brook Activity Centre was almost thirty years old and needed a significant overhaul and redevelopment; and
- **Thirdly**, within each local neighbourhood there were limited facilities that provided a focus for the respective residents. For example, in Poleglass the main community facilities consist of the Sally Gardens Centre, Footprints, and Cloona House. In Lagmore apart from a school, church, and small nursery, there are no community facilities.

**As part of the strategy, it was recommended that the following approach be adopted:**

Identify the preferred location of local neighbourhood centres in each area where ideally community facilities and local commercial activities would congregate; maximise the benefit of existing school facilities by improving these and enabling them to be used during out-of-school hours; and encourage employment opportunities by providing start-up business units in the existing industrial estates.

### Landscape/Open Space\_

The general Colin area represented an area of significant natural resources including the Black Mountain backdrop, Colin river including the Forest Park, and the natural landscaping of Dunmurry Lane and Lagmore townland including the small woods and glens. These assets needed to be conserved and managed thereby securing investment for future generations who would make their homes in the area. It was therefore recommended resources were committed to ensuring:

- enhancement and extension of the landscape features of the existing watercourses running east/west across the area;

- provision of adequate numbers of play facilities for different age groups in the appropriate locations within each local neighbourhood;
- provision of a traditional landscaped local park within each local neighbourhood;
- improvement of existing external sports pitches and provision of appropriate support accommodation;
- archaeological monuments are highlighted within the area; and
- provision of new sports pitches where appropriate.

### Stewartstown Road

The project brief highlighted the Stewartstown Road as a particular area of concern. A series of proposals had been developed which responded to the nature of the road and the proposals in the adjacent areas. The road in its current form provided several challenges due to the amount of traffic, the typography, and the lack of building frontages. It was not economically or physically possible for the road to become a busy city street such as the Andersonstown Road.

Therefore, the proposals were based on the principle of numerous small interventions rather than one overarching solution. These take the form of entrance features, improved landscaping at the road edge, improvement in street lighting at important locations, environmental improvements/traffic calming at crossing points, and encouraging more buildings to address the road where appropriate. It was therefore proposed that the following measures should be considered as a means of complementing the proposal to develop a Colin Town Centre:

- the Stewartstown Road Strip (including the former Dairy Farm) from the Teeling roundabout to the Becketts Public House compliment the Colin Town centre. This area should become the primary focus of all key commercial and statutory developments within the Colin area;
- establishment of a series of entrance features/environmental improvements in relation to the entrances to the Colin area and the specific neighbourhoods;
- reduction of the dominance of the car by introducing traffic calming and making provision for cycle networks;
- formation of new road and path connections where appropriate to improve the linkages throughout the area; and
- provision of a circuit bus route which passes the local neighbourhood centres, the schools, the Town Centre, and the Rail halt at Dunmurry.

### Colin Town Centre: The Need for a Heart

One of the key issues that were raised as a fundamental issue weakness of the Colin area both in a physical and in a community, the sense was the absence of a centre or heart. Analysis of the area highlights the nature and timeframes of the various developments across the area over four decades. Colin developed without a real centre. Consultation with residents, community representatives, and representatives of the various statutory bodies continuously stated the lack of heart as a core issue within the Colin area. Through analysis, discussion, and consultation, it was concluded that within the physical constraints, availability of

appropriate sites, and accessibility issues, the former Dairy Farm complemented by the Stewartstown Road area presented the best opportunity for a Colin Town Centre.

A key recommendation of this strategy was that a comprehensive and economic feasibility study, dealing with land ownership issues should be carried out.

### **Creating a Sense of Place**

Colin is a place in which there is a growing sense of belief and commitment to the regeneration of the neighbourhood. In implementing the Colin Neighbourhood Strategy, it would be important that the ‘creating a sense of place’ Colin concept was developed further to encourage and support its continued growth and credibility, both within the community and beyond.

### **The Name**

Since the developments at Twinbrook, Poleglass and more recently Lagmore all of these constituent neighbourhoods have been referred to in terms of their own area name. In other words, there has not been a collective name for the study area.

However, due to early discussions of various interested parties across the area, including environmentalists, religious leaders, political leaders, and community representatives, the Colin title had surfaced. Colin had begun to gain momentum and recognition across the immediate community and beyond. Colin represented and symbolised many things including:

- **New Start:** including a new image that would shake off some of the failures of the past. During the course of this strategy development, the Dairy Farm name would be replaced with the Colin Centre and the Public Library within the centre would now be deemed as ‘Colin Library’;
- **Collective title:** which reflected the whole of the area;
- **New Image:** which would shake off the old ‘baggage’ and represent new pride, confidence, and self-belief; and
- **Engagement:** of local groups and bodies with statutory and other key bodies.

### **Overview**

A large number of strategic proposals were identified and it was anticipated that these would be taken forward by a wide variety of community and statutory organisations. Each would require consideration in its own merits, in terms of its physical feasibility, community support, and funding context. While each may provide limited benefit in isolation, together they would have to create a clarity of structure and a quality of the physical environment which would assist in the regeneration of the Colin Neighbourhood.

### **Theme: Housing, Land Environment, and Transportation**

#### **Shaping Our Future and Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015**

Shaping Our Future was about preparing a Regional Development Strategy which would a strategic and long-term perspective on the future development of

Northern Ireland up to the year 2025. It had been prepared in close consultation with the community and sought to define an agreed vision for the Region and frame an agenda that would lead to its achievement.

The Issues Paper produced as part of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan process set out the key questions to be addressed to accommodate housing growth. In particular, the distribution of housing allocation across different areas, integration with employment and public transport, and the creation of balanced communities were presented as critical issues. The plan-making process would be underpinned by an urban capacity study to identify the potential for new housing within the urban limits in the BMAP area.

The significant existing and proposed developments across Colin but more recently in the Lagmore area presented issues of environmental, physical infrastructure, and social infrastructure for the Colin, West Belfast, and Lisburn City communities. In the process of developing this strategy, a submission was made to BMAP outlining initial concepts and ideas of the Colin community. As the strategy was implemented the initial concepts and ideas were revised, CNP would seek to work in partnership in ensuring that BMAP represented the needs and aspirations of the wider Colin community. CNP would highlight that future housing must be matched by appropriate facilities infrastructure including shops, Medical clinics etc.

Recognising the need for further housing within the area, CNP would play a key role in ensuring that the development of the broader Colin area reflected and respects the natural heritage of Colin.