



Preferred Options Paper
January 2017

Local Development Plan 2020-2035



Belfast
City Council



Foreword from Party Group Leaders, Belfast City Council

Local Development Plan Preferred Options Paper



Alderman David Browne



Alderman Patrick Convery



Councillor Billy Hutchinson



Councillor Michael Long



Councillor Jim McVeigh



Councillor Lee Reynolds

Belfast City Council is preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP), which will provide the planning framework for the city up to 2035. The Preferred Options Paper (POP) is a key stage in the plan making process and provides the basis for consulting with the public and stakeholders on how the city should develop in the future.

Our recently launched Belfast Agenda sets out the leadership framework to support inclusive growth and improve services for residents and businesses. The Local Development Plan will set out how the council area should grow and how this growth can be accommodated in the delivery of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda.

As a capital city we want to support sustainable growth to strengthen our position as the economic driver for the region. We have set out ambitious, but realistic goals for sustainable employment and population growth for the city.

The LDP vision is that:

Belfast will be a globally successful, dynamic, smart 21st century regional city that is environmentally resilient with a vibrant economic heart, bustling with sustainable mixed-use businesses that attracts investment, talent and visitors; and is surrounded by thriving well-connected neighbourhoods where people love to live.

A strong local economy will support progressive, healthy, safe and vibrant communities and provides a gateway to opportunities locally, nationally and worldwide.

As the Leaders of each of the six political party groups on Belfast City Council, we commit ourselves to the collaborative leadership needed to deliver the Local Development Plan. We would like to encourage everyone to respond to the Preferred Options Paper during the 12 week consultation period and help shape the future of our city.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 What is the Local Development Plan?.....	1
1.3 The Local Development Plan process.....	2
1.4 The Preferred Options Paper and consultation	2
2. Policy context.....	5
2.1 Regional policy considerations	5
2.2 The review of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland.....	5
2.3 The Community Plan.....	5
3. District profile	7
3.1 Belfast Conversation – key issues.....	7
3.2 Spatial characteristics and settlement hierarchy	7
3.3 Summary of key opportunities and challenges	10
4. The vision and objectives.....	11
4.1 City vision (Community Plan).....	11
4.2 The Local Development Plan vision.....	11
4.3 Strategic aims.....	11
4.4 Strategic objectives.....	13
5. How will we grow Belfast?.....	19
6. Shaping a liveable place	23
6.1 Residential accommodation.....	24
6.2 Sustainable neighbourhoods.....	37
6.3 Design and heritage	41
6.4 Review of relevant PPSs	50
7. Creating a vibrant economy	55
7.1 Economic growth.....	56
7.2 Retail.....	65
7.3 City centre	68
7.4 Policy review and findings	78

8. Smart connected resilient place	81
8.1 Infrastructure, telecoms and utilities.....	82
8.2 Transportation	85
8.3 Environmental quality.....	91
8.4 Building environmental resilience.....	92
8.5 Waste infrastructure	96
8.6 Minerals.....	97
8.7 Policy review of relevant PPSs	98
9. Green and active place.....	103
9.1 Open space, sport and outdoor recreation	104
9.2 Natural heritage and trees.....	108
9.3 Review of relevant PPSs.....	112
10. Next Steps	115
Glossary	117
Appendix A: Review of regional Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)	131



1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Council through the emerging Community Plan is focussed on inclusive growth and its priorities are for balancing economic growth with improved social outcomes and reduced inequalities. To support and influence future investment and development decisions, the Council is preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP) for Belfast to guide development of the city up to 2035.

The LDP is required to provide a spatial framework and policies to shape future growth in a manner that will contribute to a smart and resilient city for the 21st century. It will be guided by an overall vision, which outlines where the city wants to be in 2035. The vision provides an overarching context for the plan that shows how economic, social and environmental considerations can be balanced to deliver sustainable development up to 2035.

An integral part of the vision and development of the plan is that local communities and stakeholders will be fully engaged in the process to bring about the sustainable growth of the city and to help the Council to manage investment in a way that delivers tangible social, economic and environmental benefits.

As part of the plan making process, the Council has prepared a draft Preferred Options Paper (POP). The draft POP outlines the vision, objectives and key planning issues affecting the city, possible approaches to new development and planned growth, and the justification for the Council's Preferred Option for Belfast. These preferred options have been developed to support the aspirations and vision set out in the emerging Community Planning for the city.

The draft POP will provide the Council with the opportunity to consult with the public and stakeholders to encourage inclusive engagement that will stimulate discussion on key planning issues in a more meaningful way at this early stage of the LDP preparation. The public and stakeholder comments concerning the draft POP will be taken into account in formulating the draft Plan Strategy, which is the first phase of the LDP (see Section 1.3).

1.2 What is the Local Development Plan?

The Local Policies Plan sets out the Council's local policies and site-specific proposals in relation to the development and use of land in Belfast. It will contain the local policies, including site specific proposals, designations and land use zonings required to deliver the Council's vision, objectives and strategic policies, as set out in the Plan Strategy.

Introduction

In summary, the Belfast City LDP 2035 will:

- Provide a 15 year plan framework to support economic and social needs in the city, in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing the delivery of sustainable development;
- Facilitate growth by coordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the wellbeing of the community;
- Allocate sufficient land to meet the needs of the city; and
- Provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within the local area should take place.

Once adopted, this LDP will replace the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015, insofar as it relates to Belfast city, and the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Subject Plan for the Belfast City Council Area 2015.

1.3 The Local Development Plan process

There are four key stages in the LDP process. The first is the initial plan preparation stage, which comprises the preparation of the plan timetable and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), alongside the production of the Preferred Options Paper (POP), which provides the basis for consulting on a series of options for dealing with key issues in the plan area.

1.4 The Preferred Options Paper and consultation

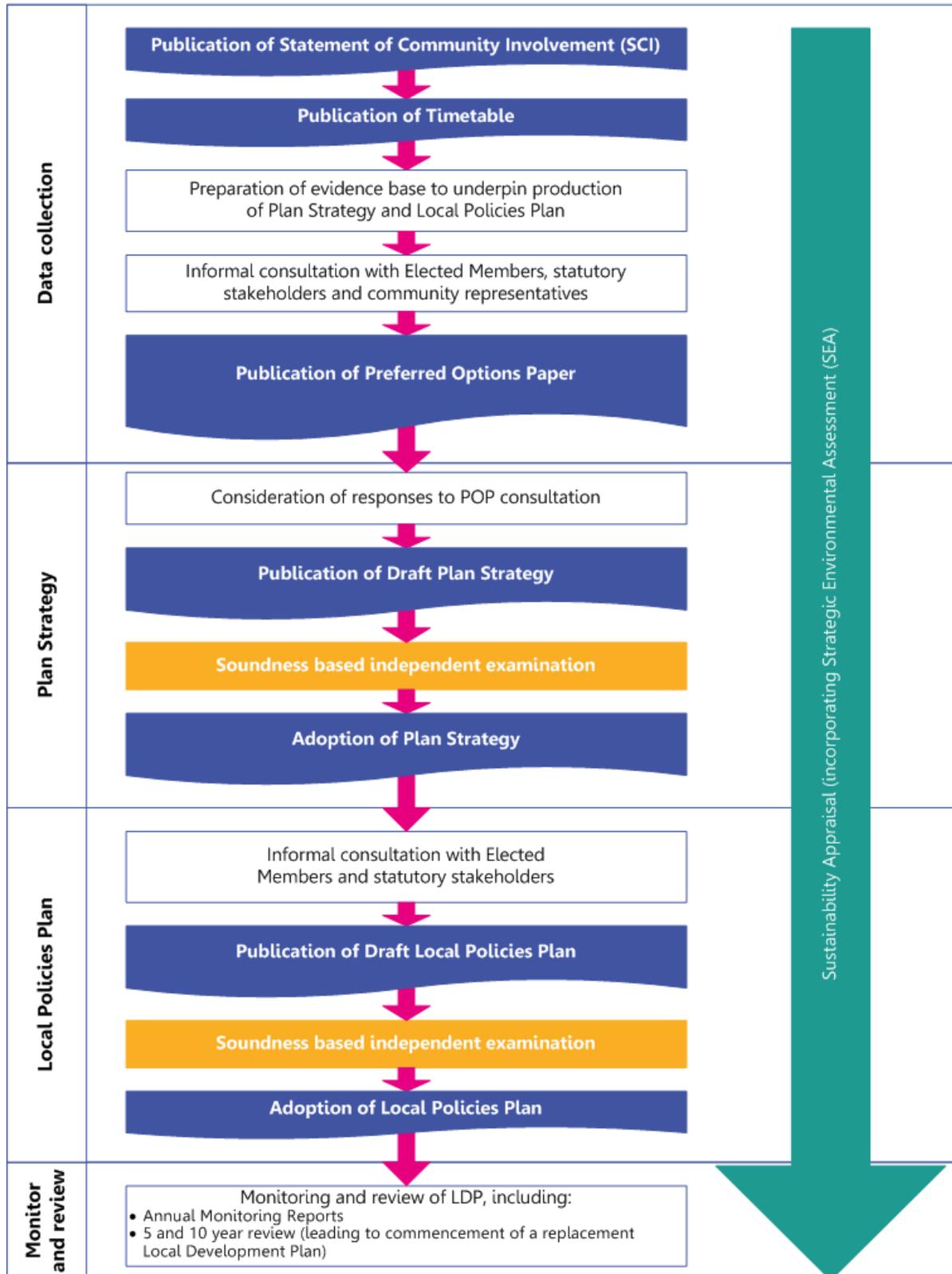
The Preferred Options Paper (POP) represents the first step in the preparation of the Belfast LDP 2035. The POP provides the basis for consulting with the public and stakeholders on a series of options for dealing with key issues within the plan area. It aims to stimulate public comment and provide interested parties with an opportunity to put forward their views and be part of the plan from the beginning of the process.

The publication of the POP will start the process of consultation inviting comment within a maximum of 12 weeks. We will hold a launch and exhibition to announce publication of the POP. Public meetings and exhibitions with drop-in sessions throughout the city will also take place. We will also write to key consultees and elected members providing them with a copy of the POP and inviting them to attend the launch and provide comments within 12 weeks. We are seeking the views of those who live, work, or have an interest in the city, to comment on the preferred options we have chosen.

The various assessments undertaken alongside preparation of the POP are outlined below:

- Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA);
- Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA); and
- Rural Proofing.

Stages in the Local Development Plan (LDP) process





2. Policy context

In the development of the POP, the Council has had regard to regional policy, undertaken a review of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), and considered the spatial issues arising from the emerging Community Plan.

2.1 Regional policy considerations

The regional policies to which the council has had regard are:

- Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035;
- Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS);
- Sustainable Development Strategy 2010; and
- Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation.

2.2 The review of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

A review has been undertaken of existing PPS policies and the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI) as part of the preparation of the Preferred Options. In order to assess each policy, a standardised evaluation matrix has been considered, which objectively assesses the appropriateness of each policy against the following criteria:

- Is the policy addressed in other regional policy (e.g. RDS, SPPS)?
- Has national or regional policy or legislation changed since the adoption of the original policy (e.g. change of policy direction in SPPS, changes to the Use Class Order, Building Regulations, HMO legislation, etc.)?
- Does the policy align with existing Council policies or aspirations?
- Have there been any difficulties or issues arising from the implementation of the policies through the development management process or as a result of planning appeal decisions?

2.3 The Community Plan

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 sets out a statutory link between the Community Plan and the LDP. It is now a legislative requirement that during preparation of the LDP the Council must take account of the Community Plan.

To help us develop the Community Plan, known as the 'Belfast Agenda', we created the 'Belfast Conversation' to gain a better understanding of residents', community groups' and partner organisations' aspirations for the city and how they would like to see it shape and develop over the next 15 years. The response of participants was overwhelmingly positive with each workshop generating a wealth of ideas to help shape the Belfast Agenda. This

Policy context

feedback and responses from partners have highlighted issues for the city and informed the development of the preferred options.

3. District profile

The existing characteristics of the Belfast District set the context for the LDP by illustrating the key opportunities and challenges facing the area. This information has been brought together into a series of background Topic Papers that have formed the basis of decision taken to arrive at the LDP vision and objectives and preferred options presented within this POP. These Topic Papers are published alongside the POP for information and to inform the POP consultation.

3.1 Belfast Conversation – key issues

The ideas that emerged out of the Belfast Conversation highlighted a number of opportunities and challenges confronting the city. Whilst these opportunities and challenges are distinctive, many overlap and are intertwined. They mainly relate to the physical make up of the city and its contemporary economic and social context.

The key issues generated during the Belfast Conversation, concern the need:

- To enhance the city's public transport infrastructure
- For greater co-ordination and support for the economy, skills and employability
- To address issues of community relations, social and health inequalities
- To make the most of our physically compact city and enhancing the city's strong links to our surrounding natural environment
- For stronger civic participation and engagement and to find ways to support greater individual fulfilment and self-empowerment.

3.2 Spatial characteristics and settlement hierarchy

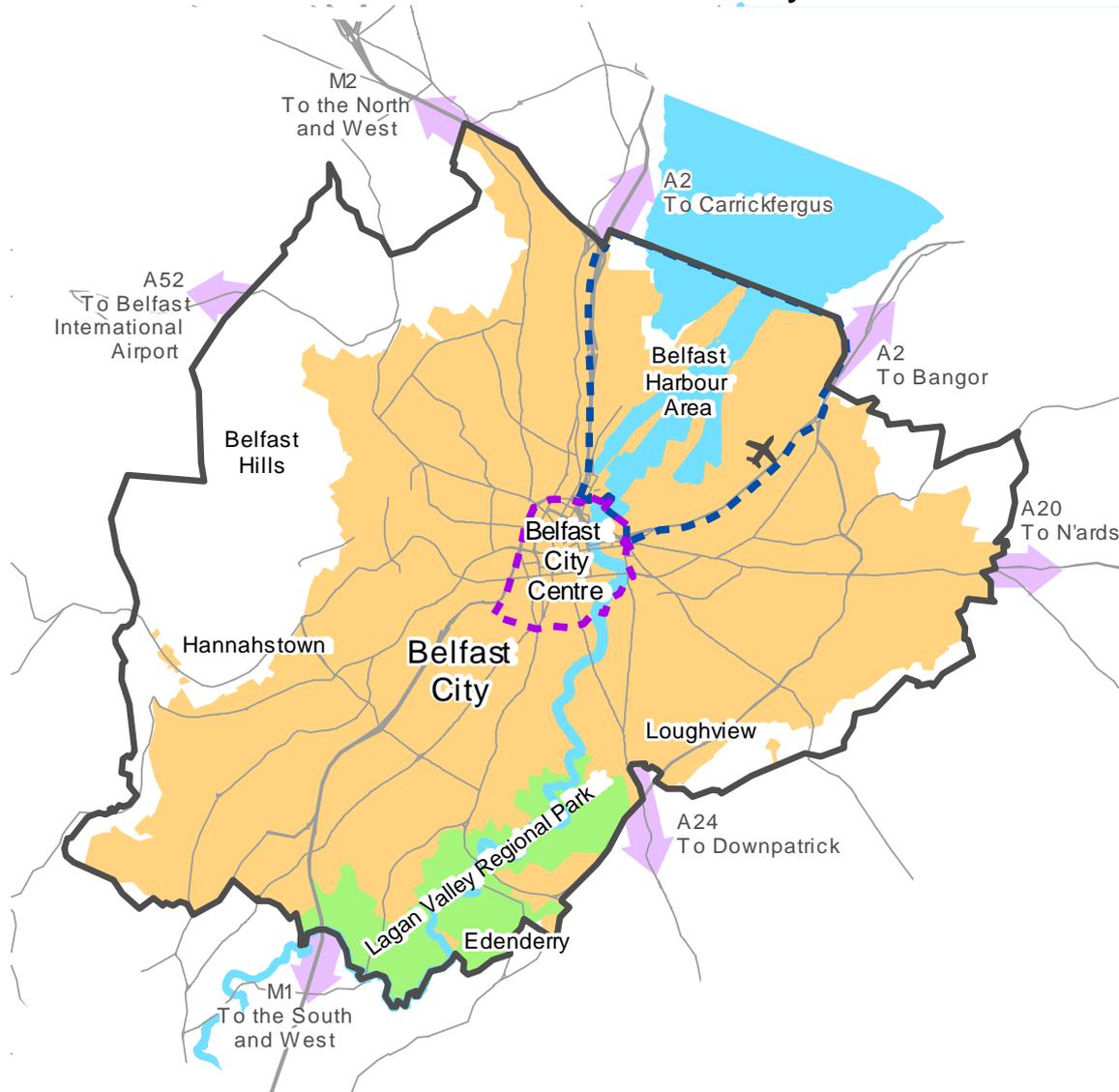
Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland and lies at the heart of a wider urban metropolitan area that dominates the east of the region. It drives much of the economic growth across the province and shares its wealth across the region. Given this strategic location, the Belfast Metropolitan Area is the major gateway to NI and the primary administrative, retail and commercial location within the region. It has been the key driver for an improving regional economy and will continue to play a strategic role in the future economic growth and development of NI. The RDS therefore aims to “strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver”, recognising that “successful regions have strong and vibrant cities at their core”.

District profile



The majority of the Belfast district consists of a single contiguous built up urban area, which continues into Lisburn and Castlereagh to the South, North Down and Ards to the East and Antrim and Newtownabbey to the North. According to the RDS settlement hierarchy, Belfast city is a principal city, acting as the main service centre. It should therefore be the focus for major population and economic growth to maximise the benefits from efficient use of existing facilities, infrastructure and its strategic location on the transport corridors. Belfast city will accommodate economic development through expansion and creation of industrial estates and modern enterprise and business centres. It will accommodate new residential development both, with the exact development limits to be designated at the Local Policies Plan stage.

Belfast District Settlement Hierarchy



The Belfast district consists of four settlements, designated in accordance with the RDS 2035 definitions:

Classification	Settlement
Principal City	Belfast City
Small Settlements	Edenderry Hannahstown Loughview

Outside of the core urban area, the Belfast District also contains three small settlements – Edenderry, Hannahstown and Loughview. Each of these settlements act as a focal point for the rural community and take the form of a rural cluster or cross roads development where consolidation of the built form can provide opportunity for individual dwellings or small groups of houses and small rural businesses. The exact extent of the settlement limits of

District profile

these three small settlements will be defined within the Local Policies Plan, but will be drawn to ensure the three settlements remain separated from the contiguous built up area.

Outside of these areas, the majority of the area is open countryside, offering opportunities for rural recreation and tourism, helping increase the attractiveness of Belfast as a place to invest, live and work. Within the rural area, residential development will continue to be restricted in line with the policy approach currently contained within PPS21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside.

3.3 Summary of key opportunities and challenges

Belfast has witnessed a revival in recent years in terms of inward investment, including significant regeneration within the Titanic Quarter and waterfront areas, major growth in tourism and the Ulster University redevelopment in the city centre. However, there continue to be a range of issues that inhibit the ability of the city to fully function as one of the main urban centres in Europe. There are areas of the city that are fractured, disjointed and poorly presented. There are infrastructure and environmental constraints, such as traffic congestion and poor air quality.

There are opportunities to reconnect the city, to improve public transportation networks and extend service provision. This could be encouraged by promoting appropriate design in new developments to make the city more permeable and aid both vehicular and pedestrian movement. New development could be encouraged along routes connecting the city centre to inner-city neighbourhoods that are currently poorly integrated with the urban core.

There are opportunities through planning and regeneration processes to increase equality of opportunity and contribute to a breakdown of the physical and psychological aspects of division. There is an opportunity to plan for regeneration that seeks to rejuvenate interface areas and facilitate the removal of barriers and other forms of infrastructure or architecture that serve to reinforce patterns of division within the city. There are opportunities to promote development of shared sites and facilities that provide safe access for all of the community and have potential to foster greater levels of social integration.

There are also opportunities to support and promote the continued regeneration of the city centre to attract inward investment and encourage a more diverse economy that will contribute to an enhancement in liveability and the city centre as a place. Such opportunities offer potential to attract residents to the city and facilitate initiatives to address dereliction and poor-quality environments within the city, and to promote the night-time economy.

There is opportunity to foster civic leadership and support joined-up governance to address the challenges identified from the issues raised in the Belfast Conversation and those that have emerged through evidence based research.

4. The vision and objectives

The visions set out in the Community Plan and the LDP intend to respond to these and other issues, confronting the city of Belfast.

4.1 City vision (Community Plan)

The Community Plan known as the Belfast Agenda has a bold and ambitious vision:

“Belfast will be a city re-imagined. A great place to live for everyone. It will re-energise and drive a successfully economy where everyone can reach their potential. Beautiful and well connected, it will be a shared city and loved by all its people and admired around the world. It will be a producer of and a magnet for talent, investment, innovation and creativity, a compassionate place where people create value and are valued.”

To achieve this vision we will work towards these outcomes:

- Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all
- Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city.

4.2 The Local Development Plan vision

Like the Community Plan the LDP vision set out an ambitious but realistic spatial vision:

Our vision

Belfast will be a globally successful, dynamic, smart 21st century regional city that is environmentally resilient with a vibrant economic heart, bustling with sustainable mixed-use businesses that attracts investment, talent and visitors; and is surrounded by thriving well-connected neighbourhoods where people love to live.

A strong local economy will support progressive, healthy, safe and vibrant communities and provides a gateway to opportunities locally, nationally and worldwide.

4.3 Strategic aims

To help deliver the city envisaged in 2035, there are a series of strategic aims and related objectives that have been identified below to support the vision realisation.

**Do you agree
with the LDP
vision?**

Vision and objectives

Although the LDP's Strategic Aims and objectives do not align directly with the Community Plan's long-term Outcomes and shorter-term Priorities, this Preferred Options Paper seeks to identify the linkages and synergies throughout. This includes an indication of which Community Plan Outcomes each Strategic Aim is contributing to, as well as an indication of the relevant Outcomes and Priority 'Pillar' in relation to each preferred option.

Shaping a liveable place

Promoting development that enhances the health and well-being of communities, neighbourhoods and places.

Creating a vibrant economy

A strengthened Belfast as the regional economic driver.



A green and active place

A protected, enhanced and attractive natural setting, reinforcing uniqueness and accessibility to all who live work and enjoy the city.

A smart connected and resilient place

Improving connectivity and supporting the efficient movement of people, goods, energy and information to create a dynamic innovative 21st century city with the capacity for adaption to environmental challenges.

4.4 Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives will outline how the LDP will address the key issues and shape future development to deliver the vision for Belfast 2035. In supporting the strategic aims, the following objectives are set out below the relevant strategic aim.

Strategic aim: shaping a liveable place



Promoting development that enhances the health and wellbeing of communities, neighbourhoods and places.

Relevant Belfast Agenda outcomes:

- Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair, and inclusive city for all
- Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city

The LDP will seek to support the development of sustainable inclusive Neighbourhoods, which are well designed; and to provide a sufficient supply and choice of homes that will provide for the city's growing and diverse population. The Neighbourhoods will be accessible to a range of services and facilities, which will provide opportunities to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life for everyone.

We will try to protect and manage Belfast's built heritage, whilst also supporting innovative new uses and ensure that new developments enhances their distinctive character and features to contribute to the identity of local places.

The following objectives have been set along with the preferred options to achieve Belfast, a sustainable place:

1. To grow the population of Belfast and connect with other cities across the UK and Ireland in supporting a greater level of inward investment.
2. To address current and future residential needs through ensuring sufficient suitable land is available to meet future requirements, and that new residential development is of an appropriate type, size, tenure and mix.
3. To promote and deliver high quality design by including policies to protect and enhance the built environment that fosters local distinctiveness.
4. To improve community safety and reduce the potential for antisocial behaviour or crime through an approach to new development focused on design quality.

Vision and objectives

5. To improve access for all groups in society to public services through the design and location of new development.
6. To protect and enhance the historic environment through effective management of proposed development and ensuring high quality design.

Strategic Aim: creating a vibrant economy



A strengthened Belfast as the regional economic driver.

Relevant Belfast Agenda outcomes:

- Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city

Belfast is an important economic gateway for Northern Ireland with a thriving port, and its role as the administrative capital city. In support of the city and city centre's role as a major employment location, there will continue to be a mix of retail, leisure, businesses, financial services, higher education, tourism, and other supporting functions appropriate for a regional city.

Through the plan, we will seek to create the conditions and support regeneration opportunities for attracting high quality inward investment and jobs. This will include creative industries, ICT services, research, high-tech industry and other innovative sectors that will contribute to jobs, growth and secure Belfast's role as the regional economic hub whilst supporting growth of indigenous small business.

The objectives linked to the Strategic Aims have been set out alongside the preferred options necessary to achieve the goal of a vibrant economy for Belfast:

7. To maintain a strong and growing economy by ensuring a range of suitable sites for employment uses are available and able to be developed to meet the future growth of the economy and employment.
8. To support the local economies by promoting development of suitable land and buildings for retail, leisure, office and commercial uses within the city centre and district centres ensuring the future needs are addressed and their continued vibrancy and viability maintained.

9. To strengthen the potential of local tourism and the development of suitable tourism infrastructure, cultural facilities, and accommodation for this important sector of the economy.
10. To support the connectivity and the continued regeneration of disadvantaged and deprived areas.

Strategic aim: a smart connected and resilient place



Improving connectivity supporting the efficient movement of people, goods, energy and information to create a dynamic innovative 21st century city attractive to investors, businesses, residents and visitors, and encourage the capacity for adaption to environmental challenges and the transition to a low carbon city

Relevant Belfast Agenda outcomes:

- Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city

We will support an efficient integrated transport network offering travel choice that minimises congestion and pollution. Encourage expansion of green infrastructure networks for walking and cycling to encourage active travel and improve air quality. Promote increased use of public transport whilst retaining suitable provision for cars. Facilitate a Smart Belfast where we can harness the city's digital infrastructure, open data, our data analytics and research capacity to create excellent services for our citizens.

The LDP will encourage development of renewable energy networks to build capacity and security. Promote innovative building technologies to improve efficiencies to create competitive advantage for businesses. Support energy efficient housing developments to help alleviate fuel poverty and facilitate development of a circular economy to manage waste and support the creation of jobs.

We will encourage adaptation to emerging environmental challenges and mitigate flood risks through improvements to green and blue infrastructure networks. Manage development within areas of risk and ensure the design of new development reduces future risk from flooding. Encourage flood resilient design to build the city's resilience for future generations.

The following objectives have been set along with the preferred options to achieve a smart connected and resilient place for Belfast:

Vision and objectives

11. To build stronger communities by protecting and improving social, economic, green, digital and physical infrastructure through supporting its development and enhancement, and through securing contributions from new development.
12. To ensure availability of land to facilitate sustainable patterns of development and promote travel by more sustainable modes of transport.
13. Address the local elements that could contribute to wider environmental challenges through ensuring new development is designed to minimise carbon emissions, use resources efficiently, and be resilient to longer term implications.
14. Adapt for the potential implications of environmental changes through management of development within areas of risk and designing new development to reduce future risk from flooding
15. Ensure new development minimises the production of waste and supports recycling

In relation to Minerals:
16. To safeguard the environment by ensuring new development proposals address the potential risks in respect of environmental pollution or damage.

Strategic aim: a green and active place



A protected, enhanced and attractive natural setting, reinforcing uniqueness and accessibility to all who live work and enjoy the city.

Relevant Belfast Agenda outcomes:

- Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair, and inclusive city for all
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city

The LDP will seek to develop an integrated and multi-functional green infrastructure network of high quality open spaces, parks, and corridors; (e.g. river valleys, Lough, wetlands and woodlands) to support biodiversity, encourage physical activity and improve links between the neighbourhoods, facilities, services, employment and the city centre. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity networks, trees, hedgerows, geodiversity sites and important habitats from loss or damage.

The following objectives have been set along with the preferred options to achieve Belfast, as a green place:

17. To support healthy lifestyles through ensuring sufficient land availability for accessible play, sport and recreation opportunities.
18. To protect, enhance and link the natural environment and biodiversity by managing the location and design of new development.
19. To protect and conserve the natural asset of Belfast's countryside, coast and hills by managing proposed development in sensitive areas.

Do the aims and objectives strike the right balance between social, economic and environmental considerations?

Are there any issues that we have missed from our vision, aims or objectives?





How will we grow Belfast?

Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland and lies at the heart of a wider built-up area in the east of the region. It drives much of the region's economic growth and is the main gateway into the country



Belfast's economy supports nearly 30% of all jobs in NI



Between 2001-2015 Belfast's population grew by 2.47% whilst the NI population grew by 9.6%



Belfast's population declined over 33% from 1971-2011 while the NI population increased over 18%



Belfast contributes over a quarter (28 per cent) to NI's total productivity





How will we grow Belfast?

Belfast City Council has ambitious growth aspirations set out in the Belfast Agenda, which mirrors the objectives of regional planning policy. The RDS aims to “strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver”, recognising that “successful regions have strong and vibrant cities at their core” and that “Belfast drives much of the economic growth and shares its wealth across the region”. The SPSS also advises that the LDP should positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth.

The city has continued to create new employment opportunities and, over the long term, Belfast’s economy has performed well, with strong pre-recession growth in employment, despite a continued fall in population. This illustrates the complex relationship between economic growth and population, with changes in the behaviour of those who live and work in the city impacting upon economic growth and vice versa.



The preferred growth option for the city must seek to secure an ambitious level of inclusive growth to enable the city to compete with similar sized cities elsewhere in the UK in terms of attracting investment, creating jobs and driving the regional economy. The starting point for considering the supply of housing units needed to support economic growth in the city is an objective assessment of the current population profile and how the population could change in the future.

The economic growth aspirations for the city therefore have implications for the growth of the population and, in turn, the level of residential development required to support this growth. Conversely, a failure to deliver the level of residential accommodation required could limit or restrict economic growth.

The preferred LDP strategy will aim to provide a framework that supports investment and development to achieve a successful and sustainable economy, taking key decisions to create the conditions and supporting infrastructure, including housing, to attract high quality investment, employment opportunities and deliver urban regeneration.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • Liveable Place 	1 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy

GR1 – Supporting economic growth preferred option

LDP policies will be based on ambitious growth aspirations, with appropriate population growth, employment land and residential development delivered to help Belfast compete with other cities across the UK, supporting a greater level of inward investment and strengthening the regional economy. This means over the plan period the LDP will:

- Ensure a supply of sufficient employment land to support the creation of c. 46,000 additional jobs;
- Seek to grow Belfast’s population by 66,000, increasing the population to over 400,000 by 2035; and
- Make provision for the development of 37,000 new homes, delivered at an average rate of 1,600-1,800 dwellings per year, phased to align with infrastructure capacity and provision.

1. Baseline demographic growth (2014-based)	2. Supporting baseline employment growth	3. Supporting higher employment growth
 <p>- Employment Limited or no growth in labour force supported</p>	 <p>46,000 Additional jobs supported by the labour force</p>	 <p>69,000 Additional jobs supported by the labour force</p>
 <p>19,000 Additional residents 2014-2015 356,000 total population in 2035</p>	 <p>66,000 Additional residents 2014-2015 403,000 total population in 2035</p>	 <p>89,000 Additional residents 2014-2015 426,000 total population in 2035</p>
 <p>17,000 Additional homes needed 2014-2035 800 dwellings per annum</p>	 <p>37,000 Additional homes needed 2014-2035 1,750 dwellings per annum</p>	 <p>47,800 Additional homes needed 2014-2035 2,275 dwellings per annum</p>



How will we grow Belfast?

Approach

The preferred option seeks to support a baseline level of economic growth over the plan period, resulting in strong job creation, adding a further 46,000 jobs and leading a total employment of around 286,800 in 2035. The level of growth proposed within this economic scenario is our preferred option given the objective of enabling the city to compete with similar sized cities elsewhere in the UK in terms of attracting investment, creating jobs and driving the regional economy. It will help support the RDS aims of strengthening Belfast as the regional economic driver, delivering a vibrant city at the core of the region, and will allow Belfast to continue to drive much of the economic growth of NI.

This scenario would see a population of over 400,000 by 2035, or up to 66,000 additional residents over the plan period. Independent research demonstrates that this level of population growth is required to support economic growth and is ambitious but also realistic in terms of rates of residential development delivery. This would result in a need for around 37,000 new homes over the plan period or 1,750 new housing units per year.

Essentially, this preferred option is required to support the economic growth aspiration of the city, supporting the creation of new jobs and resulting in a net inflow of migrants to Belfast, delivering a more balanced age profile of the population. This better reflects the most recent demographic trends, and recognises that higher levels of residential provision could result from potential improving economic circumstances.

Do you support Belfast's aspirations for a higher level of growth to help drive the regional economy?

Will the level of growth proposed enable the city to better compete with similar sized cities elsewhere in the UK and Ireland?

Would the availability of an increased number, mix and type of new homes in appropriate locations, including affordable housing, encourage more people to consider living in the city?



Shaping a liveable place

Promoting development that enhances the health and wellbeing of communities, neighbourhoods and places



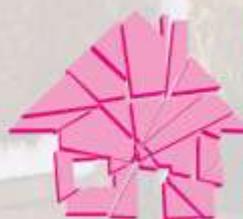
Nearly a quarter (24%) of houses in Belfast are socially rented, while 57% are owner-occupied



We are one of the youngest cities in Europe with nearly a third of our population up to 21 years old



Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland with a population of **338,907**



In 2015, nearly **7,000** people were in housing stress



6.1 Residential accommodation

Homes and residential accommodation of all types lie at the heart of town planning. Planning assists in responding to arising needs and demands for new accommodation, both from the existing population – as new households form or as housing needs change – and from new residents attracted to a growing city. New homes play a vital role in supporting population growth, encouraging more people to stay within or move to the city. Planning for new homes is therefore a critical element of the LDP as we seek to stabilise and grow the population of Belfast. Regional policy requires the Council to manage residential development to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development, support urban and rural renaissance and strengthen community cohesion by:

- Promoting more sustainable residential development within existing urban areas;
- Ensuring an adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs of everyone;
- Providing mixed housing development with homes in a range of sizes and tenures;
- Maximising the use of existing infrastructure and services;
- Creating more balanced sustainable communities;
- Increasing density without town cramming;
- Delivering sustainable forms of development; and
- Ensuring quality design.

The Preferred Options for housing set out in this section are in relation to:

- Accommodating new homes;
- Social and affordable homes;
- Housing mix;
- Specialist accommodation for older people;
- Traveller accommodation;
- Shared housing; and
- Design quality in residential development.

It should be noted that homes and residential accommodation of all types are generally referred to throughout this document under the generic term 'housing', which therefore includes apartments and flats and other forms of residential accommodation as well as more traditional houses.

6.1.1 Accommodating new homes

The LDP is the main vehicle for managing housing growth to deliver sustainable forms of residential development. As part of the LDP process, therefore, the Council must allocate sufficient land to meet its projected housing needs over the plan period. There are three key factors to be considered when assessing the quantity of land required and the suitability of land to accommodate new housing:

- Total number of residential units required;

- Desired density (measure of the number of dwellings in a given area) of development; and
- Type of land to be prioritised.

The SPPS sets out a sequential approach for the identification of suitable sites for housing, whereby previously used land is prioritised over expansion into the area surrounding existing settlements or the creation of new settlements. The RDS seeks to manage housing growth to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development and sets a regional target of 60% of all new housing to be located on appropriate 'brownfield' sites within the urban footprints of settlements greater than 5,000 population.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here

LP1: Accommodating new homes preferred option

In order to support the ambitious growth aspirations for the city, the LDP will allocate sufficient land to accommodate 37,000 new housing units during the Plan Period in accordance with the following priorities:

- Increasing the density of housing development across the city of Belfast, focussing the highest density of development on the city centre and other locations which benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities;
- Prioritising the re-use of previously developed land by setting an appropriate target for housing development on 'brownfield' land and encouraging the re-development of appropriate locations to contribute to urban regeneration;
- Concentrating growth within the existing settlement limits of the Belfast city urban area;
- Identifying opportunities for developments on the edge of settlements, but avoid any development in areas that could lead to the coalescence of our small settlements into the larger urban area; and
- Restricting housing development in the open countryside.

Approach

Our preferred option for the growth of Belfast identifies a need for 37,000 new homes over the plan period. At an average density of 30dph, this would require over 1,200 ha of land, whilst at an average density of 60 dwellings per hectares (ha) only 616 ha of land would be needed. The average density of new housing delivered between 2007 and 2014 was just under 60dph; however, individual developments can range from 20dph in suburban locations to over 250dph in the city centre.



SPPS's Sequential Approach as Applied to Belfast

Step 1: Use previously developed land within the urban footprint, informed by urban capacity studies

- Increase the density of housing development, by targeting the City Centre and other locations that benefit from high accessibility
- Prioritise previously developed or 'brownfield' land within Belfast's existing urban footprint

Step 2: Extensions to cities or towns

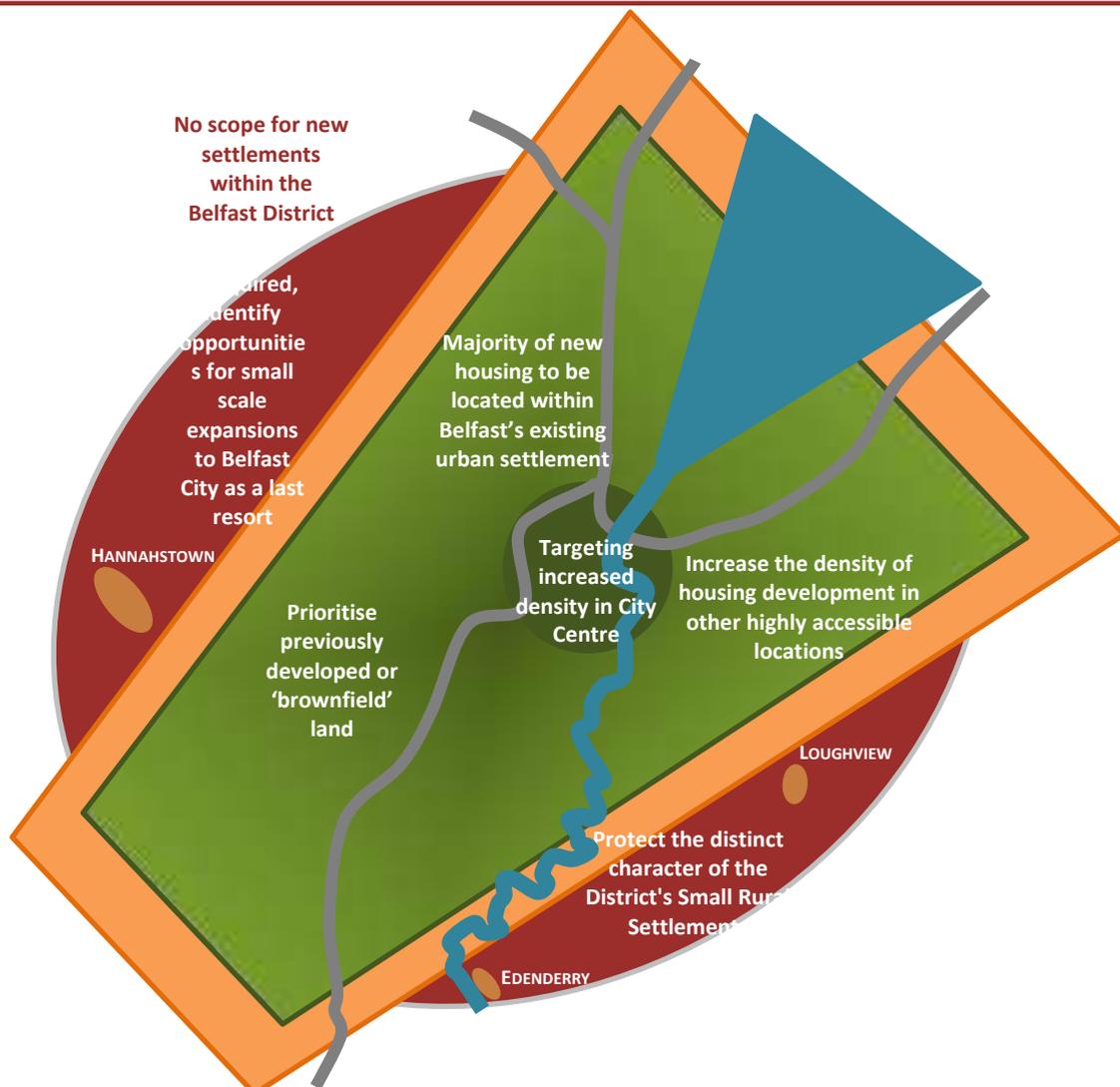
- Identify opportunities for small scale expansions to Belfast City as a last resort

Step 3: Exceptional major expansion of a village or small rural settlement

- Protect the distinct character of the District's Small Rural Settlements by preventing any development that could lead to coalescence

Step 4: New Settlements

- No scope for new settlements within the Belfast District



The preferred option seeks to accommodate housing growth by increasing density without town cramming in the first instance. In accordance with the SPPS, this will need to be delivered in a

sensitive way, striking a careful balance between meeting housing needs whilst ensuring well-designed developments appropriate to their locations. This will continue the approach currently set out in PPS12 Housing in Settlements' Planning Control Principle (PCP) 1 that seeks to promote higher densities in town and city centres and in other locations that benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities, whilst respecting local character, maintaining environmental quality and safeguarding the amenity of existing residents within established residential areas.

Do you agree that new development should focus on the city centre and other accessible locations in preference to other previously developed or 'brownfield' land within the city?

The Council will carry out further assessment of sites as part of an Urban Capacity Study prior to inform the development of the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan. This will ensure that the most suitable sites are proposed for allocation for housing and that all sites allocated for housing development will have been robustly tested for suitability, availability and deliverability. This will include consideration of infrastructure constraints and the phasing. In order to maintain a viable five year supply of housing land, committed housing sites currently under construction and those with current planning consents for new build housing or for change of use or conversion will be prioritised in the short term.

Do you agree that new housing development should be restricted in the countryside?

6.1.2 Social and affordable homes

Although house prices in Belfast are relatively low by national standards, incomes are also low and consequently there is significant demand for affordable housing in the city. Affordable housing comprises the social rented sector, housing benefit funded private rented and that part of the low cost owner occupation market that can be purchased utilising 30% or less of gross household income.

Traditionally housing need has been met through the provision of social housing by the NIHE and more recently Housing Associations. However, the Housing Market Area (HMA) analysis reports that the proportion of households living in the social rented sector across the Belfast Metropolitan HMA, in common with the rest of Northern Ireland and the UK, has been declining for many years. However, the NIHE annual assessment of housing need



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indicates that the requirement for additional social housing across the whole Belfast Metropolitan HMA has been well in excess of social housing construction rates for most of the past decade.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City development

LP2 – Affordable housing preferred option

Our Preferred Option is to require a percentage of all new homes in larger developments to be affordable. Local Development Plan policies will be developed to ensure that affordable housing:

- Meets the affordable housing needs of the District in terms of size, type and tenure (including rental and forms of owner occupation);
- Is genuinely affordable in relation to housing costs and local household incomes;
- Is retained as affordable housing;
- Is integrated with general needs housing within mixed tenure developments; and
- Meets certain standards in terms of internal space and external design.

The exact level set will need to be informed by an up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment or Local Housing Need Assessment and should involve a mix of social housing, affordable housing and intermediate housing options.

Approach

The preferred option would require all housing developments to help meet housing need by making a contribution towards gross affordable housing targets. To help overcome concerns around viability, this should be limited to larger housing and mixed use developments through the use of appropriate thresholds in terms of number of units or size

Should a proportion of all new homes in larger developments be affordable?

of development site. An appropriate percentage will need to be set taking into account the housing need identified through an up to date housing market assessment.

Research published by DSD found that at current values and costs, something

between a 10% and 20% contribution as land rather than units is probably achievable in Belfast, although this would need to be linked to the general make up of the local area. It also notes that the ability to meet this level would become more secure with a rise in house prices. However, it is unlikely that every housing site in Belfast would be able to meet such demands and flexibility will therefore also need to be built in to the policy framework to ensure that viability can be taken into account on a case-by-case basis.

6.1.3 Housing mix

Whilst population projections are an important source of information on the level and location of future housing requirements, it is the rate of household formation that is the more important driver of the housing market. The rate of household formation has been rising in Belfast, driven by population growth and single accommodation. The continuing trend towards more single person and older households will result in a sustained demand for accommodation and in particular for smaller units of accommodation and supported housing.

There needs to be a more inventive approach to provision for the changing needs identified, such as an ageing population and reduction in household size. The LDP will need to seek to reduce any imbalances in the future housing stock. There is considerable research to support an approach encouraging a mix of housing types as opposed to concentrations of one type or another.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City development

LP3 – Ensuring an appropriate mix of housing preferred option

The Local Development Plan will include appropriate policies to support a mix of housing units being delivered over the plan period – in terms of size, types and tenures – to help meet the needs of the projected population (as identified through the latest local housing market analysis and future population projections). This will include:

- A requirement to help deliver mixed and balanced communities; and
- An appropriate mix of housing specified in relation to key housing land allocations and development opportunity sites to help promote choice and assist in meeting community needs.



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Approach

The preferred approach continue the existing regional policy approach set out in PPS12 Policy HS4, with a general requirement for residential developments to deliver an appropriate mix of housing in terms of type and size, promoting choice and helping to meet community needs. However, flexibility would also be allowed for the exact mix delivered to be negotiated with developers on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the latest housing market analysis and specific characteristics of the site and its context.

Will our proposed approach ensure an appropriate mix of housing – in terms of size, types and tenures – for the city?

This would be supplemented with specific housing mix requirements for key residential zonings. This could include a differentiated need to apply to social and affordable housing given that the need is likely to be for smaller one and two bedroom houses in response to proposed welfare reforms. This would help take account of smaller household sizes and will enable downsizing from existing stock to occur.

6.1.4 Specialist accommodation for older people

The Local Development Plan needs to ensure that new development includes the right mix of housing to meet the diverse needs of the population. Whilst we have previously referred to the need for affordable housing and an appropriate mix of housing in terms of type, size and tenure, there are also a number of specialist housing types and general needs of the population to be considered. For example, specialist housing provides for people with specific housing needs, particularly in relation to impaired physical and mental health and old age. The need for specialist housing is likely to increase in Belfast, as there is an ageing population and relatively high levels of poor health.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing	Pillars • Living Here

LP4 – Specialist accommodation for older people preferred option

The Local Development Plan will contain specific policies to address the most acute needs of the community as identified in an up-to-date strategic housing market. This will include:

- **Homes for older people** – Setting locational criteria to ensure specialist housing for older people, including retirement villages and care-related facilities, will provide ease of access to relevant services and facilities such as shops, public transport routes and health facilities. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence that the homes or bed spaces meet identified community needs.
- **Lifetime Homes** – Requiring an appropriate proportion of new homes on strategic housing sites to be built to Lifetime Home standards so that they are adaptable enough to match changing needs of people throughout their lifetime.

Approach

Recent research completed by the NI Housing Executive notes that the ongoing increase in the number and proportion of people aged 65 or more, particularly those aged 85 or more, will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the design of dwellings and the need for supported housing¹. It is therefore prudent given the identified growth in the older population to ensure that the LDP actively plans for the provision of such accommodation. Our preferred option will seek to balance the locational requirements, such as access to local shops and services, with the need to protect the established character of existing residential areas.

Do you agree with the approach taken to specialist housing for older people?

Will our proposed use of the Lifetime Homes Standards ensure an appropriate supply of homes for children, older people and those with physical disability?

Whilst a requirement for all new housing to meet Lifetime Homes Standards is unlikely to be feasible within the Belfast context, it is proposed that an appropriate proportion, based on the latest evidence of need within the local housing market, will ensure a readily available supply of housing suitable to enable independent living in the older population. This approach is supported by the evidence contained within the Local Housing Systems

¹ NI Housing Market Review and Perspectives 2015-2018, NIHE



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Analysis of the Belfast Metropolitan Housing Market Area (NIHE, August 2011). It notes that the continued upward trend in the numbers of older households over the next 15 years and beyond implies that there may be an increased demand for property adaptations or services to allow older homeowners to continue to live independently. It suggests that information could be shared with developers to encourage them to provide 'mainstream' housing that is appealing for older households, helping ensure that suitable housing is supplied that presents as few barriers to mobility as possible.

6.1.5 Traveller accommodation

Travellers have distinctive housing needs from the wider population and must be addressed within the LDP.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liveable Place 	Objectives 2	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Here

LP5 – Traveller accommodation preferred option

The Council will ensure that the need for Traveller specific accommodation will be addressed through the Local Development Plan, by protecting existing Traveller facilities and providing a criteria-based policy for assessing future proposals for the provision of suitable facilities. Criteria will focus on the balance of need and land availability as well as compatibility with surrounding land uses. Development proposals will also be required to address service provision, including convenient access to a health services, education facilities, and public transport.

Approach

There are several existing traveller sites in Belfast, which should be protected from future development, whilst any need identified through an up to date Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Analysis will be accommodated in suitable locations. It should be recognised that there should be a distinction between permanent residential use of caravans by Travellers and transit or temporary uses. In addition to the SPPS policy

requirements, future local policy will seek to address a broader range of local issues, including access to key community services and provision of infrastructure and utilities (running water, toilet facilities, waste disposal, etc).

Do you agree with the proposed approach to traveller accommodation?

6.1.6 Shared housing

There is a need to meet the demand for shared housing and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are an important component of this housing provision. HMOs, alongside other accommodation options within the private rented sector, play an important role in meeting the housing needs of people who are single, who have temporary employment, students, low income households and, more recently, migrant workers. Although students are often most closely associated with HMOs, it is recognised that students can also be accommodated in university Halls of Residence, alternative forms of privately rented housing and, increasingly in Belfast, private Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA).

Within Belfast, a combination of HMOs and sub-division of larger housing units into flats are prevalent in parts of Belfast and both have a detrimental impact on local communities. As well as resulting in environmental changes through the increased traffic generation and demand for on-street parking, and physical alterations to the built structure through extensions, dormer windows and rooflights, proliferations of these more intensive housing forms can also lead to changes in the age structure and socio-economic characteristics of an area.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing	Pillars • Living Here

LP6 – Shared housing provision preferred option

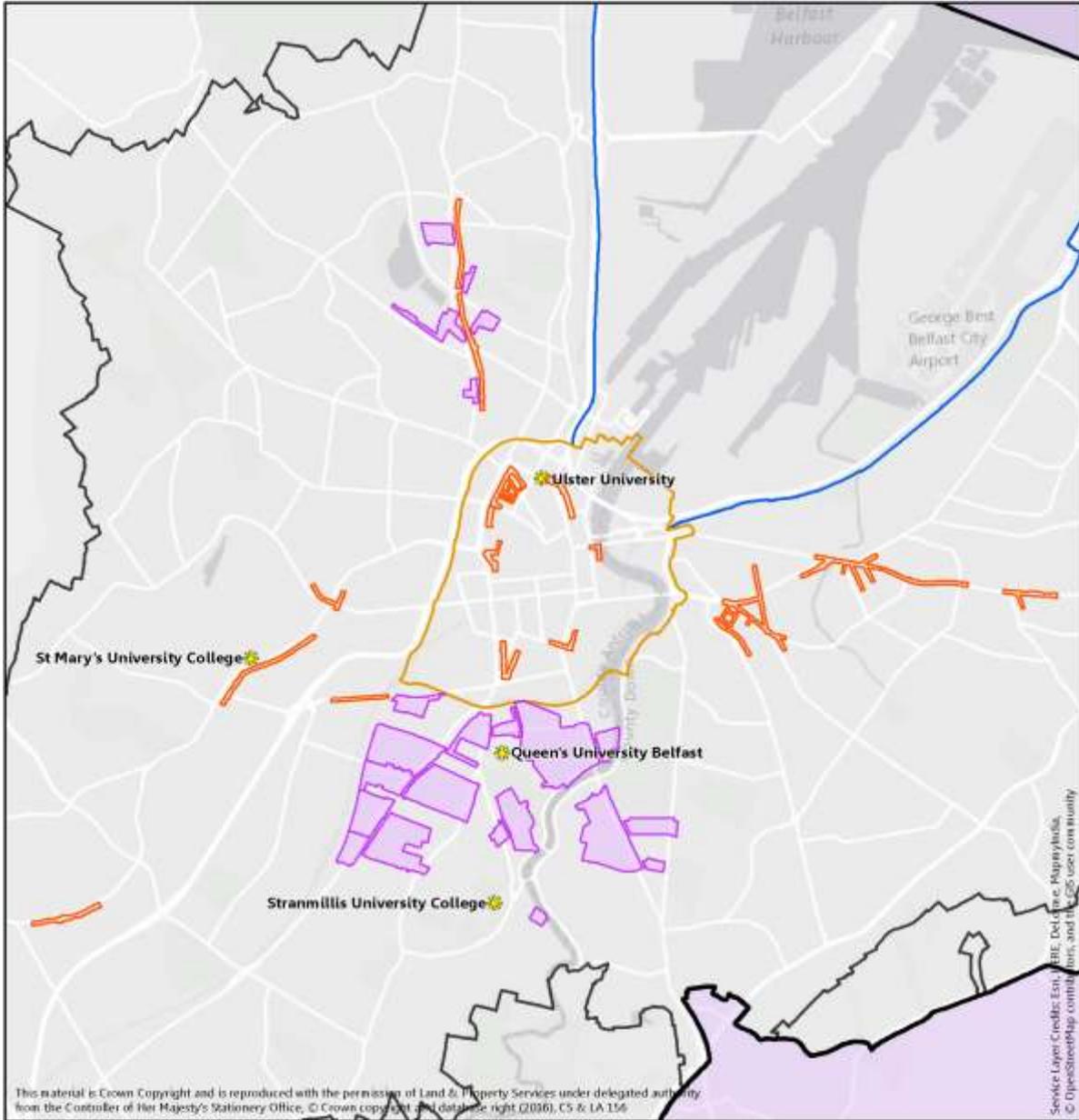
The Local Development Plan will seek to pro-actively manage the future supply of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), flats or apartments and Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) to ensure that mixed and balanced communities continue to be delivered and maintained. Specifically, this approach will include:

- General policy provisions to ensure that the established character of existing residential communities is protected;
- Limiting the number of HMOs and flat conversions allowed in specific areas of the city that are experiencing problems associated with the over-proliferation of these intensive forms of housing;
- Identify locations that are best able to support more intensive forms of housing; and
- Introduce a new criteria based policy for the assessment of PBMSA applications.



LP6 – Continued...

Supplementary Planning Guidance may be used to ensure that the approach is flexible and can be tailored throughout the plan period in response to market conditions and emerging trends.



Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

-  HMO Policy Area*
-  HMO Development Node*
-  University/University College
-  Council Area
-  Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit
-  Belfast City Centre
-  Belfast Harbour Area boundary

Source: *HMO Subject Plan for Belfast City Council Area (Adopted December 2008)



Approach

Achieving balanced communities and strengthening community cohesion is one of the major themes underpinning the RDS and forms one of the key SPPS strategic policies relating to housing in settlements. The SPPS notes the delivery of homes to meet the full range of housing needs and contributing to balanced communities is an essential component improving health and wellbeing and that supporting the creation of well-linked, mixed-tenure neighbourhoods is essential for the creation of shared space and community cohesion.

Should the LDP seek to manage the conversion of houses into flats, as well as HMOs, in specific areas of the city?

Whilst the original Development Guidance Note 4 from the 1990s sought to manage the demands of flat conversions within Belfast, the more recent HMO Subject Plan (2008) targets HMOs specifically. In fact, the evidence of a fall in HMO numbers within the existing

Where does the LDP need to actively manage concentrations of shared housing?

HMO Policy Areas and a corresponding increase in the number of flats in the same area suggests that both need to be actively managed in order to minimise the loss of larger housing stock and an intensification of residents that the local infrastructure is unable to support.

There are a number of aspects required to ensure the effectiveness of such a policy in the future, including a general need to protect existing residential character in areas where there are currently low numbers of HMOs or houses converted into flats, whilst also limiting further development in areas already with high concentrations. In addition, pro-active policies identifying appropriate locations that are able to accommodate such developments can also help to reduce the pressure in these core areas, recognising that there is a rising demand for shared forms of accommodation within the city.

6.1.7 Design quality in residential development

Housing development in Belfast should create places that are attractive, safe and meet the needs of the residents. Improving the quality of housing is an important aspect of the wider regeneration of Belfast and, in the case of many development sites in Belfast, good design will ensure new housing integrates sympathetically with the existing built form of the city.



Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 5	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City Development

LP7 – Quality design in residential developments preferred option

Our preferred option is to set out a single criteria based policy to ensure quality in all residential development. This will ensure that future housing developments respect the surrounding context and are appropriate to the character and topography of their specific site in terms of layout, scale, proportions, massing and appearance of buildings, structures and landscaped and hard surfaced areas. The Policy provisions should also ensure there is no unacceptable adverse effect on existing or proposed properties in terms of overlooking, loss of light, overshadowing, noise or other disturbance.

This overarching policy approach will complement the general approach to good design addressed under the design and heritage aspect of the Council's Preferred Options Paper, but will introduce criteria and related guidance specific to housing development, such as:

- Introduction of minimum housing space standards to ensure that dwellings meet the needs of residents;
- Adequate provision of public and private open space, including minimum garden size standards;
- Ensure that developments contribute to the sense of place, and maximise opportunities for the creation of local landmarks and the use of public art;
- Providing secure, safe and accessible places to promote community safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, helping to encourage community engagement and reduce social isolation;
- Adequate provision of necessary local neighbourhood facilities, to be provided by the developer as an integral part of larger developments;
- Designing residential schemes to support walking and cycling and providing convenient access to public transport; and
- Ensuring that the design and layout will not create conflict with adjacent land uses.

This policy approach will be applied to extensions and alterations to existing dwellings, and conversions of other buildings to residential use, as well as to all new build residential developments.

Approach

This preferred option seeks to build upon the approach to quality residential environments currently set out in PPS7 and associated Addendum on Residential Extensions and Alterations. It recognises that quality design comes from achieving a balanced response to all the factors influencing a scheme and requires housing layouts that respond to a local context by making the most of a site's characteristics and its landscape or townscape setting. Quality design should entail variety and contrast within developments, in layout, in boundaries and planting, and in adapting the buildings and spaces around them, to enhance local distinctiveness. It should encourage pedestrian and cycle movements, make provision for increased use of public transport, promotes biodiversity and encourages wildlife, integrates open space and, where necessary, accommodates local neighbourhood facilities, addressing the needs of residents, in particular those of children and the elderly.

Do you agree with the criteria based approach proposed in relation to quality design in residential developments?

Are there any factors that we have overlooked?

6.2 Sustainable neighbourhoods

A sustainable neighbourhood is one that is economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient, providing a better quality of life for the whole community. We want to achieve a city that is made up of sustainable, vibrant and distinctive neighbourhoods that are well designed, with accessible services, to the city's growing and diverse population.

The preferred options for delivering sustainable neighbourhoods:

- Promoting healthy communities;
- Social facilities; and
- Community cohesion.

6.2.1 Promoting healthy communities

The plan has an important role to play in facilitating social inclusion and creating healthy communities. Improving Health and Wellbeing is one of the five core planning principles of the planning system and the SPPS states that Councils may bring forward local policies that contribute to improving health and wellbeing and sets out a range of health and wellbeing policy areas that could be considered.



Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing	Pillars • Living Here

LP8 – Promotion of health and wellbeing preferred option

The LDP should include strategic policies to ensure that all new developments maximise opportunities to promote healthy and active lifestyles.

This will include supporting active travel options, improving accessibility to local service centres, adequate provision of public open space, leisure and recreation facilities and managing the provision of restaurants, cafes and hot food bars.

Approach

Improving Health and Wellbeing is one of the five core planning principles of the planning system. The SPPS states that Councils may bring forward local policies that contribute to improving health and wellbeing and sets out a range of health and wellbeing policy areas that could be considered. Belfast has specific local challenges around the health and wellbeing of its residents, evidenced as a persistent element of local inequalities over the last decade. Ensuring that ‘Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing’ is also one of the five outcomes of the Belfast Agenda, with emphasis placed on healthy lifestyles, physical and emotional wellbeing, reducing health inequalities and better services for those who suffer poor health.

How can the LDP best help to improve health, quality of life and wellbeing?

6.2.2 Community infrastructure

This section considers community facilities including cultural and youth centres, leisure and sports grounds, community allotments and places of worship, health facilities such as GP surgeries and educational facilities such as nurseries, schools and colleges. Facilities will inevitably change as local needs evolve. Demands have increased through growth of the population following the reform of public administration, from needs as the regional centre of specialised services and through expectations of better quality and more efficient facilities. Within education there have been significant restructuring of education facilities in terms of school amalgamation, closures and new facilities like the relocation of University of Ulster into the city centre.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place	Objectives 3, 5 11	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here

LP9 – Community infrastructure preferred option

The plan will seek to protect and provide development opportunities for community, health, leisure, nurseries and educational facilities based on local need in line with the projected population growth over the plan period to 2035.

Where appropriate, new developments should be required to contribute towards any new community infrastructure requirements arising as a result of development and should ensure good accessibility to existing services and facilities intended to serve future residents.

Approach

The RDS recognises Belfast as the regional capital for specialised services and cultural amenities serving a trans-boundary population. The existing plan BMAP 2015 protected land for health, community and cultural facilities and delivery of services which safeguards against unnecessary loss of valued neighbourhood services. It is also essential that any new community infrastructure requirements arising from proposed developments are adequately addressed as part of the planning process. Where appropriate, Section 76 Planning Agreements can be used to ensure provision of new facilities and services that are needed to serve future residents.

Should the council seek financial contributions from developers towards the provision of community infrastructure?

6.2.3 Community cohesion

The form of the city has been influenced by the spatial legacy of conflict. The impact on the physical layout of the city is most visible in the disconnection of inner-city neighbourhoods from the city centre, and through the legacy of physical separations or peacewalls, which serve to reinforce patterns of division. Planning and regeneration processes offer the potential to reconnect the city and encourage the development of a shared urban environment to which everyone has access.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 5	Outcomes • Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here



LP10 – Community cohesion preferred option

The LDP will include an over-arching strategic policy to encourage all new development to promote community cohesion and make a positive contribution to community relations. This approach could be to address, through supplementary guidance, site specific masterplans or development briefs that ensure proposals are considered in their broader context.

The approach will facilitate development that contributes to a more coherent urban form by promoting connected developments that facilitate accessibility for all communities and policy will encourage permeable mixed-use, mixed-tenure design and layouts to support shared neighbourhoods and facilities.

Approach

The RDS and SPPS provide clear direction concerning community cohesion and the creation and enhancement of shared space. The SPPS directs that planning authorities should utilise development planning and development management powers alongside regeneration initiatives to contribute to the creation of an environment that is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities, has a higher standard of connectivity and supports the shared use of public realm. Equality legislation also places a responsibility on the Council to promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

There are a range of measures across a number of LDP policy areas that can contribute to a more coherent urban form and improved community relations. The establishment of mixed-use developments, mixed-tenure housing schemes, strong neighbourhood centres, temporary uses in interface locations, active street frontages, buildings that provide public services, public paths and cycleways, and passive spaces, has potential to enhance community cohesion and to contribute to an opening up the city to inner-city neighbourhoods.

Of particular importance is the Executive's goal for the removal of all interface barriers by 2023 and the need for the plan to consider the potential for utilisation of all land within the city. The SPPS states that to achieve this target, planning initiatives concerning peace-lines and contested spaces should be considered as part of a more comprehensive regeneration of wider neighbourhood environments. Given that the specific issues associated with each

Is there anything else the LDP could do to better promote community cohesion?

interface or barrier are likely to vary from location to location, it is considered appropriate to address such matters through supplementary guidance and site-specific masterplans or development briefs to ensure a flexible approach across the city.

6.3 Design and heritage

Good quality design that takes account of the history and unique features of a place is fundamental to good planning. There is evidence to suggest that good quality, well-designed places add value to people's lives by promoting opportunities for walking, cycling and social interaction. It is important that the policy framework continues to require good design in all applications to ensure that the quality of the built environment in the city is improved where possible.

The SPPS seeks to ensure that environmental quality in urban areas is improved and maintained, particularly with adequate provision of green infrastructure, with greater significance being given to the design and management of the public realm. It acknowledges that the region has a rich and diverse built heritage that contributes to our sense of place and history, represents a key tourism and recreational asset and notes that sustainable management of the built heritage makes a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society.

The options for Design and Heritage set out in this paper are considered under the following headings:

- Urban design;
- Arterial routes and gateways;
- Spatial connectivity;
- Tall buildings;
- Heritage;
- Local distinctiveness; and
- Energy efficient design.

6.3.1 Urban design

The SPPS advises that good design can change lives, communities and neighbourhoods, bring communities together and attract business investment. It can further sustainable development and encourage healthier living; promote accessibility and inclusivity; and contribute to how safe places are and feel. Local Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. The policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 5	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City Development



LP11 – Urban design preferred option

Applications will be required to demonstrate how their design supports the creation of an attractive environment in Belfast. Development proposals will need to demonstrate they have regard to:

- The relationship between the development and the surrounding context in terms of:
 - Layout;
 - Scale;
 - Enclosure;
 - Proportion;
 - Massing;
 - Form (appearance of facades and roofscape);
 - Detailing;
 - Materials;
 - Density;
 - Uses;
 - Setting and relationship to Heritage Assets;
 - Local Character;
 - Distinctiveness; and
 - Adaptability in relation to changing social and economic conditions
- Security and surveillance in order to minimise the risk of crime; and
- The creation of public spaces which provide places for community interaction through: Inclusive access; Active frontage; High quality public realm; Appropriate soft and hard landscaping; Micro-climate; and, Minimising the potential for anti-social behaviour.

Approach

The preferred option relates to broad urban design criteria that will be taken into account in assessing any application for new development. These include response to local character, continuity and enclosure, quality public realm and interaction with street frontage, creation of permeable environments promoting ease of movement, creation of legible urban environments with a strong urban image, easy to read, understand and orientate through and the ability of development to adapt to socio-economic change. The general

Do you agree with the Council's urban design preferred option?

Are there any additional criteria that we should consider?

design criteria set out above will be supplemented by more specific and area focused details later in formal supplementary planning guidance documents.

This policy could be supported by a number of supplementary planning documents, which will provide further advice and guidance on aspects of this policy as necessary, addressing areas such as landscape, materials, public art and minimising the risk of crime.

6.3.2 Arterial routes and gateways

Urban hierarchies are important in the creation of a strong urban image with clear recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to assist orientation and way finding. Gateway corridors into the city centre help to promote a strong city image and sense of arrival. Arterial routes that lead to these play an important role in connecting the city centre with its neighbouring areas and the wider region. They also serve an important role in influencing impressions of the city as people travel to Belfast to work, shop and be entertained. Arterial routes are important as centres for local residents, visitors and investors and help promote sustainable living environments. They are often neighbourhood centres, which provide local shops, employment and services for local communities.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here

LP12 – Arterial routes and gateways design preferred option

Provide policy which supports quality design vitality and function of arterial routes and key city centre gateways, supplemented by Supplementary Planning Guidance to guide development proposals for the arterial routes of the city and key gateway or arrival corridors.

Approach

Given the importance of promoting the ‘High Street’ character of these local centres and the sense of arrival at key gateway corridors, it is considered appropriate for such a policy

Do you agree that design quality should be promoted on arterial routes, key gateways and arrival corridors to the city centre?

to be included. Given the strategic importance these places have to the city, failure to address them through the plan would fail to recognise their contribution to the strategic objective of the plan particularly in relation to place making and supporting neighbourhoods. This



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approach would seek to promote key routes with a strong urban image appropriate to reading of these places as local centres where people can live, work, shop and avail of entertainment opportunities in a sustainable manner. Supplementary Planning Guidance could be produced to guide development within areas that have experienced fragmentation of the urban form.

6.3.3 Spatial connectivity

It is recognised that there is poor connectivity between parts of the city, which can lead to physical separation of areas, difficulty of access and movement, and visual and psychological barriers. Social exclusion and development of segregated neighbourhoods may also result compounding socio economic fragmentation in parts of the city. Planning can be an instrument in alleviating some of the factors that have lead to physical fragmentation of the city. Defensive architecture has often meant that development has been set back behind walls or other barriers, or has long blank frontages – which create dead frontage unattractive to pedestrian movement. Active street frontages promote vitality and surveillance of spaces making people feel safer.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here

LP13 – Promoting greater spatial connectivity preferred option

The LDP will include an over-arching strategic policy to ensure that all new developments promote greater connectivity between places.

This approach will support the identification of areas of the city that suffer from poor connections between different places and neighbourhoods to facilitate greater connectivity and integration.

Supplementary Planning Guidance for key gateway corridors would be produced in order to promote a more cohesive approach that recognises the need to establish a sense of arrival into the city centre and to address its distinctive nature.

Approach

Given the scale of potential development that could come forward for areas where regeneration potential exists, masterplans or supplementary guidance could be developed to identify development sites and guide development within them. This approach will provide strategic vision for these areas giving certainty for developers and the wider community. These would include provision for the public realm demonstrating how the areas can be made friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists. It is considered that the approach

set out above will provide certainty and assist the development industry in site assembly through the production of a vision articulating how new blocks and plots will be developed around existing and proposed transport infrastructure. It is also considered that the approach advocated will assist investment decision making by increasing certainty.

Do you agree with our proposed approach to promoting greater spatial connectivity?

6.3.4 Tall buildings

Belfast has a number of clusters of taller buildings including hospitals, educational buildings, office blocks and hotels. Whilst performing crucial roles for the operational needs of the city, it is important to consider the visual impact that taller buildings can have on the key historic vistas and skylines – for example on views of other environmental assets such as the Belfast Hills or the setting of listed buildings. It is important to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on historic and significant environments. Therefore, existing key views and settings of certain buildings and landmarks need to be protected.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 4, 5, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City Development

LP14 – Tall buildings preferred option

Include a policy on taller buildings. This will allow the plan to adopt an approach which identifies sites where taller buildings may be acceptable in certain locations, if they:

- Contribute to a cluster or an interesting skyline when grouped together;
- Support locations of civic or visual importance (retail centres or major transport interchanges);
- Provide focus and catalyst to regeneration areas;
- Form appropriate landmark gateway buildings at arrival points into the city centre;
- Provide a focus for long distance views;
- Positively contribute to the legibility of the city and long distance orientation; and



LP14 – Continued...

- Provide quality architectural assets for the city.

This would be integrated with broader design policy objectives for the creation of a more coherent urban form, contributing to public spaces and appropriate enclosure patterns for key streets, whilst considering potential impact on heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas and key city views, including views into and out of city centre. Taller buildings will not therefore be appropriate in all areas of the city.

Do you support our proposal to include policies to manage the location of tall buildings?

Are there any additional criteria that we should consider?

Approach

An alternative approach would have been to remove urban design policy and assess applications on a site-specific approach, through the production by applicants of Design Statements, setting out the rationale and justification for proposed scale, mass and form of proposals. Similarly, removing specific guidelines and replacing them with a general urban design policy, setting out the criteria that the Council will take into account when assessing development proposals. The Council is of the opinion however that these approaches would give less certainty than the preferred option for investors thus supporting the strategic aim of a vibrant economy.

6.3.5 Archaeology and built heritage

The RDS sets out regional guidance to “conserve, protect and where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment.” It recognises that Northern Ireland has a rich and diverse archaeological and built heritage, which contributes to our sense of place and history. It also regards built heritage as a key marketing, tourism and recreational asset that, if managed in a sustainable way, can make a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society. The aim of the SPPS in relation to Archaeology and Built Heritage is to manage change in positive ways so as to safeguard that which society regards as significant whilst facilitating development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets.

There are 13 Conservation Areas, 57 Areas of Townscape Character, 1300 Listed Buildings, 16 Scheduled Monuments and 19 registered Historic Parks and Gardens, one Area of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) and one potential ASAI.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City Development

LP15 – Archaeology and built heritage preferred option

The plan will identify the heritage assets of the city and include additional policy criteria to address specific issues and demand pressures affecting the heritage assets of the plan area as a supplement to the SPPS.

The policy will seek to be responsive to the specific issues which Belfast's heritage assets face now and are likely to face over the lifetime of the plan.

Where evidence supports it, Article 4 Directions that remove permitted development rights over specific developments that impact negatively upon heritage assets, will be introduced to preserve the character and appearance of an area by protecting elements of significance to individual properties and the architectural and historic interest of the area.

Areas of Townscape Character will be reviewed and monitored including appropriateness of current boundaries.

Approach

While the SPPS sets out high level principles to be applied when considering applications for development, by its very nature it cannot provide the necessary local dimension reflecting local needs and development pressures. Additional policy, appropriate to the plan area, will add value for developers and decision makers by creating greater certainty for investors, developers and individual property owners. Detailed area specific guidance,

Do you agree with our approach towards protecting heritage assets?

What specific issues do Belfast's heritage assets face, or are likely to face, over the lifetime of the LDP?



Shaping a liveable place

based on a thorough character appraisal of specific areas, should be delivered through Supplementary Planning Guidance while generic policy would be delivered within the LDP. The Council will continue to support the enhancement of heritage assets, through

Conservation Area Character Appraisals – setting out a detailed assessment of their character – and the use of additional Article 4 directions where necessary.

Do you support the withdrawal of permitted development rights over specific developments to preserve the character and appearance of an area?

6.3.6 Local distinctiveness

Local distinctiveness is important in promoting an individual sense of place, local identity and a place set apart from others in terms of character and uniqueness. The positive features of a place and its people contribute to its special character and sense of identity. Designing for local distinctiveness involves the creative adaptation of latest building technologies with local building traditions and forms. Character and innovation are not incompatible. This will involve responding to context such as topography, landscaping, existing grain, local building forms and materials, as well as the scale, massing and height of existing buildings.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 3, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here • City Development

LP16 – Local distinctiveness preferred option

A policy on local distinctiveness will be introduced through the plan. This would allow the LDP to set out the unique and distinctive features of the city. This would provide guidance for applicants, decision makers and any future neighbourhood plans. It would be based on analysis of the heritage evidence base.

Approach

The plan would continue its current approach of assessing proposals on design, based on assessments of broad contextual design cues such as scale, form and massing. The SPPS sets out detailed considerations that should be taken into account when taking decisions on a case-by-case basis. Whilst this is undoubtedly important in terms of good planning practice, there are many locally distinct characteristics of the city that could be compromised without stronger emphasis on the positive benefits to the appearance of the city, which could be gained from their promotion through the Local Plan. Policy may seek

Do you think that locally distinctive features of the city, that help reinforce a sense of place, should be promoted and safeguarded?

to provide guidance to proposed developers over issues such as height, massing, scale, proportion and materials of buildings. It is considered that these will assist in reinforcing a sense of place without restricting architectural innovation, and

can contribute and add to richness and diversity of the textural layering of the city.

6.3.7 Energy efficient design

Efficient use of natural resources is a key component of sustainable development. The SPPS emphasises the need to improve energy efficiency in buildings to reduce our carbon footprint and that Plans should:

- Require the siting, design and layout of all new development to minimise resource and energy requirements that would help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Consider the energy and heat requirements of new developments when designating land for new residential, commercial and industrial development and making use of opportunities for energy and power sharing, district heating, or for decentralised or low carbon sources of heat and power wherever possible; and
- Promote the use of energy efficient, micro-generating renewable energy systems.

The planning system can contribute to this objective by encouraging low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings, such as passive solar design, high levels of thermal mass, maximising natural ventilation, passive cooling using planting for shade, roof overhangs to provide shade for high-sun angles and smart glazing materials.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liveable Place • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	3, 6 13,15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Here • City Development

LP17 – Energy efficient design preferred option

The policy will promote an approach which facilitates high standards of energy efficiency in design requiring a minimum BREEAM rating for non-residential buildings unless it is demonstrated not to be viable.

Approach

It is highly desirable to make new buildings as energy efficient as possible to minimise energy use and encourage zero carbon emissions, while ensuring that the character of



Shaping a liveable place

buildings of architectural or historic interest is maintained.

The LDP will aim to help homeowners implement energy efficiency and retrofitting measures to reduce energy usage. This is critical for householders who are experiencing fuel poverty. Cost-effective energy efficiency improvements should be incorporated when works to extend existing homes are undertaken. Changes to Building Regulations will mean that new homes will have to become more energy efficient. We can specify a BREEAM rating for non-residential development, but we have to

be mindful that it does not have an undue impact on development viability in the city. The preferred option promotes energy efficient design and in particular, passive solar design. Further guidance could be given on how the principles of passive solar design should apply in Belfast. This could be published as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Do you think that minimum standards should be put in place in relation to energy efficiencies in all new non-residential buildings?

Should energy efficient design requirements also apply to new residential buildings?

6.4 Review of relevant PPSs

6.4.1 Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, archaeology and the built heritage

Published in 1999, PPS6 sets out regional planning policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and features of the built heritage and advises on the treatment of these issues in development plans. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and environmental stewardship and outlines the main criteria that will be employed in assessing proposals that affect the archaeological or built heritage. In March 2011, a revised Annex C to the original PPS6 was also published containing updated guidance in relation to the 'Criteria for Listing'.

On the whole, the main principles contained within this PPS have been carried forward into the SPPS and there has been little difficulty in relation to the application of these policies in practice. However, there remains merit in including operational policy at a local level within the new LDP, although in a number of cases this could be retained with minor changes to better reflect SPPS requirements.

For example, in relation to archaeological preservation, the SPPS places more emphasis on need for development outweighing the value of remains, rather than the level of

importance of those remains previously referred to in PPS6. Changes will need to align closer with the text now contained within the SPPS to avoid potential for misinterpretation or changes in emphasis from the regional policy. Similarly, changes to the requirements for consent for partial demolitions in Conservations Areas will necessitate an update to existing policies.

Two of the policies are no longer required, including Policy BH5 relating to World Heritage Sites, of which there are none within Belfast's District, and BH6 relating to the protection of parks, gardens and demesnes of special historical interest which are now addressed more fully within the SPPS. There may also be a need for additional local policies affecting heritage assets within the Council area to supplement and interpret the policy in the SPPS, such as that relating to design or demolition within Conservation Areas or control of advertisements (see also below).

In August 2005, an addendum to PPS 6 was also published to provide additional planning policies relating specifically to Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs), for demolition of buildings, new development and the control of advertisements. It is proposed that the policies within this Addendum should be retained within the new LDP, supplemented by local policies interpreting their implementation at a local level.

6.4.2 Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality residential environments

PPS7 sets out a series of planning policies for achieving quality in new residential development and advises on the treatment of this issue in development plans. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and the Quality Initiative – a programme launched in the late-90s to raise awareness of the importance of good design and quality in the built environment.

Since its adoption in 2001, achieving good design has gained a much greater profile through the planning system, with the publication of 'Living Places' in 2014 and the inclusion of "supporting good design and positive place making" as one of the core planning principles embedded throughout the SPPS. The original PPS has also seen a number of addendums to help address specific aspects of quality in residential development in relation to 'Residential Extensions and Alterations' (March 2008) and 'Safeguarding the Character of Residential Areas' (August 2010).

Our review found that these existing PPS7 policies can be largely retained within the LDP, with many of the objectives and key principles carried through into the SPPS at a strategic level. Although some of the policies may require minor amendments to better reflect the updated wording of the SPPS. It should be noted that Annex A of the Addendum on Residential Extensions and Alterations and Annexes A and E of the Addendum on Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas are all also regularly relied



Shaping a liveable place

upon as operational guidance when considering individual planning applications. They therefore also need to be retained in some form through the LDP, or subsequent SPG to support the application of these policies as retained in the LDP.

6.4.3 Planning Policy Statement 12: Housing in settlements

PPS12 was published in July 2005 to assist in the implementation of the original RDS. It flowed directly from the vision, spatial strategy and strategic planning guidelines contained in the RDS and was one of the key mechanisms used by Government for the implementation of the RDS. It sought to guide the future pattern of housing by managing future housing growth and distribution, supporting urban renaissance and achieving balanced communities and applies to all residential development proposals within cities, towns, villages and small settlements in Northern Ireland. Although it replaced a number of housing policies contained within the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland, it does not apply to dwellings in the countryside, which are instead addressed in PPS21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside.

The overarching aims of the policy contained within the four Planning Control Principles – Increasing Housing Density without Town Cramming, Good Design, Sustainable Forms of Development and Balanced Communities – have largely been continued within the SPPS. However, subtle changes within the SPPS such as references to ‘affordable’ rather than ‘social’ housing and the sequential approach to prioritise the reuse of existing buildings and previously developed land, will necessitate an update to some of the related policies at a local level.

Within the Belfast context, consideration will be given to the option of setting specific local targets in relation to housing mix (in terms of type, size and tenure) or ‘brownfield’ land development, which may require that the PPS12 policies are replaced within the new LDP. Policy HS3 of PPS12 was superseded by an amendment on Travellers Accommodation in January 2013, but is now adequately addressed within the SPPS and is therefore no longer required in its current form.

6.4.4 Planning Policy Statement 17: Control of outdoor advertisements

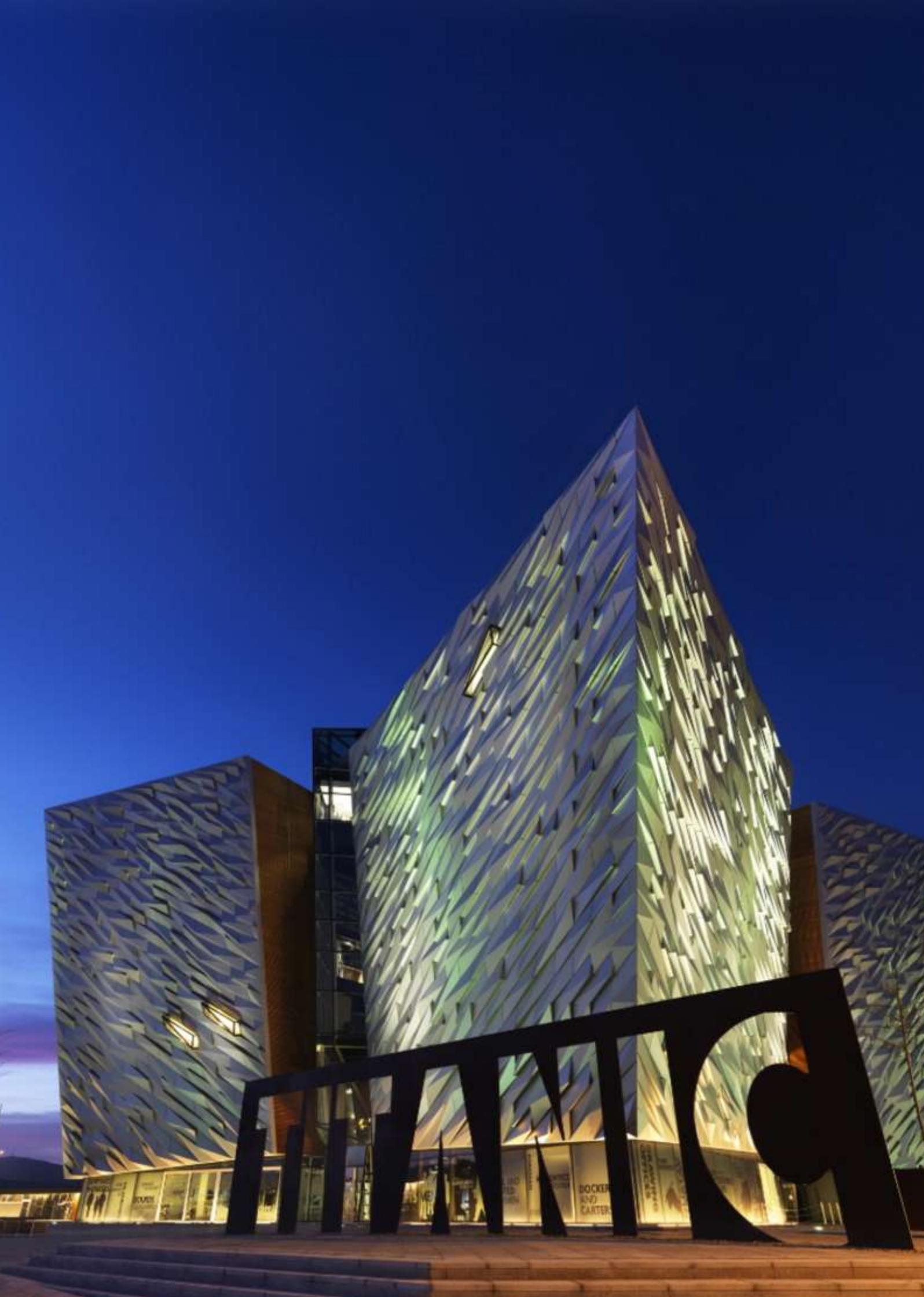
PPS17 sets out regional planning policy and guidance relating to the display of outdoor advertisements. It complements the Government’s commitment to securing a competitive economy whilst affording appropriate protection to amenity and public safety including road safety.

The two over-arching objectives from this PPS – to ensure that outdoor advertisements respect amenity and do not prejudice public safety, including road safety; and to help everyone involved in the display of outdoor advertisements to contribute positively to the appearance of a well-cared for and attractive environment – have been carried forward into

the SPPS. Whilst Policy AD1 is therefore in compliance with the updated policy framework it is felt that the overarching principles are adequately addressed in regional policy and that the detailed guidance contained within the policy and associated Annex A would be more appropriately addressed in the local context within subsequent Supplementary Planning Guidance.

6.4.5 Planning Policy Statement 23: Enabling development

PPS23 sets out planning policy for assessing proposals for Enabling Development in support of the re-use, restoration or refurbishment of heritage assets such as historic buildings, scheduled monuments, industrial heritage and historic parks, gardens and demesnes. It is proposed that this Policy is retained in its current form within the new LDP.





Creating a vibrant economy

A strengthened Belfast as the regional economic driver



The Regional Development Strategy seeks to strengthen the role of Belfast city centre as the primary retail location in Northern Ireland

Belfast has been recognised as Europe's most business friendly city of its size for two years running



Visitors contribute £278m to our economy and a growing tourism sector supports **over 1.3m visits** **17,000 jobs**



Our city centre is the prime location for large scale retail with a catchment of over **600,000 residents**



Creating a vibrant economy

Belfast is an important economic gateway to Northern Ireland with a thriving port, airport and rail and road infrastructure. It provides a competitive near shore proposition to Europe, with the advantage of operating in the same time zone, regulatory environment and is ideally situated between mainland Europe and the U.S. The city has a strong engineering heritage with an international reputation with companies developing innovative components for the aerospace, automotive, technology and energy sectors.

The city, like many other former industrialised regions, has undergone economic restructuring, with a shift from manufacturing employment towards services and public sector employment. The city needs to restructure the economy by diversifying its economic base, reducing its dependence on the public sector and increasing the size and efficiency of its private sector. Outside of London, Northern Ireland is the leading UK region for attracting inward investment most of which are located in Belfast. However, it is essential that the whole region continues to benefit from the impetus provided by a competitive and successful city that can attract talent and investment, generate regional employment and opportunities and drive sustained growth in key sectors.

7.1 Economic growth

Economic growth in the city will have spatial implications and the planning process is a key enabler for economic growth. The RDS and the SPPS advise that the LDP should positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth. The LDP will aim to provide a framework that supports investment and development to achieve a successful and sustainable economy. It will take key decisions to create the conditions required to support regeneration opportunities for attracting high quality investment and employment. It will build on the objectives and priorities set out in the Belfast Agenda and the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS).

The options for economic growth and employment set out in this chapter are considered under the following headings:

- Employment land requirements;
- Strategic employment locations;
- Review of existing employment locations; and
- Supporting higher education.

7.1.1 Employment land requirements

Belfast City Council has an ambitious growth strategy set out in the Belfast Agenda, which mirrors the aspirations of regional planning policy. The RDS aims is to “Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver”, recognising that “successful regions have strong and vibrant cities at their core” and that “Belfast drives much of the economic growth and shares its wealth across the region”.

To determine development and land needs it is usual to assess needs for manufacturing, logistics and office development (so-called B-Class uses as defined in the Planning (Use Classes) Order (NI) 2015) as distinct from those jobs linked to services, for example, retail, tourism and leisure. Both types need to be catered for but bring different development and location needs. Econometric projections, which forecast how many jobs might be created in the city, build on wider trends nationally and regionally and suggest a more negative view for 'B class' uses, particularly for manufacturing, than what has actually been occurring within the city over recent years.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a Liveable Place • Green and Active Place 	7,8,9,10 1,2 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development • Growing the Economy • Working and learning

VE1 - Employment land supply preferred option

The LDP will seek to identify and maintain a flexible and varied supply of business accommodation and employment land that is of the right type and in the right locations. This should be based on the ambitious level of economic growth – projecting the creation of c. 46,000 additional jobs over the plan period – to help Belfast compete with other cities across the UK.

Sufficient land will be identified to ensure between 486,400-608,000 sq m of floorspace can be supplied for B-Class employment uses to 2035, or 25,600-32,000 sq m on average per year. However, the approach to land supply will be flexible, based on the qualitative nature of supply, including its distribution across different growth sectors of the economy and different markets areas of the city.

Approach

The SPPS states that a fundamental role of the LDP is to ensure there is an ample supply of suitable employment land available to meet economic development needs within the plan area.

Under our preferred option, with no allowance made for existing capacity, Belfast will require a total of 608,000 sq m of employment space for B Use Classes between 2016-2035. The largest requirement will be in B1A use class - General Offices. This use will require an estimated one third of the total requirement. Small business

Do you consider the preferred option for employment growth to be a realistic ambition for Belfast?

space (B Mixed Class) and Storage and Distribution (B8 Class) are also estimated to require over 100,000 sq m each. Of course, not all future demand will require new buildings, as many businesses will expand within their current footprint and vacant property can also be brought back into use if it is fit for purpose. A sensitivity analysis has therefore also been applied giving us range of employment space demand between 486,400-608,000 sq m or 25,600-32,000 sq m on average per year.

Demand for B Use Class employment space, 2016-2035, sensitivity analysis

		No Sensitivity Applied		Capacity of 10%		Capacity of 20%	
		Base Scenario Sq M	Upper Scenario Sq M	Base Scenario Sq M	Upper Scenario Sq M	Base Scenario Sq M	Upper Scenario Sq M
B1A	General Offices	283,643	510,286	255,279	459,257	226,914	408,229
B1B	R&D Space	36,643	81,429	32,979	73,286	29,314	65,143
B1C	Light Industrial	33,929	89,571	30,536	80,614	27,143	71,657
B2	Industrial & Manufacturing	6,786	25,786	6,107	23,207	5,429	20,629
B8	Storage & Distribution	103,143	157,429	92,829	141,686	82,514	125,943
B Mixed Class	Small Business Workspace	143,857	253,786	129,471	228,407	115,086	203,029
Total		608,000	1,118,286	547,200	1,006,457	486,400	894,629

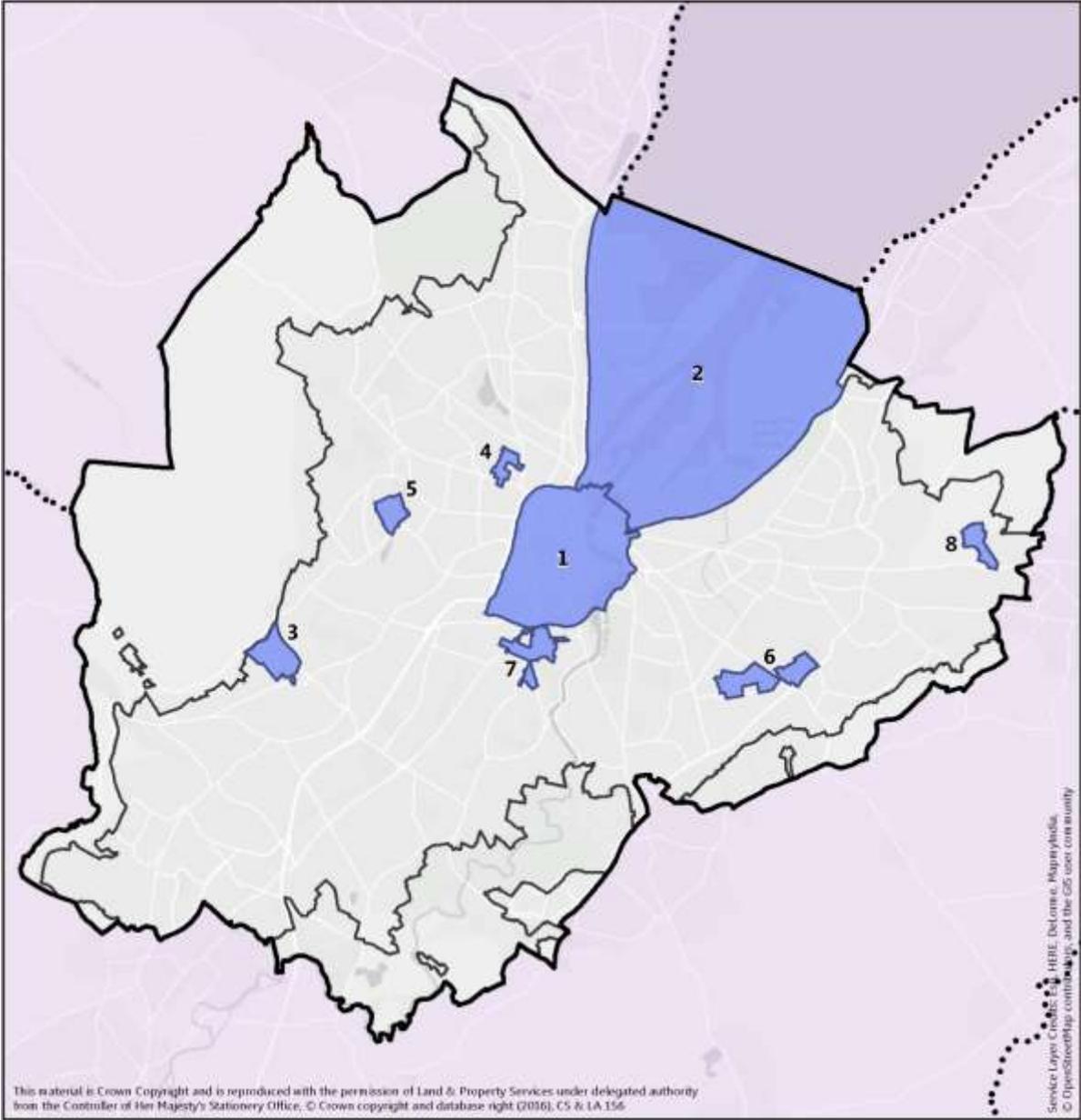
The exact level of land to be allocated within the LDP to ensure this supply will therefore be informed by more detailed information relating to current businesses, land availability and vacancy, but will ensure flexibility in approach to ensure sufficient land to accommodate for needs within different geographical and market areas within the city.

7.1.2 Strategic employment locations

Employment land and opportunities are located within various areas within the city. The different character of these areas has a significant influence on how they are able to contribute to economic ambitions. Areas present distinct property markets with different rental capital values achieved, influencing the availability of development opportunities. Locational benefits also influence where different operators or industries choose to locate. Supply requirements have to be considered within the wider operation of the functional economic area and it is important to recognise that different market areas overlap with adjoining Local Authority areas.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a Liveable Place 	7 1,2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here

VE2 - Strategic employment locations preferred option
Our Preferred Option is to review strategic employment sites as set out in BMAP and identify new smaller opportunity sites to ensure projected employment needs are accommodated across the plan period.



Key Employment Locations

Key Employment Location

Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit

- 1** Belfast City Centre
- 2** The Harbour Estate and Port, including Titanic Quarter
- 3** Land at Monagh Bypass/Upper Springfield Road
- 4** Land at Crumlin Road, including the former Girdwood Barracks

- 5** Land at Springfield Road (Former Mackies site)
- 6** Castlereagh Industrial Estate
- 7** Queen's Office Area
- 8** Stormont Office Node



Approach

The LDP is required to zone sufficient land for economic development over the plan period. The Preferred Option is in line with the key objective of RDS and SPPS to ensure the Plan will provide an ample supply of suitable land to meet future economic development needs within the plan area. Targeting future employment growth in a few, larger strategic locations will ensure that these regional objectives are met.

Where do you think employment growth should be focussed in the city?

Is our proposed option to facilitate employment opportunities the best approach to safeguard local jobs?

In addition, the RDS and the SPPS state that the local plan should identify previously developed land within settlements for potential economic development use. This will serve to return vacant or underused land to productive use and to create environments that are more

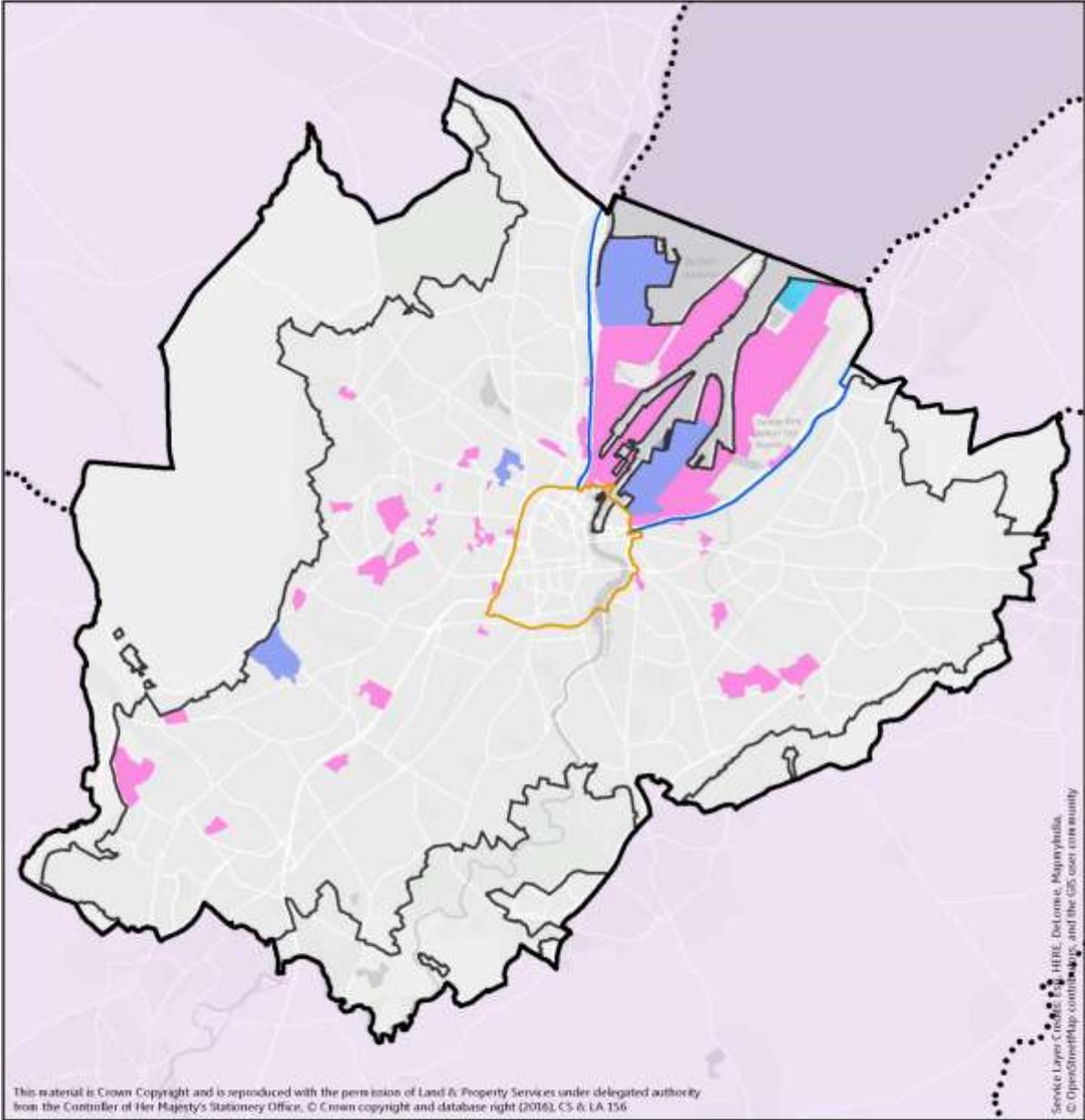
attractive. It will also promote sustainable development through reducing the need for green field development and may assist with economic regeneration and physical renewal, helping to stimulate enterprise in disadvantaged areas. Not all previously developed sites may be available or feasible in the short term – for example, some previously developed sites may be subject to land contamination.

7.1.3 Protection of existing employment locations

The city needs to provide sufficient employment land to meet projected requirements over the plan period. However, the SPPS states that planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should therefore be regularly reviewed and where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a Liveable Place • A Smart Connected and Resilient City • A Green and Active Place 	7, 8 1,2 12 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development • Working and Learning

Should existing employment locations be protected against other competing uses?



Existing Employment Designations

- Land zoned as Existing Employment
- Land zoned for Mixed Use
- Land zoned for Port Operations and Port-related Uses
- Council Area
- Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit
- Belfast City Centre
- Belfast Harbour Area & Major Employment Location

Source: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Adopted September 2014)



VE3 - Existing employment land preferred option

Our Preferred Option will protect areas of existing employment against other competing uses to facilitate opportunities for economic regeneration and employment growth. Where sites become available due to closure or relocation, there will be a presumption in favour of retaining the employment focus, which may include a range of B use class and sui generis uses that help drive future employment growth.

However, a flexible approach is required to allow for alternative uses on employment land where such sites are not capable of accommodating similar employment uses, to ensure on-going beneficial use of land and to maximise potential. The release of sites will depend on an adequate supply of employment land being retained and any alternative uses remaining compatible with neighbouring existing employment use.

Approach

Land zoned for economic use in the LDP should be protected as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment, thereby contributing to the aims of the Programme for Government (PfG). Protection of such zonings should ensure that a variety of suitable sites exists across Belfast to facilitate future economic growth and help maintain a diverse broad based economy to ensure all sectors of employment are provided for. It is recognised that employment uses may move beyond the traditional B use class and flexibility is required to ensure economic opportunities are maximised.

The preferred option allows for appropriate consideration to be given to the continued need for designated employment land and does not seek simply to retain land through over allocation. The LDP should allow alternative uses where there is evidence that the site has been marketed for a reasonable period of time and there has been no take-up for employment use or redevelopment, together with evidence of viability. By allowing a range of acceptable employment-related uses within the existing employment areas, the risks of losing the ability to properly assess the future contribution of sites to economic growth are diminished.

7.1.4 Supporting higher education

There are five further and higher education institutions in Belfast, including:

- Belfast Metropolitan College
- Queen's University of Belfast
- St Mary's University College
- Stranmillis University College
- Ulster University

Do you agree that we should be generally supportive of higher education institutions?

Universities are both key employers in the city and support research and development that supports wider economic growth. They are enterprises in themselves, generating economic activity, creating jobs and output in other industries and contributing to GDP. The re-location of Ulster University to the north of the city centre and growth in the international student market all present significant opportunities for the city.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a Liveable Place 	7, 8, 10 1, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city • Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development • Working and Learning

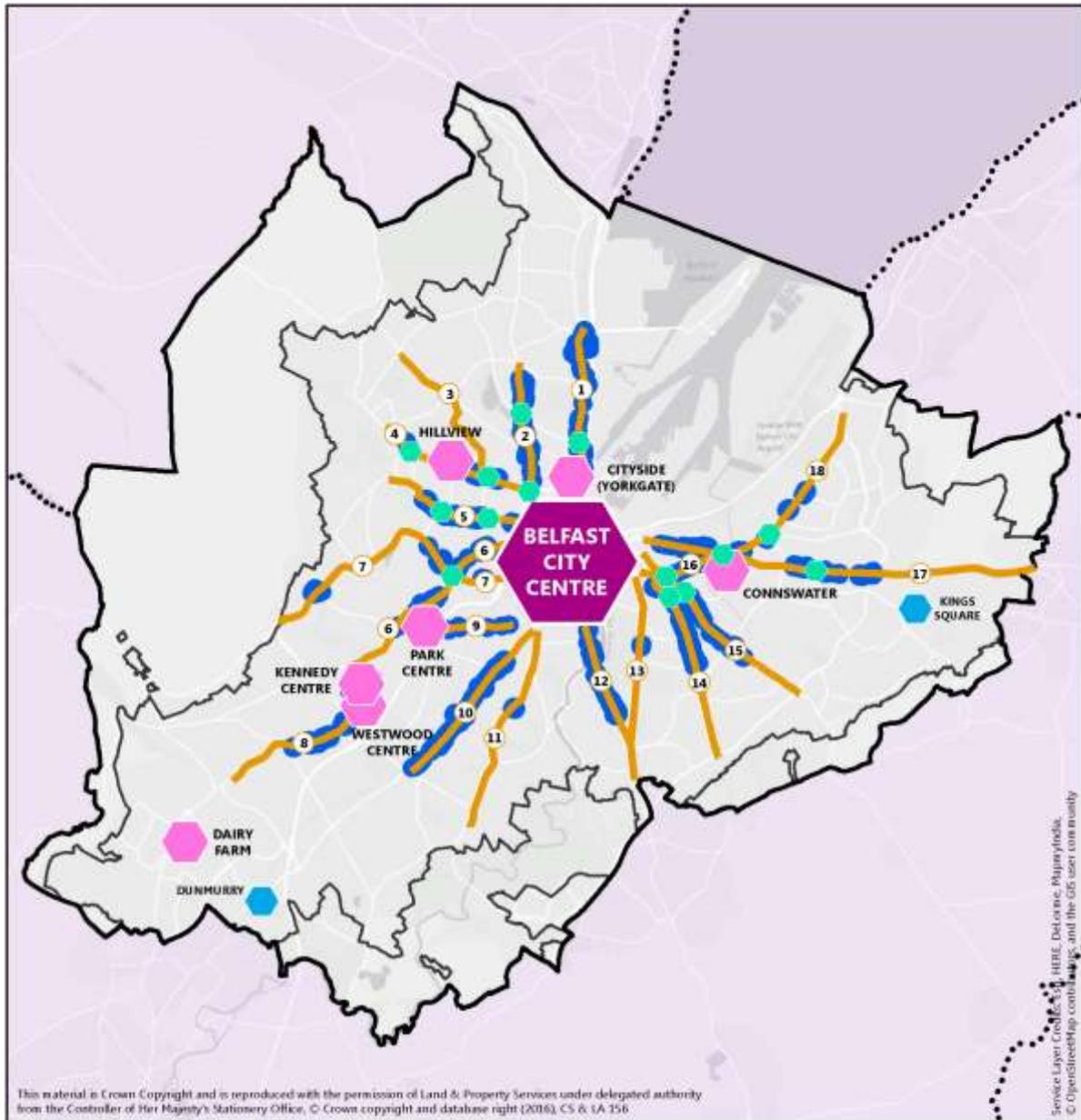
VE4 - Supporting development needs of higher education institutions preferred option

Our Preferred Option will provide a policy framework that is generally supportive of a range of development needs associated with Belfast’s five Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This will maintain the city’s reputation as a leader in higher education and research, and support their important role as a key economic driver and anchor institutions.

Approach

The plan will aim to support the city’s aspirations of a ‘learning city’ by creating an environment that allows the city’s educational institutions to reach their full potential. This recognises not only the important role these key institutions play in education, delivering the highly skilled workforce necessary to attract foreign direct investment and support the growth of the economy. It is vital that these institutions are able to develop to ensure that Belfast remains a world leader in higher education and continues to develop as a centre of excellence in higher education research and knowledge based industries. The preferred option will therefore provide a policy framework that is generally supportive of a range of development needs associated with HEIs.

The £250m relocation of the Ulster University into the north of the city will further enhance the educational offer and provide direct and indirect employment opportunities. The BCCRIS recommends that consideration of the potential development of the University campus should be extended to include a proposed ‘Creative Hub’ with connections to an extended library and innovation uses within vacant buildings in proximity. This could be supplemented through a masterplan approach to the development of these types of anchor institutions.



Retail Centres Hierarchy

- City Centre
- District Centre
- Local Centre
- Commercial Node
- Council Area
- Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit
- Shopping/Commercial Area (Indicative)
- Arterial Route:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 York Street/York Road/Shore Road | 10 Lisburn Road |
| 2 Antrim Road | 11 University Road/Malone Road |
| 3 Oldpark Road | 12 Ormeau Road |
| 4 Crumlin Road | 13 Ravenhill Road |
| 5 Shankill Road/Woodvale Road/Ballygomartin Road | 14 Woodstock Link/Woodstock Road/Cregagh Road |
| 6 Divis Street/Falls Road/Glen Road | 15 Castlereagh Street/Castlereagh Road |
| 7 Grosvenor Road/Springfield Road | 16 Albertbridge Road |
| 8 Andersonstown Road/Stewartstown Road | 17 Newtownards Road/Upper Newtownards Road |
| 9 Donegall Road | 18 Holywood Road |

Source: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Adopted September 2014)



7.2 Retail

Communities and people are the lifeblood of our city, and we must create neighbourhoods that make a real difference to people’s lives, and are transformational at a citywide and local level. Well planned, designed and sustainable neighbourhoods, with high quality, attractive local services will create places where people will want to live to bring up their families and meet their friends. The RDS recognises the importance of accessible, vibrant city and town centres that offer people more local choice for shopping, social activity and recreation. Local neighbourhood centres can provide diverse places where people want to live, visit and work.

The options for shops, services and community facilities are considered under the following headings:

- Centre hierarchy
- Defining the extent of centres
- Viability and vitality of centres



7.2.1 Establishing a centre hierarchy

Many centres are the heart of their communities and attract a significant number of people for day-to-day activities. To help guide planning for centres the plan should define a network (the pattern of provision of centres) and hierarchy (the role and relationships of centres in the network). Belfast has a large number and range of different centres across the city that act as a focus for shopping, leisure, and community facilities. The plan will direct future development based on a centre hierarchy as directed by the SPSS that includes the primary retail core, town centres, edge of centres, out of centre locations and rural areas.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a Liveable Place 	7, 8, 9, 10 1, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy

VE5 – Network and hierarchy of centres preferred option

The plan will define the network and hierarchy of centres as the best framework for directing future development based on that currently defined within BMAP as stated below:

- Belfast city centre;
- District centres;
- Local centres; and
- Arterial routes or commercial nodes.



Creating a vibrant economy

Approach

The preferred option proposes a hierarchy that will develop, and support investment for the retention of sustainable local centres across the city. It will promote equity and address social exclusion by ensuring residents have easy access to key facilities, local services and local employment opportunities at a reasonable cost and promote pedestrian accessibility and public transport use reducing the need to travel by car and help to reduce emissions. It will ensure a co-ordinated approach to a sustainable network of retail and service provision across the city to promote the city centre first, complemented by precautionary approach to out of centre commercial developments as set in the RDS. This would allow those who put policy into practise to adopt a town centre first approach to retailing and other relevant uses (cultural and community facilities, retail, leisure, entertainment and businesses). This is known as the sequential approach to decision making.

The plan will adopt the sequential approach from the SPPS when proposals cannot be located in these centres due to their size, layout and format and applicants will be expected to demonstrate why alternatives sites are not suitable, available and viable for retail and main town centre uses.

7.2.2 Defining the extent of centres

The boundaries for existing district, local and commercial nodes on arterial routes are usually delineated to include commercial units, as well as service and community facilities, when these are thought to form part of a cohesive and recognisable centre. In larger centres, there may be retail, community and a range of other facilities. It is critical to define exactly which locations are included within centres to bring clarity to where future policies might apply and support the broader role of the city centre. The role of these centres will vary depending on their scale, each making an important contribution to viability of becoming a focal point for sustainable neighbourhoods.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy 	Objectives 7, 8, 9, 10	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy

VE6 – Centre boundaries preferred option

Define centre boundaries for all district, local and commercial nodes on arterial routes as identified in the proposed retail hierarchy and illustrated on the map to provide a focus for effectively managing development and investment that will maintain compact centres and ensure a balance of retail, services and community facilities.

Approach

The hierarchy has a crucial role in supporting surrounding communities encouraging development and investment in centres across the city. The preferred option allows the focus to be on managing the balance of uses within centres in accordance with the SPPS. It provides greater clarity on the type of uses that will be allowed and where, particularly how retail and non retail, including community facilities make up and contribute to a centre’s role and function. Further survey work is necessary to determine whether the existing boundaries are current and relevant. The boundaries would be of a scale appropriate to the position of the centre in the hierarchy and the character of the centre to ensure that the scale and proposed use is in keeping with its role and catchment that it will serve.

Do you agree that centre boundaries should be redefined?

Are there specific shopping, retail or commercial areas that should be identified as local or neighbourhood centres?

7.2.3 Ensuring the vitality and viability of centres

The LDP should positively support the vitality and viability of local centres, to generate local employment, help to reduce social exclusion, promote beneficial competition between centres that allow for customer choice and create attractive, diverse places where people want to live, visit and work. To maintain diversity of use and retailer representation the range of acceptable uses is typically controlled. Planning defines land uses according to the Planning (Uses Classes) Order (NI) 2015. This means that planning permission has to be sought before changing to a use within another category. Class A1 includes all shops and retail services such as a travel agent or hairdressers. It does not include professional and financial services, including banks (A2) or food and drink uses (which are sui generis).

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Creating a vibrant economy	Objectives 7, 8, 10	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Growing the Economy

VE7 – Ensuring the vitality and viability of centres preferred option
 Within the defined centres a proportion of units will be maintained as Class A1 shops and change of use to other A Class uses and non-retail uses will be managed. This will prevent an over-concentration of non-retail uses and provide a diverse mix of uses appropriate to meet local shopping demand that is highly accessible.



Creating a vibrant economy

Approach

The preferred option supports the vitality and viability of centres by providing for flexibility for a diversity of uses that add to footfall. It should also be creative and permissive to adapt to changing circumstances over the plan period such as addressing vacancy through temporary 'meanwhile' or 'pop up' uses and promotion of resiliency to competition from other centres. The plan will accommodate office space for employment outside the city centre of an appropriate scale and where the proposed use is in keeping with its role and catchment that it will serve. In planning for growth, the plan will support the SPPS adopting the sequential approach that will also support the viability of the city centre alongside promoting sustainable neighbourhoods.

Do you agree that the proportion of non-retail uses should be managed within existing centres?

7.3 City centre

The Strategic Framework Guidance within the RDS specifically recognises the important role of Belfast as a regional gateway to promote urban economic growth. The city centre is to a large extent the window of the region to the world. The success of the city centre is vital to the future of the city and Northern Ireland. The city centre is the key driver of the region's economy. It is the location of a significant portion of the city's office based businesses and the primary retail location within Northern Ireland. BCCRIS sets out the context for developing the city centre and outline our aspirations for the continued growth and regeneration.

The options for the city centre set out in this paper are considered under the following headings:

- Defining the city centre;
- City centre retail;
- Leisure and tourism;
- Offices;
- Living in the city;
- Shared space; and
- Development opportunities.

7.3.1 Defining the city centre

It is critical to define exactly which locations and properties are included within the city centre boundary to bring clarity to where future policies might apply. This can give greater certainty to those seeking to develop and invest in Belfast city centre. Whilst the city centre comprises a range of diverse uses, it is the principle economic core of the region and also a hub of social activity.



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Belfast Urban Grain

-  Building
-  Transport network
-  Water



Should the city centre boundary be redefined (from that set out under the BMAP 2015)?



Creating a vibrant economy

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Creating a vibrant economy	Objectives 7, 8, 9, 10	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy	Pillars • Growing the Economy • City Development

VE8 – Defining the city centre preferred option

Review and define the boundary to reflect the existing use, scale and built form and to accommodate the projected development needed over the plan period to 2035.

Approach

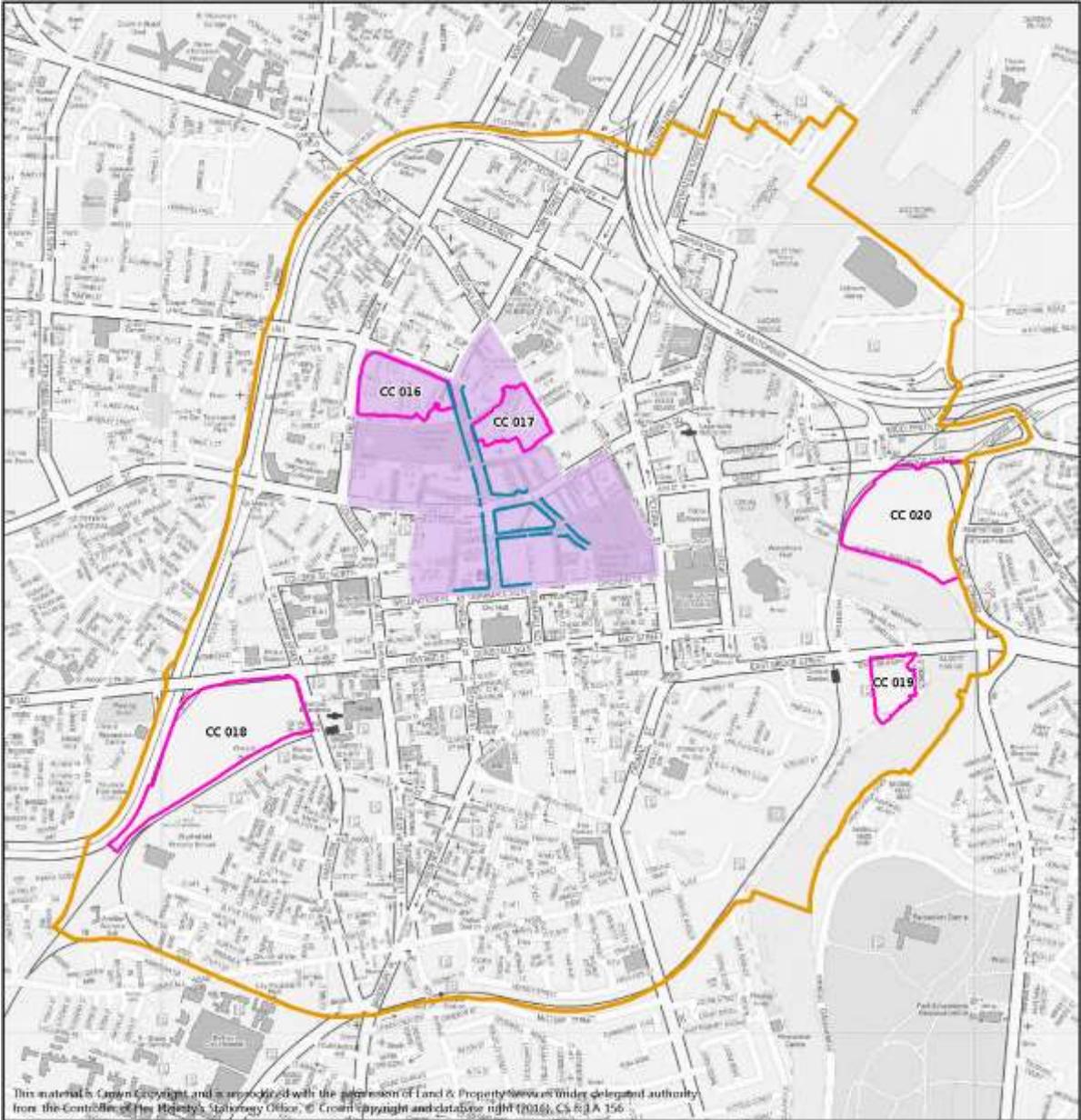
The existing city centre boundary was defined in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP) and the new plan could adopt a similar boundary. However, it includes established residential areas where existing uses and future ambitions for policies to support development and comprehensive regeneration may not be relevant. It would be the plan preference that the boundary is modified through a process to potentially exclude areas that are already covered by broader land use policies and establish a city centre that still provides sufficient opportunities and potential to accommodate growth over the plan period. The plan should however adopt a flexible approach to those properties and locations adjoining any proposed boundary, not necessarily precluding changing land use but to ensure connectivity and integration of uses. Our city centre boundary could reflect the potential of the river and adjoining areas to act as a focus and enhance accessibility to our waterfront as a city asset.

7.3.2 Defining the primary retail area

For many residents and visitors, the primary role of Belfast city centre is as destination for shops and services. For it to support the economic growth potential of the centre, it is critical that this shopping role is supported by giving it appropriate focus. It is typical that the core is defined by a primary retail frontage, which typically includes a high proportion of high street shops and retail services. Outside these frontages offers greater scope for diversity such as retail and financial services, restaurants and independent shops. Whilst there is scope for some retailing growth to be absorbed by reoccupation of vacant units, there will be pressure to provide for new requirements, both size and layout and the plan should accommodate for a range of retailers from large anchor stores to local, artisan and independents. This will ensure that Belfast city centre remains competitive to retailing in neighbouring council areas.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Creating a vibrant economy	Objectives 7, 8, 9, 10	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy	Pillars • Growing the Economy • City Development

VE9 – City centre primary retail area preferred option
Review the primary shopping area and the type of uses and define the boundary necessary to accommodate future growth.

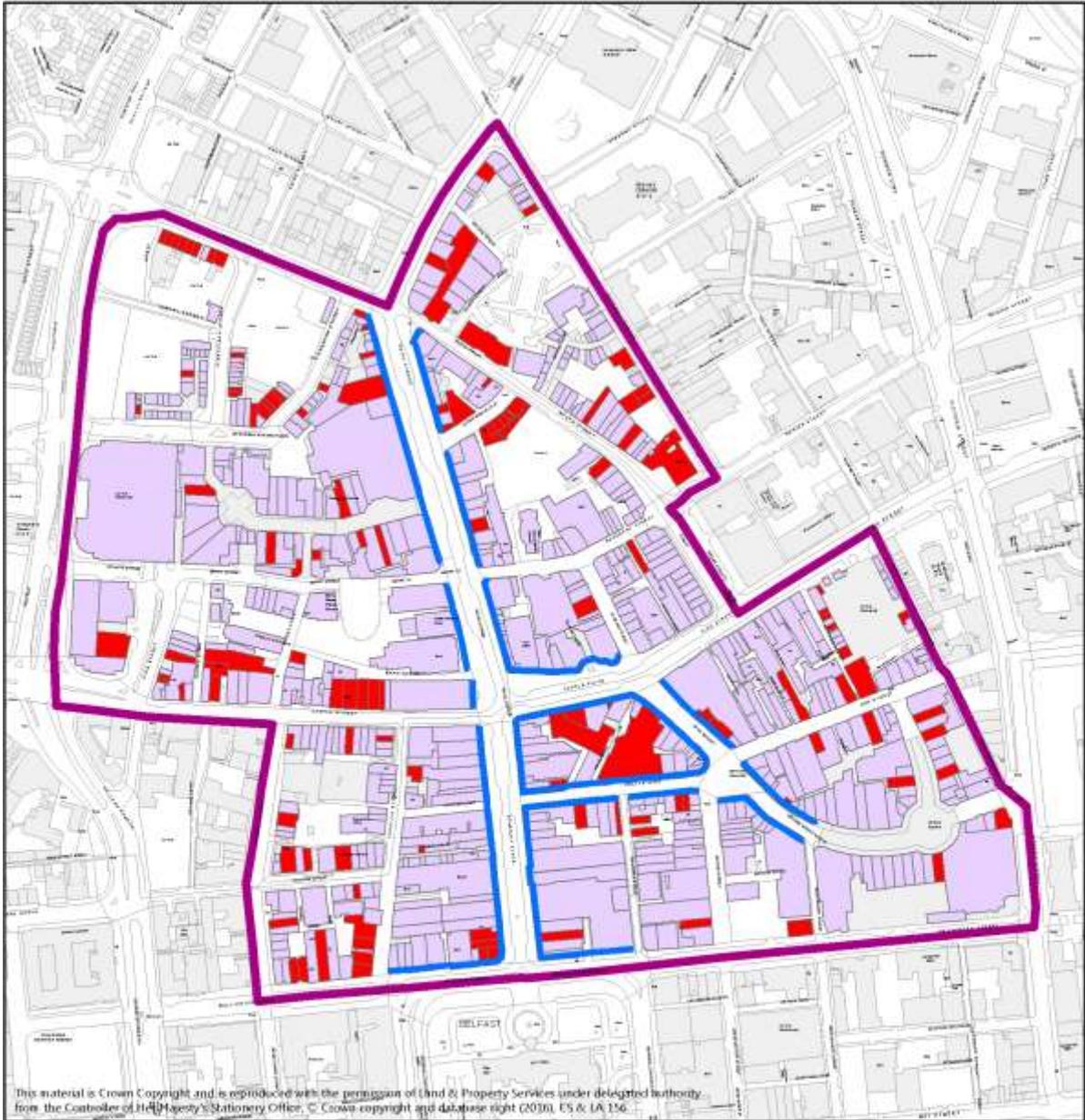


Retailing - Belfast City Centre

-  Belfast City Centre
-  Primary Retail Core
-  Primary Retail Frontage
-  Development Opportunity Site

Source: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Adopted September 2014)

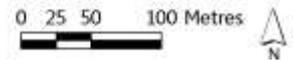


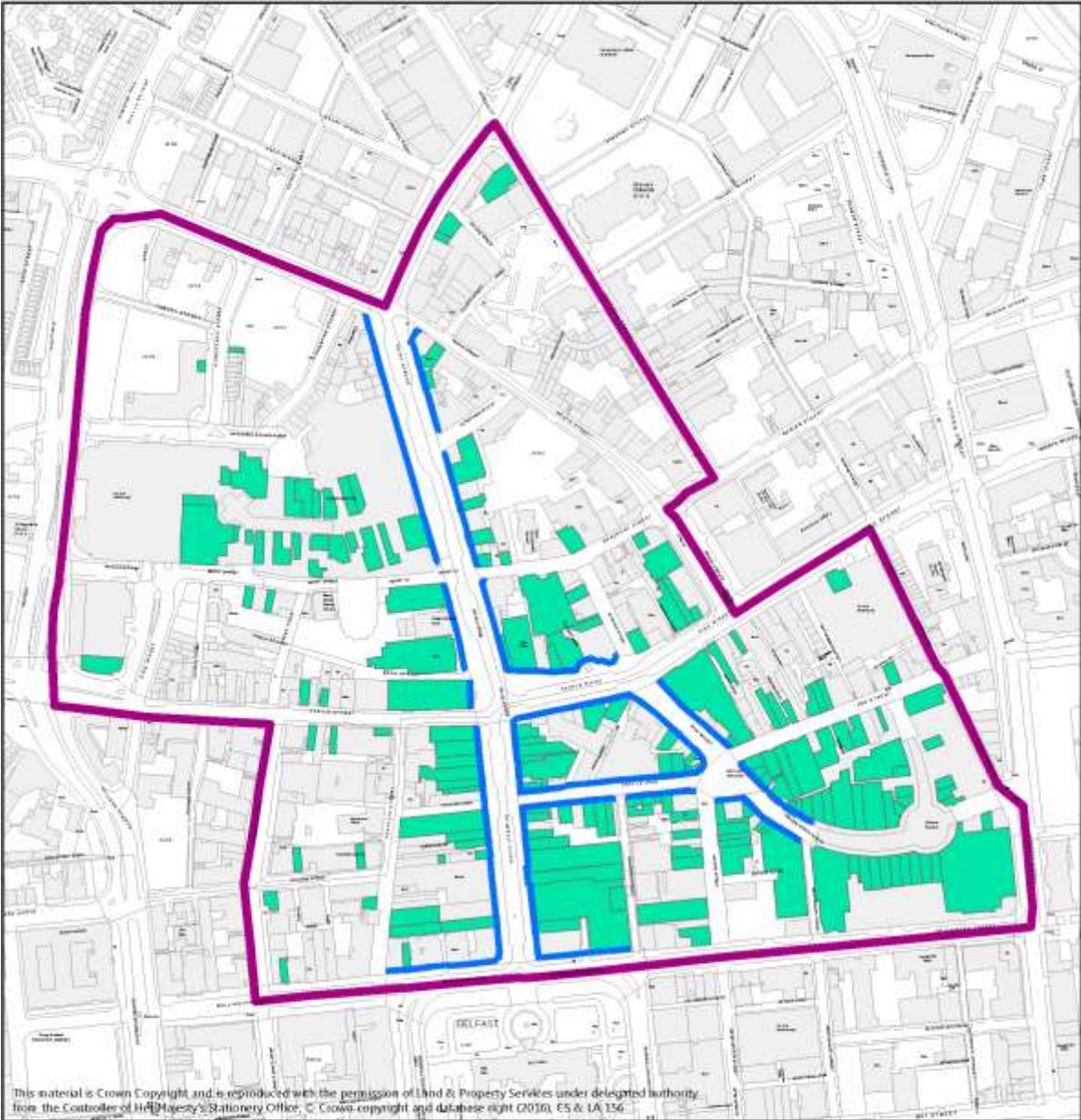


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Belfast City Centre Primary Retail Core - Ground Floor Retail Vacancy Survey (July 2016)

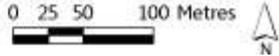
- Vacant Ground Floor Retail Unit
- Ground Floor Retail Unit
- Primary Retail Core
- Primary Retail Frontage





Belfast City Centre Primary Retail Core - Multinational presence (July 2016)

- Multinational
- Primary Retail Core
- Primary Retail Frontage



What issues should be taken into consideration when re-defining the primary shopping area within the city centre?



Creating a vibrant economy

Approach

In order for the city centre to remain successful and competitive, it should comprise a strongly performing retail core as the focus for major investment and retail development. Council's BCCRIS emphasises this direction by favouring retail activity to the city centre. A clear area of consolidated retail use based on where there is a high representation of A1 use and comparable shopping, which along with high footfall, would promote a strong and competitive retail core and support a growing economy. By providing a clear policy for an appropriate mix of uses, a strong and competitive retail area can be supported to prevent dilution of the primary core or fragmentation of active frontages. The local policies plan should set an acceptable level within primary retail areas to control change of use to non-retail. Setting an acceptable level could provide certainty and assist decision makers when assessing applications for change of use. Setting the threshold would support the RDS and SPPS aspirations to provide for diversity, vitality and viability.

7.3.3 Leisure and tourism

Tourism plays an important part in contributing to the economy of Belfast and employment generation. By strengthening the tourism offering, the city can ensure it has the capacity to compete for visitors and tourism growth. Although there has been a rise in hotel developments, there is further capacity in the city centre alongside the potential for distinctive visitor attractions.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Shaping a liveable Place • Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	7, 8, 9, 10 5 11, 13,14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast experiences good Health and Wellbeing • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development • Working and Learning

VE10 –Leisure and tourism in the city centre preferred option

The plan will provide a policy framework to guide development and support opportunities for tourism projects and hotels in recognition of the role of the city centre as the regional economic driver

Approach

The Council's broad objective is to make Belfast a World Class Visitor Destination. The BCCRIS recognises that the city's culture and history play a key role in attracting more people to come to the city centre bringing significant economic benefits and the Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy seeks to double the value of tourism to the city by 2020.

Adopting a flexible approach to development by allocating sites for a range of development, the plan could support signature tourist destinations, hotel development, leisure and public realm attracting more people into the city centre bringing economic benefits. The plan could provide for better integration of places to live, work and leisure activity.

Do you agree that a policy framework should be provided to guide leisure and tourism development in the city centre?

By identifying sites, this provides clarity and certainty for investment. By adopting the city centre first approach as advocated by the SPPS, the plan can reinforce the city centre as the hub of cultural, entertainment, tourism and leisure facilities. There may be facilities that provide for cultural and leisure activities, or which are an attraction to tourists, which may be more appropriately located outside of the city centre. These will be considered through criteria within the policy.

7.3.4 City centre living

Although the population of the city has increased over the last ten years, the overall residential population of the city centre remains low. Housing will make a key contribution to the success of the city centre bringing added vitality throughout the day and evening. A growing city centre population is therefore a key objective for the city. Within the city centre, residential accommodation is likely to be an important part of mixed-use developments, particularly on larger development opportunity sites.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Liveable Place	Objectives 1, 2, 5, 6	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • Living Here

VE11 – City centre living preferred option

The plan will seek to accommodate a significant proportion of new residential development within Belfast city centre. This approach will include:

- Increased densities;
- The re-use of existing buildings, particularly where these make a positive contribution to local character, and bringing vacant space back into use; and
- The inclusion of residential accommodation as part of mixed use development schemes;
- A mix of types and tenures.

Approach

Encouraging an increase in residential uses will help re-invigorate and regenerate the city centre. Through residential development and regeneration, there are opportunities to improve accessibility to employment, services and connectivity to open space across the city. There is a need to establish goals in terms of the residential population potential for the city centre to ensure community infrastructure, (health, community, education and leisure services), can be appropriately identified and planned.

Do you consider the proposal to facilitate and promote city centre living as a viable and realistic option?

If not, why not?

Would you consider living in the city centre?

How could we best encourage people to live in the city centre?

The city centre will have an important contribution to make in supporting the potential for population growth. This potential, based on higher densities, will only be feasible where quality design ensures a high level of amenity for future residents. In addition to higher densities, housing can play an important role in the wider regeneration of the city centre as part of mixed-use developments. Opportunities will exist to bring vacant space above ground floors back into use where it would not compromise the retail, leisure or office function of the city centre. Belfast also has a rich and varied built heritage that provides clear opportunities for re-use. By re-using vacant land and buildings, converting upper floors and promoting Living over the Shops (LOTS), the city centre can help to meet the housing needs of a growing population, whilst supporting sustainable urban renewal and regeneration.

7.3.5 Shared spaces in the city centre

Belfast is home to an increasingly diverse and broadening society. The city needs to be welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive to accommodate all ages from the elderly to the very young and celebrate our cultural diversity. An environment promoting good relations improves the quality of life for everyone and to support this, the entire city should continue to function as a shared and accessible place.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liveable Place 	3, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast experiences good Health and Wellbeing • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Here • City Development

VE12 – Shared space in the city centre preferred option

The plan will promote the principles of a shared society through guidance and a spatial approach that is built on improving connectivity, delivering balanced development and supporting regeneration.

Approach

Within the city centre, the plan will create spaces, streets and parks where people have priority and are accessible to all as spaces for leisure or family friendly spaces. The delivery of shared facilities such as leisure centres, libraries and shopping centres within the city centre that are accessible and well linked to the wider neighbourhoods can support a shared environment. Quality design will be promoted to encourage safe environments. To adapt to changing needs and priorities over the plan period, policy flexibility to support ‘meanwhile’ or temporary uses will be considered.

How inclusive do you think the city centre is?

How could the LDP help to make it more inclusive?

7.3.6 City centre development opportunities

The BCCRIS identifies five special action areas to include:

- mixed use retail led development within the North Eastern Quarter;
- possible redevelopment of Castlecourt;
- better connections with the eastern bank of the river;
- opportunities for retailing and offices at the proposed new Transport Hub which itself is at an advanced stage; and
- for small independent businesses with the relocation of Smithfield Market within the Inner West, Castle Street area and opportunity to provide a major visitor attraction in the city centre.

There are a number of brownfield sites of significant development capacity that detract from the city’s character and coherence, which, if developed, could help improve the vibrancy of the city centre. The relocation of the Ulster University campus will make significant alterations to the north of the city and anchor regeneration of this part of the north inner city.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a vibrant economy • Green and Active Place 	7, 8, 9, 10 17, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast experiences good Health and Wellbeing • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Here • City Development • Growing the Economy • Working and learning



VE13 – City centre development opportunities preferred option

The plan will provide a policy framework to guide development and regeneration opportunities in recognition of the city centre role as the regional economic driver.

Approach

The plan would continue to support key development opportunities throughout the city

Do you agree that policy frameworks are required to guide development and regeneration within the city centre?

centre. In order to maintain flexibility within the plan and promote city resiliency, opportunity sites should provide for a mix and diversity of uses. The plan could support interim uses whilst development is realised. Detailed development briefs and master planning areas can ensure future development can be properly integrated with the rest of the city centre. The plan will

bring forward supplementary guidance with regard to developer agreements and contributions that can better facilitate the development of land and activities to be carried out within the city centre. These agreements and contributions can be used to improve public realm and physical connections, provide for a balanced mix of tenure within a housing development or facilitate hotels and offices within the city centre.

7.4 Policy review and findings

7.4.1 Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning and economic development

This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for economic development uses and indicates how growth associated with such uses can be accommodated and promoted in development plans. It seeks to facilitate and accommodate economic growth in ways compatible with social and environmental objectives and sustainable development.

The key aim of PPS 4 is to facilitate the economic development needs of the region in ways consistent with protection of the environment and the principles of sustainable development. This aim is supported by six policy objectives and nine operational planning policies. PPS 4 also outlines the role of development plans in ensuring that there is an ample supply of suitable land available to meet economic development needs within a plan area.

Our review found that a number of these policies can be largely retained within the LDP, with many of the objectives and key principles carried through into the SPPS. However, it has also been established that some of the policies may require changes, for example Policy

PED 7- Retention of zoned land and economic development uses being reworded to remove references to 'significant adverse impact', which suggest that a lot of harm is ok.

7.4.2 Planning Policy Statement 16: Tourism

This PPS sets out the Department's planning policy for tourism development and also for the safeguarding of tourist assets. It seeks to facilitate economic growth and social wellbeing through tourism in ways that are sustainable and compatible with environmental welfare and the conservation of important environmental assets. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and to the conservation of biodiversity.

The aim of PPS 16 is to manage the provision of sustainable and high quality tourism developments in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment. This is supported by six policy objectives and eight operational planning policies and outlines the role of development plans in tourism development.

It is considered that a number of these policies can be also largely retained within the LDP, with many of the objectives and key principles carried through into the SPPS. However, it is proposed that a number of policies can be retained, for example TSM5 – Self Catering Accommodation in the Countryside, as the issue is not addressed within the SPPS.





A smart connected and resilient place

Improving connectivity and supporting the efficient movement of people, goods, energy and information to create a dynamic, innovative 21st century city, with the capacity for adaption to environmental challenges



Belfast has the highest density of fibre network in Europe and nearly 100% of households have access to optical fibre broadband



Over **100,000** people travel into Belfast from other areas to work every day



The Belfast Bikes scheme has 40 docking stations in the city with over

4,000
annual subscribers



The Connswater Greenway Project is bringing benefits to local communities, including recreation, regeneration and flood alleviation





8.1 Infrastructure, telecoms and utilities

Infrastructure is integral to the sustainability of our city and the LDP must ensure there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure to meet current and future needs. This section will consider options for telecommunications, water, sewage, electricity and gas and will take account of the current strategic policy guidance and other relevant policies.

8.1.1 Telecommunications infrastructure

A key challenge for the region will be to improve international and internal connectivity and to ensure that the opportunities provided by access to high quality telecommunications services are fully exploited. The need to invest in infrastructure for higher broadband speeds; improve telecommunication services in smaller rural areas to minimise the urban-rural divide; to increase the usage of broadband; and to capitalise on direct international connectivity, are recognised. Connectivity is deemed to support foreign direct investment and offer a significant competitive edge for the benefit of the region.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place	Objectives 11	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • City Development

SCR1 – Telecommunication infrastructure preferred option

The plan will seek to support the development of new telecommunications infrastructure or promote an upgrade of existing networks to:

- Support the competitiveness of the city and region;
- Enhance connectivity; and
- Encourage investments.

The plan should consider criteria for the siting, design and impact upon visual amenity of new telecommunication infrastructure and areas of constraint.

Approach

The approach is to retain the policy direction set out in PPS10. The development and enhancement of the telecommunications infrastructure in a way that makes use of existing assets, is incorporated in the design of other forms of development and which respects visual amenity and environmental sensitivity are key elements of regional

How can we best facilitate telecommunications infrastructure to ensure business and consumer needs are met?

guidance and policy. The delivery of a high quality telecommunications infrastructure in appropriate locations is essential to support the development of residential areas and to encourage economic growth. It provides benefits to households and consumers, strengthens business and makes the region attractive for inward investment. With potential for technological advancement and the emergence of changing needs in the consumer society and business arena, the future of the telecommunications infrastructure in Belfast is likely to be subject to change. The policy approach to telecommunications should have a degree of flexibility and account should be given to emerging change in operator enterprise.

8.1.2 Water and sewerage infrastructure

Changes in population distribution, household formation, urban development and lifestyles place pressure on water resources and drainage systems. Climate change will also impact upon the water environment. It is necessary, therefore, to plan for the provision of water and sewerage infrastructure and treatment facilities. Moving towards a more sustainable water sector in NI is a key government objective to support the RDS in promoting economic growth, and in contributing to environmental protection and a reduced risk of flooding throughout the region.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place: 	Objectives 11	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

SCR2 – Water and sewage infrastructure preferred option

The LDP will seek to facilitate the development of water and sewerage infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner whilst keeping the visual and environmental impact to a minimum. The plan could encourage the use of sustainable initiatives and technologies in regard to water, wastewater management and drainage. It could also encourage the alternative management and maintenance of existing water and sewerage assets to contribute to decreases in energy use and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This approach will include measures that contribute to a reduction in water consumption, energy use and CO2 emissions within in the design and layout of future development.

Approach

The development and enhancement of the water and sewage infrastructure is essential for accommodating growth. Adequate investment in water, sewage and drainage, and long-term investment plans to encourage the delivery of sustainable initiatives are key factors in facilitating new industrial and residential development, promoting tourism and attracting



Smart connected resilient place

inward investment to the region. The promotion of new technologies and incorporation of waste reduction measures in the design of future development are important factors in contributing towards a decrease in water consumption and carry additional environmental benefits in lessening energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. With potential for technological advancement and increased investment towards innovative alternatives to conventional high-energy water, wastewater and drainage solutions, the future of the water and sewerage infrastructure in Belfast is likely to be subject to change. Accordingly, the policy approach to water and sewerage should have a degree of flexibility to facilitate emerging eventualities.

Does our approach to water, sewerage, electricity and gas infrastructure achieve an appropriate balance between necessary infrastructure provision and environmental considerations?

8.1.3 Electricity and gas infrastructure

A robust energy infrastructure, including healthy electricity and gas networks, is essential for economic growth and in furthering sustainable development. Society depends on secure and efficient connections to energy networks. This is affirmed by the Strategic Energy Framework for Northern Ireland (SEF) 2010, (currently subject to review), and by the RDS. Both documents recognise the important role energy infrastructure has in delivering reliable and secure services to communities and businesses in NI. The strategic aim underpinning the SEF is for a more secure and sustainable energy system, driven by a competitively priced and robust supply market, increased energy from renewable resources, and improved efficiency.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Development

SCR3 – Electricity and gas infrastructure preferred option

Where proposals to develop new or replace or upgrade existing infrastructure or grids are known or envisaged by utility providers, they will be reflected in the LDP. The LDP will seek to facilitate the development of such infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner whilst keeping the visual and environmental impact to a minimum.

Approach

The development and enhancement of the electricity and gas infrastructure in a way that makes best use of existing assets, incorporates renewable and low or zero carbon energy sources and which respects visual amenity and environmental sensitivity are key elements of regional guidance and policy. Significant investment in terms of upgrading the electricity infrastructure, developing the natural gas network and exploring the potential to develop a renewable heat generation and distribution network are essential for a secure and robust infrastructure that is capable of accommodating growth. The promotion of renewable energy generating facilities at appropriate locations and encouragement towards the use of micro-generation and other technology are important factors in contributing towards a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.

8.2 Transportation

A good transportation system helps people get to where they need to go quickly and easily and makes our towns and cities better places to live. Moving people and goods is essential to the everyday life of the city and is essential for the growth of the local economy, but also impacts greatly on our environment.

Sustainable transport is a key component of sustainable development and refers to any means of transport with a low impact on the environment, and includes walking, cycling and public transport. There is also an increase in electric and alternative fuel vehicles available to the public, which have a lower environmental impact through less carbon dioxide emissions. In addition, the use of smart technology has a role as it can be used to deliver enhanced traveller experience and influence travel behaviour to reduce congestion, environmental impact and deliver societal benefits. Smarter choices are techniques for influencing people's travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes.

There is a high volume of travel by car to and within Belfast; however, increasing congestion, road safety and associated emissions resulting in poor air quality are main concerns in relation to the strategic and local road network. At peak times, the network has little resilience to incidents such as road accidents resulting in excessive delays. High volumes of vehicles and competition for road space between pedestrians, cyclists, buses, servicing vehicles and general traffic in the city centre gives rise to problems, including driver frustration, road safety and pedestrian severance.

The options for transportation in this section are considered under the following headings:

- Walking and cycling;
- Public transport network;
- The highway network; and
- Parking demand management.



8.2.1 Walking and cycling

Walking and cycling are important modes of transport and are viable options in Belfast largely due to the flat topography, low car ownership and the compact nature of the city. Cycling and walking are non-polluting and healthier and often quicker and more convenient for shorter journeys than travel by car. However, traffic conditions and the lack of high quality walking and cycling networks in the city can discourage many people from cycling or walking.

Do you frequently walk or cycle to and from work?

Would you walk or cycle more if there were improved networks and connections in place?

Cycle and pedestrian network links and improvements can encourage a modal shift away from the private motor vehicle use to more active and sustainable modes of transport. DfI is beginning to develop a number of bicycle network plans for urban areas within the region and to build on the Bicycle Strategy for NI. Work has already started on a bicycle network plan for Belfast and this will help the development and operation of the bicycle infrastructure in the city for the next 10 years.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	Objectives 12	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

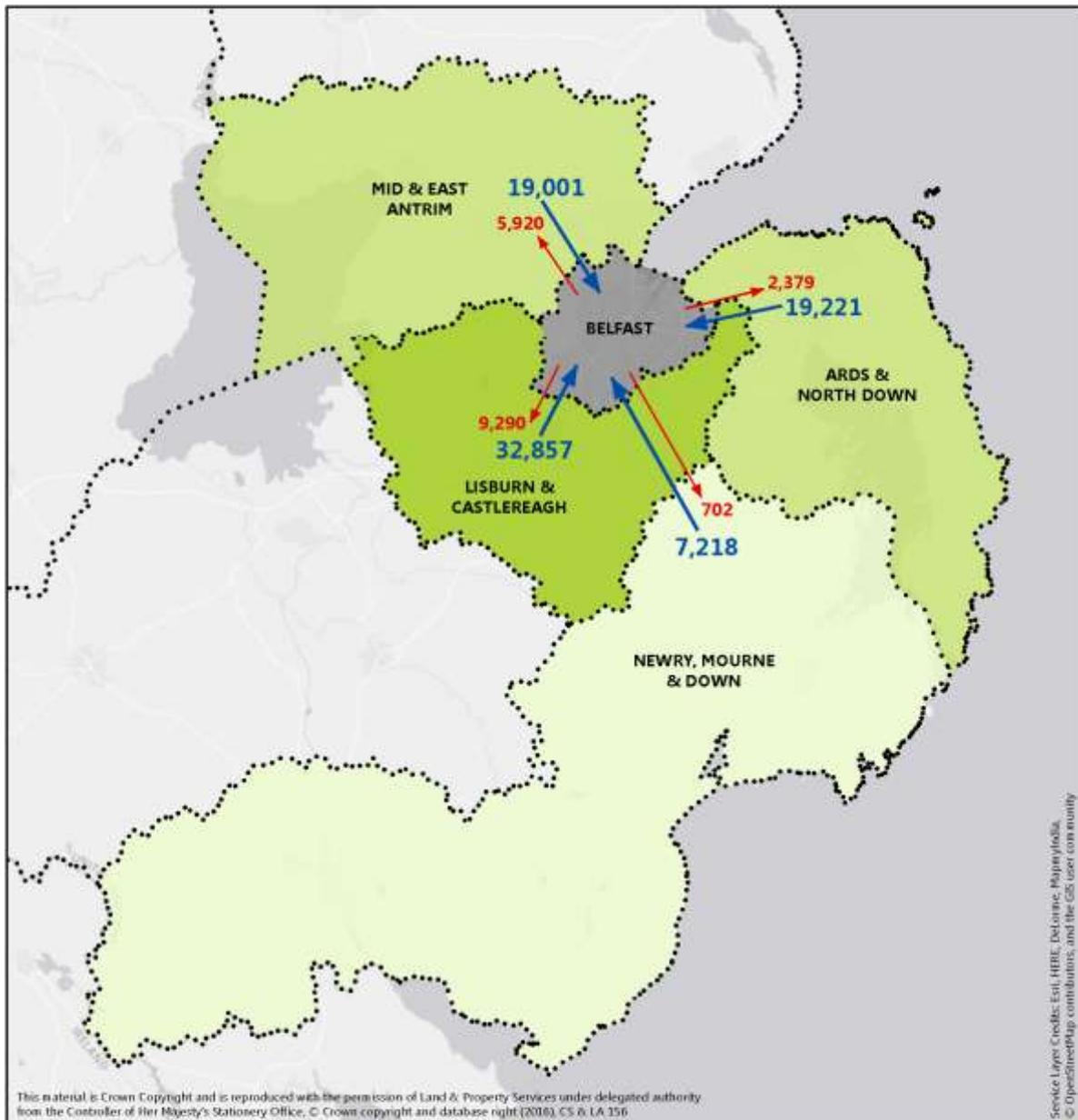
SCR4 – Walking, cycling and sustainable modes of transport preferred option

The plan should support walking and cycling as sustainable modes of transport by the provision of facilities and safeguarding existing and proposed cycle and walkway routes to encourage active travel. The plan will support design guidance that encourages pedestrian movement and establishment of safe and attractive pedestrian routes.

Approach

The option is in line with the objective of the SPPS to identify active travel networks and provide a range of infrastructure improvements to increase the use of more sustainable modes. It is also in line with other RDS policy objectives to improve air quality and improve health and wellbeing. Creating safe and attractive pedestrian environments should be an essential element of any city. Travelling by bike can be a viable and attractive mode for Belfast due to its compact form and flat topography. There are a growing number of cycle

routes across the city and an increasing number of people choosing this mode of travel. This could not only provide a low cost solution for commuters, contribute to relieving congestion in the city but also have leisure and health benefits.



Commuters into Belfast

- > 20,000
- 10,000 - 20,000
- < 10,000

..... Council boundary

Source: Centre for Cities





8.2.2 Public transport network

Bus transport is the main form of public transport in the city and is largely based around the city’s arterial routes. It has been subject to a number of recent improvements to the network, however, there is a need for high quality, continuous bus lanes on arterial routes in order to improve the speed and reliability of public transport journeys. There are infrastructure developments that need to be addressed within the plan.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

SCR5 – Public transport network preferred option

The plan should protect the land required to facilitate new public transport schemes or planned improvements to the existing network. The plan should encourage higher density developments and promote regeneration opportunities linked to new and existing public transport networks.

Approach

The option is in line with regional strategic objectives to promote sustainable patterns of development and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car. The approach also supports the objectives of the Council’s Air Quality Action Plan and the emerging Sustainability Appraisal. A key objective of the RDS Spatial Framework Guidance is to manage the movement of people and goods within the BMUA (SFG4). Measures outlined under this objective are to improve the public transport service and to introduce a Rapid Transit system.

The SPSS emphasises the need to integrate transportation and land use to maximise development around sustainable transport networks. There is a limited capacity in the city’s highway network and therefore the promotion of public transport along with the appropriate level of movement of cars as part of a balanced approach is the preferred option. In terms of meeting the regional strategic objective to “ensure accessibility for all”, with 37% of households in Belfast not having access to a private vehicle, good accessibility to public transport provision is essential.

Does our approach to transportation achieve and appropriate balance between all modes of transport?

8.2.3 The highway network

The highway network caters for buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians as well as cars and goods vehicles and is fundamental to the economic vitality and social wellbeing of Belfast and NI as a whole. The highway network in Belfast comprises of strategic and non-strategic roads that are outlined in the BMTP and different policies and measures apply to the roads on the hierarchy. The highway network in Belfast is under increasing strain from rising traffic levels and demands from different road users. There is also concern in relation to road safety.

The SPPS advises that local planning authorities should identify and protect sites and routes that could be critical in developing infrastructure, where there is robust evidence, to widen transport choice. At a strategic level, it is considered that the York Street Interchange Road Improvement Scheme could help to reduce congestion as well as improve access to the ports and airports and connectivity to the city centre. Within the city centre, a greater emphasis has been placed in recent years on a pedestrian friendly environment.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	Objectives 12	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

SCR6 – Highway network preferred option

The plan should protect land required for new road or road improvement schemes as identified as essential by the DfI and provide design guidance to ensure wider benefits to the surrounding areas through improved connectivity and regeneration benefits.

Approach

The RDS regional guidance outlines the need to deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure, support the growth of the economy, enhance quality of life for all and reduce the environmental impact of transport. A number of improvements to the highway network are viewed as essential to remove bottlenecks from the strategic road network and improve traffic management within the city. The York Street Interchange has progressed through

How can we best capture regeneration benefits arising from developments in the strategic road network?

the option appraisal stage and public inquiry process and its implementation is now dependent on funding. It is viewed as essential to improve access to Belfast and the harbour area. The non-strategic road improvement proposals can be reviewed as part of the new Belfast Transport Plan and included in the local policies plan if considered essential for local access in the city



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and to improve traffic management.

8.2.4 Parking demand management

Demand management measures can influence choice of travel mode through initiatives such as parking supply and pricing policies, land use policies and the application of new smart technology in the form of Intelligent Transport systems. There is a need to actively manage travel demand and modal choices to and within the city centre by planning, design and operation. Managing demand can be cost effective alternative to increasing capacity.

Car parking in suitable amounts and locations is vital for the city centre to function properly. A balance is necessary between car parking and other transport modes and between the needs of short-stay and long-stay parking users. Belfast must compete as a shopping and leisure attraction with other towns and cities, and with out-of-town retail developments. An appropriate supply of short-stay car parking spaces for shoppers in the city centre is therefore needed to assist its vitality and viability by attracting customers.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

SCR7 – Parking demand management preferred option

The plan will consider revised local parking standards to include guidelines to allow a flexible approach to be applied and to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport. The plan will ensure adequate provision for parking in new developments including provision for disabled and family friendly spaces. The Plan will include provision for designating areas of parking restraint and managing the provision of long term parking spaces.

Approach

The option supports the RDS strategic objective to promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion. The option should recognise the role of car parking in influencing modal shift and encouraging the use

Do you agree with our proposed approach to parking demand management?

of more sustainable travel. Sustainable measures and the introduction of demand management can help improve the existing transportation network and the environment in the centre of the city whilst making better use of the highway infrastructure.

Within the city centre fringe, parking studies may be undertaken to assess the potential for areas of control or parking restrictions. The provision of car parking needs to be carefully balanced to ensure that sufficient provision is made to meet needs whilst recognising that where there is good public transport provision, easy access to shops and services and desire to lead healthy lives, less provision may need to be made.

Do you agree with the approach to improve the environmental quality of the city set out below?

8.3 Environmental quality

The quality of the physical environment is vitally important for human health and biodiversity. The LDP has an important role to preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at risk from unacceptable levels of ground contamination, air, noise and light pollution. Exposure to environmental pollution and environmental risks can affect people’s quality of life. It is important that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects and cumulative effects of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity and the sensitivity of the proposed development to adverse effects from pollution should be taken into account. Safeguarding and, where possible, enhancing the quality of the city’s environment is a key part of achieving the LDP vision for Belfast.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart, Connected and Resilient Place 	17, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Development

SRC8 – Environmental quality preferred option

The Preferred Option is to enhance Environmental Quality where possible, and protect communities from materially harmful development. The LDP will consider the issues of environmental quality related to ground contamination, air, noise and light pollution to ensure the amenity for the end users is protected.

To provide supplementary guidance for Developers outlining the information required as part of their development proposal for remediating contaminated sites.

Approach

The acceptability of adverse effects on environmental quality will depend on the nature of the development and the location, with the most sensitive sites, such as residential areas, being more vulnerable. The LDP will seek to encourage improvement in environmental quality as a result of new development. This should include the remediation of contaminated land as part of redevelopment and replacing existing obtrusive lighting with a low-level scheme. The LDP will promote the growth of the city where people will live and



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work; with an enhanced green infrastructure to improve environmental quality and connectivity for sustainable transport that will reduce the number of car journeys in the urban area.

Should we provide supplementary guidance on the information required with a planning application in relation to site investigation and remediation proposals?

Will this help avoid delays in the planning process?

8.4 Building environmental resilience

Environmental change and building community resilience is one of the most pressing challenges facing the city in the 21st Century. A sustainable development approach is required to mitigate and adapt to the environmental challenges affecting the city. This will involve the need to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to environmental change and to adapt to the impacts of changing weather patterns.

The options for building environmental resilience set out in this section are considered under the following headings:

- Mitigating environmental change;
- Renewable energy;
- Adapting to environmental change; and
- Flood risk management.

How can Belfast build on its status as a global 'resilient city' to respond to environmental change?

8.4.1 Mitigating environmental change

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is an important consideration when the aim of the LDP is to grow the city, and to encourage city living. The LDP is an important spatial tool to create a compact city, designing neighbourhoods that have shops, workplaces local amenities and services near homes, increasing opportunities for walking, cycling, or taking public transport and to reduce the need to use the car. The incorporation of a multi functional green infrastructure network, with pedestrian and cycle paths, would link neighbourhoods and employment areas. Electric car pools and an electric vehicle charging network would reduce green house gas emissions in the city. There needs to be a strong linkage between policies for managing green house gas emissions and environmental change.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart, Connected and Resilient Place 	17, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development

SRC9 – Mitigating environmental change preferred option

To reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the plan will facilitate the development of clean technologies, and sustainable design to help reduce green house gas emissions, and ensure sustainable development.

Do you agree we should encourage the reduction of green house gas emissions to improve air quality?

Approach

The LDP should address green house gas emissions to mitigate environmental change and to build resilient communities. As this is a multi-faceted topic, the best way to tackle it is to ensure it is covered within the plan. The city will have to tackle green house gas emissions to contribute towards the UK Targets to reduce carbon emissions.

8.4.2 Renewable energy

A reliable and plentiful supply of renewable energy is vital if we are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To plan for the adoption of renewable energy technologies will bring significant benefits of greater energy security, tackling fuel poverty and improved air quality in the city. The dependence on imported fossil fuels is at odds with delivering future prosperity and wellbeing. A secure and affordable renewable energy supply is crucial to delivering economic growth. There is a need to plan for sustainable forms of energy to encourage investment in renewables.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart, Connected and Resilient Place 	Objectives 17, 18, 19	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development

SCR10 – Renewable energy preferred option

The LDP will review and revise the scope of the existing policies to facilitate the delivery of a planned, and integrated renewable energy generation supply appropriate for the urban area.

Approach

The Preferred Option provides a positive basis for assessing the delivery of renewable energy technology where possible. This would provide certainty for investment decisions. It



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would provide for the planning of new development to make use of opportunities for decentralised and local renewable sources of heat and power. The Council is keen to promote and embrace renewable energy technology to provide the city with a competitive economic advantage in helping to market Belfast as an attractive location for inward investment, businesses, and residents who are committed to sourcing their energy supply from renewable sources.

Would you support policies for community energy generation schemes?

To what extent do you agree that we should promote the delivery of a planned and integrated renewable energy generation supply?

8.4.3 Adapting to environmental change

Belfast has had direct experience of extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels in recent years. There have been five significant flood events in Belfast in the last ten years. The impact of flooding on individual households, communities and business can be devastating and costly. The effects on human activity are wide ranging, with the potential to cause fatalities and injury, displacement, pollution and health risk. Damage to buildings, can severely compromise economic and social activities. Extreme weather resulting in flooding of properties and infrastructure is expected to be a significant long-term risk associated with climate change for NI.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Smart, Connected and Resilient Place:	Objectives 17, 18, 19	Outcomes • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city. • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing	Pillars • Living Here • City Development

SRC11 – Adapting to environmental change preferred option

The Preferred Option is that the LDP Policies will seek to facilitate the incorporation of adaptation measures to adapt to environmental changes, which will support a resilient city that protects communities, biodiversity, the built and natural environment.

Approach

The city is already experiencing extreme weather events, which has had an impact on the communities in Belfast. To leave the city vulnerable without adapting to the future changes will be a high-risk strategy, and financially very expensive in the long term. The LDP should address adaptation to environmental change to fulfil sustainability commitments, and to

build a resilient city. As this is a multi-faceted topic, the best way to tackle adaptation to environmental change is to ensure it is covered thoroughly throughout the LDP.

Do you support measures to adapt to environmental change that will help to build a resilient city?

8.4.4 Flood risk management

A general approach to flood risk management in the past has largely been based on flood defences and flood warnings. With weather predictions of more intense rainfall and stormier weather in summer months, wetter winters and rising sea levels, we are likely to experience damaging floods more frequently and intensely. In recent years, there has been an increase in the need for modern approaches and well co-ordinated, sustainable actions to deal with these increased flood risks to society.

As Belfast intensifies development within the city with impermeable surfaces, there is a risk that more storm water runoff will flow rapidly into the combined sewers and rivers, with less water filtering through the soil. This can lead to localised flooding and water pollution. The LDP is projecting population and economic growth, which will increase the amount of wastewater into the combined sewer system, the additional storm water from intense rainfall is predicted to cause capacity problems that will result in flooding.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart, Connected and Resilient Place: 	Objectives 17, 18, 19	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city. • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing. • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy. 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the Economy • Living Here • City Development

SRC12 – Flood risk preferred option

The Preferred Option is to review the scope of existing policy to focus on the management of potential flood risk in the urban area. This will consider the potential for supplementary guidance on how to incorporate flood mitigation measures, such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) appropriate for the urban environment.

Approach

A strategic approach to flood risk is to be adopted by considering the River Lagan catchment area as a whole, ensuring that new development is not exposed unnecessarily to flooding, whilst having regard to the cumulative effects of existing development within the city boundary. It will provide a framework to ensure that flood risk to people and property is not increased as a result of new development.



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It will be important to ensure that the design of new residential developments do not increase flood risk within vulnerable flood risk areas. The impact of dwellings being flooded can cause disruption to householders, damage possessions and affect their health. Developers will be required to assess the flood risk for residential developments and to propose mitigation measures. This will ensure the safety and wellbeing of people.

Do you support the range of measures proposed to manage potential flood risk within the plan area, such as green and blue infrastructure and the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)?

Should we also require a drainage assessment to be provided for all new residential developments within potential flood risk areas?

The LDP would promote SuDs within all elements of design to ensure a proactive approach towards flood risk and help alleviate risks and concerns. Lands that are prone to flooding should be developed in such ways that are able to act as a flood relief pondage areas, this will help minimise flood risk potentials to lands zoned for residential and industrial purposes.

8.5 Waste infrastructure

Moving towards more sustainable waste management is a key government objective for the future. The emphasis on waste management in NI is changing from resource management with the need to divert waste away from landfill in favour of more sustainable methods where waste is treated as a resource. The waste hierarchy aims to encourage the management of waste materials in order to reduce the amount of waste materials produced, and to recover maximum value from the wastes that are produced. Waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery are collectively defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as waste minimisation. Finally, waste disposal should only be used when no option further up the hierarchy is possible.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • A Smart Connected and Resilient Place 	1, 2 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Development

SCR13 – Waste infrastructure preferred option

The LDP should facilitate the development of new infrastructure in appropriate locations or an upgrade of existing facilities to increase resource efficiency and enable a shift towards a circular economy as well as have regard to the proximity principle.

The plan will ensure that appropriate provision is made for the storage of waste recycling containers in all new development schemes to maintain a high quality environment.

Approach

The delivery of the right level and type of waste facilities at the right time is not only essential to support the development of new homes, economic growth and the creation of sustainable communities, but also provides benefits to the city's existing residents, workers and visitors. An integrated network of waste facilities is also essential if EU targets are to be met. The future of the waste management in the Belfast is likely to be subject to change therefore the policy approach should have a degree of flexibility. It is not anticipated that the LDP will designate or zone specific sites for the management of waste unless already established such as the Giants Park. The LDP should have regard to the Council's Waste Management Plan, which will outline the infrastructure required to manage the city's waste.

Do you agree with our approach to sustainable waste management throughout the city?

8.6 Minerals

The SPPS recognises that mineral development can make a significant contribution to the local economy by providing materials for construction such as sand, gravel and crushed rock along with providing jobs and employment. It is important to facilitate mineral development but in a sustainable approach which balances with the need to protect the environment. A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI) (1993) sets out the current regional policy context for mineral development. The Policies cover Environmental Protection (MIN1), Visual Implications (MIN2), Areas of Constraint (MIN 3), Valuable Minerals (MIN4), Mineral Reserves (MIN5), Safety and Amenity (MIN6), Traffic (MIN7) and Restoration (MIN8).



Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims • Green and Active Place	Objectives 16	Outcomes • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally friendly city	Pillars • City Development

Approach

The LDP should adopt the policy approach outlined in the SPPS to balance the need for mineral resources against the need to protect and conserve the environment. The policy should ensure the restoration and re-use of mineral sites at the earliest opportunity and, in addition, the LDP should identify areas that should be protected from mineral development.

Is there anything within the existing approach to minerals you would like to see amended?

8.7 Policy review of relevant PPSs

8.7.1 Planning Policy Statement 3 (Revised): Access, movement and parking

PPS 3 was published in 2005 and sets out the Department’s planning policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessment, the protection of transport routes and parking. It embodies the Government’s commitments to the provision of a modern, safe, sustainable transport system, the improvement of mobility for those who are socially excluded or whose mobility is impaired, the promotion of healthier living and improved road safety. Policy AMP 3 was superseded by PPS 3 (Clarification) published in October 2006. The policies in PPS3 are:

- Policy AMP 1 - Creating an Accessible Environment;
- Policy AMP 2 - Access to Public Roads;
- Policy AMP 4 - Protection for New Transport Schemes;
- Policy AMP 5 -Disused Transport Routes;
- Policy AMP 6 Transport Assessment;
- Policy AMP 8 Cycle Provision;
- Policy AMP 9 - Design of Car Parking;
- Policy AMP 10 - Provision of Public and Private Car Parks;
- Policy AMP 11 Temporary Car Parks; and
- PPS 3 (Clarification) Policy AMP 3.

The transportation section in SPPS supports the policies and general principles of PPS3 and it is proposed that these policies are retained.

8.7.2 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 10: Telecommunications

PPS 10 sets out planning policies for telecommunications development. It embodies the Government's commitment to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The PPS also addresses health issues associated with telecommunications development. This has been carried forward in the SPPS, which contains regional strategic policy concerning health issues and the development of telecommunications equipment.

The five overarching objectives as set out in PPS10 have also been carried forward into the SPPS. Whilst objective four of the PPS makes reference to 'television broadcasting services', the SPPS is broader in referring, instead, to 'radio spectrum users'. However, the general policy thrust of PPS10 remains in the SPPS.

The PPS contains two planning policies that set out the main planning considerations that will be taken into account in assessing proposals for telecommunications development and proposals likely to result in radio interference. These two policies – TEL1: Control of Telecommunications Development and TEL 2: Development and Interference with Television Broadcasting Services – broadly align with the objectives of the SPPS. The policy direction of PPS10 will be retained.

8.7.3 Planning Policy Statement 11: Waste

PPS 11 was published in 2002 and sets out the Department's planning policies for the development of waste management facilities. The policies include Policy WM1 Environmental Impact of a Waste Management Facility, Policy WM2 Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities, Policy WM3 Waste Disposal, Policy WM4 Land Improvement Policy, and WM5 Development in the vicinity of Waste Management Facilities.

It is proposed that the policies in PPS 11 will be retained with minor amendments.

8.7.4 Planning Policy Statement 13: Transportation and land use

PPS 13 was published in 2005 and was prepared to assist in the implementation of the RDS to guide the integration of transportation and land use. The policy contains the following general principles:

- General Principle 1 - The integration of transportation policy and land use planning should be taken forward through the preparation of development plans and transport plans informed by transport studies.
- General Principle 2 - Accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car should be a key consideration in the location and design of development.
- General Principle 3 - The process of Transport Assessment (TA) should be employed to review the potential transport impacts of a development proposal.



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- General Principle 4 - Travel Plans should be developed for all significant travel generating uses.
- General Principle 5 - Developers should bear the costs of transport infrastructure necessitated by their development.
- General Principle 6 - Controls on parking should be employed to encourage more responsible use of the private car and to bring about a change in travel behaviour.
- General Principle 7 - Park and ride and park and share sites should be developed in appropriate locations to reduce the need to travel by car and encourage use of public transport.
- General Principle 8 - Land required to facilitate improvements in the transport network should be afforded protection.
- General Principle 9 - Reliance on the private car should be reduced through a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport.
- General Principle 10 - Rural public transport schemes should be developed to link rural dwellers to essential facilities and larger settlements.
- General Principle 11- Innovative measures should be developed for the safe and effective management of traffic.
- General Principle 12 - The integration of transport and land use planning should seek to create a more accessible environment for all.

The general principles of PPS 13 are covered in the SPPS in the transportation section and regional strategic objectives. General Principle 5 – Developers should bear the costs of transport infrastructure necessitated by their development is referred to under the SPPS Developer Contributions and Community Benefits section where it is stated that “Planning authorities can require developers to bear the costs of work required to facilitate their development proposals. Contributions may be required in a variety of circumstances including: where a proposed development requires the provision or improvement of infrastructural works over and above those programmed in a LDP”.

8.7.5 Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning and flood risk

The revised PPS15 Planning and Flood Risk published in 2014, sets out the Department’s draft planning policies to minimise and manage flood risk to people, property and the environment. It embodies the government’s commitment to sustainable development and the conservation of biodiversity. It adopts a precautionary approach to development and the use of land that takes account of emerging information relating to flood risk through the implementation of the EU Floods Directive in Northern Ireland and the implementation of sustainable drainage systems. The revised PPS is supportive to the safety and wellbeing of people.

The Council’s view is that the PPS15 should be retained with minor changes identified in the Preferred Option.

8.7.6 Planning Policy Statement 18: Renewable energy

PPS18 'Renewable Energy' sets out the Department's planning policy for development that generates energy from renewable resources. The PPS encourages the integration of renewable energy technology and greater application of the principles of Passive Solar Design in the design, siting and layout of new development in appropriate locations within the built and natural environments. The aim of this Statement is also to achieve Northern Ireland's renewable energy targets and to realise the benefits of renewable energy. The overarching objective is to ensure that the impacts of renewable technology are adequately addressed, and the built and natural, and cultural heritage features are protected.

The Council's view is that the PPS18 should be retained with some minor changes modifications as identified in the Preferred Option.





A green and active place

A protected, enhanced and attractive natural setting, reinforcing uniqueness and accessibility to all who live, work and enjoy the city





9.1 Open space, sport and outdoor recreation

In recognition of the contribution that open spaces, playing fields, and green areas make to the city, the retention or enhancement of important parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments, large tracts of countryside, landscape features and many other areas that make up the provision of green infrastructure is supported. Existing green spaces and corridors are to be protected and enhanced. Opportunities to create new areas of interconnected multi functional green space as part of new developments will be maximised. The LDP presents a unique opportunity to plan for a Green and Blue Infrastructure network to provide a multitude of recreational, environmental, ecological, socio-cultural and economic benefits for Belfast.

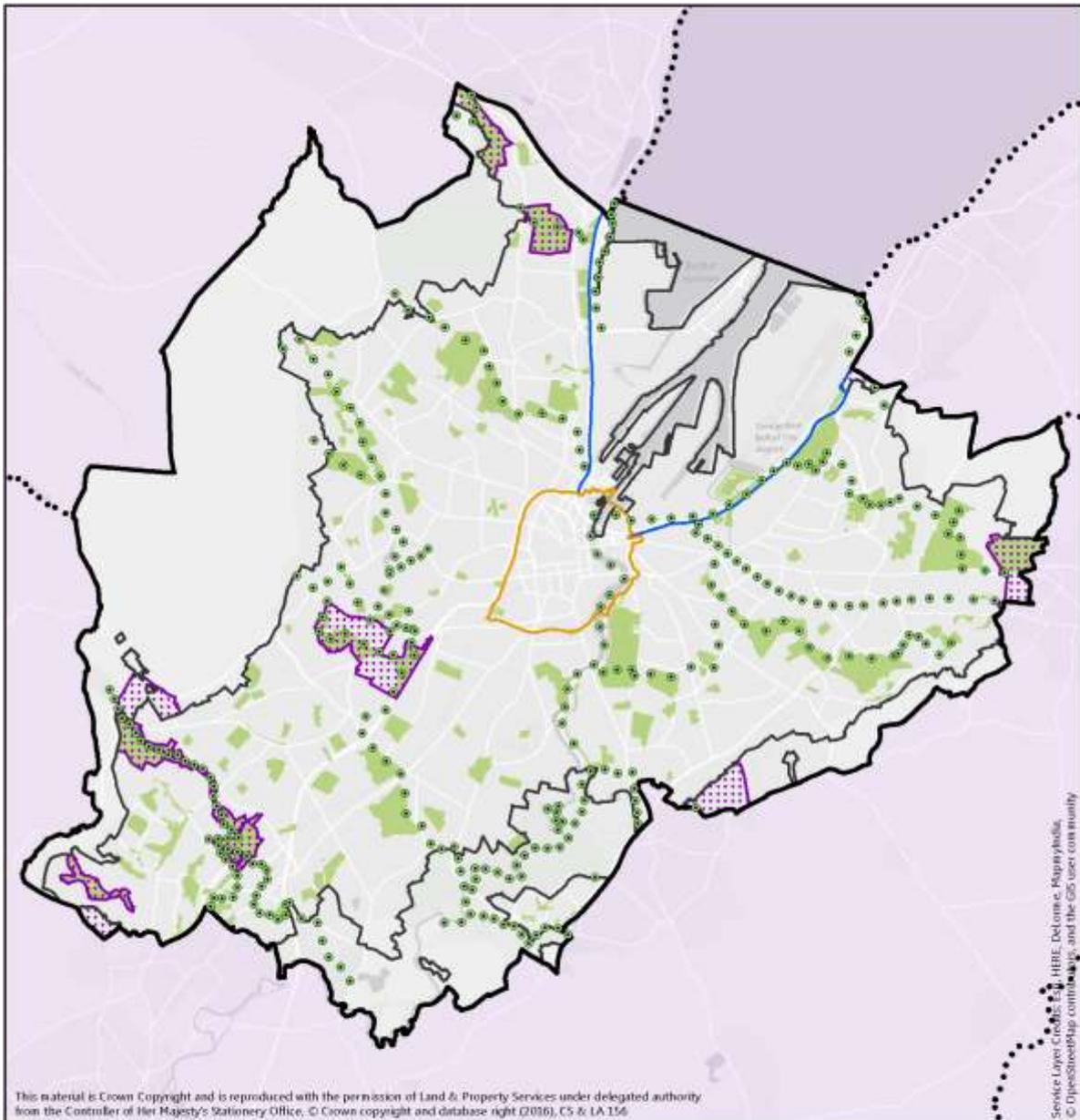
9.1.1 Open space, sport and outdoor recreation

The city has a variety of open spaces, playing fields, and green amenity areas, which have the potential to be connected to form an integrated green and blue infrastructure network capable of serving many functions and delivering significant benefits for Belfast. There is the opportunity to retain the community greenways and green wedges to form the basis of an integrated blue and green infrastructure network. This would provide benefits for recreation and sports, tourism, visual amenity, biodiversity, active transport network, flood prevention, health and wellbeing. It would build sustainable and resilient communities, in mitigating the impacts of climate change, promoting the healthy living agenda and safeguarding biodiversity.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • Liveable Place • Smart Connected and Resilient Place • Green and Active Place 	3, 4, 7, 8, 14, 15 17, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing • Belfast is a connected and environmentally connected city • Belfast is a welcoming safe, fair and inclusive city for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the economy • Living Here • City development • Working and Learning

GA1 – Open space, sport and outdoor recreation preferred option

The Preferred Option is to continue the existing policy approach to the provision and protection of open space including community greenways, natural heritage areas, the Regional Park, Belfast Hills, green wedges, and linear green communal spaces, to support an integrated approach to green and blue infrastructure networks. The plan will also review and update policy in respect of the scale of proposal for which the provision of new communal space is a requirement.



Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

- Area of Existing Open Space
- Land identified for Open Space
- Landscape Wedge
- Community Greenway
- Council Area
- Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit
- Belfast City Centre
- Belfast Harbour Area & Major Employment Location

Source: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Adopted September 2014)



Approach

The preferred option recognises the huge contribution that open spaces, and green areas make to the city and supports the retention and enhancement of important parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments, community gardens, landscape features and amenity areas that would constitute the city’s green and blue infrastructure. The provision



Green and active place

of additional open space and green corridors will be required as part of new developments to deliver the integrated and connected green and blue infrastructure network provision.

Do you think there are enough open spaces, parks, sporting opportunities and areas for recreation, walking, cycling in Belfast?

How can provision be improved?

The preferred option aims to ensure that green spaces around new development are treated as integral to a planning and design process that is conscious of the proposed green and blue infrastructure network master plan. Limited releases of open space for development will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where the loss would not result in detriment to the overall green infrastructure provision and there is scope for improving the quality of provision elsewhere.

9.1.2 Provision of new open space and green corridors

The SPSS requires all new residential development to provide new publicly accessible urban green space to enhance the quality of new developments. However, the size of many development sites in the city makes it impractical to provide green space within the curtilage of the development site. In such cases, it may be appropriate to have a planning agreement to collect financial contributions and use them to create or improve larger areas of green space.

A Green and Blue Infrastructure Network master plan is to be prepared to provide an integrated plan that can be used for decision-making purposes for development management as well as for investment decisions. This is a multi-functional space that will have a coherent sustainable urban drainage network, and will involve a number of partners to deliver the green and blue infrastructure network. It will provide a transparent plan that can be used to secure funding from a variety of sources, which may include Section 76 financial contributions from developers.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • Liveable Place • Smart Connected and Resilient Place • Green and Active Place 	3, 4 7, 8 14, 15 17, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing • Belfast is a connected and environmentally connected city • Belfast is a welcoming safe, fair and inclusive city for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the economy • Living Here • City development • Working and Learning



GA2 Provision of New Open Space and Green Corridors Preferred Option

The Preferred Option is to provide guidance on where contributions may be appropriate to support the green and blue infrastructure networks located in proximity to the new residential development.

Should the LDP contain proposals for the development of an integrated green and blue infrastructure network of green spaces and water features, providing access to amenities for recreation, walking, cycling and wildlife?

Approach

The integrated green and blue infrastructure network will be provided through connecting existing green spaces to create new interconnecting areas of multifunctional green spaces and corridors as part of new developments. The preparation of a green and blue infrastructure master plan will

provide an integrated plan that can be used for decision-making purposes for development management as well as for investment decisions.

This is important, as this is a multi-functional space that will have a coherent sustainable urban drainage network, and will involve a number of partners to deliver the green and blue infrastructure network. It will provide a transparent plan that can be used to secure funding from a variety of sources, which may include Section 76 financial contributions from Developers. This would be considered where residential developments require access to the green and blue infrastructure network nearby.

Should the Council seek financial contributions from developers towards green and blue infrastructure?

Do you know of any open spaces, local routes or rights of ways that could be used to form part of an integrated green infrastructure network to provide for wildlife, recreation, walking and cycling?

Improving access to green and blue infrastructure network will be pursued where this does not create unacceptable conflict in areas of high biodiversity value. Development that unacceptably compromises the extent and quality of green and blue infrastructure provision will not be supported.



9.2 Natural heritage and trees

The city’s natural heritage is of outstanding quality and beauty. The diversity of landscapes, habitats, species and geology, and their relationship with the urban area, contribute enormously to the city’s distinctive and attractive character. The surrounding hills, countryside, Belfast Lough and the Lagan Valley Regional Park have outstanding visual amenity value, and provide a unique and iconic setting for Belfast. The coast is of great economic importance to Belfast as the port provides a strategic economic links to Britain and Europe. However, the Coast is also a protected marine environmental with a range of distinctive habitats.

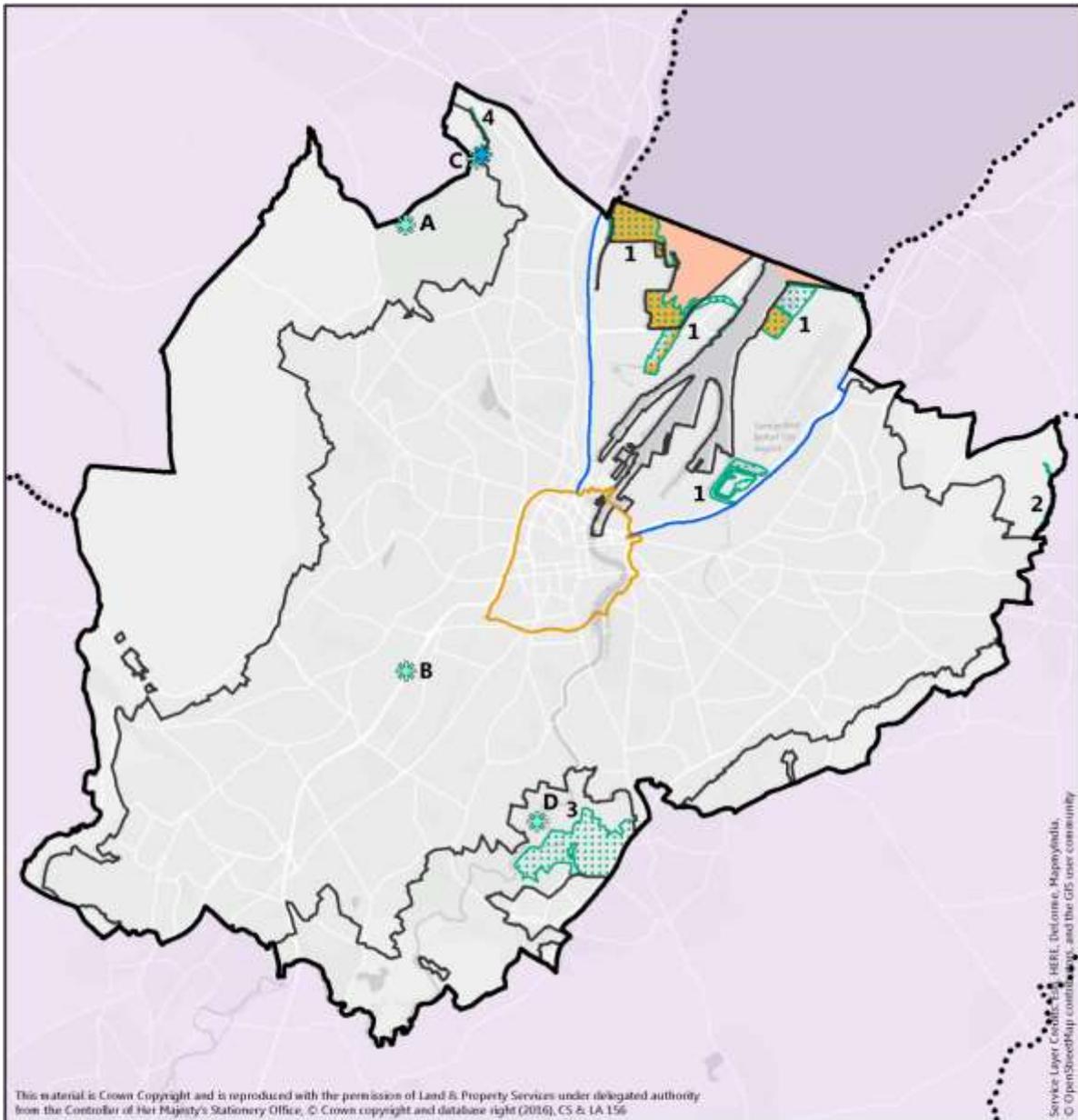
9.2.1 Natural heritage

The natural heritage contributes significantly to the quality of life and economy of Belfast. It makes the city an attractive place to live and visit. The natural heritage is one of the city’s most valuable assets. All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that development conserves and enhances the quality of the natural heritage, which must be balanced against the need to facilitate sustainable economic growth.

In this context, ‘conserve and enhance’ will allow for appropriate development in line with the principles of sustainability, which are to balance environmental, economic and social needs. Appropriate development will need to minimise impacts, conserve and enhance valued landscapes, and significant biodiversity sites.

To mitigate the potential impact of new developments there should be a requirement to provide where possible net gains in biodiversity whilst protecting or enhancing green and blue infrastructure provision in recognition of its wide-ranging benefits.

Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims	Objectives	Outcomes	Pillars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • Smart Connected and Resilient Place • Green and Active Place 	3, 4 14, 15 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing • Belfast is a connected and environmentally connected city • Belfast is a welcoming safe, fair and inclusive city for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the economy • Living Here • City development • Working and Learning



Natural Heritage Designations

- Belfast Lough Ramsar site and Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Belfast Lough Open Water SPA/ Proposed East Coast (NI) Marine SPA
- Area of Special Scientific Interest:
 - 1** Inner Belfast Lough (Part of)
 - 2** Craigtanlet Woods (Part of)
 - 3** Belvoir
 - 4** Bellevue
- Hazelwood Area of Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserve:
 - A** Ballyaghagan
 - B** Bog Meadows
 - C** Hazelwood
 - D** Lagan Meadows
- Council Area
- Metropolitan/Settlement Development Limit
- Belfast City Centre
- Belfast Harbour Area

Source: Department of the Environment, Natural Heritage Datasets (Downloaded 12/02/16)





GA3– Natural heritage preferred option

The Preferred Option is to review existing policy regarding local sites of nature conservation importance and consider the potential for the preparation of management plans and local design guides for designated areas such as AONB and Special Countryside Areas. The Local Development Plan will adopt a strategic approach to opportunities for green and blue infrastructure networks to help support biodiversity. It will establish policies to recognise the value of community greenways, natural heritage areas, open spaces, green wedges, and linear, green open spaces, as part of integrated green and blue infrastructure networks.

Approach

The Preferred Option recognises that it is the unique relationship between a vibrant city and outstanding Natural Heritage that helps to make Belfast a unique and attractive place to live, work and visit. The natural heritage contributes to a positive visual image of the city, providing a beneficial impact on the local economy through increased tourism, enhanced appeal for inward investment, and jobs in the environmental sector.

Managing the maintenance of the city's natural heritage is fundamental to the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the area. Contact with nature can improve health and wellbeing, offering free or low cost opportunities for recreation and a place of refuge from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The Preferred Option seeks to capitalise on protecting of the natural heritage and safeguarding biodiversity, the benefits of an integrated approach through the creation of a green and blue infrastructure network.

9.2.2 Trees

Trees make an important contribution to the environment, creating a varied, interesting and attractive landscape. They help define the character of an area and create a sense of place. The Council currently manages around 12,500 street trees in Belfast on behalf of Department of Infrastructure. The Council currently owns around 40,000 trees within its existing land holdings such as parks, and playing fields. Belfast has four Forest and woodlands, Belvoir Park Forest, Hazelwood, Colin Glen Forest Park, and Craigantlet Woods.

Do you support our proposed approach to protecting the natural heritage of Belfast?

Do you agree with the preparation of management plans and local design guides for designated important landscape and natural heritage areas?



Local Development Plan		Belfast Agenda	
Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant Economy • Smart Connected and Resilient Place • Green and Active Place 	Objectives 3, 4, 14, 15 18, 19	Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing • Belfast is a connected and environmentally connected city • Belfast is a welcoming safe, fair and inclusive city for all 	Pillars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the economy • Living Here • City development • Working and Learning

GA4 - Trees preferred option

The Preferred Option is that the LDP will seeks to protect existing trees and encourage further provision to offset unavoidable carbon emissions, reduce air pollution, provide shade and mitigate flood risks. This will be achieved by:

- Adopting a precautionary approach to the net loss of trees;
- Protecting trees from harm caused by development; and
- Requiring proposals to consider the potential to plant new or replacement trees through either on or off-site provision.

Do you support the protection of valuable and historic trees in the city?

Approach

The preferred option seeks to protect existing trees, and to encourage more trees to be planted in the city. This option to protects existing trees and requires new trees to be planting is justified because trees can play an important role to mitigate and adapt to environmental change, and

to build city resilience. In particular, trees can help to reduce air pollution, provide shade and reduce temperatures, and mitigate flash flood risk.

In addition, trees improve the visual amenity of new developments, and help to provide habitats for wildlife in the urban area. Trees can help to create the green ecological linkages throughout the city and form a valuable element of the green and blue infrastructure network.

Do you agree that we should seek the provision of more trees to help to enhance visual amenity, improve air quality, minimise flood risk and provide shelter or shading?



9.3 Review of relevant PPSs

9.3.1 Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural heritage

PPS2 Natural Heritage sets out the Department's planning policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural heritage. For the purpose of this PPS, natural heritage is defined as "the diversity of our habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features".

In considering the SPPS, the Council's view is that there should be some changes made to the SPPS Natural Heritage policy. This would include:

- PPS2 NH1 International and European Sites - To be retained with minor changes to include enhancing information concerning compensatory measures for International and European Designated sites through Section 76 Developers Contribution
- PPS 2 NH4 Local Sites of nature conservation importance – Policy to be retained as it is not included in the SPPS.
- PPS 2 NH6 AONB – To be replaced with a new policy concerning the preparation of management plans and local design guides for designated areas such as AONB and SCA.

9.3.2 Planning Policy Statement 8: Open space, sport and outdoor recreation

PPS8 'Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation' sets out the Department's planning policies for the protection of open space, the provision of new areas of open space in association with residential development and the use of land for sport and outdoor recreation, and advises on the treatment of these issues in development plans. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development, to the promotion of a more active and healthy lifestyle and to the conservation of biodiversity.

In considering PPS8 the Council's view is that the following policies contained in PPS8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation should be retained:

- OS1 Protection of Open Space
- OS2 Public Open Space in New Residential Development, with minor amendments proposed in the preferred option
- OS3 Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside
- OS4 Intensive Sports Facilities
- OS6 Development of Facilities ancillary to Water Sports
- OS7 The Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities.

The Council will also undertake the review of policies identified in the Preferred Options.



9.3.3 Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable development in the countryside

This PPS sets out planning policies for development in the countryside (defined as land lying outside settlement limits as identified in development plans).

The aim of PPS 21 is to manage development in the countryside in a manner consistent with achieving the strategic objectives of the RDS for Northern Ireland 2025; and in a manner that strikes a balance between the need to protect the countryside from unnecessary or inappropriate development, while supporting rural communities. This is supported by four policy objectives. PPS 21 contains 17 operational planning policies that set out the main planning considerations to be taken into consideration in assessing proposals for development in the countryside.

The SPPS (Sept 2015) has been revised to incorporate additional policy detail from PPS 21, in particular the provision for the designation of Special Countryside Areas in LDPs and to ensure their protection from unnecessary and inappropriate development.

Belfast has a relatively small rural hinterland within the Council area. PPS 21 covers an array of issues relating to the countryside whilst the large-scale rural economic development is dealt with in PPS 4. It is generally considered that PPS 21 is fit for purpose and it is therefore suggested that the vast majority of the policies can be retained, with a few policies requiring minor changes to reflect the provision of the SPPS, for example CTY 11 Farm Diversification with the additional minimum period of which a farm business is active.

9.3.4 A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (often referred to as the 'Rural Strategy') covers all of the towns, villages and countryside of Northern Ireland outside Belfast (and adjoining built up areas) and Londonderry. When published in 1993, it established objectives and policies for land use and development appropriate to the particular circumstances of rural Northern Ireland, which need to be considered on a scale wider than the individual Council Areas. It set out regional policies for the control of development, to ensure a consistent approach to rural planning matters.

However, since then a number of the existing PPSs – most notably PPS21 on Sustainable Development in the Countryside have superseded many of the policy provisions and many of the remaining policies have also now been replaced through the SPPS. However, for those topics not covered by a PPS or other policy publication the provision of the Rural Strategy remain in force.

The main element of the Rural Strategy currently in force relates to mineral development and this has been addressed in Section 8.6. However, a number of miscellaneous provisions are also still material considerations when determining relevant planning applications



Green and active place

insofar as they apply to the rural areas of Belfast's District. These policies have therefore been reviewed alongside the provisions of the broader suite of PPSs and recommendations made in relation to their inclusion within the future LDP. These relate to Landscaping (DES10), Roadside Service Facilities (IC15), Community Needs (PSU1), Overhead Cables (PSU11) and Advance Tourism Signs (TOU5). In all cases, our review has found that the policy approaches can be retained or retained with minor amendments.

10. Next Steps

At the end of the 12-week Preferred Options Paper consultation period Belfast City Council will divide the representations received into those that relate to the Plan Strategy and those that relate to the Local Policies Plan. The planning related comments that refer to the Plan Strategy will be used to inform the document, which is the next stage in the process.

Information relating to specific sites will be held over and considered as part of the Local Policies Plan, which will be published in line with the LDP timetable.

Council will publish a public consultation report for both the Preferred Options Paper. Your responses are public documents and will be available for public scrutiny. All information will be held on a database and used to assist with the preparation of the LDP and with the consideration of planning applications, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.



Glossary

Active frontage	Building frontage where there is an active visual engagement between those on the street and those on the ground floors of buildings.
Active travel	An approach to travel and transport by physically active, human powered modes, as opposed to motorised ones.
Affordable Housing	Comprises the social rented sector, housing benefit funded private rented and that part of the low cost owner occupation market which can be purchased utilising 30% or less of gross household income.
Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)	Belfast City Council has a statutory duty to annually review, assess and report on air quality across the city under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime. This is provided for via Part 3 of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 and the relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents LAQM.PGNI(09) and LAQM.TG(16). Belfast City Council has designated four Air Quality Management Areas where the health based air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter were exceeded.
Areas of Archaeological Potential	The SPSS states that LDPs should highlight, for the information of prospective developers, those areas within settlement limits, where, based on current knowledge, it is likely that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of continuing development and change. Belfast is named as an Area of Archaeological Potential.
Areas of High Scenic Value (AOHSV)	Areas of High Scenic Value (AOHSV) are designated to protect the setting of the Metropolitan Urban Area and other areas of particular landscape merit. There are portions of three AOHSV in the Belfast City Council area.
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	A designation in recognition of areas of national importance as their landscapes possess a distinctive character and landscape features of high scenic value. The purpose of this designation is to protect and enhance the qualities of these areas for environmental fulfilment, outdoor recreation and public enjoyment. There is one AONB in the Belfast City Council Area.
Areas of Scientific Interest (ASI)	Declared under the Amenity and Lands Act (Northern Ireland) 1985 where consideration must be given to maintaining the feature of scientific interest but development may proceed subject to appropriate restrictions. There is one ASI in Belfast.

Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI)

The SPPS notes the importance of LDP in taking into account the implications of local policies and proposals on all features of the archaeological and built heritage. It states that where appropriate, LDPs should designate Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI). The Giants Ring is the only ASAI in the Belfast City Council Area.

Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

Protected sites that are of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiological features designated under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (as amended). Sites are protected to conserve biodiversity and geodiversity. There are four ASSIs in Belfast.

Areas of Townscape Character (ATC)

The SPPS notes that in managing development within ATCs designated through the LDP process, the council should only permit new development where this will maintain or enhance the overall character of the area and respect its built form. There are 57 Areas of Townscape Character within the Belfast City Council Area.

Belfast Agenda

The Belfast Agenda is the new Community Plan for Belfast and was created by a partnership of key city stakeholders, residents and community organisations. The plan sets out a joint vision and long-term ambitions for Belfast's future, as well as outlining the priorities for action over the next four years.

Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS)

The BCCRIS outlines a vision to develop a world-class city centre for the future. It was prepared by the Belfast City Council City Centre Development Team and sets out a collective ambition for the continued growth and regeneration of the city core and its surrounding areas to 2030.

Belfast Hills Access Points

Emulating SFG5 of the RDS, BMAP 2015 recognises that the "Belfast Hills make a particularly important contribution to the setting of the Metropolitan Area, and extend for over 16 km from Lisburn, through Belfast, to Carnmoney Hill in Newtownabbey. There are 16 access points to the Belfast Hills.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP)

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 is a development plan prepared under the provisions of Part 3 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 by the Department of the Environment (DOE). The Plan covers the City Council areas of Belfast and Lisburn and the Borough Council areas of Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey and North Down.

Brownfield

Land that has previously been developed. May include vacant or derelict land, infill land, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings and developed land.

Built Heritage	The Belfast Council Area contains a significant number of archaeological sites and monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks, gardens and demesnes and has an important industrial heritage.
Built Heritage at Risk Register	Buildings and monuments of architectural and historic interest. Deemed to be under threat and may be suitable for restoration and repair. There are currently 49 buildings and monuments listed in the Belfast City Council area.
Coalescence	The merging together of settlements into a single larger urban area.
Community Cohesion	Community cohesion refers to the sense of togetherness and bonding exhibited by a community, which helps to hold that community together. It may include feelings of belonging together, shared purpose or identity, or sense of place.
Community Infrastructure	The community, health, leisure, nurseries and educational facilities and services that serve and help to sustain a community.
Conservation Areas	The SPSS notes that in managing development within a designated Conservation Area the guiding principle is to afford special regard to the desirability of enhancing its character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists, or to preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise. There are 13 conservation areas within the Belfast City Council area.
Countryside Assessment	Provides an overview of the existing environmental assets in the Belfast City Council Area and how these are protected. This will include the following four interrelated strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Environmental Assets Appraisal; • A landscape Assessment; • A Development Pressure Analysis; and • A Settlement Appraisal.
Creating Places	Creating Places is a DoE and DRD prepared document that seeks to achieve quality in residential development and incorporates guidance on layout and access.
Decentralised Energy	Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually but not always on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies. Locally produced energy to supply the local area or a group of buildings.
Defence Heritage	The Historic Environment Division (HED) is responsible for Northern Ireland's defence heritage, both in its conservation and protection. There are 63 sites of Defence Heritage within Belfast City Council.

DEFRA

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Department for Infrastructure (Dfi)

The Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) is one of nine Northern Ireland Departments. The main responsibilities of the Department are:

- Regional strategic planning and development policy;
- Transport strategy and sustainable transport policy;
- Public transport policy and performance;
- Road safety and vehicle regulation policy, including strategies to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads;
- Driver and operator licensing and driver and vehicle testing
- Provision and maintenance of all public roads;
- Certain policy and support work for air and sea ports;
- River and sea defence maintenance and the construction of flood alleviation schemes;
- Provision of flood maps and risk information;
- Policy on water and sewerage services and management of the Department's shareholder interest in Northern Ireland Water.

Development contribution (Section 76)

A contribution, either financial or in kind, which allows the provision of infrastructure that is necessary for a development to go ahead.

Dwellings per hectare (dph)

A measure of the density of development, i.e. the number of dwellings within 1 hectare of land.

Earth Science Interests and Assets

Include geology and geomorphology and is defined by BMAP as "the rocks and landforms of Northern Ireland from the surface on which life has developed, they have a major influence in determining the biodiversity of regions and, more directly, the physical character of the landscape." There are 6 sites within the Belfast City Council area.

Environmental Assets Appraisal

The Environmental Assets Appraisal seeks to establish and evaluate the environmental resources of the Belfast City Council Area. It also assists in defining specific development plan designations.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

Green and Blue Infrastructure is a phrase used to describe all green and blue spaces in and around our towns and cities. The term enables the consideration of the collective value of all of these spaces together. Constituent elements of green and blue infrastructure include parks, private gardens, agricultural fields, hedges, trees, woodland, green roofs, green walls, rivers and ponds. The term covers all land containing these features, regardless of its ownership, condition or size. It is all green and blue spaces in and around our towns and cities.

Green Belt

A Green Belt is a policy and land use designation used in land use planning to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding urban areas.

Green Corridor

A strip of land that provides sufficient habitat to support wildlife, often within an urban environment, thus allowing the movement of wildlife along it. Can act as vital linkages for wildlife dispersal between wetlands and the countryside. Common green corridors include railway embankments, river banks and roadside grass verges. Green corridors can also be continuous paths and cycle routes, which can link housing areas to the city centres, places of employment and community facilities. They help to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas.

Greenfield

Land on existing undeveloped or green space.

Habitats and Birds Directive

The Habitats and Birds Directive aims to maintain biodiversity of a range of "rare, threatened or endemic animal and plant species" whilst taking cognisance of the economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Section 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) requires a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) to be undertaken during the preparation of a LDP, if necessary.

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

HMO stands for House in Multiple Occupation and generally refers to one of the following:

- A house split into bedsits;
- A house or flat-share where each tenant has their own tenancy agreement; and
- Students living in shared accommodation.

Housing Association

A housing association is a society, body of trustees or company that provides rented accommodation and specializes in accommodation for special needs groups. Housing Associations are the main developers of new social housing for rent in Northern Ireland.

Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs)

The RDS introduces the concept of having housing growth indicators applied to the Region. Their purpose is to direct the distribution of housing in the Region over the period to 2035, through the development plan process, in accordance with the Spatial Development Strategy.

Housing Market Area (HMA)

A housing market area is defined as a geographical area where most people both live and work and where most people moving home (without changing job) seek a house. HMA's can overlap, and often do not marry well with local authority boundaries. Moreover, they are dynamic and HMA boundaries can change over time.

Housing Monitor

The purpose of a Housing Monitor is primarily to inform local development plan preparation by assessing the extent of housing land available within an area and the estimated number of units that this could accommodate. It will also help the Council identify where a potential shortfall in land supply might exist and serve to inform house builders on the availability of land that may be suitable for housing.

Industrial Heritage

The Plan Area contains a wealth of remains of industrial heritage, all of which are reminders of the economic development in the area. Synonymous to Belfast. The Industrial Heritage Record is included in the DAERA Monument's and Building Record. There are 745 sites of Industrial Heritage in Belfast City Council.

Infrastructure

The basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies, water services) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.

Interim Report-Sustainability Appraisal

The Interim Report is part 2 of the first stage (Stage A) of the SA process. Stage A (2) requires the preparation of the environmental report which involves:

- Identifying, describing and evaluating the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan;
- Reasonable alternatives taking into account the geographical scope of the plan and reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- Description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information.

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape Character Assessment's are a tool in identifying the landscape features that give a locality its 'sense of place'. The LCA grew out of the European Landscape Convention. The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA) identified 130 district LCAs as fragile landscapes at risk of development pressures. Of which, there are 7 in Belfast.

Leisure Transformation Programme	A £105 million investment programme to improve the Council's suite of leisure centres, programmes and services.
Life expectancy	The average period that a person may expect to live.
Lifetime Homes	A set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the occupier over their lifetime.
Listed Building	The SPSS recognises that Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest are key elements of our built heritage and are often important for their intrinsic value and for their contribution to the character and quality of settlements and the countryside. There are approximately 1379 listed buildings within the Belfast City Council area.
Local Housing Systems Analysis	An approach to understanding how local housing systems operate and change over time.
Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Wildlife Refuges	LNRs can be provided by Councils under the powers conferred to them under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. They can provide a platform for education and research as well as for public information services and recreational uses. There are four sites within the Belfast City Council Area.
Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Framework	Schedule 2 (5) of the EAPP (NI) Regulations require that "the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation." The development of an assessment framework of objectives provide a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be predicted, described, analysed and compared in a consistent way.
Local Policies Plan	The Local Policies Plan is prepared following adoption of the Plan Strategy. It outlines the detailed land use proposals, including zonings and key site requirements, for the local development plan. Together with the Plan Strategy, it will be the principle consideration when determining future planning applications for development in the city.
Masterplan	A masterplan is a plan that outlines an overall development concept for an area, including urban design, landscaping, infrastructure, service provision, circulation, present and future land use and built form. It provides a structured approach and creates a clear framework for the future development of an area.

**Northern Ireland
Housing Executive
(NIHE)**

NIHE, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, was established in 1971 as Northern Ireland's strategic housing authority. It offers a range of services to people living in socially rented, privately rented and owner occupied accommodation as well as supporting and working with a number of other public bodies, and with registered Housing Associations to facilitate the delivery of social housing in areas of identified need.

**Northern Ireland
Priority Species (NIPS)**

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (NI) Act 2011 also known as the WANE Act introduced a duty on public authorities to exercise its functions to conserve biodiversity. NIEA under DAERA maintain a list of priority species that require conservation action. There are 200 recorded NIPS within the Belfast City Council Area.

**Northern Ireland
Regional Landscape
Character Assessment
(NIRLCA)**

The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA), was published in February 2016, identifies 26 regional scale landscape character areas and provides a regional framework for landscape character and an impartial evidence base comparable to the rest of the UK, which will guide strategic decisions about landscape and set the context for more detailed local landscape studies in the future. There are 4 RLCA's within the Belfast City Council area.

**Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research
Agency (NISRA)**

NISRA is the principle source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. It aims to provide a quality, cost effective registration, statistics and research service.

Plan Strategy

The Plan Strategy outlines the strategic aims and objectives of the Local Development Plan. It is prepared following consultation on the Preferred Options Paper. Together with the local policies plan, it will be the principle consideration when determining future planning applications for development in the city.

**Preferred Options Paper
(POP)**

This Paper represents the start of work on a Local Development Plan and is a consultation document outlining what are considered to be the key plan issues and the preferred options available to address them. It seeks to promote debate on issues of strategic significance that are likely to influence the shape of future development within the city.

**Previously Developed
Land**

Previously developed land (also commonly referred to as brownfield land) is that which is, or was occupied by, a permanent structure within a defined settlement limit. The term may encompass vacant or derelict lands; infill sites; land occupied by redundant or under-used buildings; a piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or under-used and often environmentally contaminated.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)	PROWs are created through the 'Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983. Under this order, Councils have a duty "to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any public right of way in their district".
Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA)	PBMSA is accommodation that is built, or converted, with the specific intent of being occupied by students undertaking a full time course of higher or further education – either individual en suite units or sharing facilities. The inclusion of the word 'managed' highlights the importance of such accommodation being centrally supervised by the developer or landlord to provide welfare support for students and to ensure compliance with any code of conduct or tenancy agreements, etc.
Quiet Areas	The designation of Quiet Areas is a further legal requirement of END and the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. END requires Member States to 'preserve environmental noise quality where it is good' by identifying Quiet Areas within agglomerations (urban areas with a minimum population density). On 7th June 2016, Lagan Meadows was proposed as a Candidate Quiet Area and is currently under consideration by DAERA.
Ramsar Sites	The Ramsar Convention 1971 is an international treaty that provides a framework for sensitive use of wetlands. Belfast Lough is the only Ramsar site in the Belfast City Council Area.
Regional Development Strategy (2035)	The Regional Development Strategy sets the context for the sustainable development of Northern Ireland to 2035. The RDS acts as the spatial strategy of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government. The RDS was revised in 2010 to reflect the changing development of Northern Ireland and continues to set the overarching planning framework for the region.
Renewable Energy	Any naturally occurring source of energy such as solar, wind, tidal wave, biomass and hydroelectric power that is not derived from fossil or nuclear fuel.
Rural Landscape Wedges	Rural Landscape Wedges consist of buffer landscapes and open areas that can fulfil any of the objectives set out in Policy COU 1 (BMAP). There are 4 'Rural Landscape Wedges' within the Belfast City Council area.
Rural Proofing	Rural proofing is the process where any major policy and strategy are assessed to determine whether they have a differential impact on rural areas, and where appropriate, make adjustments within their plans to take account of particular rural circumstances.

Scheduled Zone (Scheduled Monuments)	Archaeological sites and monuments are scheduled for protection under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and the work of scheduling is ongoing. There are 37 scheduled archaeological monuments in the Belfast City Council area.
Secured by Design	An initiative combining the principles of 'designing out crime' in development with physical security.
Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs)	SLNCIs are established under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1995 and Local Nature Reserves that may be established by local Councils under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985. SLNCIs are managed by public agencies or voluntary bodies and are identified by their local nature importance on the basis of their flora, fauna or scientific interest. In the Belfast City Council area, there are 60 SLNCIs
Social Capital	The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively.
Social Housing	Housing provided by registered Social Landlords for rent. Such housing is allocated by reference to an approved (Department for Social Development) Common Waiting List and allocation system.
Spatial Connectivity	A measure of how well places, areas or spaces are connected or linked to each other.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	SPAs are sites established under the European Commission Directive of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC), commonly known as the 'Birds Directive'. SPAs are important areas for breeding, over-wintering and migrating birds. Currently Belfast has 2 SPA's, Belfast Lough SPA and Belfast Lough Open Water SPA.
State Care Sites	Archaeological sites and monuments are taken into the care of the DfC under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. State Care sites and monuments represent all periods of human settlement in Ireland from circa 7,000 BC to the 21st century. There are four sites within state care within the Belfast City Council area.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The SEA is set out in European Directive 2001/42/EC and is transposed into Northern Ireland law by the 'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (NI) 2004 (EAPP (NI) 2004), referred to as 'SEA Regulations'. The SEA is a procedure that contributes to the integration of environmental considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)	The Department of the Environment's (now Department of Infrastructure) Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) published in 2015, sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development. It sets the strategic direction for the new councils to bring forward detailed operational policies within future local development plans.
Sub-national population projections (SNPP)	Sub-national population projections use past trends to project forward the population to give an indication of the future population for 25 years from the base year.
Suburban Sprawl	The unplanned spreading of suburban developments into the areas adjoining the edge of a settlement.
Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) supports, clarifies or illustrated by example planning policy statements and plans. This can take the form of design guidance, such as the recent one council developed on Purpose Built and Managed Student Accommodation or guides prepared for Conservation Areas. It also includes a set of Development Control Advice Notes that explain the criteria and technical standards to be considered when dealing with specific categories or particular aspects of development. Where relevant to a particular development proposal supplementary guidance will be taken into account as a material consideration in making decisions.
Supported Housing	Supported Housing enables vulnerable people to live more independently, both in their own home and in the community, through the provision of housing related support services.
Sustainability Appraisal - Scoping Report	<p>The Scoping Report is the first stage (Stage A) of the SA process and it involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing relevant plans, policies and programmes, and objectives relevant to the plan with information on synergies or inconsistencies; • Collecting baseline information; • Identifying the economic, social and environmental issues and objectives the Council proposes to address in helping to deliver sustainable development through the LDP; • Developing the proposed framework by which the strategic options and detailed policies and proposals of the LDP will be appraised; and • Consulting on the scope of the SA (incorporating SEA) in accordance with the SEA Directive, which has been transposed into Northern Ireland law by the 'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 EAPP (NI) Reg 11.

Sustainability Appraisal of Reasonable Alternative Options

Presents the summaries of the likely significant effects (positive and negative) of the Reasonable Alternatives considered to determine the preferred option for the preparation of the Preferred Options Paper (POP).

Sustainable Development

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- An economic role. Contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- A social role. Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural wellbeing; and
- An environmental role. Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

SUDS are a sequence of water management practices that seek to alleviate the problems associated with hard and paved surfaces in urban environments, by storing or re-using surface water at source, thereby decreasing flow rates to watercourses and improving water quality.

Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)	The 'Together: Building a United Community' (TBUC) Strategy, published on 23 May 2013, reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.
Town Cramming	Can also be known as urban crowding and is linked to increased housing densities and the loss of open spaces within settlements. It can result in poor environments, noise, congestion and lack of recreational and open space.
Travellers	A generic group as defined by the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 i.e. "having a shared history, culture and traditions, including a nomadic way of life."
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	The Council has a duty to protect trees under Section 122 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are designated to trees (either singularly or in a group) which are of high amenity or historic value or, for its rarity. There are over 160 TPOs in Belfast.
Unscheduled Monuments	There were a total of 144 other recorded archaeological sites and monuments in the Belfast City Council Area.
Urban Capacity Study	An Urban Capacity Study assesses the supply of land and buildings that may be available to accommodate new housing development. They are a valuable tool in facilitating sustainable development by identifying land and buildings within an area that might be reused for housing purposes and to form the basis for choosing new housing sites and the management of their release through the local development plan.
Urban Footprint	This is defined as the continuous built-up area of a settlement. Urban footprints have been identified and set as the baseline of January 2001 and for monitoring purposes will not be altered for five years. The boundary is represented by an uninterrupted line, often lying inside the planned settlement limit. It contains land that has a formal urban use and, for example, gardens on the edge of the settlement will be included within the urban area as they form part of a curtilage of a building. Undeveloped zoned land at the edge of the settlement is excluded.
Urban Landscape Wedges	Urban Landscape Wedges are open areas that are designated to separate localities within the Metropolitan Urban Area. They have a significant role in helping to define and retain the identities and character of the component parts of the urban area and preventing the merging of different city communities. There are 5 designated sites within the Belfast City Council area.

Urban Regeneration

Urban regeneration, also known as urban renewal or renaissance, is a program of land or building redevelopment in areas of medium to high-density urban land use. It includes a focus on significant physical, economic, community and social interventions within a designated area. The development of masterplans and other strategies within an urban renewal area is an important part of the process in establishing a clear framework for the improvement and revitalization of these areas.

Viability

A measure of a centres capacity to attract ongoing investment for maintenance, importance and adaptation to changing needs.

Vitality

A measure of how busy a centre is.

Walkability

The measure of how suitable or appealing an area is to walking. Factors influencing walkability include the presence or absence of quality footpaths or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and safety, amongst others. Walkability is an important concept in sustainable urban design.

Wellbeing

A good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state influenced by health, happiness and prosperity. For a larger group of people, it could be described as the welfare of that group.

Appendix A: Review of regional Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
Planning Policy Statement 2 - Natural Heritage (Adopted July 2013)				
NH1	European and Ramsar Sites - International	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain with enhanced information relating to compensatory measures or s76 planning agreements.	GA3
NH2	Species Protected by Law	No longer required	Policy now contained within SPPS	GA3
NH3	Sites of Nature Conservation Importance - National	No longer required	Policy now contained within SPPS	GA3
NH4	Sites of Nature Conservation Importance - Local	Retain policy approach	Similar policy required by SPPS.	GA3
NH5	Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance	No longer required	Policy now contained within SPPS	GA3
NH6	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Replace with policy provisions	Replace with updated policy to address new SPPS requirements, such as AONB Management plans and local design guides.	GA3
Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking (Adopted February 2005)				
AMP1	Creating an Accessible Environment	Retain policy approach	It is essential to retain this policy to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.	LP7, LP10, LP11, LP13, SCR4, SCR6, VE12
AMP2	Access to Public Roads	Retain policy approach	Requires consultation with the Department for Infrastructure.	SCR6, LP12
AMP3	Access to Protected Routes	No longer required	Policy already superseded by PPS3 AMP3 Clarification.	LP12
AMP4	Protection for New Transport Schemes	Retain policy approach	Required to comply with SPPS provisions.	SCR6
AMP5	Disused Transport Routes	Retain policy approach	Policy required to meet SPPS requirements.	SCR6
AMP6	Transport Assessment	Retain policy approach	Transport Assessments, which may include a Travel Plan, are required for consultation with Transport NI.	LP7, LP12, SCR5, SCR6
AMP7	Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements	Retain policy approach	Requires consultation with the Department for Infrastructure.	SCR7

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
AMP8	Cycle Provision	Retain policy approach	Operational policy not addressed in SPPS.	SCR4
AMP9	Design of Car Parking	Retain policy approach	Operational policy not addressed in SPPS.	SCR7
AMP10	Provision of Public and Private Car Parks	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Not addressed in SPPS. May need to be updated to reflect Council's Car Parking Strategy.	SCR7
AMP11	Temporary Car Parks	Retain policy approach	Temporary car parks not addressed in SPPS.	SCR7
Planning Policy Statement 3 - Clarification of Policy AMP 3: Access to Protected Routes (Adopted October 2006)				
AMP3	Access to Protected Routes (Revision)	Retain policy approach	Similar policy required by SPPS.	LP12
Planning Policy Statement 4 - Planning and Economic Development (Adopted November 2010)				
PED1	Economic Development in Settlements	Replace with new policy provisions	Update to reflect SPPS sequential approach and better protect viability of the city centre	GA2, VE1 – VE13
PED2	Economic Development in the Countryside	Replace with new policy provisions	Update to reflect SPPS sequential approach	VE1, VE2, VE3
PED3	Expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	Replace with new policy provisions	Remove presumption in favour of development in the countryside	VE1, VE2, VE3
PED4	Redevelopment of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	Replace with new policy provisions	Remove presumption in favour of development in the countryside	VE1, VE2, VE3
PED5	Major Industrial Development in the Countryside	Retain policy approach	Complies with SPPS sequential test	VE1, VE2, VE3
PED6	Small Rural Projects	Replace with new policy provisions	Remove presumption in favour of development in the countryside	VE1, VE2, VE3
PED8	Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses	Retain policy approach	No change required to policy	VE3
PED9	General Criteria for Economic Development	Retain policy approach	Criteria more extensive than SPPS requirements.	GA2, VE1 – VE13
PED 7 ' The Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses' (Adopted September 2011)				
PED7	Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses	Replace with new policy provisions	Removal of reference to 'significant adverse impact', which suggests a lot of harm is ok.	VE1, VE2, VE3

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
Planning Policy Statement 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage (Adopted March 1999)				
BH1	The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Regional Importance and their Settings	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain policy with changes to reflect updated SPPS approach	LP15
BH2	The Protection of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and their Settings	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Update to reflect 'need' test contained within SPPS.	LP15
BH3	Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation	Retain policy approach	Such policy required to meet SPPS requirements.	LP15
BH4	Archaeological Mitigation	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Needs to be updated to reflect additional SPPS requirements.	LP15
BH5	The Protection of World Heritage Sites	No longer required	There are no World Heritage Sites in Belfast	N/A
BH6	The Protection of Parks, Gardens and Demesnes of Special Historic Interest	No longer required	Policy addressed more fully in SPPS.	LP15, LP16, GA1, GA3
BH7	Change of Use of a Listed Building	Retain policy approach	Council could produce supplementary guidance to outline the approach it will take in assessing proposals against these criteria.	LP15, LP16
BH8	Extension or Alteration of a Listed Building	Retain policy approach	Council could produce supplementary guidance to outline the approach it will take in assessing proposals against these criteria.	LP15, LP16
BH9	The Control of Advertisements on a Listed Building	Replace with new policy provisions	More detailed local guidance required to supplement general SPPS criteria	LP15, LP16
BH10	Demolition of a Listed Building	Replace with new policy provisions	New policy required to reflect issues raised through implementation. The economic viability of the development can outweigh adverse impact on the heritage asset	LP15, LP16
BH11	Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building	Retain policy approach	May require additional guidance to add detail to retained policy.	LP15, LP16

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
BH12	New Development in a Conservation Area	Retain policy approach with minor changes	More detailed local guidance required to supplement general SPPS criteria	LP15, LP16
BH13	The Control of Advertisements in a Conservation Area	Replace with new policy provisions	Require detailed criteria against which signage will be assessed - scale, front, colour, materials, degree of projection etc. and set out the types of signs that will have an adverse impact on the overall character, appearance and setting.	LP15, LP16
BH14	Demolition in a Conservation Area	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Need updated policy covering buildings and elements of buildings - now that partial demolition requires demolition consent.	LP15, LP16
BH15	The Re-use of Non-listed Vernacular Buildings	Replace with new policy provisions	Update policy to reflect potential for local listing, Article 4 Directions and use of s76 Agreements.	LP15
Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 6 - Areas of Townscape Character (Adopted August 2005)				
ATC1	Demolition Control in an Area of Townscape Character	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Update Policy to apply to Conservation Areas as well as ATCs. Could also benefit from detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance.	LP15
ATC2	New Development in an Area of Townscape Character	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Update Policy to apply to Conservation Areas as well as ATCs. Could also benefit from detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance.	LP15, LP16
ATC3	The Control of Advertisements in an Area of Townscape Character	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Update Policy to apply to Conservation Areas as well as ATCs.	LP15
PPS7 Quality Residential Environments (Adopted June 2001)				
QD1	Quality in New Residential Development	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Design criteria may need minor amendments to meet SPPS requirements	LP7
QD2	Design Concept Statements, Concept Masterplans and Comprehensive Planning	Retain policy approach	SPPS requires inclusion of such a policy	VE13

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
Addendum to PPS7: Residential Extensions and Alterations (Adopted March 2008)				
EXT1	Residential Extensions and Alterations	Retain policy approach	Retain both policy and Annex A (guidance for residential extensions and alterations) referred to within the Policy. The Annex A guidance could be addressed through future Supplementary Planning Guidance.	LP7
Addendum to PPS7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas (Adopted August 2010)				
LC1	Protecting Local Character, Environmental Quality and Residential Amenity	Retain policy approach with minor changes	May need to be updated depending on any changes to Policy QD1. Retention (with minor changes) should also include specifying Space Standards currently addressed in Annex A of the PPS7 Addendum. However, these may require update to ensure alignment with most recent DfC Space Standards and building regulations. The definition of 'Established Residential Areas' contained within Annex E of this Addendum will also require retention within LDP to support the application of policy LC1.	LP7
LC2	The Conversion or Change of Use of Existing Buildings to Flats or Apartments	Replace with new policy provisions	Council wish to provide a more enabling environment for conversion of existing buildings. May also introduce specific policy on space standards.	VE11
LC3	Permeable Paving in New Residential Developments	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace with greater link to flood risk policies.	SRC12
Planning Policy Statement 8 - Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (Adopted February 2004)				
OS1	Protection of Open Space	Retain policy approach	Policy clearer than reference set out in SPPS.	GA1
OS2	Public Open Space in New Residential Development	Retain policy approach	Similar policy required by SPPS.	GA1, LP7
OS3	Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside	Retain policy approach	Policy provides additional detail to SPPS provisions.	GA1, SCR8
OS4	Intensive Sports Facilities	Retain policy approach	Policy adds detailed criteria to SPPS provisions.	GA1, LP8
OS5	Noise Generating Sports and Outdoor Recreational Activities	No Longer Required	Policy adequately addressed through SPPS.	GA1, SCR8
OS6	Development of Facilities Ancillary to Water Sports	Retain policy approach	Criteria based policy adds detail to text retained within SPPS.	GA1, SCR8

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
OS7	The Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities	Retain policy approach	Policy provides greater detail to SPPS provisions.	GA1, SCR8
Planning Policy Statement 10 - Telecommunications (Adopted April 2002)				
TEL1	Control of Telecommunications Development	Retain policy approach	Policy aligns with SPPS objectives.	SCR1
TEL2	Development and Interference with Television Broadcasting Services	Retain policy approach	Policy aligns with SPPS objectives.	SCR1
Planning Policy Statement 11 - Planning and Waste Management (Adopted December 2002)				
WM1	Environmental Impact of a Waste Management Facility	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Criteria provide greater clarity than SPPS policy. Will need to reference the Council's Local Waste Management Plan.	SCR8, SCR13
WM2	Waste Collection and Treatment Facilities	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Criteria provide greater clarity than SPPS policy. Will need to reference the Council's Local Waste Management Plan.	SCR13
WM3	Waste Disposal	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Criteria provide greater clarity than SPPS policy. Will need to reference the Council's Local Waste Management Plan.	SCR13
WM4	Land Improvement	Retain policy approach	Retain policy to comply with SPPS requirements.	SCR8, SCR11, SCR13
WM5	Development in the vicinity of Waste Management Facilities	Retain policy approach	Policy not addressed in SPPS	SCR8, SCR13
PPS12: Housing in Settlements (Adopted July 2005)				
HS1	Living Over the Shop	Replace with new policy provisions	Council wish to provide a more enabling environment for living over the shops.	LP1, VE11
HS2	Social Housing	Replace with new policy provisions	Policy to be included on 'affordable' housing rather than 'social' housing	LP2
HS3	Travellers Accommodation	No Longer Required	Policy already superseded.	LP5
HS4	House Types and Size	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Could set targets % based on need	LP3
PCP1	Increased Housing Density without Town Cramming	Retain policy approach	Policy required to meet RDS and SPPS objectives.	LP1

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
PCP2	Good Design	Retain policy approach	Retain to meet SPPS requirements. Detail could be addressed through SPG.	LP7, LP11
PCP3	Sustainable Forms of Development	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace with specific % targets for brownfield land development	LP4, LP6,
PCP4	Balanced Communities	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace with more detailed policy on housing mix, which should include reference to 'affordable' housing rather than 'social' housing	LP2, LP3, LP10, VE11
PPS12: Housing in Settlements - Policy HS 3 (amended) Travellers Accommodation (Adopted January 2013)				
HS3	Travellers Accommodation (Amended)	No Longer Required	Policy covered within SPPS. Could provide a locally specific policy if new Traveller Sites are required.	LP5
Planning Policy Statement 13 - Transportation and Land Use (Adopted February 2005)				
GP1	General Principle 1	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP2	General Principle 2	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP3	General Principle 3	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP4	General Principle 4	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP5	General Principle 5	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP6	General Principle 6	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP7	General Principle 7	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
GP8	General Principle 8	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP9	General Principle 9	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP10	General Principle 10	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP11	General Principle 11	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
GP12	General Principle 12	No Longer Required	PPS13 General Principles addressed through SPPS, Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan and LDP Objectives.	LP12, LP13, SCR4, SCR5, SCR6, SCR7
Revised Planning Policy Statement 15 - Planning and Flood Risk (Adopted September 2014)				
FLD1	Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal Flood Plains	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain with some additions in relation to man-made and natural Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs).	SCR12
FLD2	Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure	Retain policy approach	May wish to supplement retained policies with proposed flood defence locations, if known.	SCR12
FLD3	Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Could be updated to reference use of flood management schemes relating to future growth needs.	SCR12
FLD4	Artificial Modification of Watercourses	Retain policy approach	Aligns with SPPS and is clear and concise.	SCR12
FLD5	Development in Proximity to Reservoirs ¹³	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain, but supplement requirements for flood mitigation measures.	SCR8, SCR12
Planning Policy Statement 16 - Tourism (Adopted June 2013)				
TSM1	Tourism Development in Settlements	No Longer Required	Adequately addressed through SPPS	VE10
TSM2	Tourism Amenities in the Countryside	No Longer Required	Adequately addressed through SPPS	VE10

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
TSM3	Hotels, Guest Houses and Tourist Hostels in the Countryside	Replace with new policy provisions	Needs to be updated to comply with SPPS and Tourism NI Order 1992	VE10
TSM4	Major Tourism Development in the Countryside - Exceptional Circumstances	No Longer Required	Addressed in SPPS	VE10
TSM5	Self Catering Accommodation in the Countryside	Retain policy approach	Issue not addressed within SPPS.	VE10
TSM6	New and Extended Holiday Parks in the Countryside	Retain policy approach	Specified criteria add detail to general SPPS references	VE10, GA3
TSM7	Criteria for Tourism Development	Retain policy approach	Design criteria add detail to general SPPS references	VE10
TSM8	Safeguarding of Tourism Assets	No Longer Required	Adequately addressed through SPPS	VE10, LP15, GA3, LP16
Planning Policy Statement 17 - Control of Outdoor Advertisements (Adopted March 2006)				
AD1	Amenity and Public Safety	No Longer Required	Two objectives addressed in SPPS. May require supplementary planning guidance to clarify detail for Belfast.	SCR8, LP15
Planning Policy Statement 18 - Renewable Energy (Adopted August 2009)				
RE1	Renewable Energy Development	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain with some minor modifications to reflect the local Belfast context.	SCR10
RE2	Integrated Renewable Energy and Passive Solar Design	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain policy, but update to make greater reference to cumulative impact.	SCR10
Planning Policy Statement 21 - Sustainable Development in the Countryside (Adopted June 2010)				
AMP3	Access to Protected Routes (Consequential Revision)	Retain policy approach	Access to Protected Routes in the Countryside not addressed through SPPS.	LP12, SCR6
CTY1	Development in the Countryside	Retain policy approach with minor changes	SPPS requires LDP to address the issues outlined within this policy. References to related PPS policies may need to be updated (PPS6, PPS7, PPS8, PPS12, PPS18, PPS21, and Rural Strategy).	LP1, VE1 – VE3
CTY2	Development in Dispersed Rural Communities	No Longer Required	Dispersed Rural Communities not addressed through SPPS.	VE1 – VE3

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
CTY2a	New Dwellings in Existing Clusters	Retain policy approach	Policy is more prescriptive than SPPS provisions.	LP1
CTY3	Replacement Dwellings	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification and Annex 2 of PPS21	LP1
CTY4	The Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings	Retain policy approach	Retain alongside policy provisions of PP6 for listed buildings.	LP1
CTY5	Social and Affordable Housing	Retain policy approach	Retain to add detail to partial SPPS coverage.	LP2
CTY6	Personal and Domestic Circumstances	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	GA3
CTY7	Dwellings for Non-Agricultural Business Enterprises	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	VE1 – VE3
CTY8	Ribbon Development	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	LP12, SCR6, LP1
CTY9	Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	LP1, SCR1
CTY10	Dwellings on Farms	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21. Also includes reference to policies CTY13, CTY14 and CTY16.	LP1
CTY11	Farm Diversification	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain with the additional min. period of which a farm business is active referenced in SPPS.	VE1 – VE3
CTY12	Agricultural and Forestry Development	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Retain with the additional min. period of which a farm business is active referenced in SPPS.	VE1 – VE3
CTY13	Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	LP11, LP16
CTY14	Rural Character	Retain policy approach	Policy helps address cumulative impact, which is limited in SPPS.	LP16
CTY15	The Setting of Settlements	Retain policy approach	Only partial coverage within SPPS.	LP16
CTY16	Development Relying on Non-Mains Sewerage	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside justification and amplification from PPS21.	SCR2, SCR8
Planning Policy Statement 23 - 'Enabling Development for the Conservation of Significant Places' (Adopted April 2014)				
ED1	Enabling Development	Retain policy approach	Retain policy alongside associated Best Practice Guide.	LP15, LP1, VE1 – VE3

Policy	Subject	Preferred Approach To Policy	Justification	Relevant Preferred Options
Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (Adopted September 1993)				
DES10	Landscaping	Retain policy approach	Aligns with SPPS references under 'Natural Heritage'.	GA2
IC15	Roadside Service Facilities	Retain policy approach	Approach reflects and complements SPPS provision.	VE1 – VE3
MIN1	Environmental Protection	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace policy to align with updated SPPS policy approach. Will consider the need for a Joint Mineral Plan with surrounding Council areas.	SCR8
MIN2	Visual Implications	No Longer Required	SPPS has greater provisions than this older policy.	SCR8
MIN3	Areas of Constraint	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Update to reflect SPPS approach.	SCR8
MIN4	Valuable Minerals	Replace with new policy provisions	Update to reflect changes to Permitted Development Rights.	SCR8
MIN5	Mineral Reserves	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace with policies specifying where mineral development would or would not be suitable.	SCR8
MIN6	Safety and Amenity	Retain policy approach	Aligns with SPPS provision for mitigation measures to be imposed through appropriate conditions.	SCR8
MIN7	Traffic	Replace with new policy provisions	Need to update to address difficulties in monitoring activity for enforcement purposes.	SCR8
MIN8	Restoration	Replace with new policy provisions	Replace to reflect updated SPPS policy, including use of appropriate planning conditions and planning agreements at the planning application stage.	SCR8
PSU1	Community Needs	Retain policy approach	Aligns with updated SPPS provisions.	GA3
PSU11	Overhead Cables	Retain policy approach with minor changes	Policy provides greater detail than SPPS, but may need to be updated to reflect changes in national guidance.	SCR1
TOU5	Advance Direction Signs	Retain policy approach	SPPS does not address signs directing visitors to tourist attractions.	SCR8, LP16

**We want to hear your views on the future of Belfast.
You can give us your feedback by completing a
questionnaire on our website yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk
by Thursday 20 April 2017.**

**To find out more or to download a copy
of the Preferred Options Paper go to our
website or contact:**

**Belfast Planning Service
Belfast City Council
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP
T: 028 90 320 202, ext 2255
E: planning@belfastcity.gov.uk**



**Belfast
City Council**