

GLENGORMLEY TOWN CENTRE

BAESLINE REPORT

APRIL 2010

SANDRA'S
VILLAGE HOME BAKERY

THOMPSONS
Tel: 9083 2507
Family Butchers

The Hair Room

O'Connor
Kennedy
Turtle
EXCELLENT FIRST FLOOR
PROPERTY FOR SALE
BUSINESS NOT AFFECTED
9024 8181 To Let

TO LET

POUNDZONE

Thompson's
FAMILY BUTCHERS
PHONE TO
832507
SPECIAL OFFER

NORTHERN IRELAND
FARM QUALITY
ASSURED

BRING IT ON

TRIBAL

All drawings based on Land and Property Services data with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright and database rights MOU209.

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report is the first substantive output of the commission to prepare a Regeneration Masterplan for Glengormley Town Centre. It is a background document and sets out the background information collated during the initial phase of the project, based on a review of existing materials and consultations with key stakeholders. It is from this baseline position that development options and proposals will be generated.

Policy Context

The national planning policy framework for Northern Ireland seeks to identify sites for high quality, mixed use developments in existing urban areas, most notably in town centres (PPS1). This may include elements of residential accommodation (PPS5). This in turn helps deliver the PPS3 policy aims of more sustainable transport choices, greater accessibility and reducing the need to travel.

PPS5 underlines the importance of completing a Town Centre Health Check (see below) and recognises the need to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres. The policies seek to promote retail development in town centres, although it recognises the role commercial leisure development can play in town centres. PPS5 also recognises the important contribution town centre living can make to vitality and viability.

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) recognises Glengormley as part of the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA). In particular, Newtownabbey is recognised as an area with potential for significant housing growth, as well

as providing a leisure role for the north and west of the BMA. Policy BMA 2.2 promotes physical renewal, whilst Policy BMA 2.3 seeks to enhance the physical quality of the urban environment. Additional policies seek to:

- Direct and manage future housing growth, including innovation in the form of housing development;
- Promote a balanced spread of economic development;
- Promote a sustainable approach to the provision of tourism infrastructure and enhanced 'first impression points';
- Develop and enhance the Metropolitan Transport Corridors and improve public transport;
- Manage traffic demand and better integrate land use planning and transportation;
- Encourage walking and cycling;
- Conserve the built environment; and
- Facilitate access to a range of recreational and cultural activities.

At a local level, although technically out of date, the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 provides the existing policy context. It seeks to:

- Develop small business units close to residential areas;
- Improve public transport;
- Locate new shopping development in existing town centres, including large retail warehouses; and
- Enhance Local Shopping Centres such as Glengormley;

The replacement local policy is currently under preparation. The Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015

seeks to strengthen the role of the metropolitan area, promote urban renewal and enhance quality of life. Glengormley is designated as a Town Centre, providing shoppers with accessible convenience and comparison goods close to where they live.

The policies of most relevance to Glengormley Town Centre include:

- SETT 3: Supports and enhances the vitality and viability of town centres;
- SETT 4: Facilitates development on Arterial Routes;
- HOU 4: Promotes the growth of housing stock in town centres;
- TRAN 1: Ensures adequate provision for public transport, walking and cycling;
- R 6: Encourages smaller retail proposals to serve local need in Glengormley;
- OF 1: Promotes office developments within designated town centres;
- OF 2: Restricts office developments in Glengormley to 400 sq m;
- UE 4: Sets a high standard of quality for new non-residential developments; and
- UE 6: Prevents the provision of ground floor parking along street frontages in town centres.

The Antrim Road forms part of the Antrim to Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridor (MTC), one of eight key transport routes within the BMA. The route also constitutes a Quality Bus Corridor. The Belfast Metropolitan

Transport Plan (BMTP) 2015 seeks to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as improving public transport services.

Development Context

Glengormley town centre lies in close proximity to two large out-of-town retail centres - Abbey Centre and the Northcott Shopping Centre. Both centres have development proposals for the extension or re-development in the future and provide significant competition that reduces Glengormley's potential to develop as a retail destination.

Within the Glengormley town centre, a number of planning applications have been approved recently for a variety of schemes. Most notably, the Henderson Group are seeking to redevelop the existing BP Service Station and adjacent Kwik Fit Garage to provide new retail accommodation. As part of the process, they have also considered the potential to redevelop a significant area of land in the south of the town centre. To date, no comprehensive scheme has been agreed with all of the relevant parties and the Group now intend to complete their scheme by September 2010. Immediately adjacent to this, Bluehouse Developments have also recently received planning consent for the erection of a three-storey apartment block fronting onto Antrim Road.

Across the Antrim Road, Mr Frank McNeill has considered a number of redevelopment options for his land, which includes the Thunderdome restaurant. He received approval for a 44-bed hotel in 2008, but has now decided not to pursue this scheme. Instead, he is seeking to

deliver new retail development fronting onto Antrim Road, in partnership with the Bank of Ireland. He is also currently re-fitting part of his restaurant with a view to providing a frontage onto Ferrier Court, delivering the potential of an outdoor entertainment venue.

In addition, there are six recent planning applications for retail, office, leisure and residential accommodation within the town centre. To date, only one of the approvals has been delivered. There are also several planning applications relating to residential developments on the edge of the town centre. In total, an additional 84 units will be delivered.

Transport and Access

Walking is often difficult, unpleasant and even unsafe within Glengormley. There is an absence of pedestrian crossing facilities in the core part of the centre, which exacerbates the lack of cohesion and severance experienced in the centre. This results in low levels of pedestrian activities. Pavement widths within the town centre are variable and the provision of dropped kerbs is not comprehensive. This makes movement with wheelchairs and buggies difficult. There is no provision for cycling.

Although there is no data available on traffic flows through Glengormley Town Centre, anecdotal evidence suggests congestion occurs on most of the approaching roads. The town centre is dominated by the four-lane Antrim Road running through the centre, with parking restrictions in place to enable free-flowing traffic. Again, this makes pedestrian movement difficult.

There is one free off-street public car park in Glengormley, as well as a number of additional off-street spaces associated with particular land uses, such as the cinema and restaurants. Some perpendicular parking is provided in front of a number of new units to the north of the centre, but there is evidence of informal forecourt parking, often on the footpath, in other parts of the centre. Again, this creates an unpleasant walking environment for pedestrians.

Both the A6 and the A8 are important for bus services, meaning Glengormley is well served by a frequent bus service to the centre of Belfast. However, public transport links to the Abbey Centre and Valley Leisure Centre are poor. There is only one pair of bus stops serving the centre of Glengormley, meaning visitors are unable to arrive at one end of the centre and depart at the other. In addition, there are no bus priority measures in place, meaning journey schedules are disrupted and reliability is reduced.

Market Analysis

The town of Glengormley is situated in a densely populated hinterland and is in close proximity to Belfast City Centre, Antrim, Templepatrick, Ballyclare and Carrickfergus. The town centre is busy, particularly with car borne traffic emphasising Glengormley's strategic location close to Sandyknowes roundabout and at the "fiveways" intersection (linking Belfast, Antrim and Glengormley) of a number of Newtownabbey's more major arterial routes.

Glengormley benefits from excellent road links to Belfast City Centre both via the Antrim Road and the M2. It has, as such, asserted its position as one of Belfast's most popular

and fastest growing commuter locations, further enhanced by the topography of the area, which from many areas offers excellent views overlooking Belfast Lough.

There is however a price to pay for the town's strategic location and popularity. Considerable traffic congestion issues have beset the town for a number of years as the town has undergone the transformation from peripheral village to densely populated suburb. The infrastructure seems to be no longer capable of satisfactorily servicing the now considerable demands now placed upon it, both as the population has increased and as they have become overwhelmingly "car borne".

From a retail perspective, this situation combined with more structural changes in the retail landscape in recent years has not been to the benefit of the local independent sector. The former village of Glengormley, once at the centre of a smaller community in which butchers, bakeries, furniture shops, fashion shops and Newsagents combined to generate a distinct sense of place finds itself now lacking in identity as these occupiers have disappeared, not least due to the emergence of Tesco et al and the ever-increasing accessibility of nearby competing retail centres such as the Abbey Centre and Belfast City Centre.

The former "Village Square" at the junctions of the Carnmoney Road and the Antrim Road at one time provided a focal point and "sense of arrival" for Glengormley Village Centre. This sense of identity has been lost to a combination of suburban sprawl, car domination and road widening schemes. As a result, the town lacks an identifiable centre.

The accessibility and quantity of public car parking within the town centre is considered to be poor and a key constraint to unlocking any latent potential that the town may have.

To emphasise the positive however, the town's densely populated surroundings is a significant asset. With a more amenable town centre in which parking is more accessible and the pedestrian shopper is able to circulate more easily, it is possible to envisage that a limited number of new retailers could be attracted to the town.

In terms of the extant stock of commercial property, currently the character of the town centre is being compromised by aging buildings and too many poor quality retail fascias. Over the course of the Masterplan timeframe we envisage that buildings will be redeveloped and refurbished to provide better quality units, which is central to the demands of modern retailers and leisure operators. We believe that there is also scope for additional development in the town centre.

There is already a considerable Leisure offer in the town and this should be seen as a key strength. The evening economy is vibrant with a good offering of restaurants and to a lesser extent bars. However, this also could be improved. Again, a lack of parking is seen as a primary constraint to the future growth of this sector.

There is residential housing on the fringes of the town centre. There is scope to create new town centre residential accommodation during the course of the

Masterplan. This is most likely to be in the form of new apartment developments. This however must not be to the further detriment of the parking problem. Adequate parking supporting any new proposed development should be a key consideration of the Planning Department.

The town centre office market is small however with a large number of local occupiers in converted former residential properties. This is clustered around the Carnmoney, Antrim and Ballyclare Roads to include Portland Avenue. Again, the presence of solicitors, accountants, estate agents are seen as central to the role of the town centre in providing such services for its inhabitants. Alleviating parking constraints, once again, will help to make the town more attractive as an office location and attract new occupiers within the professional services sector.

There is no single property solution which offers a panacea to the problems facing the town. However, there are a number of smaller measures which together would certainly improve it. These are outlined in our Vision section at the end of this report.

With refurbishment and redevelopment of existing buildings complemented by initiatives to relieve the parking problem, coupled with public realm works to lift the character of the town centre, it is possible to envisage a much improved town centre environment and one which is attractive to pedestrian and car borne shoppers alike.

Retail Capacity Baseline

XXX

Urban Design Analysis

XXX

Town Centre Health Check

XXX

Summary and Conclusions

XXX

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Policy Context.....	3
3.	Development Context.....	21
4.	Transport and Access.....	29
5.	Market Analysis.....	39
6.	Retail Capacity Baseline	49
7.	Urban Design Analysis.....	XX
8.	Town Centre Health Check.....	XX
9.	Conclusions.....	XX

1. Introduction

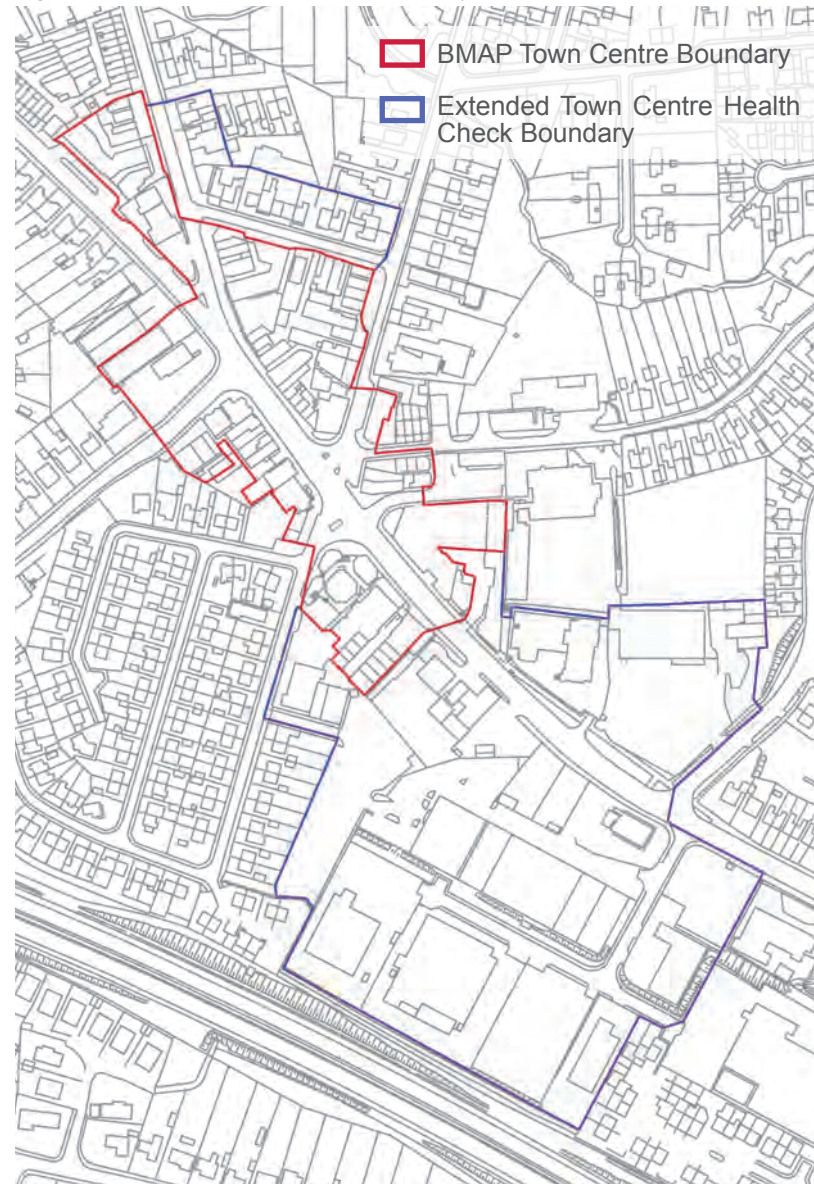
1.1 Purpose of this Report

This report is the first substantive output of the commission to prepare a Regeneration Masterplan for Glengormley Town Centre. The Masterplan was commissioned in December 2009 by the Department for Social Development (DSD) working in partnership with Newtownabbey Borough Council and is being prepared by a consultant team led by **Tribal**. It sets out the baseline from which the development options and proposals will be generated.

The study area for the commission is based upon the Local Centre limit defined in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015, but has been expanded slightly in a number of locations to reflect existing land uses. The land use survey undertaken as part of the related Town Centre Health Check reveals that a number of 'town centre uses' are contained outside of the defined draft town centre boundary, but are within close proximity (i.e. less than 300 metres). For example, retail and service properties on the north side of Portland Avenue are excluded from the town centre, whilst properties with the same characteristics on the south side of the same street remain within the boundary. Although this is the defined study area, it is recognised that the town must also be looked at in its broader context where relevant to the study.

This Baseline Report is a background document and sets out the information collated during the initial phase of the project, based on a review of existing materials and consultations with key stakeholders. While the programme of consultations is on-going, the baseline report summarises the consultant team's emerging understanding of the

Figure 1.1: Town Centre Health Check Boundary



key issues affecting the town centre. On the basis of this understanding, future stages of the project will generate options and proposals for the regeneration of the town centre.

1.2 Structure of the Report

The report is structured in the following way:

- Section 2 reviews the current policy context;
- Section 3 summarises the development history and current context;
- Section 4 deals with transport and accessibility issues;
- Section 5 is concerned with the property market;
- Section 6 provides a brief overview of the Retail Capacity Study, including a summary of initial findings;
- Section 7 sets out our understanding of the physical qualities and character of Glengormley Town Centre; and
- Section 8 provides a brief overview of the Town Centre Health Check for Glengormley.

2. Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

The regeneration of Glengormley will be guided by national, regional, sub-regional and local planning guidance and other relevant policy guidance, strategies, design guidelines and technical reports. A detailed consideration of the relevant policies is contained throughout this section.

2.2 Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

The national Planning Policy Statements (PPS) include a suite of documents intended to supersede a series of localised policies and policies contained within the Rural Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Planning Policy Statement 1: General Principles

This Statement sets out the general principles that the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland observes in carrying out its planning functions, namely formulating planning policies, making development plans and exercising control of development.

The Department's approach to planning focuses on guiding appropriate developments to the right places, while preventing developments that are not acceptable. This involves the planning and delivery of sustainable development and quality development, with significant emphasis placed on design considerations and the promotion of mixed use development, particularly in town centres.

One of the main planning aims is ensuring that development "must secure economy and efficiency as well as amenity in the use of land." It states that "good design should be the

aim of all those involved in the development process and will be encouraged everywhere". In relation to townscape, PPS1 states that "the Department will not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily. It is however proper to seek to promote to reinforce local distinctiveness particularly where this is supported by clear development plan policies or design guidance".

PPS1 also indicates that development plans should be used to identify sites for high quality, mixed use developments, built on large sites, within existing urban areas. Such sites should contain the following attributes or characteristics to make the development function correctly:

- Compactness;
- A mixture of uses and dwelling types;
- A range of employment, leisure and community facilities;
- Appropriate infrastructure and services;
- High standards of urban design;
- Access to public open space and green spaces;
- Ready access to public transport; and
- Facilitation of walking and cycling.

These characteristics will be applicable when considering the development options for the key opportunity sites within Glengormley town centre.

Planning Policy Statement 2: Nature Conservation

PPS2 'Nature Conservation' aims to ensure that issues of nature conservation are protected in development proposals.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Access, Movement and Parking and PPS3 (Clarification)

PPS 3 and its accompanying clarification document promote greater integration of transportation and land use planning by:

- Promoting more sustainable transport choices;
- Promoting greater accessibility for all; and
- Reducing the need to travel, especially by private car.

Accordingly, new developments within Glengormley town centre should be planned to take account of accessibility by all transport modes and the need to mitigate adverse transport impacts and promote road safety. When considering potential development sites within a town centre, the requirements for the main transport infrastructure which developers will be expected to provide should be considered. Where appropriate, development plans will identify existing and proposed town centre car parks and may bring forward local policies as part of an overall parking strategy. The following PPS3 policies are particularly relevant to this study:

- Policy AMP 2: Access to Public Roads,
- Policy AMP 4: Protection for New Transport Schemes; and
- Policy AMP 7: Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements.

Multi-storey car parks are considered in the context of their design and impact on townscape, with active frontages encouraged and the scale of the development appropriate to context.

Planning Policy Statement 5: Retailing and Town Centres

PPS5 echoes the principles of town centre vitality which are considered by the RDS and these policies will be particularly important in considering the masterplan options for Glengormley town centre. The momentum which the study will produce in identifying needs in the economy of the town can be carried forward with a co-ordinated approach to development which does not replicate the existing provision, but compliments and fosters a varied range of services informed by local identity.

The health of the town centre in regard to its offer across various sectors can be measured and the results used to identify additional capacity or vulnerability. The development of performance indicators for town centres has enabled comprehensive measurement of the health of town centres across Northern Ireland. The need to “sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres” in a manner which ensures that the health of local business and employment opportunities are optimised is emphasised in all of the policies contained within PPS5.

The PPS underlines the importance of a strong evidence base for the preparation of a town centre masterplan, including an assessment of existing retail patterns and floorspace provision, a town centre health check and an examination of future retail need. Strategies are then required to address the following issues:

- Encouraging greater accessibility, particularly for non-car modes;

- An appropriate level of additional retail and commercial leisure opportunities;
- Protection of the existing retail provision in town centres;
- Protection and promotion of other key town centre land uses;
- Promotion of urban renewal and regeneration, while protecting environmental assets;
- Promotion of environmental improvements and safe environments; and
- Promotion of tourism and cultural development.

The policies of most relevance to the formulation of a Town Centre Masterplan for Glengormley include:

- **Policy RRP 3: Retail Development – The Role of Non Regional Town Centres** - The “primary retail core of town centres will be the first choice location for comparison shopping and mixed retailing” as well as “major convenience retailing proposals”. Such proposals within should provide high standards of access, high standards of design and should not prejudice the implementation of development plan or development scheme policies and proposals. Furthermore, planning permission will only be granted for comparison shopping and mixed retailing within the remainder of the town centre when it can be demonstrated that no suitable sites exist within the primary retail core.
- **Policy RRP 4: Primary Retail Cores and Primary Retail Frontages** - Proposals for non-retail uses at ground floor level are not normally desirable within the Primary Retail Core. Such uses will only be permitted where they do not result in a significant loss of retail

floor space or where they do not undermine the shopping function of the core as a result of the accumulation of non retail uses.

- **Policy RRP 12: Commercial Leisure Development** - Proposals for commercial leisure development may be permitted within existing town centres where the proposals will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the centre, will result in a high standard of design, are accessible by a choice of means of transport, will not result in adverse traffic impacts and which will be accessible for people with disabilities. However, commercial leisure development will not normally be permitted in ground floor locations within the primary retail core, unless it is an element of a mixed use, retail led development scheme.

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage

Although there are no conservation areas within Glengormley town centre there are a number of buildings of exceptional quality dotted around the town. PPS 6 acts to ensure that new development respects its context in regard to built heritage and archaeological sensitivity.

Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality Residential Environments

PPS 7 provides guidance as to the appropriate building design, scale and layout of new residential accommodation. Glengormley has several residential areas within the town centre and is surrounded by residential property on all sides. It is expected that attractive environments for living in the town centre are created with mixed use sites offering combinations of residential, commercial and leisure uses.

Policy QD1 suggests that residential developments should “be based on an overall design concept that draws upon the positive aspects of the character and appearance of the surrounding area”. In many ways, PPS7 draws together the other PPS documents and relates their policies to residential development. Consequently, all proposals for residential development will be expected to respect the scale and character of the surrounding area, including built heritage, and to ensure that adequate, good quality open space is provided for residents.

In addition, it is expected that adequate provision should be made for necessary local neighbourhood facilities, to be provided by the developer as an integral part of a development. New residential developments must also provide a movement pattern which supports walking and cycling, meets the needs of people whose mobility is impaired and provides adequate and convenient access to public transport. The majority of the development opportunity sites within the study boundary would have good access to public transport and be within a convenient distance of bus stops, etc. New development must also endeavour to ‘design out crime’ by considering the possible consequences of anti-social behaviour for the residents and the impact on the new buildings.

Planning Policy Statement 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

This PPS sets out 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. ‘Open space’ is

defined as “all open space of public value”, which includes outdoor sports facilities, parks and gardens, amenity green space and children’s play areas, natural and semi-natural urban green space, allotments, cemeteries, green corridors and civic spaces.

In relation to town centres, it is the latter of these areas that are of most relevance. Civic Spaces include civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians. There are very few civic spaces within Glengormley town centre and it could be argued that a greater provision could help to enhance the quality and amenity of the Town Centre. However, it is acknowledged that the nature of traffic travelling on the Antrim Road, and consequently the shoppers who visit Glengormley, may restrict the meaningful use of civic spaces. The PPS also highlights the role open space can play in enhancing the character of civic buildings, as well as helping to attract business and tourism to a locality.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Housing in Settlements

The RDS recognises that the availability of quality housing in appropriate locations makes a vital contribution to the key policy objectives of government. It is a vital consideration in promoting economic well-being and social progress. New housing development can also stimulate urban renewal.

Planning Control Principle 1 advocates “increased housing density without town cramming”. This concept ensures that a minimum living space is allocated to an individual with access to open space and in an environment which has been considered with their interests in mind. In

regenerating Glengormley, it will be necessary to achieve a critical mass in the numbers of visitors to the core of the town and, to achieve this, town centre living could be encouraged.

Planning Control Principle 3, Sustainable forms of development, encourages the utilisation of brownfield land for new developments rather than the use of greenfield sites. Given that any development sites within the town centre are mostly brownfield sites, this policy would endorse the provision of residential accommodation in the town centre. Furthermore, Policy HS1, Living over the Shop, could also be a key consideration in reinvigorating the town centre and the evening economy in Glengormley. For example, purpose built developments which include ground floor retail and residential accommodation above may be appropriate within the town centre.

Planning Policy Statement 13: Transportation and Land Use

PPS13 provides the context for the balancing of transportation modes and the reduction in the dominance of car travel against other modes of transport; particularly public transport. The need to reduce the dominance of the physical infrastructure by the car is vital. However in a location such as Glengormley, where the main street through the town centre is a strategic link into Belfast City Centre, a balanced and measured management/reduction is necessary.

As previously mentioned, the lands included within the study boundary are relatively well connected by public transport

and this provides an opportunity for new development to maximise its use of public transport options. PPS13 recommends the development of lands in sequence starting with those which can most easily be linked to public transport networks. The policy also recommends that higher density and mixed use developments should be focused in locations benefitting from high accessibility to public transport facilities.

2.3 Regional Policy Context

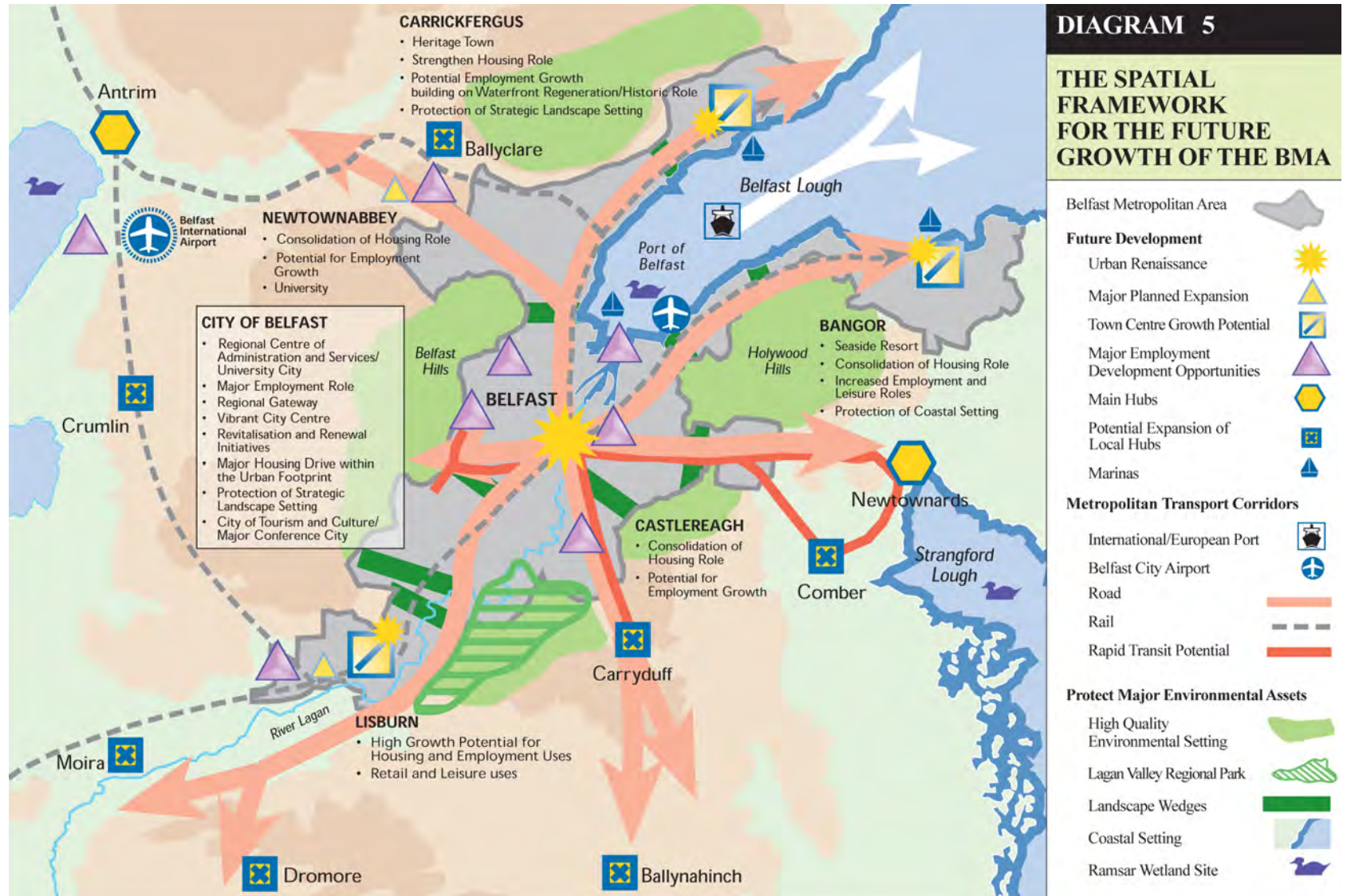
Below the national PPSs, the regional planning framework sets forth the strategic planning policy for the entire Northern Ireland region.

Shaping our Future, the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025

Shaping Our Future is a Regional Development Strategy (RDS) which offers a strategic and long-term perspective on the future development of Northern Ireland up to the year 2025. The vision is to create an outward-looking, dynamic and liveable Region and to sustain a high quality of life for all. The Spatial Development Strategy is a hub, corridor and gateway framework designed to:

- Guide physical development throughout Northern Ireland over the next 25 years;
- Facilitate economic growth by identifying a network of locational opportunities;
- Accommodate the necessary housing growth;
- Promote balanced community development; and
- Protect and enhance the natural and built environment.

Figure 2.1: The Spatial Framework for the BMA

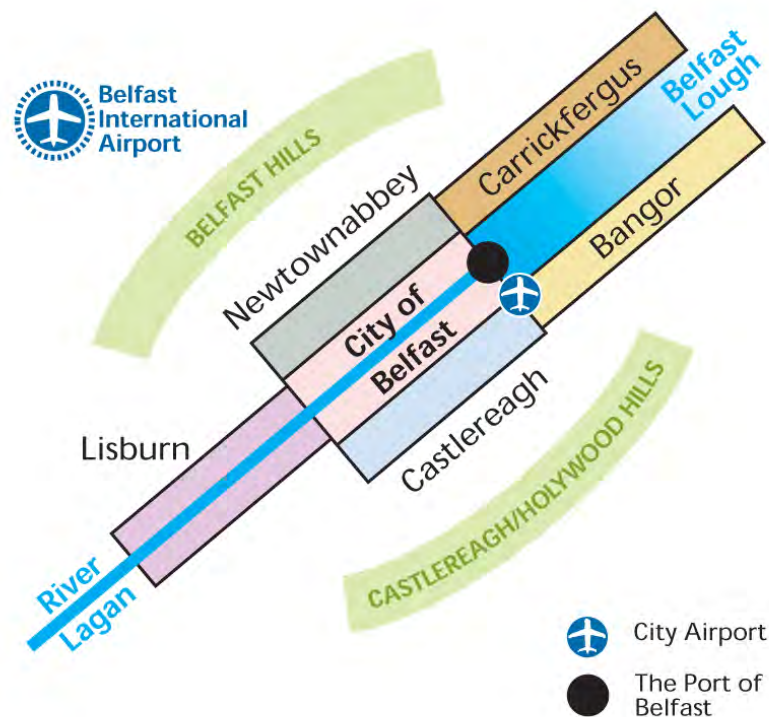


Glengormley, in the Newtownabbey district, falls with the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA). The BMA is the largest urban centre in Northern Ireland, with a population of around 600,000 persons, and over one million living within a 30 miles radius of Belfast city centre. It comprises an extensive built up area stretching along the shores of Belfast Lough and up the Lagan Valley, taking in the city of Belfast and the adjacent urban parts of the district council areas of Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down. The BMA has a high potential for future growth and development based on its many functions as the heart of the Region, as well as being the largest hub of the transport system and a regional gateway.

The Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the Belfast Metropolitan Area and its hinterland is a balanced portfolio of development options which will encourage revitalisation within the BMA and provide for major areas of planned lateral expansion on the key transport corridors at Lisburn and Newtownabbey. Policy SPG-BMA 1 seeks to create a thriving Metropolitan Area centred on a revitalised city of Belfast, including the development of the complementary role of the suburban districts of Castlereagh and Newtownabbey (BMA 1.2). Within Newtownabbey Borough, this includes:

- Enhancing the role of Newtownabbey as an area with potential for significant housing expansion;
- Focussing on Newtownabbey's advantageous location in order to further develop it as a major industrial and university centre; and

Figure 2.2: BMA Component Parts



- Utilise the setting as a basis for the expansion of Newtownabbey's role as a leisure outlet for the north and north west of the Metropolitan Area.

Policy BMA 2.2 aims to promote the physical renewal of the BMA, particularly revitalising the urban area by placing a stronger emphasis on the use of land and re-use of buildings for housing and other uses within town centres and throughout the Metropolitan Area. Alongside this, Policy BMA 2.3 seeks to enhance the quality of the urban environment throughout the BMA by guiding the process

of physical change to create an urban environment characterised by respect for the established fabric of areas of townscape character, historic buildings, public spaces and streets, and the design of a high quality contemporary architecture.

At a Strategic level, the RDS also outlines a number of other more generic policies that are of material importance when considering the regeneration of Glengormley town centre. These can be summarised briefly as follows:

Developing Community Cohesion

Policy SPG-SRC 3 aims to foster development which contributes to the better community relations, recognises cultural diversity, and reduces socio economic differentials within Northern Ireland. As part of this, Policy SPG-SRC 3.2 recognises the need to revitalise the role of town centres and other common locations well served by public transport as focal places for shopping, services, employment, cultural and leisure activities for the whole community.

Residential Development

Policy SPG-HOU 2 aims to direct and manage future housing growth to achieve more sustainable patterns of residential development. In particular, the Strategy aims to:

- Encourage mixed use developments including more housing in town centres; and
- Make more efficient use of land by promoting more housing within the existing urban areas and villages,

availing of existing infrastructure and maintaining a compact town centre.

Policy SPG-HOU 4 aims to promote a drive to provide more housing within existing urban areas by promoting a more sustainable form of development by encouraging compact urban forms and promoting more housing within existing areas. Alongside this, Policy SPG-HOU 5.1 promotes imaginative and innovative forms of housing developments within urban areas, including densification of housing developments near to public transport corridors, in town centres and, where possible, around centres of community facilities.

Economic Development

Policy SPG-ECON 1 promotes a balanced spread of economic development opportunities across the Region focused on the urban hubs/clusters, as the main centres for employment and services. As part of this, Policy SPG-ECON 1.3 aims to support an urban renaissance through:

- The promotion of town centres as the major locations and first choice for expanding service employment by focusing public administration, major office developments, shopping, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities in central areas where they are accessible to all sections of the community;
- Supporting the vitality and viability of towns centres by ensuring that they should normally be the first choice for major new retail developments; and
- Promoting mixed use development in cities and towns to facilitate the start up and accommodation of small and medium sized enterprises.

Tourism Growth

Policy SPG –ECON 7 aims to promote a sustainable approach to the provision of tourism infrastructure. As part of this Policy ECON 7.1 takes a sustainable approach to tourism development which recognises:

- Visitors are increasingly attracted to a place which has a definable and genuine local character;
- The potential of ‘knowledge based tourism and recreation’ for which both the environment and local cultural events are key attractions; and
- Local economies gain benefit from tourism development;

Policy SPG-ECON 8.2 aims to enhance ‘first impression points’ and environmental image, creating user friendly and high quality environments, presenting a favourable initial image and enhance Northern Ireland’s image by cleaning up the environment.

Transport

Policy SPG-BMA 3 highlights the need to develop and enhance the Metropolitan Transport Corridor (MTC) Network. Glengormley is centred on the Antrim Road, one of the main routes running to the north of the BMA, and is therefore a key part of the MTC Network.

This should include improvements in the public transport service in the BMA in order to provide real public transport alternatives to the car (Policy SPG–BMA 4). As part of this, it is necessary to identify, in corridor action plans, substantially improved quality of public transport services, especially in terms of journey ambience, frequency and

reliability of travel times. As part of this, Policy BMA 4.1 also seeks to develop a bus strategy centred on the MTCs that is responsive to the wider pattern of demand, maximising bus penetration to Belfast city centre and town centres within the BMA.

Policy SPG-BMA 5 aims to manage travel demand within the BMA through the extension of a range of traffic management measures (Policy BMA 5.2). Such interventions may include expanded use of transport telematics, especially at strategic junctions and river crossings in the BMA and its constituent town centres, to improve traffic control, reduce congestion, give priority to public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, and provide real time travel information.

Policy SPG-TRAN 3 aims to integrate land use planning and transportation, with paragraph TRAN 3.1 requiring the development of land use patterns which contribute to a much better range of travel choices for all, and reduce the need to travel. This is to be achieved through a number of related initiatives, including the following which are of most relevance to the Glengormley Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan:

- An appropriate spread of jobs, and homes to achieve a balanced spatial pattern;
- The maintenance of compact urban areas and the reduction of physical separation of key land uses through physical separation and mixed use developments; and
- The introduction of car parking policies to discourage public long-stay parking in urban areas where public

transport is a realistic alternative, whilst ensuring an appropriate level of good quality, short-stay parking to maintain strong and viable town centres.

Policy SPG-TRAN 4.2 seeks to give greater priority to encouraging more walking and cycling through:

- The creation of more direct, safer, pedestrian friendly routes, particularly in and around town centres, traditional shopping streets, and local neighbourhoods;
- Improvements in pedestrian facilities on routes to bus stops, bus and rail stations; and
- Promoting the provision of cycle parking in conjunction with shower and changing facilities at the workplace and provide more secure cycle parking close to shops, town centres, parks, sports and public transport facilities.

Conservation of the Built Environment

Policy SPG-ENV3 aims to conserve the built environment. In particular, Policy ENV 3.2 aims to safeguard buildings of special architectural or historic interest and in particular to conserve the character of buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest and to exercise a presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings, including an innovative approach to new uses. Policy ENV 3.3 aims to conserve the character of cities, towns and village through the:

- Control and management of development within settlements, with an emphasis on maintaining local identity and a sense of place; and
- Retention of locally important buildings and features;

- Creation and management of green spaces in cities, towns and villages, to serve multiple purposes, and contribute to local distinctive character; and
- Recognition of the contribution which natural and semi-natural habitats can make to the character of urban spaces, promoting measures which will lead to the enhancement of biodiversity and the quality of our lives.

Policy ENV 3.4 aims to conserve parks, gardens and demesnes which are of historic interest, whilst Policy ENV 3.5 aims to promote the retention of vernacular buildings and industrial heritage features in urban areas.

Recreation and Leisure

Policy SPG-ENV 7 aims to facilitate access to a range of opportunities for recreational and cultural activities in order to prevent town cramming. This should include the provision of adequate areas of open space, playing facilities, woodland and landscaping for physical activity, rest and leisure use. In addition, this policy seeks to develop pedestrian and cycle lanes within existing town centres.

Regional Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012

The (RTS) for Northern Ireland identifies strategic transportation investment priorities and considers potential funding sources and affordability of planned initiatives over the next 10 years. It supports the RDS in making a significant contribution towards achieving the longer-term vision for transportation, which is “to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits

society, the economy, and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone's quality of life".

For the purposes of transport infrastructure funding, Glengormley falls within the BMA, which is earmarked to receive around 25% of total expenditure. There are no specific interventions relating to Glengormley outlined in the RTS.

1.4 Local Policy

There are two development plans that are materially relevant to Glengormley Town Centre. Whilst the former plan is largely outdated, it remains the current, adopted development plan covering Glengormley. An up-to-date replacement, the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, is currently being drafted, but is yet to be adopted.

Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001

Whilst this plan is technically 'out of date', it is still materially relevant. Adopted in 1987, the purpose of the Plan was to establish physical development policies for the Belfast Urban Area up to 2001, clarifying the extent and location of development and providing a framework for public and private agencies in their investment decisions relating to land use. The principal aims of the Plan were to:

- Maintain and strengthen Belfast's position as the regional centre for Northern Ireland;
- Create a physical environment and framework for social and economic activity which will enhance the quality of urban living; and

- Facilitate and efficient, economic and orderly pattern of development.

The Plan comprises a strategic development plan for the continuous built-up area of the Belfast conurbation and a statement of rural planning policy for those areas outside the conurbation which come within its immediate sphere of influence. Glengormley falls within the contiguous Belfast Urban Area.

The Strategic Objectives of the plan of most relevance to the Glengormley Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan are:

- To improve the quality of the urban environment;
- To create a physical environment which will assist the strengthening of the economic base of the Belfast Urban Area;
- To provide an effective transport system; and
- To make effective use of new and existing infrastructure.

The policies of most relevance to Glengormley Town Centre, which should be considered when developing the masterplan, can be summarised as follows:

- **Policy IND 7: Development near Residential Areas** – Aims to facilitate the development of small business units in or near residential areas. In particular, areas of mixed use on main roads, such as in Glengormley town centre could be suitable locations for such development.
- **Policy TR1: Public Transport** – Seeks to improve the contribution made by the bus to the life of Belfast.

- **Policy S2: Shopping Development Outside the City Centre** – New shopping schemes outside of Belfast City Centre, but within the rest of the Belfast Urban Area, should be located in or near existing shopping centres and be of an appropriate scale. Although the protection of the commercial interests of individual retailers is not a planning consideration, the policy will seek to ensure that new retail developments are located where they will support the continued viability of established shopping centres.
- **Policy S3: Retail Warehouses** – Likewise, larger retail units (retail warehouses) should be located in or near existing shopping centres and be of an appropriate scale.
- **Policy S5: Assessment of Proposed Shopping Schemes** – New shopping schemes will be subject to assessment against criteria relating to impact, car parking, traffic generation and access, relationship to adjoining development (especially residential) and design and appearance (including materials, finishes and signs).
- **Policy S6: Enhancement of Local Shopping Centres** – Whilst no universal strategy can be applied to linear and local shopping centres in the Belfast Urban Area, local plans and policies, such as the Glengormley Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan, will be prepared for such localities. Such plans should:
 - Ensure the retention and enhancement of prime shopping frontages;
 - Facilitate public transport services with, for example, lay-bys and shelters;
 - Assist the management of car parking and access problems;

- Deal with conflict between adjoining uses (specifically residential) and retailing, particularly if the centre is expanding;
- Assist in encouraging better design and identity;
- Provide a formal basis for local involvement in development issues; and
- Provide guidelines for the use of urban renewal measures to improve the overall environmental quality of the centres.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015: Draft Plan November 2004

BMAP is a development plan currently under preparation for the council areas of Belfast, Lisburn, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey and North Down. Once adopted, the plan will replace the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001.

The Plan aims to “provide a planning framework which is in general conformity with the RDS in facilitating sustainable growth and a high quality of development in the Belfast Metropolitan Area throughout the Plan period, whilst protecting and where possible, enhancing the natural and man-made environment of the Plan Area.” The overarching Plan Strategy, as far as it is of relevance to Glengormley, consists of the following main elements:

- **Strengthening the Metropolitan Area** and providing a framework to strengthen the important and complementary roles of the adjoining Boroughs, including Newtownabbey;

- **Promoting Urban Renewal**, which includes giving priority to supporting and enhancing the role of town centres and Arterial Routes into Belfast City Centre, and promoting the renewal of distinctive places which play an important role in local community life; and
 - **Enhancing Quality of Life**, through the creation of balanced local communities, improvements in public transport, supporting and strengthening the role of town centres as a foci of community life and as centres of retail and office development, increased provision for walking and cycling, a reduction in car travel, protecting the natural and built heritage and requiring high standard of development in key location including, for example, town centres.
- Reinforcing them as the main locations for retail, office, leisure and cultural activity; or
 - Providing for a diverse mix of uses including housing; or
 - Enhancing their roles by increasing activity and accessibility.

In relation to Arterial Routes, Policy SETT 4 states that the regeneration of such routes will be facilitated by:

- Allowing an appropriate scale of retail and office use within shopping and commercial areas, where designated, to serve local populations; and
- Promoting good quality urban design.

Glengormley is a designated Town Centre lying on a designated Arterial Route into Belfast City Centre (Antrim Road). Designation MNY 28 explains that the existing local shopping area in Glengormley provides shoppers with accessible convenience and non bulky comparison goods close to where they live. To strengthen the role of this local shopping area, the town centre boundary is delineated for the Local Centre to allow for expansion.

The following policies are of direct relevance to Glengormley town centre.

Settlement

Policy SETT 3 states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals which support and enhance vitality and viability of Town Centres by:

Housing

In relation to town centre living, Policy HOU 4 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that increase the housing stock in designated Town Centres where they meet regional planning policies and are in accordance with the Plan Proposals. BMAP recognises that town centre living is a key element in contributing to a vibrant centre, encouraging a more sustainable pattern of development and optimising existing infrastructure. Opportunities to increase housing provision in town centres include:

- The full and part conversion of existing buildings, particularly long-term vacant buildings;
- The conversion of upper floors within the primary retail cores; and
- The inclusion of residential development within mixed-use retail schemes.

Transport

Within the overarching aim of sustainable development, Policy TRAN 1 ensures that development proposals incorporate, where appropriate, adequate provision for public transport, walking and cycling routes, and measures to ensure access by people with impaired mobility.

Retailing

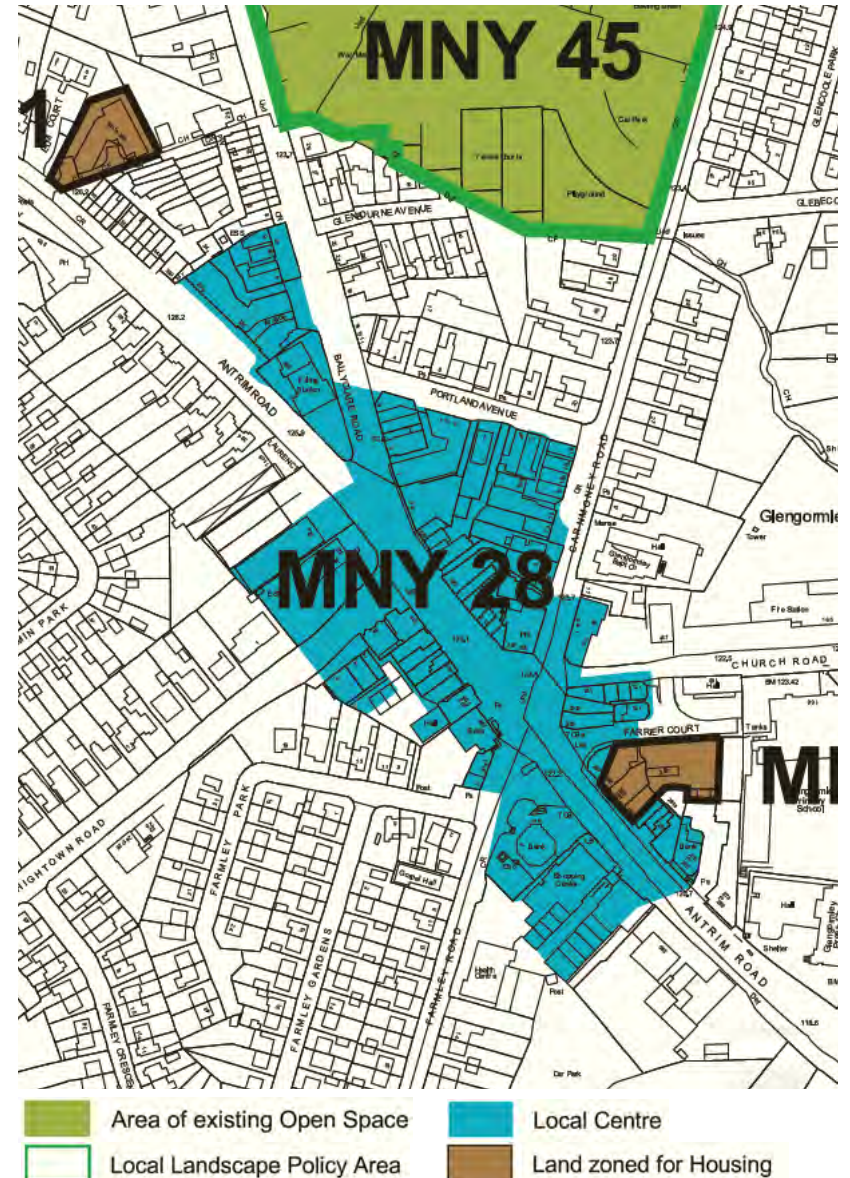
Glengormley is designated as a Local Town Centre in Policy R 6. Where no Primary Retail Core is designated in a town centre, as is the case in Glengormley, Policy R 1 states that planning permission will be granted for retail development proposals anywhere within the designated town centre boundary. This designated town centre boundary for Glengormley is shown in Figure 2.3.

Of particular pertinence for Glengormley, Policy R 6 states that retail development proposals to serve local need will be permitted provided that they do not exceed 500 sq m gross floorspace for convenience shopping and 100 sq m for comparison shopping. Furthermore, the coalescence of individual retail units into single units exceeding these thresholds is also prohibited.

Offices

Policy OF 1 states that planning permission will be granted for office developments in designated office areas, which includes designated town centres, as a means of maintaining the viability and vitality of the centres. In order to facilitate the expansion of the small office sector, Policy OF 2 states that planning permission will be granted for office development in the designated local centre of

Figure 2.3: Glengormley Town Centre (BMA 2015)



Glengormley provided that proposals do not exceed 400 sq m gross floorspace. Again, this would include the coalescence of individual office blocks into a single unit.

Urban Environment

Policy UE 4 sets a high standard of quality for new non-residential developments, requiring that proposals meet a set of criteria relating to respecting the context and built heritage, providing adequate open space and landscaped areas, supporting walking and cycling, making adequate provision for parking, drawing upon local traditions of form, material and detailing and in designing out crime. In addition, Policy UE 6 prevents the provision of ground floor parking along street frontages in town centres.

The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015, November 2004

The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) is the local transport plan for the BMA. It is the first of its type for the BMA and takes forward the strategic initiatives of the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland 2002-2012. The BMTP will deliver a phased and costed implementation programme of transport schemes to 2015, the implementation of which will be subject to detailed economic appraisal, funding availability and statutory processes.

Antrim Road, upon which Glengormley town centre is located, forms part of the Antrim to Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridor (MTC A), one of eight main transport routes within the BMA (see Figure 2.4).

Walking and Cycling

The BMTP proposes wide-ranging initiatives to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists so that walking and cycling can form a more significant element of overall travel in the BMA. The provision of improved facilities for walking and cycling as a means of providing greater travel choice is therefore a key principle of the 2025 Strategy. In Glengormley, this should include the provision of high quality walking routes along the main arterial route.

A number of measures are proposed to help achieve this, but of most relevance to Glengormley is the provision of improved facilities for walking within the BMA as a result of traffic management on local roads giving greater priority to pedestrians.

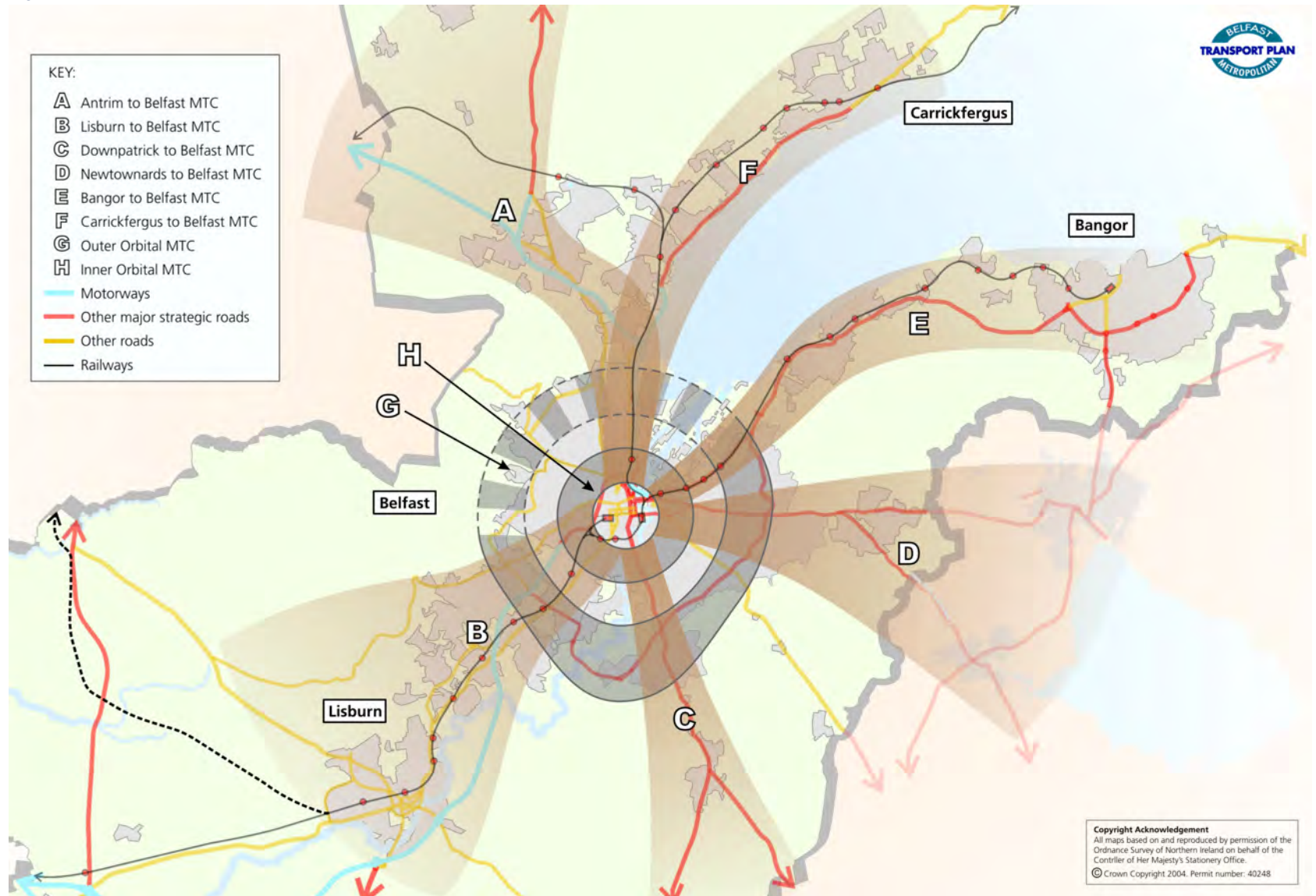
Public Transport

The BMPT recognises a clear need to substantially improve the quality of public transport services within the BMA, especially in terms of journey ambience, frequency and reliability and the way that it extends travel choices for all sections of the community. The 2025 Strategy contains a range of initiatives to improve the quality of public transport provision.

Of most relevance to Glengormley, the introduction of Quality Bus Corridors on radial routes, including the Antrim Road, should result in a series of infrastructure measures that include:

- Bus priority measures on the road network;
- The use of bus lane enforcement cameras;

Figure 2.4: Metropolitan Transport Corridors (MTCs)



- The provision of high quality bus shelters with service information and real time passenger information at high user stops; and
- The improvement of walk access/egress to/from bus stops.
- Encouraging the greater use of public transport and more walking and cycling, thereby reducing car dependency, through the development of an integrated network of walking and cycling routes.

The Highway Network

Although the Antrim Road does not form part of the strategic highway network, the 2015 Plan sets out a range of accompanying measures to better manage the traffic and to reduce the impact of traffic on the non-strategic network. These interventions include the application of traffic management measures to improve the flow of traffic and reduce the negative impact of traffic. Such measures can include:

- Those that seek to increase road capacity through more effective use of roadspace – junction improvements, lane markings and reducing conflicts between traffic movements and different types of traffic; and
- Those that seek to reduce the impact that traffic has on the surrounding area and environment – generally traffic calming.

Newtownabbey District Proposals

The BMTP also contains a number of measures specific to the Newtownabbey area, which can be summarised as follows:

- The development of the Quality Bus Corridor between Antrim and Belfast that will also serve Glengormley; and

1.5 Department of Social Development Policy Guidance

The Department of Social Development (DSD) has produced several policy documents which are of particular relevance to the Glengormley masterplan. The policies emphasise the key prior tiers of successful regeneration with a particular emphasis on social regeneration as well as physical.

Vital and Viable: A Good Practice Guide for Breathing New Life into Towns and Cities

This guide produced by DSD indicates that plans for the successful regeneration of cities and towns must also address the following key priorities:

- **Sustainability:** Development must be sustainable for it to succeed. For city and town centres this means that social inclusivity, environmental impact and economic health must be taken into account when plans are prepared, development is proposed and government support is considered.
- **Design:** High quality building design is a key success factor, linked with the provision of public realm to an equivalent standard. The creation of new iconic buildings or the re-development or preservation of landmark buildings, coupled with sensitive design, can create a real sense of place.

- **Retailing:** The retail offering remains key to the vast majority of successful city and town centres and is being influenced by the increasing dominance of national retailers and international brands coupled with the growth of out-of-town shopping centres. The challenge for cities and towns is to project a unique identity and preserve the local retail offering in a way which is easily accessible.
- **Variety:** Leisure, entertainment, sporting and recreational pursuits in city and town centres provide other uses for town centres for the local community and visitors to the area. Evening and night time economies are now an integral element contributing to the vibrancy of towns and can work supportively with town centre living.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

This strategy targets deprivation using a partnership approach to involve the communities affected by social problems. Neighbourhood Renewal will have four interlinking strategic objectives:

- **Community Renewal:** To develop confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life in the most deprived neighbourhoods;
- **Economic Renewal:** To develop economic activity in the most deprived neighbourhoods and connect them to the wider urban economy;
- **Social Renewal:** To improve social conditions for the people who live in the most deprived neighbourhoods through better co-ordinated public services and the creation of safer environments;

- **Physical Renewal:** To help create attractive, safe, sustainable environments in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

Department of Social Development - Corporate Plan 2008-2011

DSD's Corporate Plan over the period 2008-2011 sets out how the Department will deliver on its responsibilities under the Executive's Programme for Government and the overall priorities for social development which are:

- Investing in housing and addressing the housing crisis;
- Building communities, tackling disadvantage and encouraging social responsibility; and
- Creating vibrant cities, towns and urban areas.

Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018

The Northern Ireland Executive established three key investment objectives which will guide development. These are:

- **Economic:** Investment in infrastructure to help grow a dynamic and innovative economy, and help to deliver modern high quality and efficient public services;
- **Societal:** Investment in infrastructure to help promote tolerance, inclusion, equality of opportunity and the desirability of good relations, promote regional balance in future development, and tackle areas of social disadvantage; and
- **Environmental:** Investment in infrastructure to help protect and enhance our environment and natural resources.

3. Development Context

3.1 Introduction

As part of the process of establishing the best way forward for a number of 'key' sites in the study area, it is essential to fully understand the current conditions 'on-the-ground'. In order to achieve this, a review of the recent planning history in Glengormley Town Centre over the past 5 years has been completed.

We have also met with a number of landowners and developers with a current interest in Glengormley Town Centre to ascertain their current intentions and aspirations with regards to the town centre. Those consulted as part of this exercise have included:

- Mr Frank McNeill, Landowner;
- Inspector Martin Ruddy, PSNI;
- **Mr David Cartmill, Landowner;**
- Glengormley Chamber of Commerce;
- **Mr Brendan Carlin, Landowner;**
- **Northern Ireland Scouting;** and
- Mr Mark Adrain, Property Director, Henderson Group.

3.2 Out of Centre Competition

Alongside the proposals within the town centre, we are aware of proposals for a significant retail development at the Northcott Shopping Centre, which lies less than 0.5 miles to the north, as well as an extension to the Abbey Centre, which is located less than 3 miles to the south east. Given the potential impact of these major proposals on the town centre, we have addressed the two schemes below, before briefly summarising the other recent planning applications within, and impacting upon, the town centre.

Figure 3.1: Location of Main Out of Centre Competition



Northcott Shopping Centre

The owners of the existing Northcott Shopping Centre, Blanca Developments Ltd, have recently received planning consent for a £35m regeneration of the shopping centre. The scheme involves the demolition of the existing centre and the construction of a new retail outlet called 'Sandyknowes Shopping Centre', which will include a Tesco Superstore, cafe, 12 retail units within a covered mall, a petrol station and space for 840 cars.

Submitted in July 2009, the scheme follows a number of approvals for similar developments on the site since 2005. As a major planning application, the scheme was considered by the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots, and received consent in December 2009. Speaking about the development, Edwin Poots suggested that "the proposal represents a high quality modern development for the area, replacing the current centre which, although of its time, is now somewhat run down and in need of redress,"

Abbey Centre

Abbeycentre Ltd submitted a detailed planning application for the alteration and extension of the Abbey Centre in February 2005. The scheme will provide new retail units, a mall court, a new entrance covered walkway and multi deck car park (ref: U/2005/0070/F). Given the regional impact of the proposals, the application was deemed a major planning application under Article 31 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order. A decision is therefore pending, awaiting the outcome of public inquiry.

Impact on the Town Centre

The Northcott scheme received consent despite the detrimental impact the major increase in retail floorspace may have on Glengormley's town centre. Similarly, an extension to the Abbey Centre is likely to further reduce the future viability of new retail development in the town centre. Once complete, it is likely that the developments will effectively increase the strength of the out-of-centre competition already impacting upon Glengormley, further reducing the potential to develop the town centre as either a convenience or comparison retail destination.

3.3 Town Centre Applications

There are a number of planning applications and development initiatives within Glengormley Town Centre that we must be aware of when considering options as part of the masterplan process. They can be summarised as follows.

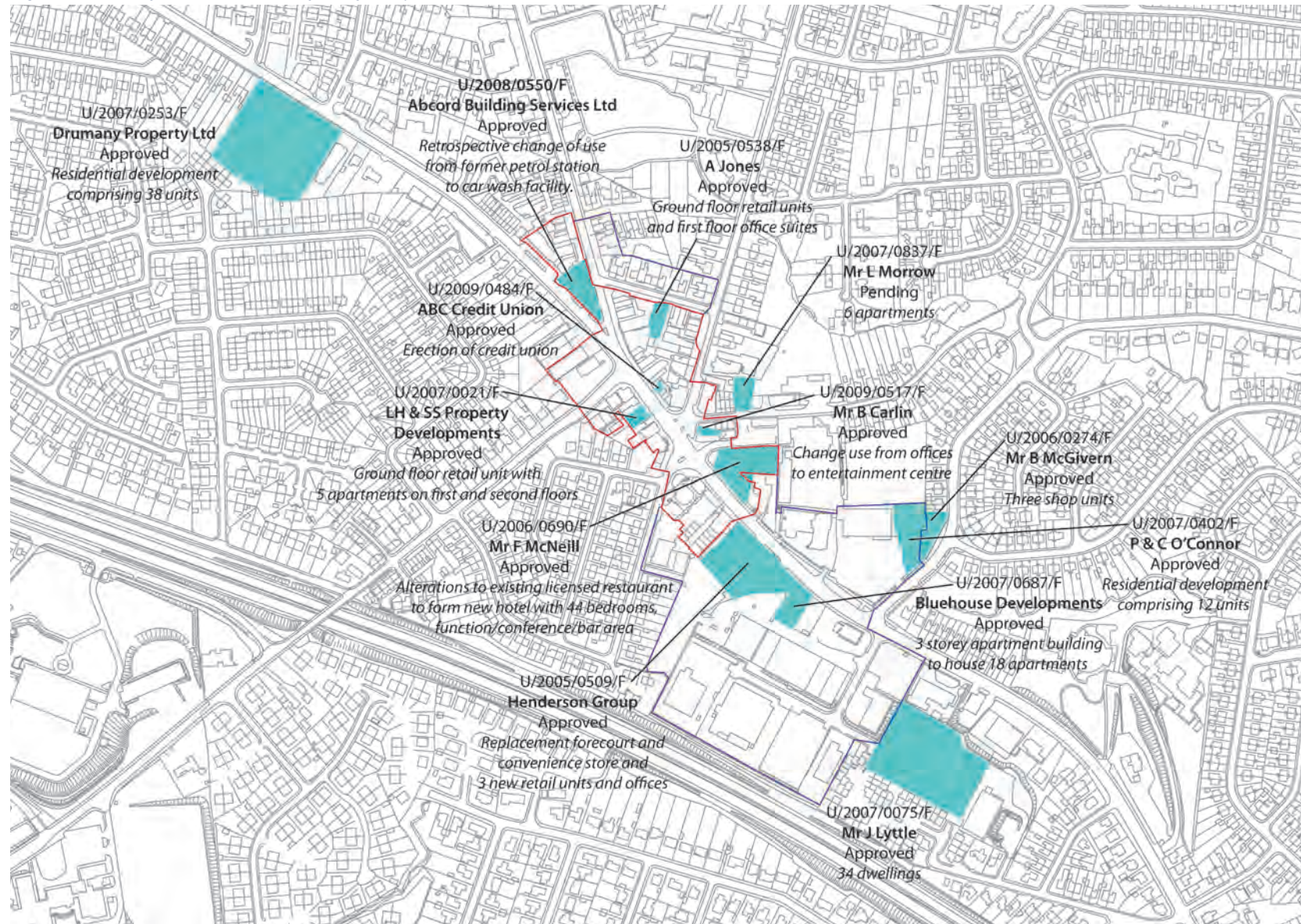
Henderson Group

The Henderson Group own the site that currently encompasses the BP Garage and the Kwik Fit Garage next door. Full planning consent was granted in September 2007 for the site's redevelopment which will involve the "erection of replacement forecourt and convenience store and 3 no. new retail units and offices", following the demolition of the existing forecourt, convenience store and tyre depot

Figure 3.2: Henderson Group's Redevelopment Proposals



Figure 3.3: Planning Applications Affecting Glengormley Town Centre



(U/2005/0509/F). We understand that the Group intend to commence on site in May 2010, following the expiration of the Kwik Fit lease, and hope to have completed the £2m redevelopment by September.

As part of the planning process, the Group have asked their architects to look at the possibility of a broad redevelopment of the wider area, including the Tramway Shopping Centre and Medical Centre, the Ulster Bank, the cinema, bowling alley and retail sheds to the rear, the associated parking areas and the vacant plots immediately adjacent to the Kwik Fit. Over the past few years, the Henderson Group have spoken to a number of landowners surrounding their site, including:

- **Bluehouse Developments:** Owners of the vacant plot adjacent to Kwik Fit. In the past, they would have been willing to work with the Henderson Group to deliver a comprehensive regeneration strategy for the wider area. However, they have recently received detailed planning consent (U/2007/0687/F) for the erection of a 3 storey apartment building to house 18 apartments – 12 two-bed and 6 one-bed – on the site. The Henderson Group understand they are now likely to proceed to construction.
- **Tramway Shopping Centre:** May have been willing to redevelop the centre as part of a wider scheme a couple of years ago, but are probably not now looking at this possibility.
- **Cinema:** Are not looking for involvement in any redevelopment scheme.

Figure 3.4: Bluehouse Development's Site at 288 Antrim Road



However, despite the potential opportunity of a collaborative approach, The Henderson Group have now decided to proceed with their own development, although they may not proceed to build the scheme with office accommodation, as they believe there is no longer a market need for such accommodation. However, they have developed their scheme so as to minimise the potential harm to the potential to develop the wider area and would be willing to engage further as we consider redevelopment options in this area as part of the masterplan. The Henderson Group still believe there may be some potential to develop a leisure service hub centered on a cinema/bowling alley and supported by restaurants and smaller retail units (e.g. Lagan Valley Multiplex in Lisburn).

Frank McNeill, Thunderdome

Frank McNeill received full planning consent in April 2008 for the extension of the existing Thunderdome restaurant on Antrim Road to form a new 44-bed hotel and function/conference bar area (U/2006/0690/F). However, the planning application took almost two years to receive approval, during which time both Corr's Corner and Chimney Corner added extensions to their hotels, reducing the market share available. We therefore understand that Mr McNeill no longer intends to implement this proposal.

Mr McNeill is now currently working on a revised scheme to provide retail and office accommodation on part of the site, along with new premises for the Bank of Ireland. In brief, the existing bank will be demolished and used for parking in short term, whilst a new bank and retail unit will be constructed on part of the Thunderdome car park fronting

onto Antrim Road. Architects are currently drawing up the scheme and Mr McNeill intends to submit a full planning application as soon as possible.

However, Mr McNeill aspires to deliver a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site, including the Thunderdome restaurant, Insurance Company, Cartmill's and the Bank of Ireland, but has as yet been unable to secure agreement with the other parties.

Mr McNeill is also currently in the process of re-fitting the rear of his Thunderdome restaurant to provide a new sports bar fronting onto Farrier Court. This will enable the use of Farrier Court as an outdoor entertainment venue with capacity for approximately 500 people. It is hoped that the first outdoor concert will be held this year.

Figure 3.5: Frank McNeill's Development Proposals



Other Town Centre Planning Applications

Within the town centre, a number of other applications have recently been submitted for both commercial, office and residential development (see Figure 2). These can be summarised as follows:

- **U/2005/0538/F:** A Jones received full planning consent in January 2007 for the “erection of ground floor retail units & first floor office suites” on the vacant site at 7 Portland Avenue. The scheme has not been implemented to date.
- **U/2007/0402/F:** Full detailed planning consent was granted to P & C O’Connor in August 2008 for the redevelopment of 4 Church Way to provide a new residential development comprising 12 units, with associated car parking and landscaping.”
- **U/2007/0021/F:** Planning consent was granted in November 2008 for the “erection of ground floor retail unit with 5no private apartments on first and second floors.” The site at 306 and 308 Antrim Road is currently vacant.
- **U/2009/0484/F:** Planning Service recently granted the ABC Credit Union planning consent for the erection of a Credit Union on the site at 315 Antrim Road. The unit is currently vacant.
- **U/2008/0550/F:** Abcord Building Services Limited applied for retrospective planning permission in October 2008 for the change of use of the former petrol station at 333 Antrim Road to a hand car wash facility. The use at the prominent site at the junction between Antrim Road and Ballyclare Road was granted temporary consent until January 2014.

Figure 3.6: Site at 7 Portland Avenue



Figure 3.7: Hand Car Wash at 333 Antrim Road



- **U/2009/0517/F:** Mr Brendan Carlin has recently received full planning permission for the change use of the unit at 303a Antrim Road from offices to an entertainment centre with first floor games zone (all ages) and ground floor entertainment (over 18yrs).
- **U/2007/0075/F:** An application for the erection of 34 dwellings at 4 Glenwell Road was submitted by Mr J Lyttle in February 2007. The scheme received full planning approval in October 2008.
- **U/2007/0253/F:** Drumany Properties Ltd received full planning consent in March 2009 for the demolition of existing buildings at 390-404 Antrim Road, a short distance north of the town centre. The scheme involves the erection of a new residential development comprising 38 units – 26 apartments and 12 semi-detached dwellings, alongside associated car parking and landscaping. An additional application has since been submitted in February 2010 to amend one of the house types approved, but the outcome is currently pending (U/2010/0055/F). Development is currently underway on site.
- **U/2007/0837/F:** A planning application is currently being considered for the “change of use” of the car repair garage at 167 Church Road to provide 6 one-bedroom apartments. The application was submitted in December 2007 by Mr L Morrow.

There are also a few developments immediately adjacent to the town centre that also have the potential to impact directly on the future development of the town centre. In summary, these include:

- **U/2006/0274/F:** On the site adjacent to 4 Church Way, Mr B McGivern received detailed planning consent for a short parade of shop units – one food and two non-food (use Class A1). The decision was issued in January 2007.

Figure 3.8: Residential Development at 390-404 Church Road



4. Transport and Access

4.1 Introduction

The section of the baseline report deals with transport and accessibility issues in relation to Glengormley Town Centre. Baseline data are reviewed for each of the modes of travel, together with a commentary on how well the various policy objectives are being met. It also indicates the key issues emerging from the baseline review.

4.2 People - Walking and Sojourn

The most striking feature of Glengormley centre is its division by roads and junctions. Severance of the community by the A6 Antrim Road is especially severe, due to the width of the road (4 lanes), the speed of traffic, and the absence of pedestrian crossing facilities in the core part of the centre. There are numerous bus services, but a lack of stops makes bus use inconvenient.

The centre also lacks cohesion as a result of activities being located at discontinuous sites, and multi-purpose trips would involve considerable walking distance between different activities. Although no data are available, it seems likely that many people making multi-purpose visits to Glengormley would park separately for each purpose rather than undertake lengthy and unpleasant walks between different facilities. This spatial fragmentation of activities may explain the low levels of pedestrian activity observed.

The main facilities in Glengormley are separated into roughly five groups which may be represented diagrammatically as in Figure 4.3. Three of the five are rough groupings of a number of facilities, the other two

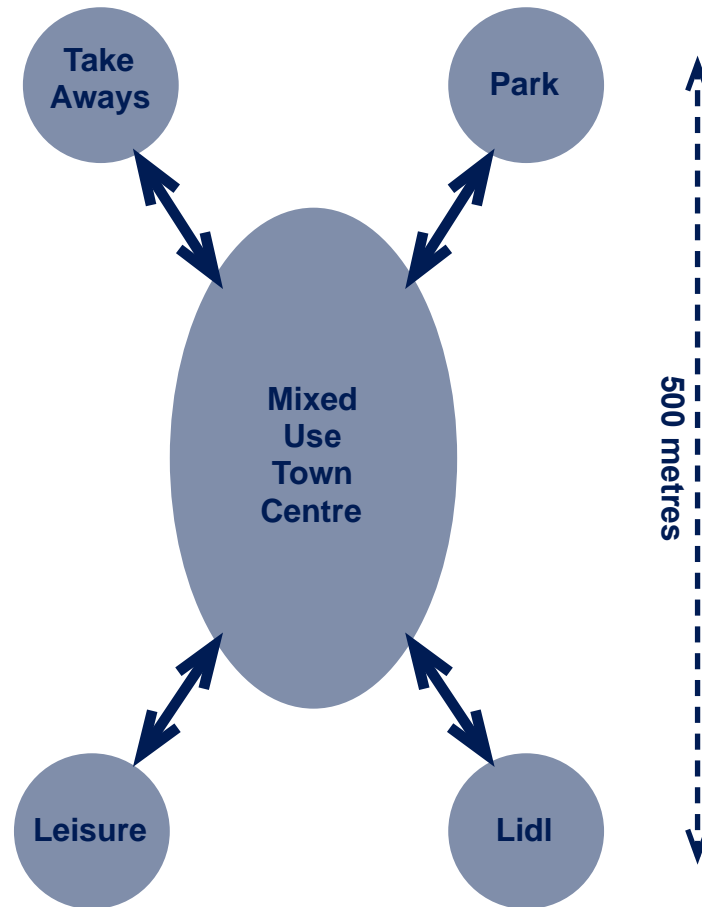
Figure 4.1: Physical Severance of the Community by the Four-lane A6 Antrim Road



Figure 4.2: Physical severance caused by wide spaces without pedestrian crossings



Figure 4.3: Conceptual Map of Glengormley Links and Facilities



are single facilities: the Park and Lidl. The central mixed facilities area suffers most from severance by the Antrim Road and its key junctions.

Another aspect to the function of Glengormley is the large number of take-way food outlets. These cater mostly to drivers (and their passengers) passing through and stopping off on the way to or from somewhere else. Therefore they tend not to generate much footfall.

Pedestrians are catered for by footways on both sides of all the approach roads to and within the town centre. These are of variable width and quality. Paving quality is variable and dropped kerb provision is not comprehensive, making movement with wheelchairs, mobility scooters and buggies difficult, as illustrated in Figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: No dropped kerb at Portland Avenue makes walking difficult for some users



Figure 4.5: Good Quality Footway Outside Lidl



Figure 4.6: Enough Room for a Coffee Stop



Figure 4.7: Bus Passengers Obstruct Footway, Antrim Road



Figure 4.8: "A" Board Restricts Footway, Antrim Road



Footways along the Antrim Road are mostly of adequate width, although the effective width is often reduced by temporary or permanent obstructions, as shown in Figures 4.5 to 4.8.

Walking is often difficult and unpleasant, and even unsafe due to drivers driving and parking on the footway. There seems to be very little respect for pedestrian space in Glengormley centre, and in the wider district. Parking and driving on the footways appears not to be enforced.

There are no signal-protected crossings in the centre of

Glengormley (Farmley Road, Carnmoney Road, Church Road junction). Signal pedestrian crossings are provided at the junctions between Antrim Road and Ballyclare Road, Hightown Road and Church Way (Lidl). Informal crossing places are provided in other locations, especially junctions.

The streets in Glengormley are dominated by moving and parked vehicles, both visually and in terms of impact on pedestrian behaviour. Crossing the street for the most part involves finding a gap in the traffic. The streets generally are laid out and managed as traffic priority areas, and drivers have unbroken right of way except at signals.

Figure 4.9: Police Set a Bad Example to Drivers Near Abbey Centre



Figure 4.10: Footway Parking and Driving Condoned in Glengormley



Figure 4.11: Parking Obstructs Footway, Ballyclare Road



Figure 4.12: Footway and Double Yellow Line Parking, Carnmoney Road



Figure 4.13: Footway Parking and "A" Board Make Walking Difficult, Portland Avenue



There are very few spaces where people can rest or sojourn. Road junctions have been laid out to maximise traffic capacity and are daunting for pedestrians to cross.

The result is a centre that has very little appeal as a place to spend time, to meet, or relax.

4.3 Private Motor Traffic Movement

There are no data on traffic flows in Glengormley. There are however reports from Roads Service and from the local sources that congestion occurs on roads approaching Glengormley centre. However, there are no data on the delays experienced, such as the impact on journey times, variability from hour to hour or day to day.

The A6 passes through Glengormley. South from the junction with Ballyclare Road towards Belfast it is marked out as 4 lanes, although where parking is allowed, parked vehicles restrict movement to one lane. In the central part of Glengormley the principal roads have extensive double yellow line parking restrictions, which is mostly effective in maintaining four running lanes. This does, however, make it difficult for pedestrians to cross.

The roads into Glengormley centre are mostly single lane with the exception of Antrim Road from the south, which is two lanes. Two lanes are provided at junction approaches, however, at Antrim Road (from the north), Hightown Road, and Farmley Road. This provision appears to be based on the availability of space rather than traffic demand. For example, traffic demand is much heavier on Ballyclare

Road joining Antrim Road from the north (single lane) than on Farmley Road joining Antrim Road from local streets and car parking.

In 2001 about a quarter of households in Newtownabbey had no access to a car or van, a little lower than the Northern Ireland average. However, there was considerable variation between different parts of the district. The figures for the main Glengormley Wards are shown in Figure 4.1.

For Newtownabbey as a whole, 74% of employed people travelled to work by car or van in 2001. This rose to 77.84% for journeys to a town/shopping centre (Telephone Survey).

Parking

There is one off-street public car park operated by Roads Service in Glengormley located at Farmley Road, with 138 spaces. Use of this car park is uncontrolled and free. There are no disabled spaces. There are no occupancy data for this car park.

There are in addition private off-street car parks associated with individual land uses, such as the cinema, restaurants and take-aways. No data are available on the quantity or occupancy of these car parks.

On-street parking is available on the side streets and along the kerbside of the principal streets away from the centre of Glengormley. In the centre, kerbside parking is mostly restricted by single or double yellow lines. This is generally effective in maintaining two running lanes in each direction on the Antrim Road (A6).

Figure 4.14 Household Access to a Car

Ward	% Households Without a Car
Collinwood	10
Glebe	10
Hightown	22
Glengormley	33

Figure 4.15: Recent development with perpendicular parking on A6 Antrim Road



Figure 4.16: Forecourt parking Portland Avenue

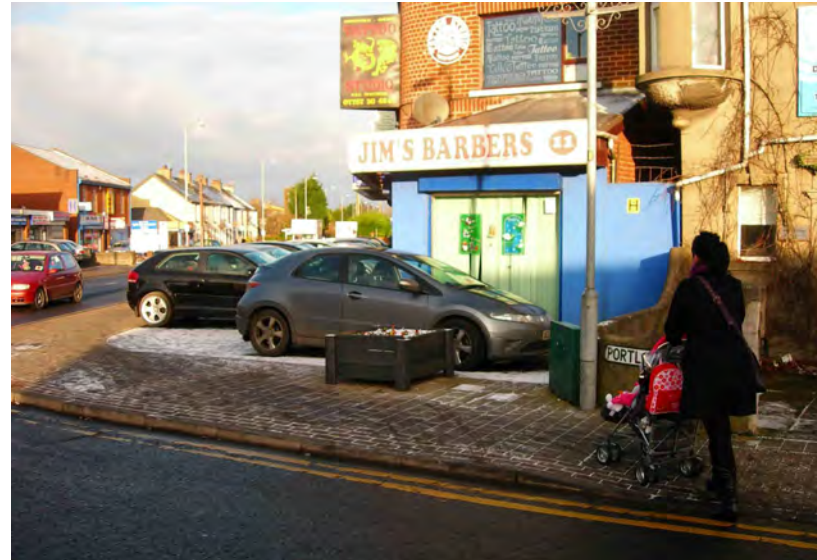


Figure 4.17: Forecourt perpendicular parking to A8



Figure 4.18: Forecourt perpendicular parking to A8 Ballyclare Rd showing impact on walking environment



Some apparently recent development has been allowed with perpendicular parking onto the main street, in particular along Antrim Road (the A6) in the north of the town centre. Such development is normally resisted in Northern Ireland on safety grounds. Forecourt parking generally is common in Glengormley and by effectively surrounding the footways with cars creates an unpleasant walking environment. Figure ** shows some examples of this.

There are a few parking bays, for example in Carnmoney Road and Farmley Road. The latter bay is restricted to 1 hour maximum stay and has a disabled space.

4.4 Buses

All bus services pass through Glengormley and stop in the central part of Antrim Road. There is no “town” service as such. The 367 from Northcott to Greenisland/Jordanston is listed by Translink as a town service, but it does not serve the centre of Glengormley. All the services are operated by Translink Ulsterbus. There is no published route map.

The A6 and A8 are important for bus services, but there is only one pair of bus stops serving the centre of Glengormley, situated at the southern end near the pedestrian shopping precinct. This means that people instead of being able to arrive at one end of the centre and depart from the other, must instead return from the same location they started. Given how spread out the facilities in Glengormley are, this means a lot of unnecessary walking.

It is notable that Glengormley has very frequent bus services to the centre of Belfast, with 176 buses in each

Figure 4.19 Bus services through Glengormley

Route	Origin - Destination	Trips Mon-Fri	Trips Sat	Trips Sun
1A	Glenville - Belfast	32	28	7
1B	New Mossley - Belfast	24	21	7
1C	New Mossley - Belfast	3	2	8
1D	Mossley (Glade) - Belfast	27	24	8
1E	Roughfort - Belfast	30	27	9
1G	Ballyhenry - Belfast	3	0	0
1J	Roughfort - Belfast	3	0	0
2B	Fairview - Belfast *	26	21	0
64A	Carnmoney - Belfast [†]	11	8	0
367	Northcott centre - Greenisland [†]	8	3	0
553A	Ballyclare - Belfast Express from Glengormley	17	11	0
Total buses to Belfast		176	142	39
Total buses to Abbey Centre		45	32	0

* Serves Abbey Centre as well as Glengormley

† Serves Valley leisure Centre and Abbey Centre as well as Glengormley

direction on weekdays. However, because of the large number of different routes making up the total, the buses do not arrive at regular intervals.

Abbey Centre is seen as a major retail facility for the area, and there are bus services to it 3 or 4 times hourly, although again not at regular intervals. The Valley leisure centre is

served, though not much better than hourly during the day, and in the evening, when the leisure centre is busiest, there are no buses to or from Glengormley.

There are frequent buses (5 routes) between Glengormley centre and Northcott centre.

There are currently no proposals to provide any bus priority in Glengormley. Buses are subjected to the same delays experienced by general traffic, and this can disrupt journey schedules and reliability. Possible ways of helping buses, e.g. on Antrim Road and Ballyclare Road, have been discussed over the years, but no firm proposals have been put forward. There are bus priority measures on the Antrim Road towards Belfast, but that is some distance from Glengormley (beyond the Zoo).

There is a planning application in for a 90 space Park and Ride at the Ballyhenry Road junction with the M2 (near Junction 4) to link with express bus services to Belfast. This would serve people in Glengormley area who do not live near an express bus service stop. The planning application has stalled, however, due to objections locally.

The residents survey revealed that 14.10% of shoppers travel to their local centre by bus. Likewise, the shoppers survey revealed that only 10% of visitors to Glengormley had travelled to the town centre by bus. By comparison 76% had travelled in a private car and 13% had walked.

Translink information awaited (requested 22 Feb. 2010)

4.5 Cycle movement and parking

There are no cycle routes in Glengormley. No publicly available cycle parking has been recorded. From observation, cycling accounts for a small proportion of travel in Glengormley, although no data are available.

4.6 Taxis

There are two taxi companies in Glengormley. Both have limited off-street waiting space for taxis.

5. Market Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This section of the Baseline Report has been prepared by Colliers CRE. It aims to assess Glengormley Town Centre from primarily a retail perspective and outlines what potential opportunities and threats it faces in the short-medium term. We offer a number of recommendations that we believe would significantly benefit the Town Centre.

5.2 UK Retail Market Overview

The UK Retail Market is currently undergoing a period of correction. Colliers CRE 2009 Midsummer Retail Report forecasts that rental values will fall by 23% by the end of 2010. The worst economic recession since the 1930s has taken its toll on the retail sector with capital values for some properties falling by up to half.

Retailers have reported “challenging” trading conditions across the board with the notable exception being those at the value or discount end of the spectrum apparently trading much better than those positioned at the middle and higher ends.

2009 and 2010 have witnessed a large number of high profile retailer administrations, the net effect of which has been to increase the rate of voids in UK shopping centres and high streets. Opportunistic discount retailers are taking the opportunity of ever increasing voids to negotiate low rents and large incentives in taking new units.

Landlords appear to have learnt the lesson of the early 1990s, in part forced upon them by the Government’s implementation of full vacant rate payments and are now

prepared to keep units occupied almost on any terms. Rent free periods and/or incentives equal to two or three years are common place with extreme examples of five or even six years rent free being accepted. Short term leases on a turnover basis are often being entered into. The occupancy of a unit helps maintain vibrancy and a feeling of well-being in shopping centres and high streets.

The recession has witnessed the first drop in prime rents since the recession of the early 1990s, when rental values fell for three consecutive years from 1991 by -2.4%, -4.1% and -3.2% respectively, highlighting the comparative severity of the current economic climate and its impact on the retail market.

5.3 Glengormley Context

Glengormley is set within the Newtownabbey borough approximately 6 miles north of Belfast and borders North Belfast, Carnmoney and Mallusk. The town enjoys a highly strategic location in close proximity to Belfast and the motorway network (via the M2). It has as such become a popular commuter town and has witnessed significant expansion since around the early 1990’s.

In retail terms, Glengormley town centre supports a nucleus of smaller shops primarily focused around the junctions of the Antrim, Ballyclare and Carnmoney Roads. This is augmented by a now aging retail / leisure development to the South of the main junction on the Glenwell Road.

The perception is that there is considerable leakage to nearby competing retail centres predominantly The Abbey

Centre and Abbey Retail Estate (less than 10 minutes drive time) and Belfast City Centre (15-20 minutes drive time).

Glengormley has a small stock of business units, in the form of offices and small warehouses. Nearby Mallusk is the principal office / warehousing location within the immediate area. There is however a considerable number of smaller offices and warehouse units in the town supporting a small number of local business.

From a leisure perspective, Glengormley town centre offers a large number of restaurants and take-aways, some of which are very popular and are considered to draw custom from relatively long distances. There are a number of more traditional pubs in the town.

5.4 Glengormley Retail Market ***Current Retail Landscape in the Town Centre***

Glengormley has a compact centre which is centred on the junctions of the Antrim, Carnmoney and Ballyclare Roads.

The **Ferbro Buildings** located to the north of the Ballyclare Road junction on the Antrim Road provide a number of terraced shop units and fast food outlets. The **Olivia Centre**, also at this northern end of town comprises Xtravision, The Khyber and the Gondala (a new Italian restaurant). At the other end of the retail core is the **Tramways Centre**, a part new / part refurbished scheme anchored by Iceland and The Medical Centre.

As is discussed in more detail below, the majority of the occupiers in the town centre are primarily low quality

smaller independents, banks, estate agents and charity shops which in our opinion fail to generate a sense of place or an attractive shopping environment.

These occupiers tend to occupy small “lock up shops” in small terrace buildings. Fit-outs and shop-fronts are generally aging and tired which creates a town centre lacking in quality and in need of comprehensive upgrading and inward investment.

It appears to be an opportune time to re-visit the retail provision in the town, upgrading and adding to it as appropriate

Retail Rents – Glengormley

The size and occupier profile of Glengormley is such that retail rents are increasingly not calculated on a zone A basis, but rather on an overall basis.

Prime Rents typically reflect c. £10 - £15 per sq ft for standard sized units up to 1,000 sq ft. Larger units will attract a further quantum discount. This figure is low, and in our opinion is reflective of the parking and congestion issues facing the town and the implications that these carry for successful retailing.

This prime stretch within Glengormley, located as it is, on a principal arterial route is comparable to other suburban arterial route retail centres in suburban Belfast such as Belmont, Ballyhackamore, the Ormeau Road, the Andersonstown Road and the Falls Road. In general terms, rents in these locations would be higher than those

paid for comparable retail accommodation in Glengormley. It is notable that these locations would be generally less congested than Glengormley and also typically offer roadside parking, making the retail units much more accessible for car borne shoppers.

The town centre in recent years has been characterised by a high turnover of predominantly local tenants. Whilst the number of vacancies is currently low, there has been considerable amount of tenant churn, reflecting difficult trading conditions generally and more particularly, the ongoing problems being encountered by traders in the town centre.

Relatively low rents however are something of an attraction to retailers. To be competitive, the Town Centre will have to build from a relatively low base in rental terms. It will find it hard to compete with its competitors unless it can provide an alternative lower cost option than that which is offered in the competing alternatives.

Recent Transactions

Recent transactions within the Retail Core have been very limited with little in terms of actual transactions to report. BTW Shiells have been marketing the former and somewhat landmark “Cartmills” building in the town for approximately 1 year. They are proposing to subdivide the property providing small lock up shops of c. 700 – 800 sq ft. They are quoting rentals of £20 per sq ft. We are advised that there is no current interest in the property and it therefore remains “to let”.

Otherwise transactions have been few reflecting the wider implications of the “credit crunch” and its constraining effect on the expansionary policies of retailers. Secondly, Glengormley Town Centre’s relatively small size and its secondary status in terms of retail positioning when considered with neighbouring retail centres, has rendered it relatively less attractive for both multinationals and indigenous retailers alike.

Proposed Developments

The triangular shaped site at the junctions of the Ballyclare and Antrim Roads (currently a car wash) was purchased in 2004 (we understand this was by the owner of the adjacent Ferbro Buildings presumably for an extension to his existing scheme). It is a very prominent site and its current use does little for enhancing the visual amenity in the town centre but thus far, remains undeveloped. We are not aware of a planning application having been lodged.

The Local Independent Sector

Glengormley has a limited range of local independent retailers. Some of the better known of these retailers include **Dundeas Pharmacy** a well established local chemist, and **Motorstore Car Spares**; an established Motor Factors. **Video City** also have representation in the town.

Cartmills are another well regarded local independent fashion retailer but who are now all but closed, reportedly now operating on a very scale.

Over the years many other of the more established independent retailers such as **Mawhinneys**, a former local greengrocer have also closed a number of years ago.

Multinational Retailers

The principal multinational retailers are **Iceland**, **Jollyes**, **Lidl** and **Xtravision**. Iceland is reported to trade very well in the town and represents a key town centre anchor. The Lidl is physically disjointed from the town centre and invariably attracts car borne shoppers so its role in attracting symbiotic trade to the town centre is questionable.

Again the town's proximity to other larger retail centres is stressed as having been a coercive influence in attracting multinationals to the town. It is worthy of note that the town previously incorporated both a **Your More Store** and a **Shop Electric**. Since the demise of both however, the town has not attracted multinational occupiers to fill their then vacant units.

Banks / Building Societies

Most of the major banks are represented in the town centre including **Ulster Bank**, **Northern Bank**, **Bank of Ireland** and **First Trust**. There are also a number of building societies including **Abbey National**, **Progressive**, **Nationwide** and **Halifax**.

Financial / Professional Users

The concentration of these financial A2 uses is supported by a large number of professional ground floor offices hosting solicitors, estate agents and a few accountants.

The dominance of the financial and professional services sectors in the town centre is therefore stressed.

Charity Shops

There are also a number of charity shops in Glengormley. Whilst not particularly conducive to creating a well regarded retail environment, their presence is typical of arterial route locations.

Medical Centres

The Tramways Medical Centre, part of the Tramways centre is an excellent footfall driver and a key asset to the town centre. At the northern end of town the Glengormley Medical Practice also draws footfall.

5.5 Competing Retail Centres – Retail Leakage

Glengormley's large catchment population is an obvious strength from a retail perspective however its proximity to competing retail centres is, by implication a threat.

The principal competition can be listed as follows:

Belfast City Centre

The City Centre has been somewhat rejuvenated from a retail and leisure perspective with the opening of Victoria Square Shopping Centre. This scheme is Northern Ireland's largest shopping centre. It provides a number of points of difference relative to regional towns. Its strong retail offer (House of Fraser, Build a Bear, Tom Tailor, LK Bennett for example) complemented by a strong restaurant offer (Nandos, Pizza Express, TGI Fridays) provide the rationale

for shoppers to visit. The majority of the schemes Tenants are not represented elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

Abbey Centre, Newtownabbey

The Abbey Centre is within a 5-10 minute drive time from Glengormley. The scheme is anchored by Dunnes, River Island, Next and others in addition to a Marks and Spencers and Tescos in the adjacent retail parks further serves to strengthen its appeal.

Northcott Shopping Centre

The Northcott Shopping Centre (c. 130,000 sq ft) is located on the edge of Glengormley on the Ballyclare Road. The scheme, which was constructed in the late 1980's, is anchored by Tesco and comprises a mix of local and national tenants (including Superdrug, H Samuel and Barratts). The scheme is currently run-down and in poor condition.

This is imminently to change however as it is to be completely redeveloped. Works are due to commence in 2011, subject to securing vacant possession. It will be known as Sandyknowes Shopping Centre and will include a food superstore, cafe, 12 mall units and petrol filling station. Tesco will remain at the expanded site and double the size of their existing store to approximately 85,000 sq ft. It is believed a number of the other national retailers have also committed to continue trading at the new scheme. The size of the entire scheme will increase to 200,000 sq ft.

Whilst many in the local area believe that a rejuvenated scheme will benefit the Glengormley area, there is little

doubt that its redevelopment will represent an increased level of competition to the town centre. Newly constructed Grade A units adjacent to a "food anchor" (Tescos) will be eminently more preferable to retailers than a town centre beset by parking shortages and which doesn't offer retailers large enough or sufficiently specified modern units from which to trade.

It is against the backdrop of ever improving competition, that the town centre itself will need to address its problems and seek to carve out a discernible niche amongst an opportunity set of competing alternatives.

5.6 Future Retail Strategy

Multinationals who may be attracted to Glengormley

In our opinion, a newly developed scheme of sufficient critical mass would attract a number of multinational retailers. Glengormley does however not offer the catchment to be considered by the large majority of multinational brands (in particular, many of the fashion retailers) but there are, in our opinion a limited number who would consider the town if an appropriate retailing environment could be provided.

Multinational dominated shopping destinations are characterized by "critical mass", that is a large number complementary retailers which together attract a diverse range of shoppers.

These retailers are listed below.

- M&Co – 7,000 sq ft
- Cheque Centre – 1,000 sq ft

- Co-Op convenience – 3,000 sq ft
- B&M Bargains – 7,000 sq ft
- Home Bargains – 6,000 sq ft
- Poundworld – 4,000 sq ft
- Poundland – 6,000 sq ft
- Semi-Chem – 2,000 sq ft
- Savers / Superdrug – 3,000 sq ft
- Cash Converters – 2,000 sq ft

To some extent, this list reflects the current economic climate and the fact that those retailers who are currently acquisitive tend to be towards the value end of the spectrum. It is these retailers who are most likely to have an interest in the town.

These multinational retailers will not be attracted to the town on a piecemeal or one by one basis. They will only come to a new development of sufficient critical mass and which promotes a tenant mix that will draw a wide range of customers. We would suggest that any new retail provision would comprise at least 7-8 new appropriately sized retail units such that the above named retailers can take comfort from knowing that other good complementary retailers can be accommodated alongside them.

The town does not currently meet the size and specification requirements of typical multinational retailers, as such, legitimising a role for the development of suitable accommodation in the town.

It should be noted that The Sandyknowes Centre is likely to “soak up” some of this latent demand in the 12 new

units to be created as part of the redevelopment. The retail sector is however a dynamic sector and we do believe that suitable town centre accommodation would be attractive to “new” retailers, particularly when combined with a cohesive Leisure offer.

Size and Specification Requirements of Multinational Retailers

In general terms, the size and specification requirements of such retailers are discussed below:

- Units ranging from 2,500 – 10,000 sq ft.
- Regular shaped units without steps / ramps or other changes in level at ground floor level.
- Minimum frontage: 6 metres (8-10 metres for larger units).
- Floor to ceiling shop fascias for display.
- 3 Phase electricity supply.
- Goods lifts / Amenity Block / Disabled W.C’s / Screeded floors.
- Rear service access and servicing areas.

The existing building stock in the Primary Retail Core could broadly be described as aging converted terrace buildings which do not adequately meet the needs of modern retailers.

5.7 Glengormley Office Market

The office market in the town would be characterized by smaller offices in converted former-residential buildings along the Antrim, Ballyclare, Carnmoney and surrounding roads. These tend to be either owner-occupied or rented

space in small office buildings or above retail or commercial space. Typical occupiers include a number of estate agents as well as solicitors, accountants and other similar small consultancy practices.

Speculative development of offices on a large scale in the town centre is deemed unlikely and inefficacious from a viability perspective. Over the course of the Masterplan timeframe it is envisaged that Mallusk will remain the principal office location in the area with Glengormley appealing to smaller “service” based offices, occupying converted residential buildings.

5.8 Leisure and Tourism

The Leisure and Tourism market in Northern Ireland is undergoing significant expansion with year on year increases in visitor numbers to the province over the past number of years.

The Executive’s Programme for Government has set Northern Ireland tourism challenging targets over the next three years. These include increasing visitor numbers from 1.98million to 2.5million by 2011, and growing tourism revenue from £370 million to £520 million.

It is widely acknowledged that Northern Ireland and Co. Antrim is rich in natural beauty with widespread areas of special interest. It is felt that Glengormley could capitalise on this and in particular its close proximity to both Bellevue Zoo and Cavehill Country Park. The potential to further enhance the catering offer in particular and in so doing

attract to Glengormley, families and visitors of both of these attractions, is stressed.

Both the **Movie House** and **The Sportsbowl** are key leisure attractors to Glengormley at the current time and draw not only from Glengormley, but also from the wider East Antrim area. They should as such be regarded as key assets for the town. Again, the potential to augment this with other retail and Leisure attractors (bars, restaurants, new retail provision with adequate parking) is stressed..

5.9 Future Leisure Market

The mix of uses that can be grouped together include:

Children’s Indoor Play Park / Activity Centre

Glengormley has a large number of resident young families. There is currently a children’s play facility called **Funworks** in the town. This is a reasonably good facility. It is suggested however that there is scope for an even larger facility which might provide more of a regional draw. A larger, perhaps branded multiple operator would not only be an important attractor to the town centre but would also further boost both the evening and daytime economies.

A large Children’s Play facility would require 10,000 sq ft.

Restaurants / Cafés

Glengormley already has a large number of restaurants and cafes, most of which are lower quality and not particularly attractive. Increasing better quality and more family-friendly restaurants and cafes will further enhance

attractiveness of the town, amongst residents and visiting shoppers.

Higher End Bars / Wine Bar

A good quality wine bar / bar could prove instrumental in attracting growing number of resident and visiting young professionals to the area.

5.10 Existing Hotels / Restaurants / Pubs and Clubs

There are a number of pubs / bars in Glengormley town centre. For the large part, these are considered to be more traditional drinking establishments and not particularly amenable to families and young people.

The **Bellevue Inn** (edge of town centre), **The Glen Inn** and **Toms Bar** (the former Village Inn) are the best known bars; however none of these would be associated with improving the retailing amenity in the town. The **Thunderdome Café** is a more family friendly environment (bar and restaurant) albeit seems to be suffering from the recent economic downturn.

The Khyber (an Indian restaurant) is a particular local success story. Anecdotally, we are advised that patrons regularly travel more than 30 miles to visit this restaurant. Proof that a successful catering offer can be very successful in Glengormley.

Other than this, there is a proliferation of relatively mid-market fast food outlets in the town centre, many of which have traded for a considerable number of years. **Indian**

Ocean, part of a local chain of restaurants has recently opened in the town centre.

There are two fast food multiple restaurants in the town: **KFC** and **McDonalds**. Both are popular and are reported to trade well.

All of which is to say that Glengormley's evening economy is already vibrant. Granted, we believe that there is added scope for a more family friendly leisure offer and as above, the potential to raise the profile of Glengormley's Leisure offer amongst patrons of the zoo and visitors to the Cavehill Country Park is stressed as a key opportunity for growth.

Irrespective of this, with a large number of young families living in the Glengormley area, there is added scope for more family friendly restaurants. The above mentioned parking problems are currently a constraint to growth in this sector.

5.11 The Town Centre Residential Market

We believe that there is further scope for apartments in Glengormley although the town centre boundary is very compact. As such, residential uses might best be accommodated slightly outside the Masterplan boundary, given the apparent lack of suitable opportunity sites. This is also at the risk of intensifying the parking issue.

Glengormley is a good commuter location and is already popular amongst young professionals. Along with improvements to the evening economy and a reduction

in anti-social uses in the town centre, Glengormley could attract such occupiers in greater numbers.

5.12 The Importance of Public Realm

Shopping has become more of a leisure activity. Customers increasingly demand shopping environments that are attractive and pleasant. Successful retailing has become about customers having an authentic experience. Increasing footfall and 'dwell time' accounts for why so much effort is put into creating attractive destinations where people want to visit.

All of which is to say that any future town centre scheme should be designed around significant public realm. The provision of high quality paving, sculptures, seating and street lighting would have very significant implications for the attractiveness of the town centre for visitors and shoppers alike. The town suffers from some antisocial uses in the evenings and public realm works could have a part to play in reducing this.

5.13 Vision

At the heart of our vision for Glengormley Town Centre is a rejuvenated and comprehensive retail / leisure offer incorporating the following:

1. A limited number of new multinational retailers.
2. Better car parking
3. An enhanced catering offer incorporating an increased range of good quality bars, cafes and restaurants.

The vitality of the Town Centre is under threat amidst traffic congestion and a stagnation in new retail development to provide high quality retail floorspace which the modern retailer demands. Glengormley "shares" its catchment with a number of other good quality retail destinations so the need to upgrade, improve and create a point of difference is clear. Further promoting both the daytime and evening economies is seen as a key way of achieving this.

The Glenwell Road trading estate – it's potential as a rejuvenated retail / leisure focal point.

The Glenwell Road area already comprises **Jollyes Pet Food Superstore, McDonalds, The Movie House and Sportsbowl Bowling Alley**. Behind it (running to the M2) are a number of vacant sites and office / warehouses. Alongside it lies a vacant former car sales site, a Petrol Filling Station and a Kwik-fit Tyre and Exhaust centre, none of which contribute anything to the daytime retail environment or visual amenity of the town. These important frontage sites are currently being utilised for uses which are to the detriment of "place making" in Glengormley town centre.

Taking this further, it is deemed that the southerly (older) portion of the Tramways centre offers little to the town. If removed, just the Iceland and Medical Centre (important town centre anchors) would remain (important town centre anchors).

If this overall site could be assembled and comprehensively redeveloped, the following could potentially be accommodated:

1. Comprehensive redevelopment of the existing Glenwell Road parade of units to provide more modern units for existing occupiers in addition to new units to accommodate new retailers.
2. A better linkage of the Glenwell Road area with the town centre.
3. Public Realm works to enhance the amenity and help to provide a focal point for the town. Re-establishing the identity of the town centre in this area might help to re-establish the town in the minds of local residents and reaffirm a sense of place which was lost when the village square became disjointed.
4. New restaurant pods which would be attractive to families
5. Additional parking to increase the overall provision in the town.

6. Retail Capacity Baseline

6.1 Introduction

XXX

7. Urban Design Analysis

7.1 Introduction

XXX

8. Town Centre Health Check

8.1 Introduction

Each of the Planning Policy Statement 5: Retailing and Town Centres indicators outlined in this Town Centre Health check can be brought together to present an overall picture of the vitality and viability of Glengormley Town Centre. This in turn can then inform a 'SWOT Analysis', considering the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Town Centre, the opportunities to improve the overall vitality and viability of the centre and the factors that could threaten the success of improvements.

8.2 Accessibility

As well as being outlined as part of the Town Centre Health Check, issues relating to the accessibility of Glengormley Town Centre are also included in detail in Section 4 of this Baseline Report.

8.3 Land Use Profile

There are 150 units within Glengormley Town Centre, as well as 5 residential units. The breakdown of land use within the town centre shows a number of concerning variations when compared to the UK average.

Convenience outlets are under-represented, comprising only 5.33% of all units. They are evenly distributed and include a number of small independent butchers and bakers. The proportion of comparison outlets is also well below the national average, suggesting a limited viability of the town as a traditional retail centre. These weaknesses are most likely a reflection of strong convenience and comparison retail competition provided by the Abbey Centre and the Northcott Shopping Centre.

As a result of the decline in traditional retailing, Glengormley has developed a niche role in the service sector. With over half of the units being classified as service sector, the proportion is 18% above the national average. The town centre also has a number of small, independent offices. Again, the distribution of these units throughout the centre is relatively even. Despite this strength, the high proportion of leisure services does lead to a lack of vitality during the day.

With 19 out of the 150 units within Glengormley being vacant, the proportion is above the national average. This is likely to be an indicator of poor vitality and viability, particularly given the number of vacancies fronting onto the Antrim Road in the traditional retail core. The low proportion of residential units also detracts from the overall vitality of the area, although the centre is surrounded in all directions by residential suburbs.

8.4 Footfall

The entrance to the Tramway Centre is the busiest location within Glengormley town centre. This is most likely attributed to the Tramway Medical Centre and Iceland located within the Shopping Centre, but may also reflect access to the public car park and bus stops.

Within the traditional retail core, the pedestrian flows remained relatively high, despite the high levels of vacancy and dereliction in this area. This may reflect the attraction of the Glen Inn at the heart of the town, or may be the result of movement of shoppers from the car park or via bus near the Tramway Centre to visit services in the northern part

of the town. Either way, a high footfall in this area can be considered a strength for the traditional retail core.

Elsewhere within the town centre, footfall tails-off. However, whilst it is common in even the best performing town centres to find a dramatic tail-off in footfall in peripheral areas, in Glengormley the tail-off seems lower and more evenly spread. This reflects the compact nature of the town centre.

It is notable that many of the peripheral areas of the town centre are the highest performing on a Saturday, suggesting that the town centre is well used by local residents on a Saturday. This, and the size of the catchment population within a short walk of the town centre, is a real strength.

8.5 Market Indicators

As well as being outlined as part of the Town Centre Health Check, issues relating to the market conditions in Glengormley Town Centre are also included in detail in Section 5 of this Baseline Report.

8.6 Customer/Shopper Views

XXX

8.7 Retailer Views

XXX

8.8 Urban Design Appraisal

As well as being outlined as part of the Town Centre Health Check, an urban design analysis of Glengormley Town Centre is also included in detail in Section 7 of this

Baseline Report.

8.9 Summary and Conclusions

XXX

9. Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

XXX



Tribal

Enterprise House
55-59 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FE

T 02890 726 030

F 02890 726 087

E info.consulting@tribalgroup.co.uk

www.tribalgroup.co.uk/masterplanning