

GREATER SHANKILL

Strategic Regeneration Framework



prepared in December 2008 for

Greater Shankill Partnership
and the
Department for Social Development
(Belfast Regeneration Office)

by the consultant team

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PREFACE

The Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Greater Shankill area of Belfast, Northern Ireland was commissioned by the Greater Shankill Partnership in November 2007. This was in direct response to the Department for Social Development (DSD) Renewing Communities Programme, which commits to the development of SRFs for each of the city's five partnership areas.

This SRF was prepared by a consultant team led by The Paul Hogarth Company, who provides Urban Regeneration, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture services. They were joined by Julie Harrison and Mike Morrissey providing specialist regeneration consultancy in social policy and economics.

The Greater Shankill Partnership would like to thank all members of the project steering group (see Appendix A), whose input was central to the development of the Framework.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Greater Shankill

The Greater Shankill is one of Belfast's most famous neighbourhoods, symbolised by its busy shopping street, the Victorian Woodvale Park and the strong cultural and political identity of its community. It emerged in response to the rapid industrialisation of the city during the 19th Century, when it became home to a predominantly working class, protestant population, associated with local Linen Mills, engineering and shipbuilding across the city. The 20th century saw expansion of the Greater Shankill, with significant house building taking place at Highfield and Glencairn, located on the area's impressive hillside setting.

However, the impact of the 'Troubles', combined with population dispersal arising from redevelopment and acute socio economic decay have profoundly impacted upon Greater Shankill communities. A 'perfect storm' of historical changes left in its wake overwhelming physical and socio-economic damage. Research undertaken for this Strategic Regeneration Framework clearly demonstrates that the Greater Shankill and its people are still greatly affected in real terms by these events that began over half a century ago.

Successive attempts have been made to regenerate areas of the Greater Shankill. Despite some notable successes and the presence of community initiatives that are well established and respected, none has succeeded in transforming the area. It is now recognised that a comprehensive and strategically based approach to the entire area is urgently needed and that piecemeal regeneration efforts are unable to produce lasting outcomes.

Despite numerous plans and proposals for different elements of the Greater Shankill there has not been a comprehensive vision for the whole area since 1969. Almost 40 years on, this Strategic Regeneration Framework provides the opportunity to:

- a) fully assess the nature and extent of issues currently facing the Greater Shankill, and;
- b) establish a set of strategically founded priorities by which to drive the reversal of its decline.

The SRF provides a clearer role for existing programmes and plans within a positive, outward looking regeneration framework that offers the best chance for the Greater Shankill to reconnect with opportunities in Belfast and utilise the assets it already possesses.



1.2 The Study Area

The study area for the Greater Shankill SRF is defined by the red line shown on the plan shown below. It extends north west from Belfast City Centre to the Belfast Hills and south from the Crumlin Road to the 'peace line' and Springfield Road. This is based upon the geographic area of the Greater Shankill Partnership's operation and designed to meet the boundaries of adjacent SRFs in neighbouring North and West Belfast.



Study Area

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1.3 The SRF Brief

The Terms of Reference for this Framework were defined by Greater Shankill Partnership as follows:

- develop the vision and devise a strategic plan to address the current and future regeneration needs
- produce an outline view of the existing physical infrastructure with particular regard to the balance of existing and future land uses
- provide an analysis of the economic, political, social and environmental circumstances and propose solutions for addressing the limitations imposed by those conditions
- make recommendations for improving transportation and traffic management within the area
- determine the shortfall in community, business and individual access to digital technology and develop proposals to enhance ICT use
- develop proposals for a co-ordinated and complementary delivery of high quality public services
- place the Greater Shankill in both a city centre, city-wide and regional context

The consultant team responded by advocating a fresh approach to the regeneration of the Greater Shankill, based upon a thorough process of analysis and consultation. A four-stage methodology was devised that enabled the development of a shared vision via a close working relationship with the client team and stakeholders. An emphasis on securing the delivery of proposals was identified an early stage as being key to the success of the Framework.

1.4 Existing Policy & Regeneration Programmes

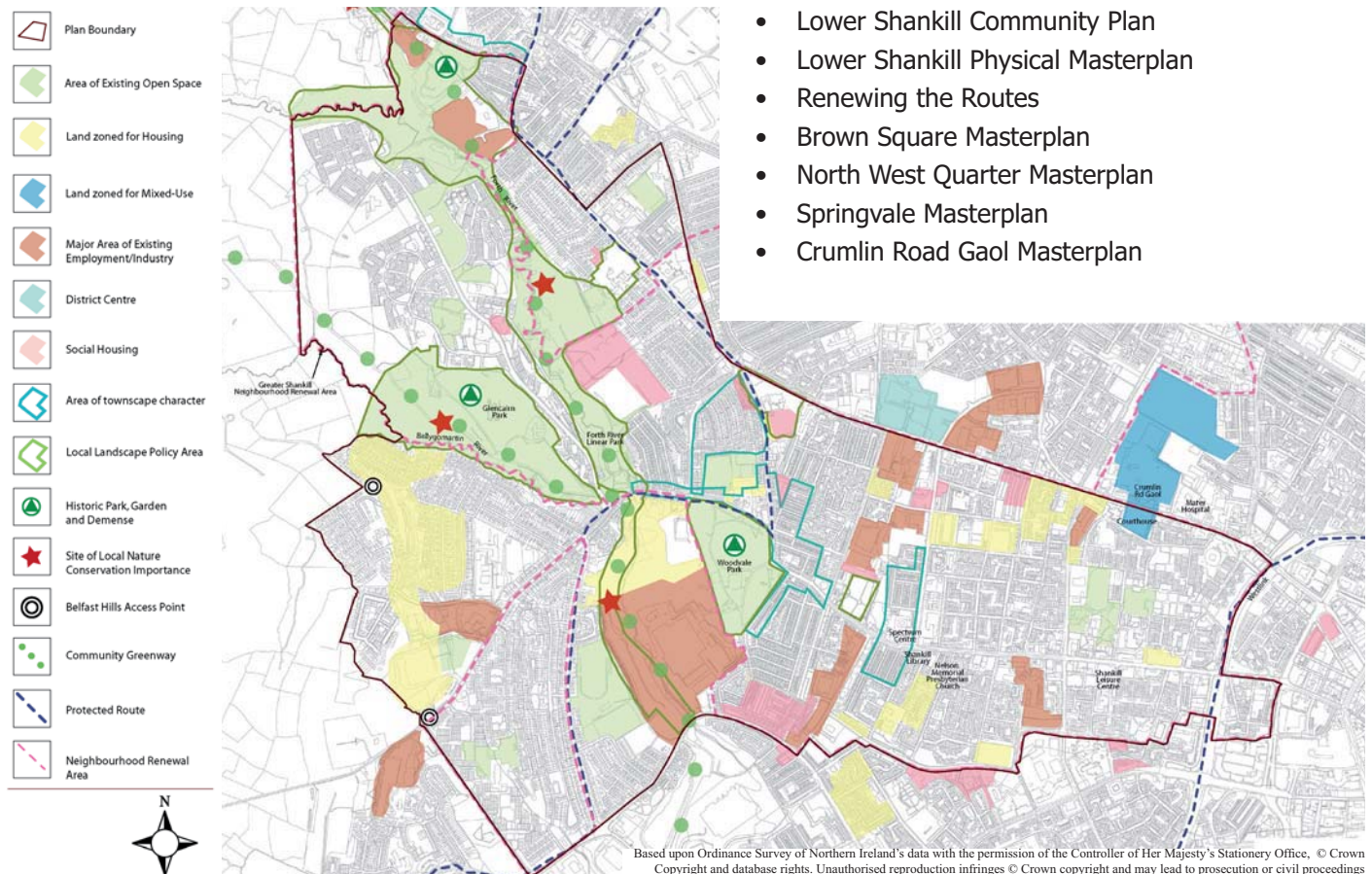
To be successful, the Strategic Regeneration Framework must recognise and align with existing policy and regeneration initiatives.

The overarching policy guidance relevant to the area consists of the following:

- o The Neighbourhood Renewal programme's – 'People and Place' aims for a more integrated implementation of 'mainstream' programmes and cross-cutting initiatives. The neighbourhood Action Plan for the Shankill neighbourhood renewal area needs to be taken account of by the SRF in seeking to address inequalities and make best use of existing resources.
- o First Steps towards Sustainability (2006) sets out Government's intention in relation to the sustainable development agenda.
- o Shared Future sets out goals for tackling the visible manifestations of sectarianism and racism, reclaiming shared space, reducing tensions at interfaces and sharing communities.
- o The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI 2005-2015) is an important consideration for the SRF as it was designed to shift from a three-year financial planning cycle to a rolling ten-year period.
- o The Review of Public Administration has implications for the way in which key public services are delivered in the Greater Shankill and will need to be kept under review so that relationships are supported and developed with those who will have responsibility for priority areas within the Framework, particularly in relation to education and physical development.
- o 'Investing for Health' is closely aligned to the SRF by acknowledging and responding to interconnected factors that impact on health and well being.

- o 'Extended Schools: schools, families, communities - working together', is potentially an important bridge between 'People and Place', the cross-departmental priorities of health and education, including BELB's 'Achieving Belfast' document, and the anti poverty and social exclusion strategy, although funding associated with this policy has been reduced.
- o The Community Safety Strategy sets out how Government intends "to improve the quality of life of the population generally by reducing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing the fear of crime" and is relevant to elements of the SRF which relate to community cohesion, physical dereliction, neighbourhoods and services.
- o Belfast City Council has several strategies and programmes that are potentially important to the SRF. 'Capital City', the Good Relations Strategy, Renewing the Routes and the Community Support Plan (part funded by DSD) are all relevant. Renewing the Routes has already led to some improvements of shop fronts near Woodvale Park and this process is scheduled to continue down the Shankill Road in the short term.
- o Previous strategies and plans for the Greater Shankill are also important to the Framework and need to be set into the overall vision and associated actions if appropriate. These include the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan and West Belfast and Shankill Task Force report. In addition, several regeneration Masterplans for specific areas have been commissioned, including:

- Lower Shankill Community Plan
- Lower Shankill Physical Masterplan
- Renewing the Routes
- Brown Square Masterplan
- North West Quarter Masterplan
- Springvale Masterplan
- Crumlin Road Gaol Masterplan



Map of Planning Policy

1.5 Role of a People Centred SRF for Greater Shankill

It is essential that in the context of current regeneration initiatives, the Strategic Regeneration Framework fulfils a clearly defined role. The diagram below illustrates how this SRF relates to these, forming the coordinating framework for all current and future regeneration efforts.

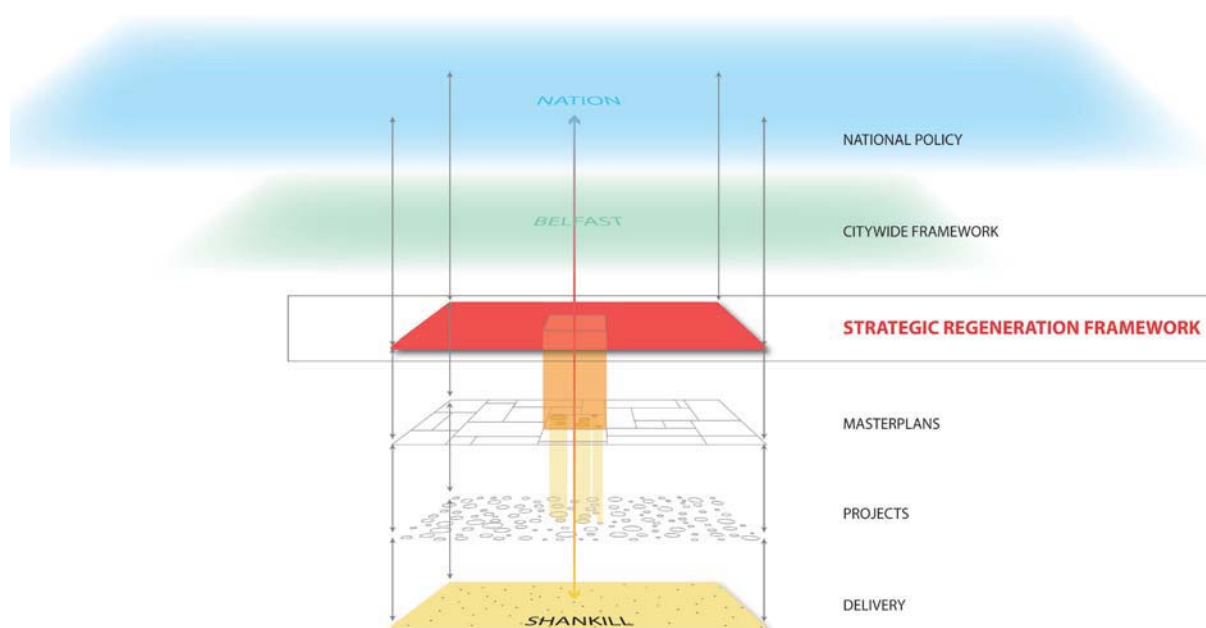
To be successful, the SRF must also have maximum relevance to the people that live in the Greater Shankill, putting their aspirations at the heart of its direction and content to form an agreed basis for regeneration. It has to meet the needs of existing communities while ensuring that the area is fully connected to the economic life of Belfast. This process was started with the involvement of members of the community and community workers in informing this SRF document. However, collaboration between Government at all levels, Private Sector partners and Greater Shankill communities is needed to coalesce efforts around a shared plan. Delivery of the SRF will therefore be reliant on local people having a central role in taking the SRF forward.

1.6 Methodology

The Strategic Regeneration Framework was developed over a 10-month period by the appointed consultant team of The Paul Hogarth Company, Julie Harrison and Mike Morrissey. The team met at regular intervals with a steering group formed by the Greater Shankill Partnership, representing stakeholders from across the community and public sectors (see Appendix A). The SRF process was structured in accordance with the following key stages:

- Desk Research
- Site Appraisal
- Stakeholder Consultation
- 'Spaceshaper' Community Consultations
- Analysis
- Concept Development
- Draft Strategic Regeneration Framework

The adopted methodology included the use of a community consultation technique known as "Spaceshaper", devised by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. This process and accompanying stakeholder consultations provided a firm foundation of community input, upon which the Framework was developed.



SRF in context



2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Shankill Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) was commissioned by the Greater Shankill Partnership and Belfast Regeneration Office (DSD) in November 2007, in response to the Renewing Communities initiative. It provides a strategic overview of regeneration priorities throughout the entire area, based upon a thorough process of research and analysis.

It has been over 40 years since the last comprehensive plan was prepared for the Greater Shankill area of Belfast. During the intervening period, its communities have experienced a traumatic process of change, brought about by the decline in traditional industries and employment, whole scale urban renewal and not least, the violent episode of the 'Troubles' by which the Shankill was greatly affected.

The impact of these separate yet inter-related events was to create a 'perfect storm' of decline, the legacy of which still has great influence upon the Greater Shankill and its people. Analysis confirms that the population continues to decline, that educational attainment remains particularly low, that multiple deprivation persists within many communities and that capital values of properties are far below those of comparable areas. Yet despite this many positives remain, such as fine examples of Victorian architecture, economic activity along the Shankill Road and above all, a strong sense of pride and community amongst its residents.

Successive attempts to bring about regeneration have had limited impact, necessitating a new and more coordinated approach to its revival, based upon these strengths.

Looking forward to a brighter future, the SRF for Greater Shankill proposes the following vision:

"The Greater Shankill will be revitalised as a sustainable community playing a vibrant role in the life of Belfast. The physical, social and economic decline of the past 40 years will be reversed in a community that experiences educational achievement; accesses employment opportunities throughout the city and sees the improving health of its residents, all set in a safe and attractive environment with affordable housing and a vibrant social and cultural scene. It will be a community at ease with itself and its neighbours".

Realisation of this vision will be delivered through a model of comprehensive regeneration, based along the following key initiatives.

The Shankill Road – comprehensive improvement of its buildings, businesses and open spaces, so that the Shankill Road plays an enhanced role as the social and commercial spine of the area.

Sustainable Neighbourhoods – focused regeneration of the Greater Shankill's different neighbourhoods with an emphasis on repopulating low density areas, ensuring good access to services and stimulating community cohesion.

Fundamental Improvement in Education and Learning - establishment of an Education and Learning Action Zone within which enhanced measures for educational attainment can be put in place. This would be accompanied by the Axis to Knowledge, a specialist corridor for educational excellence and innovation providing a focal point for education provision and associated enterprise opportunities.

Economic Opportunity – including delivery of local economic development opportunities, enhanced skills provision and physical access to employment centres across the City.

Forth River Community Greenway – fully realising the potential of the Shankill's natural assets of the hills and river by establishing a high quality and sustainable greenway. This will establish a new connection between the city of Belfast and its hills, whilst providing the focus for development along its length.

The accelerated delivery of these regeneration proposals will be accomplished through a commitment to a comprehensive approach that sources and applies adequate resources and expertise over the short to medium term. This approach is designed to bring about positive change in the Greater Shankill for the good of its residents, thus stimulating private sector confidence in the area. This will involve the establishment of a community led Urban Regeneration Company, providing a vehicle for effective cross sectoral partnership with Government and the necessary drive capability and access to successfully bring about positive and sustainable physical regeneration and investment.



3 ANALYSIS OF THE GREATER SHANKILL

3.1 *The Community Perspective*

From the outset of developing a Strategic Regeneration Framework it was clear that people in the Greater Shankill are frustrated by the regeneration process. In consultation with local residents, community leaders and other stakeholders it was evident that this frustration has developed as numerous Masterplans and consultation exercises for the area were undertaken over a relatively short period of time, but with few direct physical results or structural changes from these evident on the ground. Certain developments were also seen as inappropriate to the area. The outcome is an understandable cynicism about the value of regeneration processes and their ability to bring about needed improvements to people's lives.

This perception is a serious consideration for all those involved in regeneration of the Greater Shankill and a challenge for delivery of the SRF. It suggests a failure in the past to move beyond the conceptual, a lack of effective communication with different stakeholders about the process, difficulties with the timescales involved and an inability to generate sufficient energy around a shared regeneration programme.

The political and cultural identity of the Greater Shankill also presents both advantages and challenges. While there is a proud history and a predominantly protestant working class tradition which offers a shared framework of belonging, this has at times been a source of challenge to cohesion, driven by intra-community tensions. These reduced community confidence, impacted on the effectiveness of working relationships and created a space for criminality.

The external perception of the area has also been impacted, reducing the attractiveness of the Greater Shankill to investors and potential new residents from outside the area. Much of the challenge to community cohesion has been attributed to Loyalist Feuds. However, as land use mapping in Chapter 3 will reveal, such divisions are not helped by the physical form of the Shankill that in places creates inadvertent barriers between different areas of housing.

Whilst consultation suggests that relationships between neighbourhoods are improving and there is a determination to find a niche once more for the Greater Shankill, past divisions have resulted in a lack of cohesion, leadership and little focus on shared priorities that are a vital component of a successful regeneration process. Despite these challenges, it is evident that there is a great deal of pride within the Greater Shankill, with a strong sense of community remaining. The area is home to some of the most innovative and respected community projects in Northern Ireland with expertise that can be drawn on. There are also particular places like the Shankill Road itself and Woodvale Park, which hold particular importance as a focus for community life.



3.2 Socio-economic Analysis

The SRF has been informed by a detailed analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of Greater Shankill communities and their position in a Belfast context. Statistics have been examined at Super Output Area level, the sub unit of Electoral Wards in Northern Ireland, a map of which is provided in Appendix G. This section summarises the main findings. A full socio-economic analysis paper has been produced to accompany the SRF, located in Appendix B.

On a wide range of measures it is clear that the Greater Shankill has experienced forces of decay evidenced by:

- a substantial decline in population from the 1971 figure
- a reduced contribution to the economic life of Belfast
- increasing numbers of vulnerable households
- low capital values of properties in a city context and in comparison to other 'similar' places
- a high percentage of low income households
- persistent levels of ill health and reduced life expectancy in relative terms
- low levels of educational attainment

The socio-economic data makes a compelling case for the Greater Shankill's unique status in Belfast and underpins proposals that are made within this Framework document.

3.2.1. Multiple Deprivation

Communities in the Greater Shankill feature highly in any ranking of Northern Ireland places, on the basis of multiple deprivation and on individual measures of need that relate to education and training, ill health, the quality of people's living environment or their economic well being. The following table shows the percentage of the population in areas represented by Belfast Area Partnerships living within the 10% most deprived places in Northern Ireland. On the most recent deprivation measure (which identifies need at a more local level than its predecessors) almost one in three people living in the Greater Shankill are living in the most deprived 10 per cent of super output areas in Northern Ireland. Undoubtedly, the percentages for the Greater Shankill area are increased by its relatively small population compared to the other four partnership areas. Nevertheless, these are startling figures that illustrate the relative decline of the area.

The table below shows the Belfast Area Partnership shares of multiple deprivation 1991-2005

PARTNERSHIP AREA	1991 (ROBSON) % of Partnership Population within 10% most deprived wards in NI	2001 (NOBLE) % of Partnership Population within 10% most deprived wards in NI	2005 (NOBLE) % of Partnership Population within 10% most deprived SOAs in NI
East Belfast		7.3%	2.4%
North Belfast	15.6%	5.6%	12.1%
Shankill	13.5%	29.7%	30.3%
South Belfast	10.8%		
West Belfast	13.0%	12.9%	15.2%

Table: City Deprivation Levels

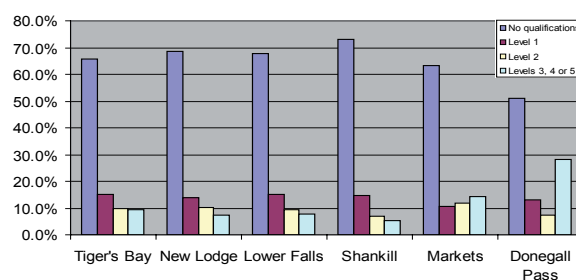
3.2.2. Education and skills

It is well known that levels of educational attainment in the Greater Shankill are low. All of the super output areas in the Greater Shankill have higher percentages of people with no qualifications than the Belfast average and in some neighbourhoods the percentage of people with no qualifications is almost double that of the Belfast average.

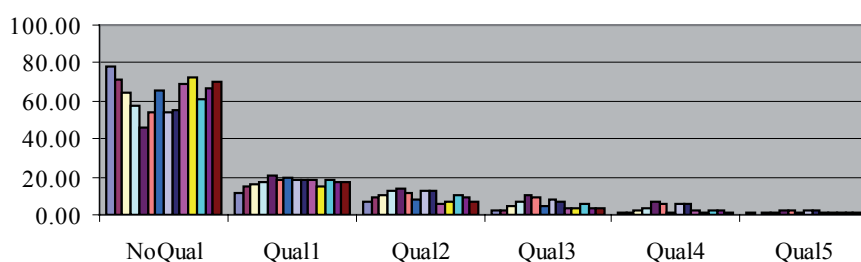
Comparison with other Belfast communities is difficult because of different population sizes. As an exercise for this SRF, six small communities in Belfast were constructed from data at Output Area level, the smallest for which data are available (see below). This showed that the Greater Shankill has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications and the lowest proportion of people with qualifications at Level 2 or above (level 2 equates to GCSE passes at grades A-C) even when compared to places that experience equally high levels of disadvantage. This is an important consideration for the SRF.

Data on young people's attainment and their position within the education system are also important. Attainment at GCSE level is consistently below the Northern Ireland average for all wards within the Greater Shankill. There are also notable geographic variations within the Greater Shankill area. For example, only 2% of young people living in the Shankill ward progress to Grammar Schools and less than one in four children achieve 5 GCSE passes. Appendix E provides further data in relation to education as a theme for the SRF.

Qualifications per Belfast Areas



Qualifications in Greater Shankill Area 2001



WARD	% ATTENDING MODEL SCHOOLS	% ATTENDING HAZELWOOD & CASTLE HIGH	% ATTENDING GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	% ACHIEVING 5 GCSE GRADES A-C (2004/05)
Crumlin	84.6	9	6	24.1
Highfield	69.2	12	19	42.2
Legoniel	67.0	10	23	53.0
Shankill	84.2	14	2	23.3
Woodvale	86.3	7	7	30.2
NI	-			63.0

Table: School Attendance and Attainment by Ward

3.2.3. Population change and economic activity

There has been a consistent decline in the number of people living in Greater Shankill communities between 1971 and 2001. This is true for many Belfast places, however the proportion of the city's population living in the Greater Shankill has also decreased over time - from just under 15% in 1971 to around 10% in 2001. Population decline in the Shankill has thus been greater than for the city as a whole. There has also been a consistent decline in the percentage of Belfast's economically active population who live and work in the Greater Shankill area.

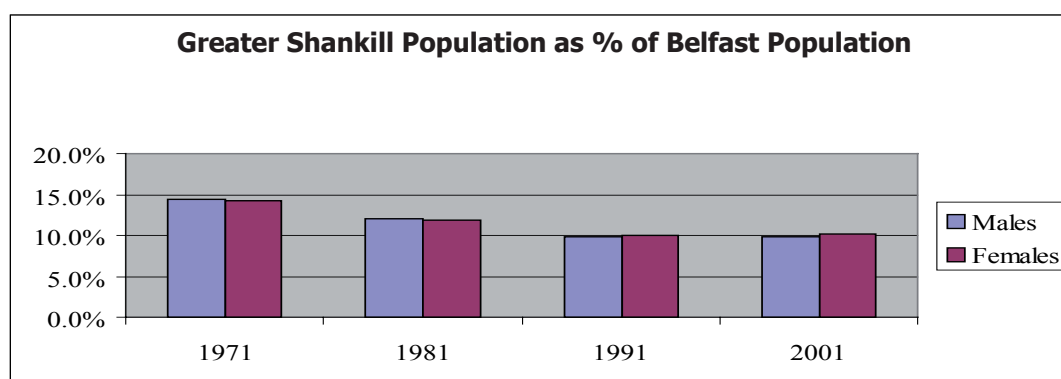
A comparison between levels of employment amongst the economically active in 1971 and 2001 for the SRF shows that the proportion of people in the Greater Shankill in work has declined while levels of unemployment amongst economically active people has increased substantially. This is true for both men and women. The comparison demonstrates that levels of unemployment in the Shankill in 2001 are similar to those of other deprived communities within the city. However, the deterioration in economic position over three decades has been greater – for example, an almost doubling of male unemployment.

Table: Male Economic Activity (1971 & 2001)

	In Employment as % of Econ Active, 1971	Out of Employment as % of Econ Active, 1971	In Employment as % of Econ Active, 2001	Out of Employment as % of Econ Active, 2001
Tigers Bay	88.2	11.8	81.0	19.0
New Lodge	76.2	23.8	66.8	32.9
Lower Falls	69.6	30.4	65.1	34.9
Shankill	84.3	15.7	71.4	28.7
Markets	74.7	25.3	74.8	25.1
Donegall Pass	84.5	15.5	80.7	19.2

Table: Female Economic Activity (1971 & 2001)

	In Employment as % of Econ Active, 1971	Out of Employment as % of Econ Active, 1971	In Employment as % of Econ Active, 2001	Out of Employment as % of Econ Active, 2001
Tigers Bay	93.9	6.1	95.9	4.8
New Lodge	89.9	10.1	79.0	20.6
Lower Falls	87.3	12.7	81.0	18.9
Shankill	93.7	6.3	83.8	16.2
Markets	86.4	13.6	90.0	10.1
Donegall Pass	93.7	6.3	88.1	12.1



3.2.4. Health and well-being

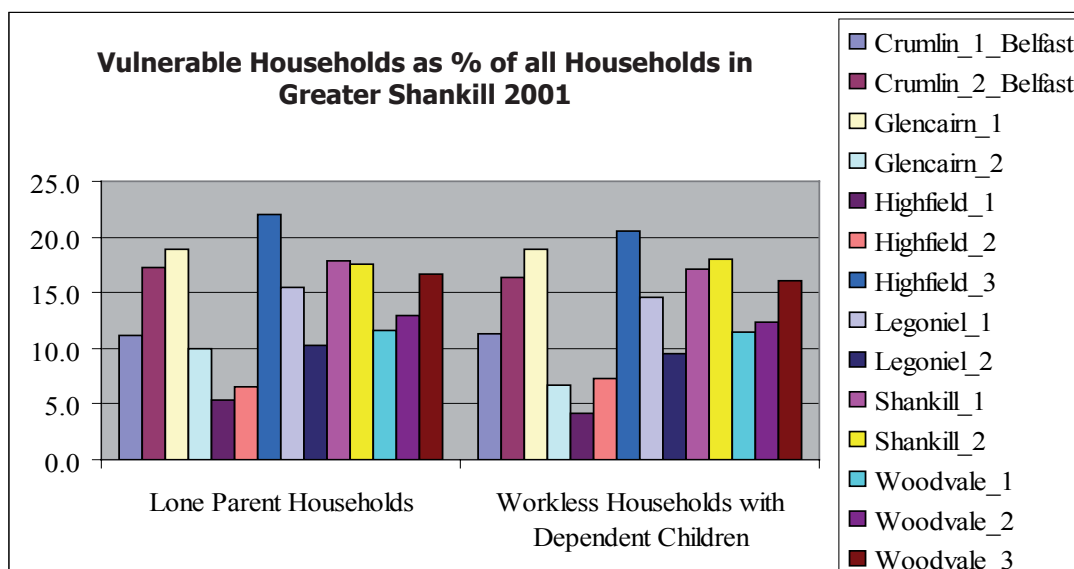
Given the correlation between health and poverty it is not surprising that levels of ill health in the Greater Shankill are high. As the table shows, many communities in the Greater Shankill have the highest levels of ill health in Northern Ireland - 12 out of 14 super output areas within the SRF study area sit in the 10% most health deprived on the basis of the 2005 Noble analysis.

The table on the right lists the Greater Shankill SOA's by Northern Ireland ranking on health deprivation (2005)

The proportion of vulnerable households is also an important consideration. In some communities the proportion of lone parent households and those where parents with dependent children are out of employment are very high.

SOA NAME	HEALTH DEPRIVATION RANKING IN NORTHERN IRELAND (NOBLE 2005)
Shankill 2	1
Crumlin 2	2
Shankill 1	8
Woodvale 3	14
Woodvale 1	22
Crumlin 1	33
Highfield 3	39
Legoniel 1	43
Woodvale 2	46
Glencairn 1	49
Glencairn 2	77
Legoniel 2	89
Highfield 2	130
Highfield 1	375

Table: Health Deprivation by Super Output Area



3.2.5. Capital values

Improving the physical fabric of the Greater Shankill and the associated living environment will play an important role for the SRF. Data on capital values of domestic properties in 2008 show that three of the Greater Shankill wards (Shankill, Woodvale and Crumlin) have the lowest average capital values in the city.

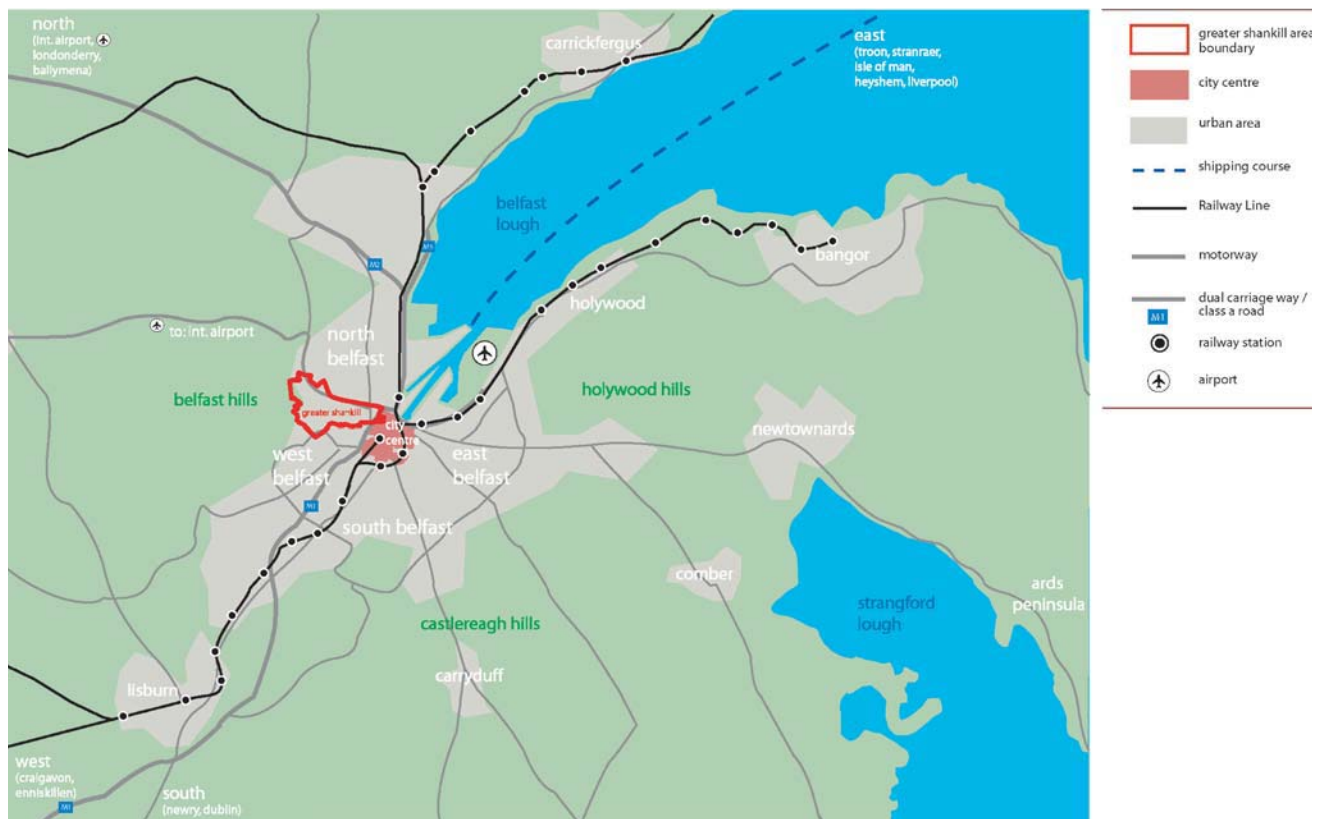
It is the culmination of data that best illustrates the urgency of the socio-economic agenda in the Greater Shankill area – not just high scores on the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation measure, but high concentrations of low household incomes – not just low educational attainment amongst the general community, but low educational achievement of school leavers – not just high scores on the health domain in multiple deprivation, but significant years of life lost through ill health.

All of these characteristics occur within a population living in a poor physical environment. Perhaps most significant, these conditions have not been a permanent feature of the area – four decades ago, the Shankill area made an important contribution to the economy and social life of the city. It requires a regeneration process that can reconnect it to the new social and economic dynamic of Belfast.



3.3.2 Proximity to Belfast City Centre

The Greater Shankill is centrally located, with Agnes Street 1.6km (20 mins walk) from Belfast City Hall and Woodvale Park 2.7km (30 mins walk) away. The close proximity of most of the Greater Shankill to the commercial and cultural centre of Belfast is an important asset that should be capitalised upon, particularly in the context of low car ownership figures for the area. However, physical analysis reveals a considerable need to improve stretches of this route, particularly along the Lower Shankill and Peter's Hill, where a lack of active frontages onto the route creates an unpleasant walking experience, particularly at night.

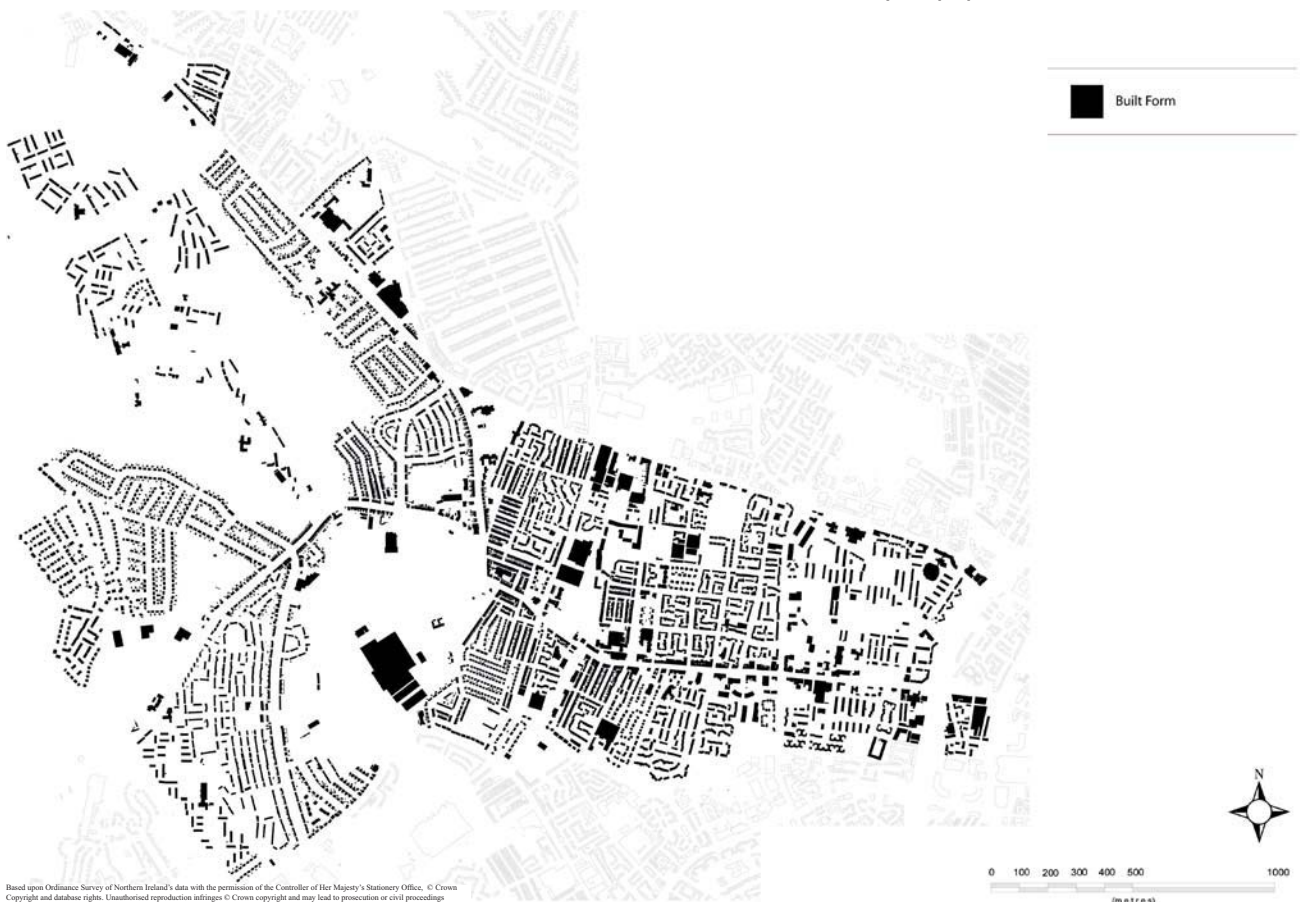


Regional Location

3.3.3 Built Form and Architecture

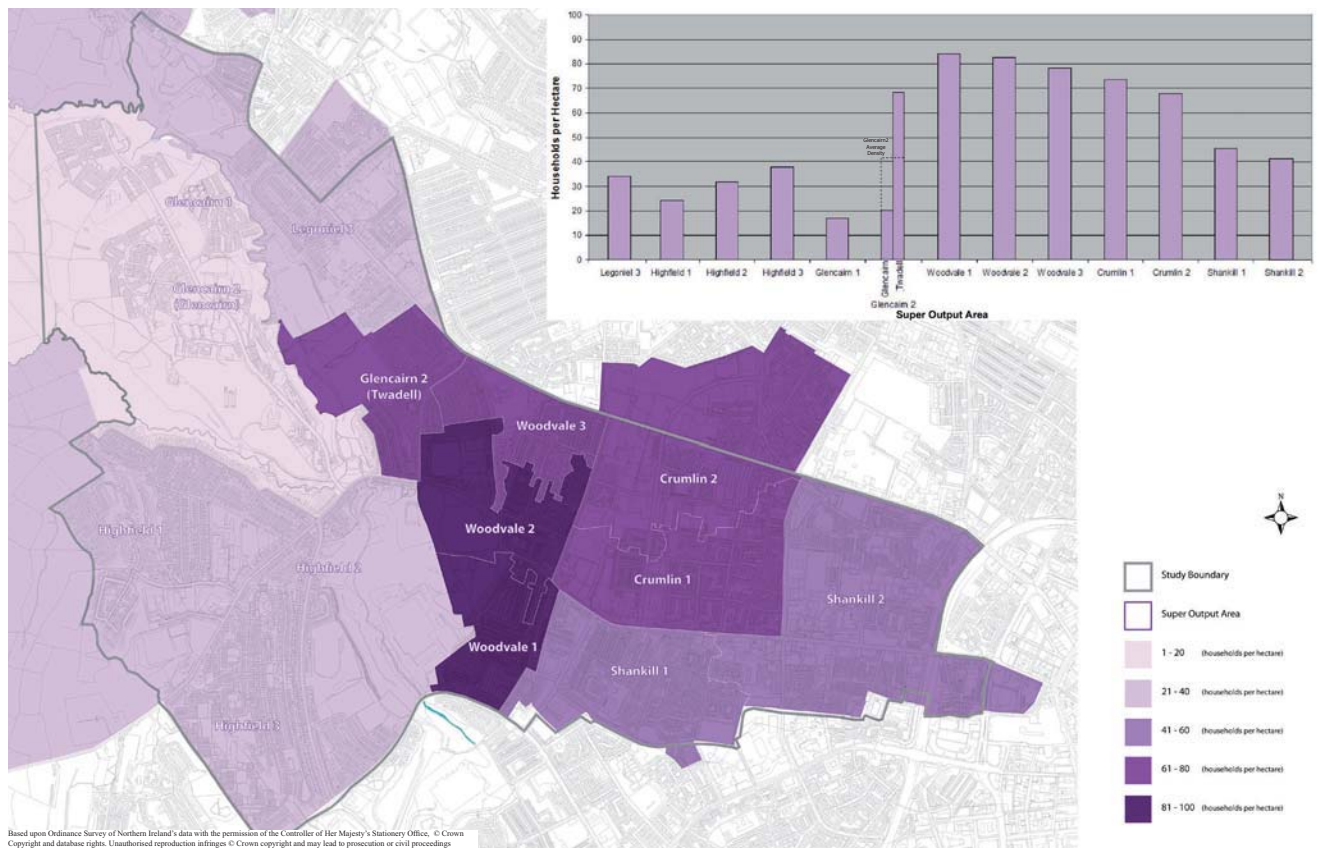


The lack of frontages is reflected by a study of built form of the Greater Shankill. Here the traditional terraced urban structure of the Greater Shankill is evident throughout much of its middle areas. This consists of predominantly 2 storey buildings, interspersed with landmark churches or other civic buildings. However, urban form 'dissipates' from this structure in several key areas, most notably Springvale, Glencairn and the Lower Shankill estate. Whist Springvale is the remnant of vacated industrial premises, Glencairn and the Lower Shankill have suffered from poor design and planning of the 1960s and 70s, followed by periods of neglect and dereliction. The result is poorly defined streets, surplus open space and vacant development sites. This greatly impacts upon the environmental quality of these areas, as well as the density of population that lives there.



3.3.4 Housing and Densities

As documented in Section 3.2, the population of the Greater Shankill continues a downward trend that began in the 1960s. In addition to statistical data, evidence of this depopulation can be seen by studying the urban densities of different areas within the Greater Shankill. The map and table below indicate that lower housing densities exist in the Lower Shankill and Glencairn areas of the Greater Shankill. This has particular implications in relation to the ability of these areas to sustain crucial services such as doctor's surgeries, primary schools, shops and public transport.



Analysis of Housing Densities

3.3.5 Transport



The Greater Shankill is dominated by the main arterial routes of the Shankill Road and Crumlin Roads to the North. Both routes are busy at peak times, with queued traffic not uncommon along the Shankill Road. The effect of this is an impact on the environmental quality of the road for pedestrians and inconvenience to those drivers who are passing through. Plans to implement a city-bound bus lane will change the dynamics of this current situation, with reduced parking but also reduced journey times for public transport users. Other areas of the Greater Shankill consist of relatively well-connected street networks associated with older residential areas. The exception to this are the three areas identified in Section 3.3.3, where cul-de-sacs and a lack of through routes exist. As well as impacting upon the character of these areas, such layouts reduce the ability of drivers and pedestrians to navigate through them easily. A citywide rapid transit system is also being planned for Belfast. Whilst its exact routing has still to be determined, measures must be put in place to ensure that the Greater Shankill fully benefits from this investment.

3.3.6 Pedestrian Movement and Public Realm



The safe and efficient movement of pedestrians around the Greater Shankill is of importance in ensuring that all members of the community can access amenities and in doing so, discourage the unnecessary use of cars. Whilst the mid stretches of the Shankill Road sees relatively heavy footfall, significant scope exists to improve the walking environment for the benefit of pedestrians and particularly local businesses to which they are customers. Cluttering objects such as light columns and bins need rationalised and the quality of surfacing, lighting and street tree planting improved.

Elsewhere, a poor walking environment is created by a lack of built form or vacant buildings. This lessens the amount of activity in the area which makes spaces feel less safe as a result.

3.3.7 Barriers

Movement is also hindered by the continued existence of the peace line that separates the unionist Shankill with the neighbouring nationalist area of the Falls. This substantial physical barrier was a necessity during violent periods of the Troubles. However, continued progress towards a more peaceful and shared society should mean that the presence of these barriers is kept under constant review, with the aim of their removal when communities are ready. In the meantime, new built form should not occur in a manner that inadvertently continues the separation even when the peace line is removed in the future.

Barriers to movement are also created by the distribution of land uses and infrastructure, leading to the isolation of different housing areas surrounded by commercial or industrial uses (see map below). This can clearly be seen in the Greater Shankill, where for example, commercial uses along Agnes Street separate residential areas of lower and mid Shankill to either side. The result is a physical environment that compounds social divisions, rather than one that provides opportunities for shared use.



3.3.8 Land Use

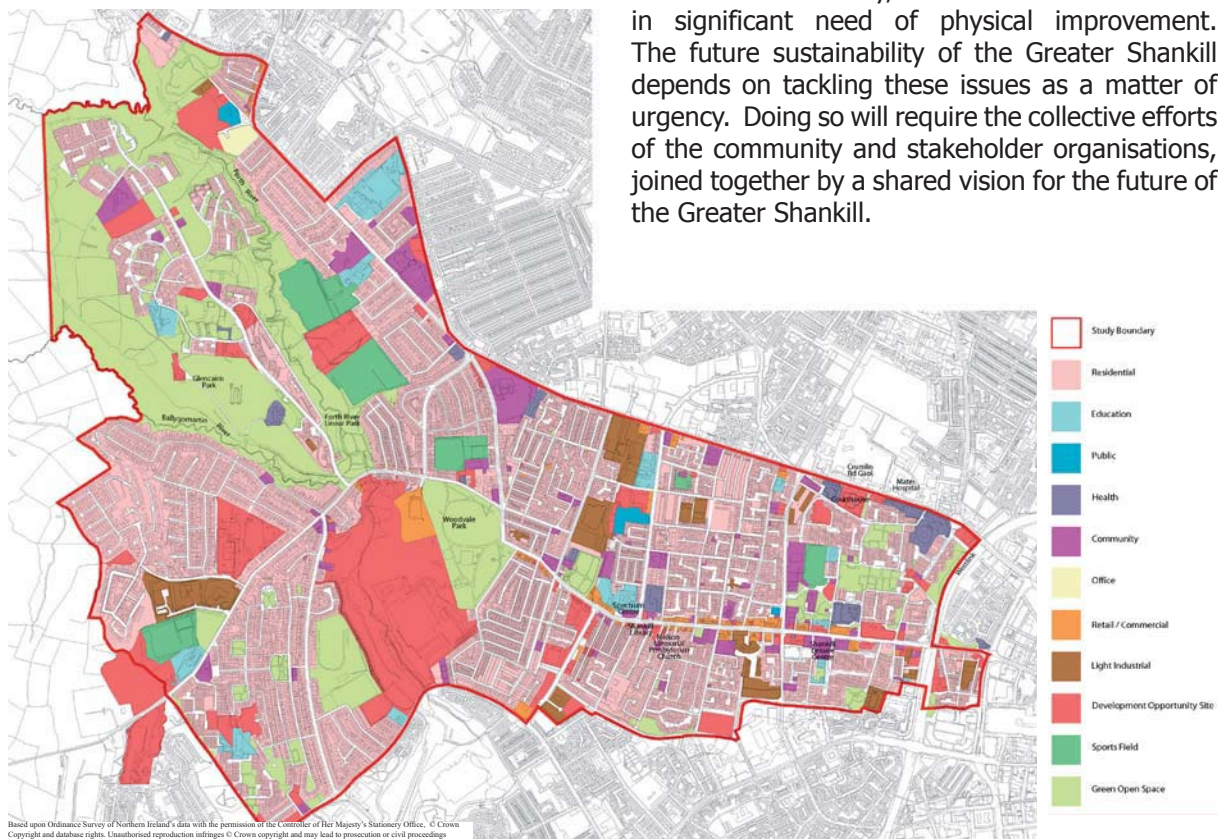
In addition to the creation of barriers, the distribution of land uses has an important bearing on the sustainability of an urban area, with mixed-use development recognised as a positive contributor to active and successful places. The mixed-use nature of key areas such as the Shankill and Crumlin Roads is therefore very important to the Greater Shankill and the city as a whole.

3.3.9 Development Opportunities

The study of land use reveals a number of development opportunity sites present within the Greater Shankill. Most notably these include sites at Springvale, Lanark Way and Lower Shankill, all of which are important strategic locations within the study area. Many such sites have significant potential to be of benefit to adjacent communities, including those located beyond the traditional boundaries of the Greater Shankill. In addition, Crumlin Road Gaol and the former Girdwood Barracks just north of the SRF study area also hold major development potential. The future of these large areas is central to the future of the Greater Shankill, providing extensive opportunity for additional housing, community uses and employment centres.

3.3.10 Conclusions

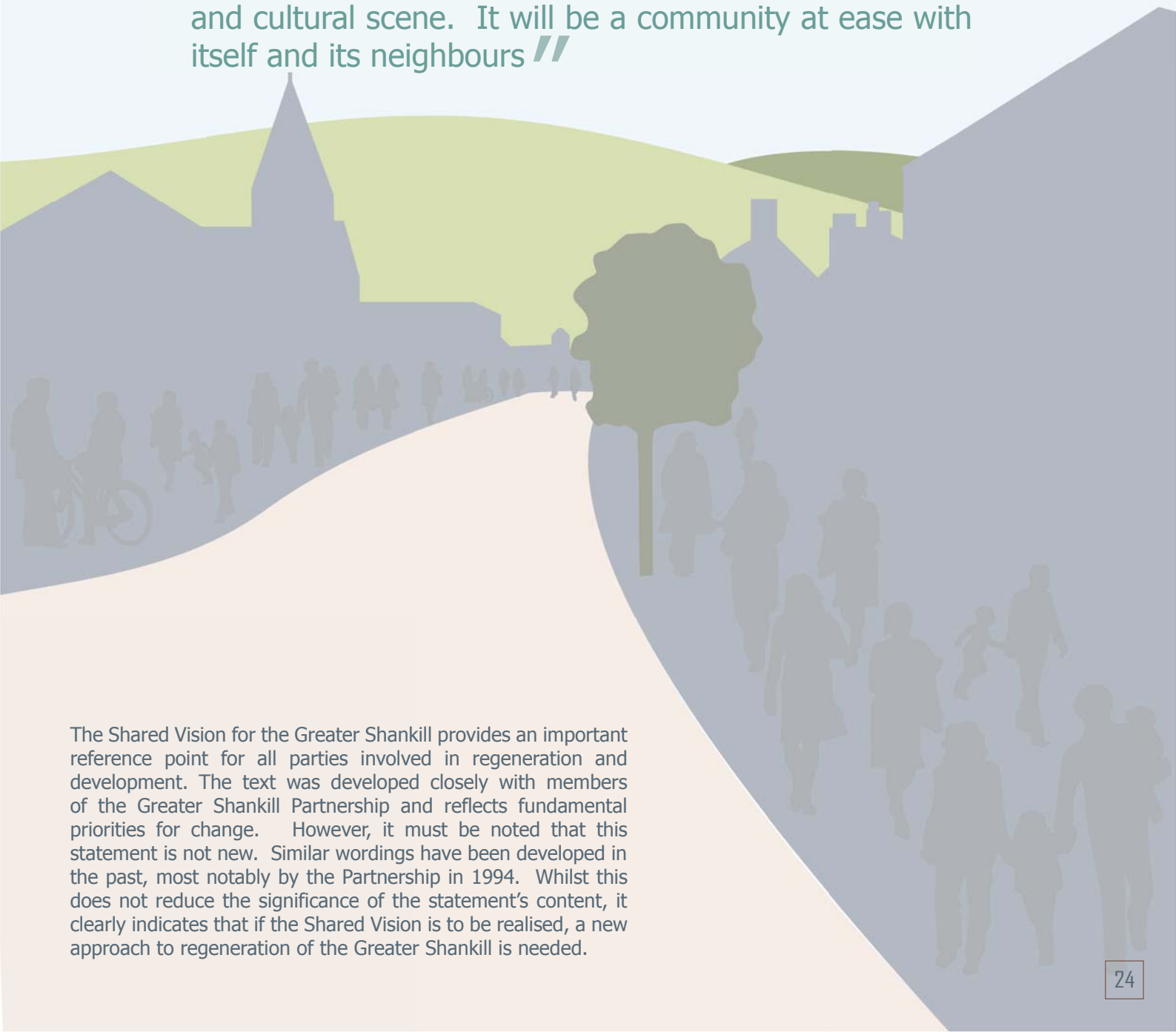
The process of research and analysis undertaken for this Framework revealed a stark trend of socio-economic decay, set amidst an environment in significant need of physical improvement. The future sustainability of the Greater Shankill depends on tackling these issues as a matter of urgency. Doing so will require the collective efforts of the community and stakeholder organisations, joined together by a shared vision for the future of the Greater Shankill.



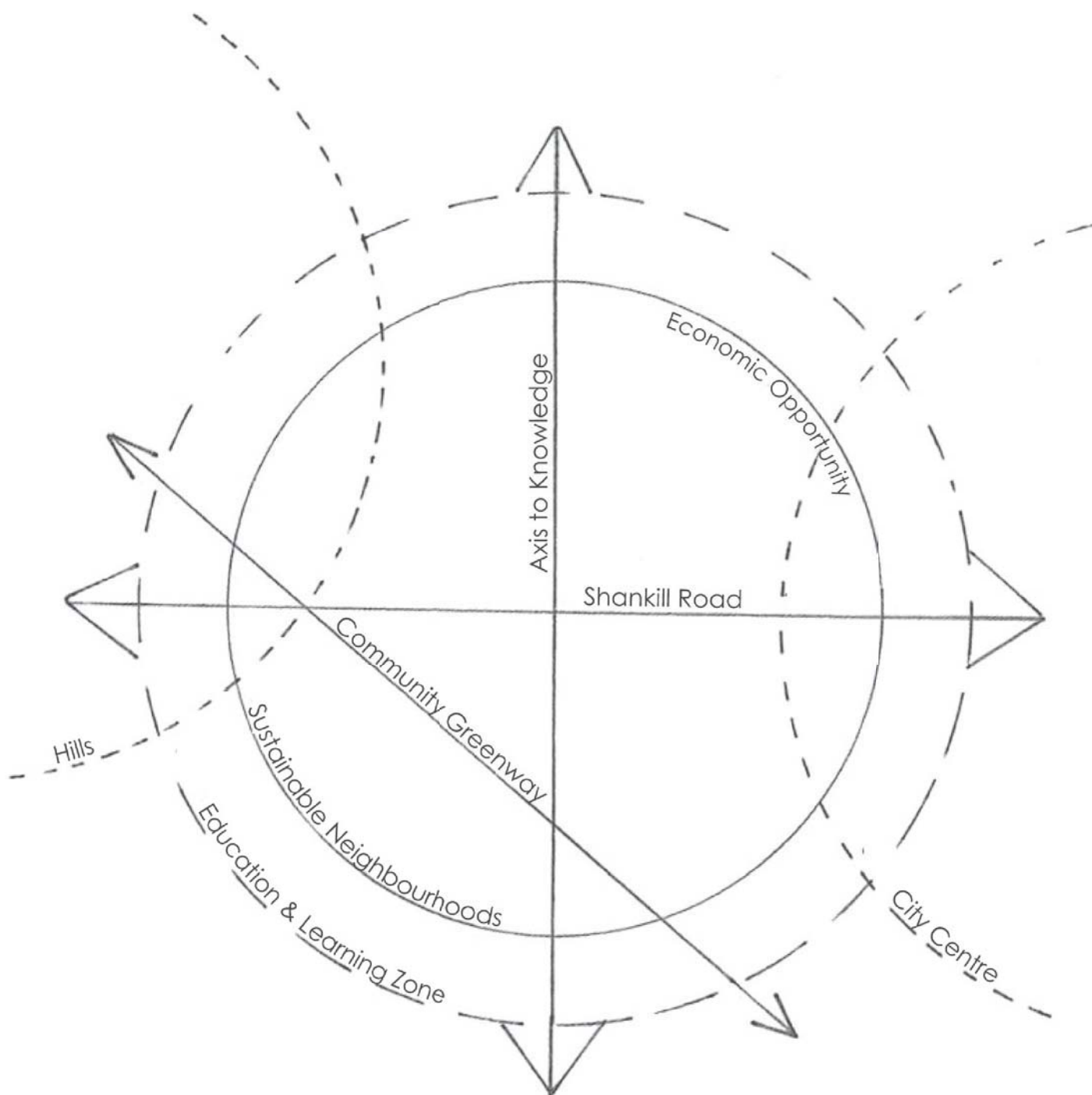
Landuse Plan

4 SHARED VISION FOR THE GREATER SHANKILL

// The Greater Shankill will be revitalised as a sustainable community playing a vibrant role in the life of Belfast. The physical social and economic decline of the past 40 years will be reversed in a community that experiences educational achievement; accesses employment opportunities throughout the city and sees the improving health of its residents, all set in a safe and attractive environment with affordable housing and a vibrant social and cultural scene. It will be a community at ease with itself and its neighbours //

The background of the page features a stylized illustration. It shows a light-colored path curving through a landscape. On the left, there are silhouettes of people walking, some pushing a stroller, and a person on a bicycle. In the center, a large, dark green tree stands on the path. To the right, more silhouettes of people are shown walking. In the background, there are silhouettes of buildings, including one with a prominent spire, and rolling hills in shades of green and yellow.

The Shared Vision for the Greater Shankill provides an important reference point for all parties involved in regeneration and development. The text was developed closely with members of the Greater Shankill Partnership and reflects fundamental priorities for change. However, it must be noted that this statement is not new. Similar wordings have been developed in the past, most notably by the Partnership in 1994. Whilst this does not reduce the significance of the statement's content, it clearly indicates that if the Shared Vision is to be realised, a new approach to regeneration of the Greater Shankill is needed.



5 REGENERATION MODEL

5.1 Rationale

A variety of socio-economic indicators demonstrate that the neighbourhoods that make up the Greater Shankill are amongst the most disadvantaged within the city. Moreover, analysis of change points to a loss of population and jobs more severe than in any comparable area. As a result, two electoral wards (Crumlin and Shankill) are firmly located within the most deprived 10 (not 10%) in Northern Ireland, the percentage of households with incomes below the EU Poverty Measure (60% of median household income) is dramatically high, average gross household income is among the lowest in the city and the average capital value of domestic properties is equally low. This is a place that is both income and asset poor and with a population disproportionately benefit dependent.

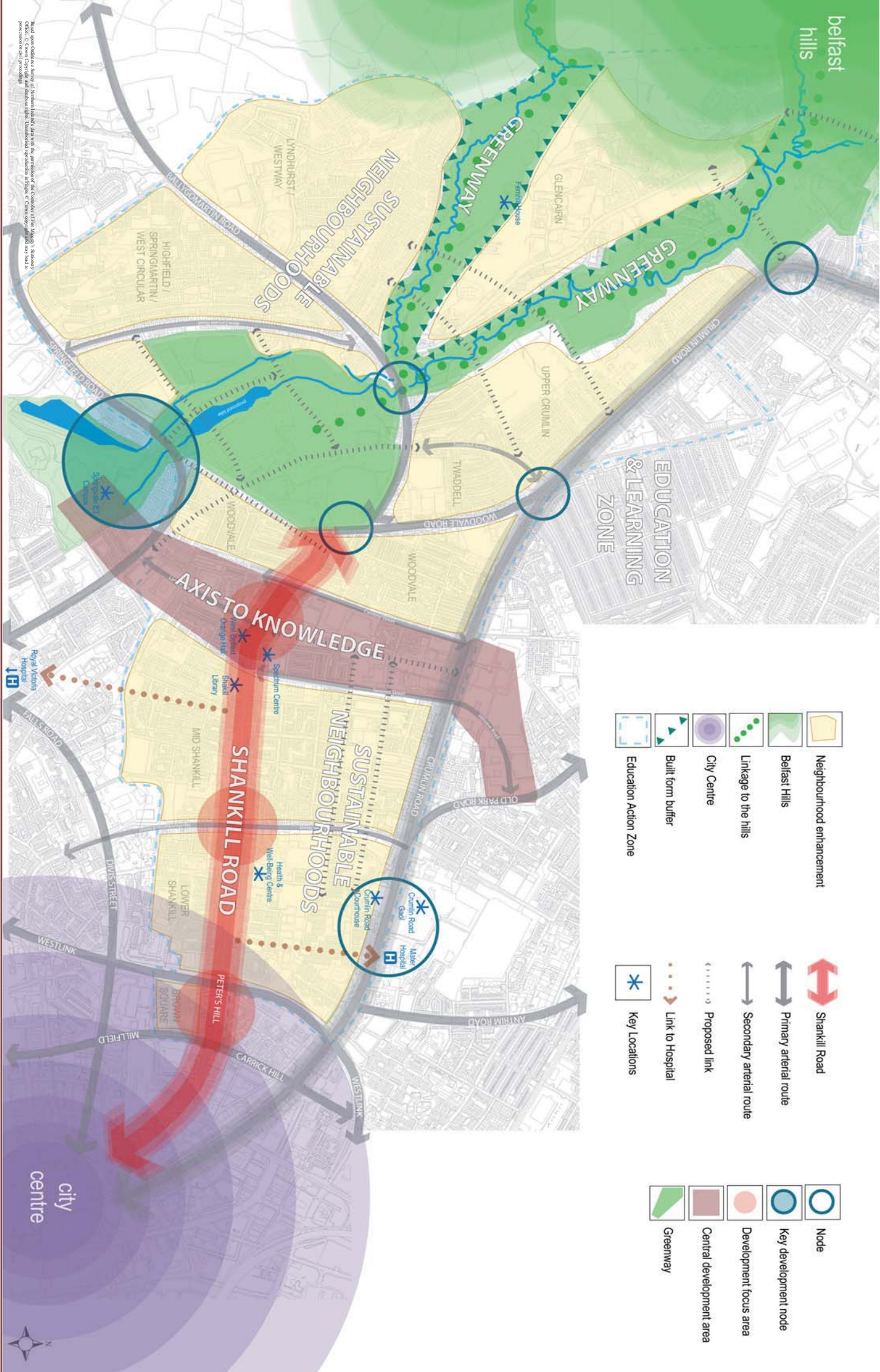
However, on the plus side, the Greater Shankill is rich in community-based organisation, has implemented some of the most innovative community programmes anywhere and possesses a well developed cadre of experienced community activists. In short, even though there is extreme social and economic need, there is substantial community capacity.

Both characteristics lead to the conclusion that an effective model of regeneration should focus on the causes of decline while tapping into the expertise and experience already in the community – community-led regeneration.

The problems experienced in the Greater Shankill area have multiple causes, but three can be highlighted:

1. Over a period of 50 years, the many connections between the Greater Shankill and the overall Belfast economy have broken down. A working population that was heavily involved in manufacturing industry suffered disproportionately from its decline. It is unlikely that the kinds of jobs that were once held by Shankill workers will ever return. The Belfast economy is a very different entity from that of half a century previously and current economic volatility suggests that it may well be very different again in another decade.
2. The Shankill was amongst the first inner-urban redevelopment schemes and these were conceived in a framework of mid 1960s, insensitive modernity. The impact was brutal leading to both population flight and the fracturing of long-standing community relationships. The amount and kind of housing on the Shankill remains an issue, which has never been adequately addressed, and there remains a lack of agreement on housing policy with regard to the area. Any successful approach to regeneration must involve building upon the emerging consensus amongst residents about what housing is required, therefore assisting the growth of the population (which has fallen by half since 1971) and diversifying it socially;
3. As an iconic area for Loyalist culture and politics, the Shankill was greatly impacted by the Troubles. The most traumatic legacy of this period was those killed and injured, as well as the destruction of property. However, another legacy has been the much greater territorial insularity and internal divisions. Transforming areas that have been most affected by political conflict is always very difficult, but regeneration requires two kinds of change: the first is about repairing the physical scars, including the empty spaces adjacent to the Peace Line; the second is about internal healing so that the various parts of the Shankill are more comfortable with each other and more accessible to those outside.

Greater Shankill SRF Concept Plan



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5.2 Introduction to Regeneration Proposals

In summary, the requirement is to make the Greater Shankill more economically active, more 'clean, green and safe' and an attractive place for those living in the wider city and beyond. On this basis, the Strategic Regeneration Framework proposes a regeneration model based on the following elements;

- 1 The physical and economic regeneration of the **Shankill Road** 'spine' into an attractive area of 'walkable urbanity' that offers a range of accommodation, retail, other services and attractions to both the local population and the wider city. This to be undertaken 'in one bite' rather than a series of small-scale projects. Within that, however, there would be nodes for specialisation and clusters;
- 2 Ensuring fully **Sustainable Neighbourhoods** together with environmental improvements and an integrated housing strategy, consonant with projected population growth and social diversification. Its location would be addressed by tackling imbalances in population density throughout the area;
- 3 **Fundamental Educational Improvement**, through an Education and Learning Action Zone and specialist corridor for educational excellence, innovation, IT connectivity and employment opportunities, customised to the economic requirements of the Greater Shankill – this to be linked by the expansion of broadband provision across the entire area.
- 4 A programme to realise **Economic Opportunity** for Greater Shankill residents, including delivery of local economic development opportunities, enhanced skills provision and physical access to employment centres across the City.
- 5 A **Community Greenway** following the paths of the local rivers to provide green space, recreation and access to the Belfast Hills as an attractive amenity for both the Greater Shankill and Belfast as a whole.
- 6 Given the need to bring co-ordination to the economic, social, physical and environmental dimensions of this model and to connect with the many initiatives and programmes already taking place, a new, community-led urban regeneration company building on the Laganside experience, to drive physical regeneration and investment. This would focus on the sustainable and **Accelerated Delivery** of regeneration of the Greater Shankill.

These six elements will create a 'critical mass' for development on the Shankill and provide the template upon which comprehensive regeneration can occur.



6 REGENERATION PROPOSALS

6.1 The Shankill Road

6.1.1 Shankill Road Today

The Shankill Road is effectively the spinal cord of the Greater Shankill. It performs a number of roles critical to the area:

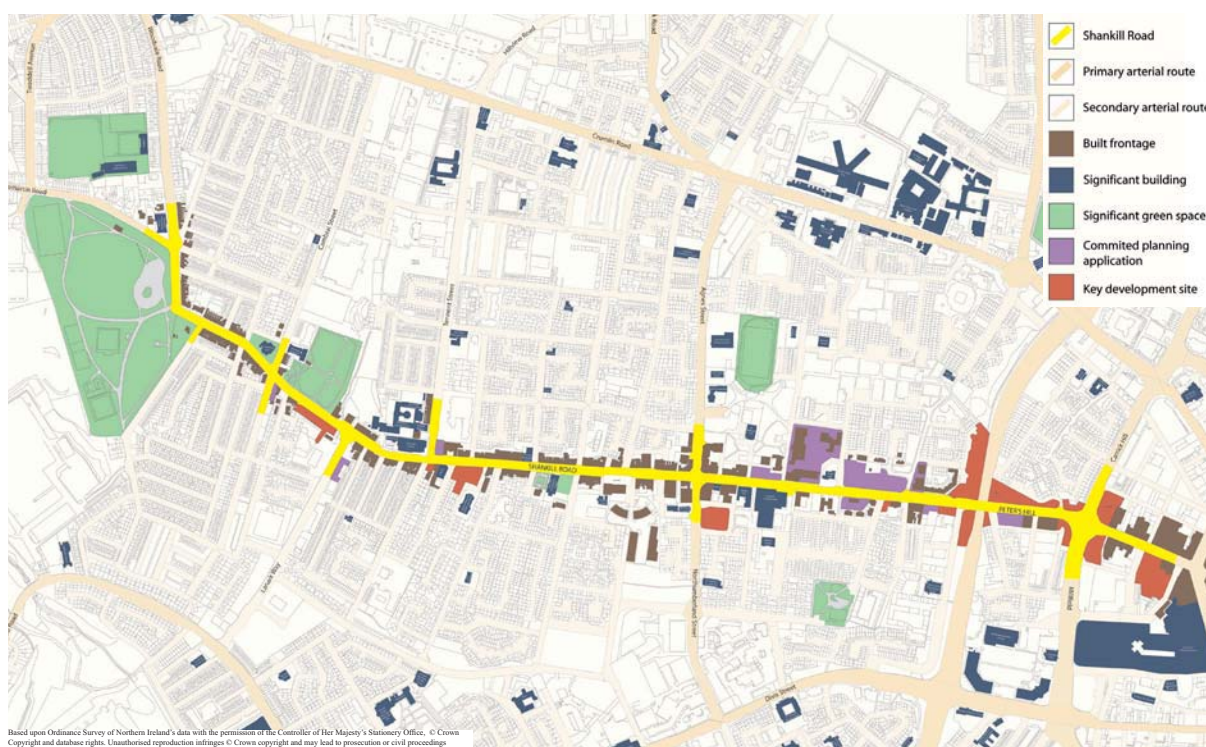
- primary physical structuring element around which adjacent streets are connected.
- principal transport connection between the Greater Shankill and Belfast City Centre.
- central hub of commercial and social activity
- public face or 'shop window' of the Greater Shankill to visitors (shoppers, investors, & tourists)

Closely connected to this is Woodvale Park. Its role is defined as:

- primary open space for active and passive recreation
- retreat from noise and air pollution
- visual softening and seasonal colour in a dense urban area
- contact with nature for inner city residents

As the Shankill Road and Woodvale Park are central to the life of residents of the area, their condition or 'health' is of paramount importance.

Survey work has been undertaken to map the extent and types of uses occurring along its length (see Appendix C) to further diagnose the health of the Shankill Road. This process reveals a relatively wide mix of uses comparable to most of the city's other arterial routes, mirrored by some high levels of pedestrian and shopping activity on key stretches. Consultation also revealed the social and cultural importance attached to the Shankill Road by residents as a central place in which to meet people from the area.



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Shankill Road Development Analysis & Surrounding Features

However, closer examination reveals that a) the mix of building uses is not evenly spread along the entirety of the road and b) the average quality of properties and businesses is relatively low in comparison to the remainder of the city. Analysis of the built form of the Shankill Road also highlights a lack of frontage along lower stretches of the road, reflecting a lack of economic activity and loss of physical character. Evidence suggests that a continued trend of gradual depreciation has occurred along the Shankill Road, arguably presenting the most visible symptom of the Greater Shankill's wider socio-economic decline.

The social and economic vitality of the Shankill Road must therefore be underpinned as a priority to ensure its short to medium term sustainability. Belfast City Council is to be commended for its ongoing work in this area. However, the extent of issues identified by this analysis highlights the need for a more extensive and comprehensive package of measures to be delivered over the short term.

Considering the future of the Shankill Road must reference the context of its past. Historically, the road had an impressive reputation as a shopping destination, attracting custom from across the city of Belfast to many well-known and established shops. This trend however was severely affected by the Troubles, when concerns for personal safety greatly reduced the extent to which people travelled between neighbourhoods. Today many of these famous shop names have gone from the Shankill Road but importantly, not all. Whilst trading is at times challenging the number of active units that remain despite greatly reduced local population numbers indicate that the Shankill Road can still attract shoppers from outside of the area.

Whilst there is now a very different market context, it is this continued strength that should be underpinned by economic measures and physical interventions to improve the way in which road both looks and functions.



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Frontages on the Shankill Road

6.1.2 Economic Measures

Firstly, a comprehensive audit of business and business opportunities on the Shankill Road is required. This would accurately assess the current viability of the businesses along its length and identify specific opportunities for economic growth. A retail health check would form an important component of this exercise, providing an objective assessment of the Shankill Road's retail function and growth potential. This process should factor the proposed population increase of the wider Greater Shankill area.

Secondly, existing businesses along the Shankill Road need support and advice to ensure the sustainability of their operations and nurturing of their growth potential, particularly as we enter a period of recession with its anticipated impact on small business. It is recognised that this SRF is being compiled during a major global downturn in economic conditions. This will undoubtedly affect the Shankill Road, as it will all parts of Belfast. However, such times only serve to emphasise the need for immediate action to ensure that the Shankill's existing business operations are secured. It is imperative that Invest NI and other key agencies adopt a proactive strategy to support small business during the recession. In addition, Belfast City Council has consistently emphasised the need for competitive business to underpin the city's growth. In following that agenda, the Council should examine all means of supporting the city's small businesses over the next period. In particular, there is a need to focus on areas that are already economically weak, like the Shankill – the cumulative impact on such areas could be dramatic. Locally, politicians, community-based organised and small businesses should come together to articulate the kinds of support these businesses need to survive.

Thirdly, the creation of new businesses must also be actively pursued along the Shankill Road. Specific niches and potential 'magnets' in retail provision require identification to assist this process. Non-retail commercial activity must also be supported, with the establishment of incubator office space on the Shankill Road to support fledgling enterprises.

The provision of space for small businesses has been an enduring feature of regeneration approaches along the Shankill, but has been criticised as failing to provide a dynamic of small business growth. The proposal here is that small business development be linked to the implementation of other proposals, particularly for physical regeneration so as to maximise the opportunity for local business and local jobs. In turn, that process will maximise the local multiplier effects of such physical investment.

The regenerative value of this socio-economic process will be particularly felt in the Lower Shankill Road and Peter's Hill areas, where current levels of inactivity have a detrimental effect both locally and upon perceptions of the wider Greater Shankill. These areas benefit from close proximity to the city centre and must therefore capitalise upon this opportunity to attract the kinds of businesses that would benefit from such a location. In addition, the planned construction of many more houses in the Lower Shankill will in time, add extra economic vitality to the Shankill Road.

As part of the necessary raft of socio-economic initiatives, the Shankill Road's 'brand' as a place to shop and spend time requires development and promotion at a citywide level. In the past the road was a recognised centre for shopping in the city utilised by people from the Falls and Crumlin and not just the immediate locale. A renewed Shankill brand should focus on the quality, uniqueness and friendliness of the Shankill Road's current retail offer, building on the established reputation of traditional independent shops located there. Developed in tandem with other measures, this process would define the Shankill Road within a competitive citywide context and provide a focus for the future development.

6.1.3 Physical Interventions

To achieve greater socio-economic sustainability, major physical improvements to the condition and quality of the Shankill Road are required. This means tackling long term vacant and derelict sites, the variable quality of building design and condition and the impact of traffic and parking on the Shankill Road. The following interventions must be made by the public and private sectors, working with the people of the Greater Shankill.

An Architectural & Urban Design Guide to establish the necessary design characteristics of new developments within the Greater Shankill is required. Given the concern within the community about the style and character of new buildings, the opportunity should be taken to use this process as a positive element of social regeneration itself. A widely publicised open competition format would allow the community, as part of an expert panel, to steer the selection process. Successful competition entrants would then take forward production of the design guide and potentially complete the delivery of a new flagship building to demonstrate good design in practice.

Opportunities to accelerate development on prominent sites requires exploration in detail through assistance, incentives and if need be, penalties. In certain cases, consideration should be given to the use of compulsory purchase powers to take forward developments that have stagnated and consequently blighted the Greater Shankill.

The upgrade of existing premises upon the Shankill must also be taken forward as a key concern. This includes the current and very successful frontage upgrade programme on buildings that line the road. Mechanisms to acquire properties in need of investment should also be explored, so that they can be rapidly improved. This should involve an assessment of their current and potential use, with the introduction of living and working above the shops schemes (LOTS / WOTS) to be actively encouraged.

The need to ensure delivery is of particular relevance to the Lower Shankill, where large tracts of high profile, undeveloped land negatively impact upon the people that live there and the wider Shankill area. The proposals set out by the Lower Shankill Community Plan and the Lower Shankill Physical Plan must therefore be finalised, agreed and delivered, to bring about much needed change. These should pay particular attention to providing a positive frontage onto the Shankill Road, as well as Agnes Street and Crumlin Road, so that the neighbourhoods are outward looking and not focused on internal areas. Clear connections to new developments at Crumlin Road Gaol and Courthouse must also be secured.

The planned Health and Well Being Centre must be taken forward as a matter of urgency, providing a beacon of regeneration in the Lower Shankill area. Care must be taken to ensure that the new development is accessible and welcoming to all Greater Shankill residents and that the architectural quality of the building is as high as seen elsewhere in the city. This development will contribute to the improvement of service provision, a need elaborated upon further in Section 6.2.4.

Shankill Leisure Centre is a well known and prominent facility also located on the Lower Shankill Road. However, its condition and architectural style are indicative of a rapidly aging building in need of improvement. This should be seen as an opportunity to develop a first class leisure facility in this location. Akin to the award winning Falls Leisure Centre, this new facility would join the Health & Well Being Centre in directly improving the health of current and future residents in the area, whilst also greatly contributing to physical regeneration.

In addition to the buildings of the Shankill Road, its open spaces and public realm are of major importance. The public realm for the Shankill should serve to provide a safe and accessible environment for pedestrians, strike a balance between their needs and those of vehicles and improve the overall attractiveness of Shankill Road.

A comprehensive scheme to upgrade the Shankill Road's public realm should therefore be developed, extending from its origins in the City Centre to Woodvale Park and connecting with key destinations such as Crumlin Road. This phased programme, would involve improvements to surfacing, lighting, street furniture and planting. A commitment to good quality materials, workmanship and maintenance will be necessary to ensure the sustainability of the project.

Reviewing the quality of public realm would also provide the opportunity to assess the transportation role of the Shankill Road. A balance between all transport modes must be struck to accommodate the needs of private car users, delivery vehicles, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

Parking provision must be carefully considered so that it supports the needs of local businesses, without compromising the ability of the Shankill Road to continue its role as an arterial route into the city. A citybound bus lane currently planned for the Shankill Road will contribute to citywide traffic flows and further encourage the use of public transport. However, it will also reduce the number of car parking spaces along the Shankill Road. In response to this measure, increased numbers of lay-bys for parking and deliveries should be constructed along the road and opportunities for parking and servicing at the rear and side of properties actively pursued.



Regeneration of the Shankill Road

Elevation of typical Shankill Frontage

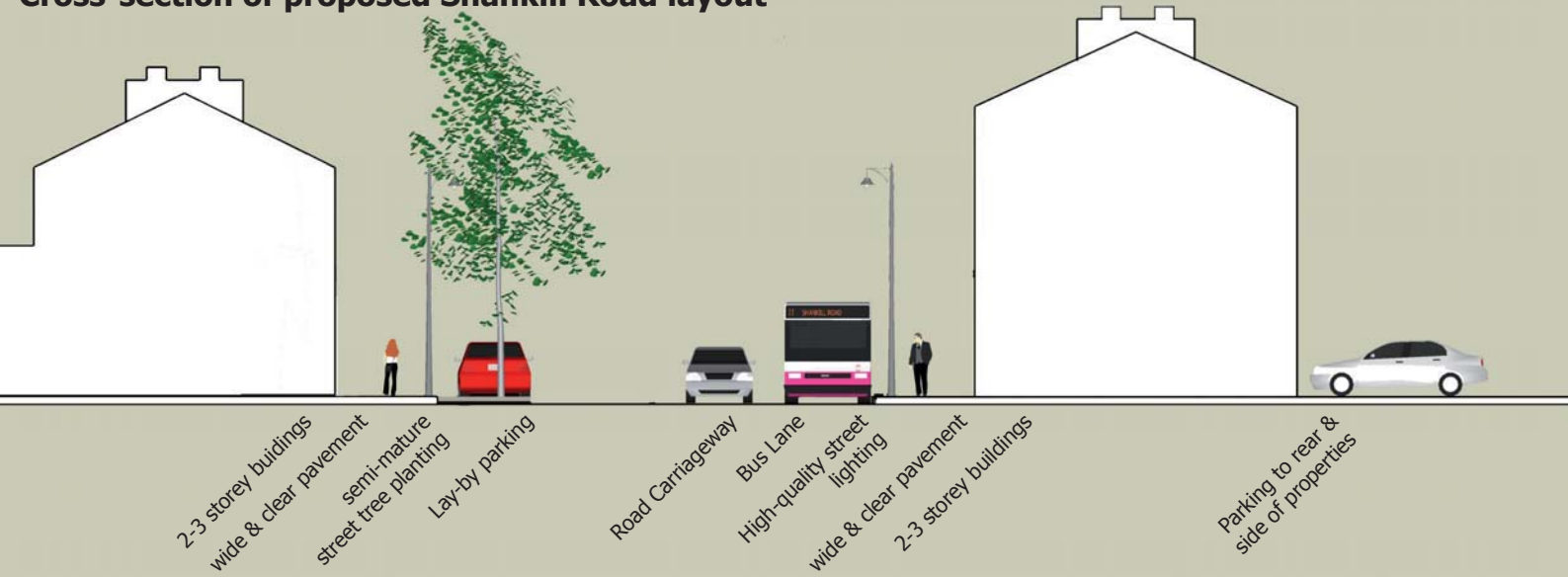


- Pitched roof
- Predominantly 2-3 storey height
- Living/working above the shops
- Proportionate windows
- Consistent signage height, size & materials
- Clear & accessible frontage

Perspective of proposed Shankill Road layout



Cross-section of proposed Shankill Road layout



Opportunities exist to improve the experience of the Shankill for pedestrians, including residents, shoppers or tourists, helping to underpin a positive and welcoming environment. The existing programme of signage and orientation provision must be taken forward to ensure that streets are appropriately signed and that the directional signage points pedestrians to important areas. The historical and cultural significance of the Greater Shankill should also be imaginatively communicated through a suite of appropriately designed and easy to read information panels. These will help to encourage tourists to spend more time in different parts of the Shankill, bringing with it economic benefits to local businesses. Scope exists to further meet this objective by working to improve the choice and content of tourist guides in the area, breaking the current pattern of on-off bus trips to specific destinations. Local people, with support the tourist board, Council and others, are best placed to share their knowledge and passion for the Shankill with visitors to the area.

Public Art and Festivals on the Shankill Road can have a greater role to play in helping to define a positive identity. Good quality and appropriately located art pieces can help to add a creative dynamic to the Shankill at key locations. Importantly, local residents and business owners must be central to the process of commissioning and developing such works, so that they have relevance to the Greater Shankill and its people. At the same time, efforts must be continued to replace sectarian murals and flags with more positive and less intimidating alternatives.

Similarly, the Greater Shankill's programme of events requires further development, with a focus on celebrating the positive identity and diversity of the area and on welcoming people from across the city and beyond. Considerable progress has been made in developing existing celebrations, most notably the 11th and 12th of July and associated Orange Marches, into family and tourist friendly events. This progress requires continued support so that the area can realise social and economic gain from such events, whilst also challenging negative external perceptions of the area. In addition, great potential exists for the Greater Shankill to host other annual events, activities and festivals that provide entertainment for its community and for visitors. The Shankill Road, Woodvale Park and facilities such as The Spectrum Centre, should be promoted and used by Belfast City Council and others as venues suitable for the hosting of citywide events.





6.1.4 Woodvale Park

Woodvale Park must be the continued focus of improvements to ensure that it is a safe, attractive and relevant open space for all Greater Shankill residents. It is established as one of Belfast's finest Victorian parks, with majestic mature trees and recently restored stone gateways that are of particular quality. However, levels of antisocial behaviour associated with the park have been the source of concern for many in the area and must continue to be tackled head on.

In addition to continued restoration of the parks physical fabric, maximising the range of suitable uses for Woodvale Park will be a central component to increasing its use, safety and relevance to the people of the Greater Shankill. This need has been recognised by several community groups in the area whose good work warrants continued support. These include an expanded programme of sporting activities help to animate the park at different times of the day and week and the planning of a Hybrid Use Building (HUB) to provide a focus for activity within the park. Measures, such as the appointment of park rangers and improvements to the quality of lighting provision, are also essential to this process of increasing safety and park usage.



Summary of Shankill Road and Woodvale Park Proposals

- a) Economic Strategy inc Retail Health Check
- b) Existing Business Support programme
- c) New business incubator development
- d) Shankill Road Branding Initiative
- e) Architectural and Urban Design Guide
- f) Accelerated development of key sites
- g) Frontage Improvements (continued)
- h) Rolling building stock regeneration programme
- i) Living and Working Over the Shops
- j) Lower Shankill Masterplans
- k) Health & Well being Centre
- l) Shankill Leisure Centre
- m) Comprehensive public realm scheme
- n) Linkage Improvements to key destinations
- o) Transportation Strategy
- p) Pedestrian signage and cultural interpretation strategy
- q) Festivals & Public Arts programme
- r) Woodvale Park Restoration
- s) Woodvale Park Activity Programme
- t) Woodvale Park – HUB
- u) Woodvale Park Ranger Programme
- v) Woodvale Park Lighting

6.2 Sustainable Neighbourhoods

The regeneration of the Greater Shankill is critically linked to the sustainability of its existing neighbourhoods and communities. The 'perfect storm' of economic change, modernist redevelopment and upheaval of the Troubles left many parts of the Greater Shankill deprived, under populated and in poor physical condition. A series of measures must therefore be introduced to strengthen the position of Greater Shankill at neighbourhood level, to rebuild communities and to improve the quality of service delivery.

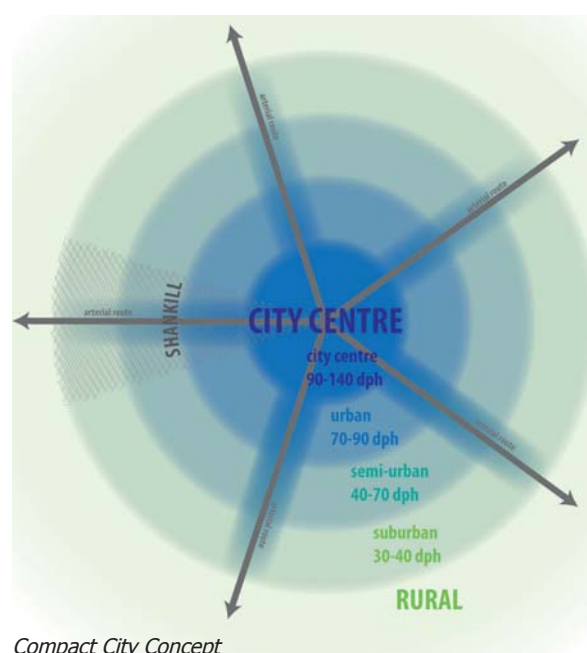
6.2.1 Housing and Environment

Population levels in the Greater Shankill have declined steeply since the 1960s. Current projections forecast a continued decline (appendix B). Securing the viability of the area and ensuring a continued and improved level of public services requires a clear objective to enhance the population and balance demographics in a dynamic way.

Establishing a more sustainable Greater Shankill community will therefore be critically linked to successfully reversing population decline. An increased population would in turn result in increased economic activity levels and support of services and amenities. In tandem with whole scale improvements to the Shankill Road and Woodvale Park, the construction of housing throughout the area must take place to deliver this outcome.

Through analysis (Section 3.3.4) the density of existing housing provision in some of the Greater Shankill's neighbourhoods was identified as being particularly low. On the ground, this is evidenced by areas of wasteland and open space, as well as a lack shops, schools and other key services. It is therefore crucial that new housing in the Shankill is built to sufficient levels of density to support services and sustain communities. The adjacent diagram illustrates nationally recognised best practice for inner city population densities based on the established concept of the Compact City. By applying these levels to the Greater Shankill, it is possible to set targets for the density of new housing.

Also identified in the Regeneration Model is the need to establish a diverse and sustainable community, comprising of people from different age and socio-economic groupings. This will therefore require the provision of a range of differently sized private, affordable and social accommodation to suit. Unlike housing densities, there is no nationally recognised guidance on the 'ideal' mix of housing types and tenures in a sustainable community. For the purposes of this Framework, it is therefore most appropriate to compare the Greater Shankill with the average tenure mix in Belfast (see table). However, a more detailed exercise to define a mix appropriate to the Greater Shankill is required. This can take into account the locally experienced impact, for example, of privately rented accommodation on the stability of communities.



Compact City Concept

Belfast Tenure (based on data from NINIS, 2001)

	All Households	Owner occupied: Owns outright	Owner occupied: Owns with a mortgage or loan	Owner occupied: Shared ownership	Households rented from: Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Households rented from: Housing Association, Housing Co-operative or Charitable Trust	Households rented from: Private landlord or letting agency	Households rented from: Other
Belfast Tenure	113,934	27,401	35,342	1,151	30,026	5,405	12,580	2,029
Belfast Average Tenure		24%	31%	1%	26%	5%	11%	2%

Based on this information, the following table illustrates the approximated housing capacity for each of the Greater Shankill's neighbourhoods, defined by the sub unit of electoral wards, Super Output Areas.

It sets a target housing density based upon nationally recognised best practice and a tenure mix based on the Belfast average. Whilst only approximate, this process results in a useful projection of population levels in the Greater Shankill and provides the basis for further more detailed study.

Approximated Housing Capacity for Sustainable Neighbourhoods in Greater Shankill

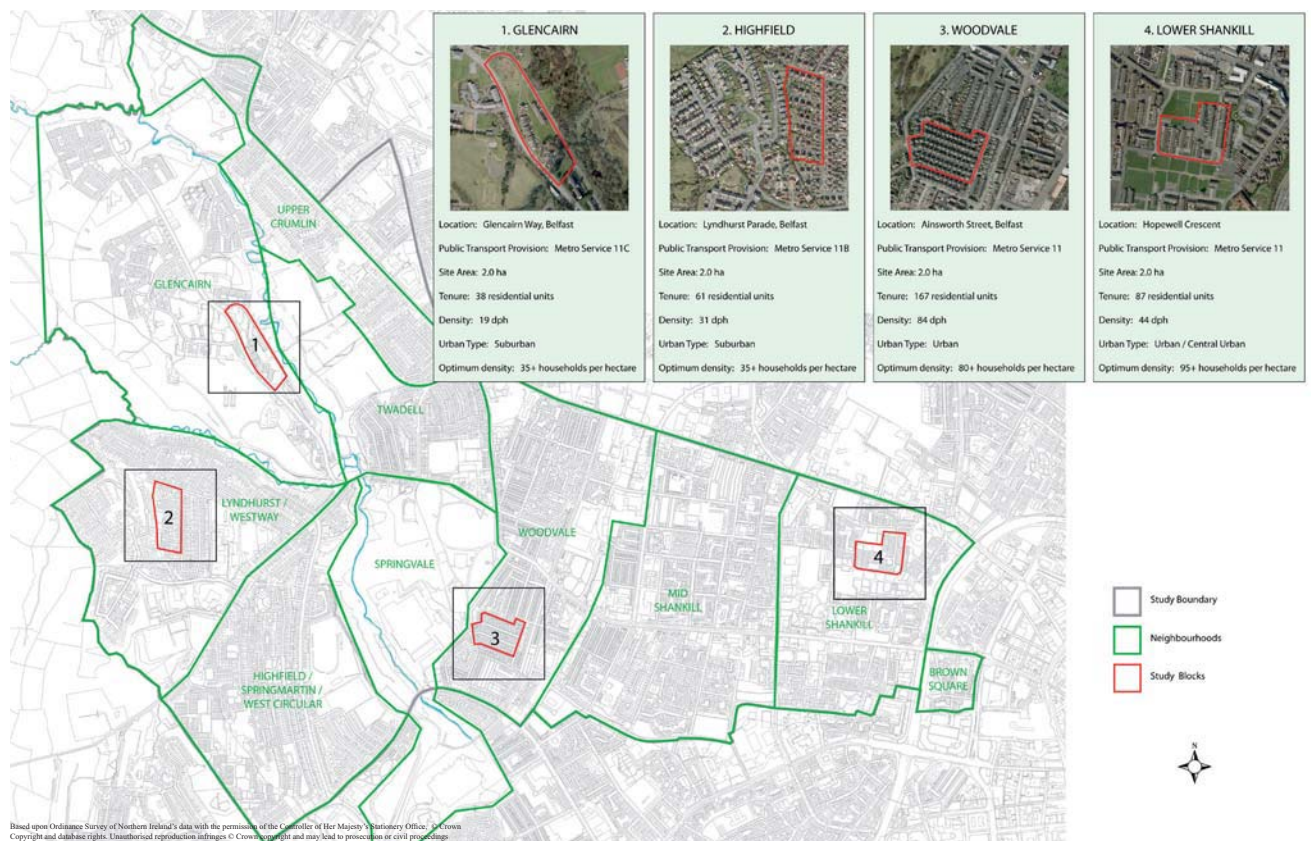
Neighbourhood (SOA)	Existing Population*1	Existing Housing Density (households per hectare)	Target for Sustainable Housing Density*2	Relative Projected Population Total	Number of New Units Required	Recommended mix of new unit sizes (%) *3		
						Single 1bed	Family 2+bed	Elderly Specialised
Legoniel 3	1808	34	35	1854	19	100%		
Highfield 1	1709	27	35	2241	193	50%	10%	40%
Highfield 2	1779	32	35	1961	73	70%	30%	
Highfield 3	1822	38	38	1822	0			
Glencairn 1	2064	17	35	4298	913	20%	55%	25%
Glencairn 2	1962	43	57.5	2569	274	30%	70%	
Woodvale 1	1543	84	84	1543	0			
Woodvale 2	1565	83	83	1565	0			
Woodvale 3	1486	78	80	1518	16		100%	
Crumlin 1	2179	73	80	2373	98	5%	95%	
Crumlin 2	2197	68	80	2595	201		100%	
Shankill 1	1806	46	80	3169	674	15%	70%	15%
Shankill 2	1978	35	95	5387	1738	17.5%	65%	17.5%
TOTAL	23898			32895	4199			

*1 NINIS, 2001

*2 Based on data from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), 2005

*3 Based on the Belfast Average

In addition, the environmental quality of the Greater Shankill's different neighbourhood areas must be the focus of localised improvements as required. This should prioritise the provision of safety and attractiveness of streets and public spaces, whilst ensuring adequate provision of key community facilities, such as play areas. Community areas have to be designed in a manner that encourages outward interaction with neighbouring areas, rather than internalising activity to their respective centres.



Density Blocks throughout Greater Shankill

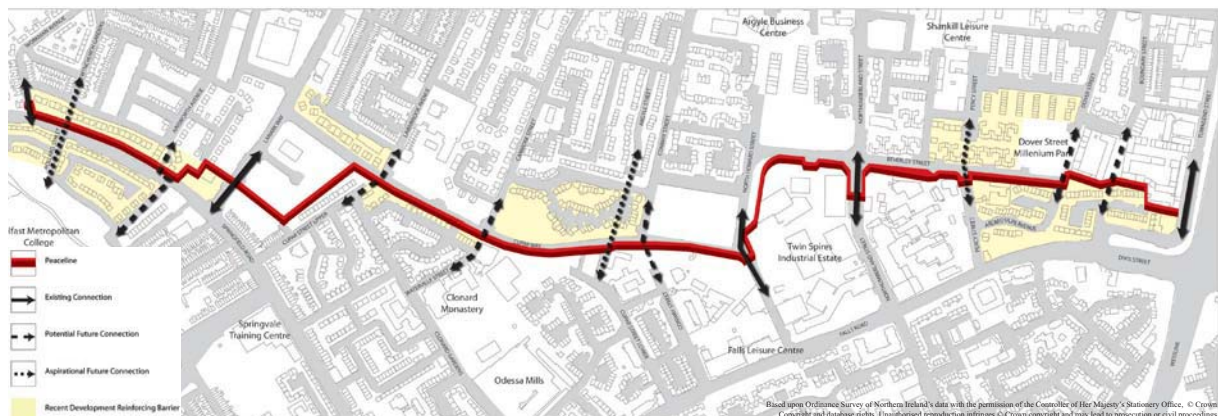
6.2.2. Community Cohesion

Much of the Greater Shankill's recent history has been shaped by a difficult and at times violent relationship with neighbouring communities, seen by many as a microcosm of the wider 'Troubles'. The Peace Line erected in the early 1970s was designed to separate and protect residents on either side and was arguably successful in allowing a degree of normality to exist in these areas. Today the wall and fence line remains, providing peace of mind and a well visited tourist attraction. However, as Belfast looks to increasingly peaceful times, the future of the peace line's role comes into question.

In moving towards a peaceful and thriving Shankill community, the peace line should never be considered a permanent fixture. The timing of its removal, however, can only be decided through consensus between those living on either side of it. Continued transition and reconciliation processes are essential to the future of the Greater Shankill, and are the focus of substantial effort by stakeholders in the Greater Shankill and neighbouring areas.

In addition to reviewing the future existence of the wall, work is required in the short term to prevent further 'solidification' of the barrier through urban form. Several relatively recent developments either side of the Peace Line have followed the line of the wall, thus blocking potential linkages through it when eventually removed. The result, albeit it inadvertent, is to create barriers of buildings that will be much more challenging for future generations to remove than a wall or fence. It is therefore proposed that an Urban Design Study of this interface area be commissioned so that future development in the area does not limit the ability to remove the Peace Line in future years.

In the longer term, planning decisions must not compound existing barriers between residential areas within the Greater Shankill. Mixed use development, such as living above shops or offices, should be particularly encouraged along the Greater Shankill's main secondary streets, such as Agnes Street, Northumberland Street and Lanark Way. Neighbourhoods must also be planned and designed in a manner that locate community and civic uses along main shared routes such as the Shankill Road, rather than siting them deep within areas of housing, thus physically internalising the activity of that community.



Potential Future Linkages Across the Peaceline

6.2.3 Community infrastructure

Analysis and consultation indicated that the provision of community facilities in the Greater Shankill is relatively widespread in most areas, but that the intensity of their uses is varied. This scenario is combined with the pressing issue of many buildings being in relatively poor physical condition, requiring significant levels of investment to sustain them. A strategic audit of the condition and use of all the Greater Shankill's community facilities should be undertaken. This would enable clear decisions to be made about the future of each venue, with the primary objective of ensuring that all areas of the Greater Shankill have access to first rate and sustainable community facilities like the Spectrum Centre which is currently under utilised. This process would involve retaining, upgrading and intensifying the use of some facilities, whilst recommending the closure of others. In some instances, the construction of new facilities may be necessary.

Achieving better coordination of effort requires inter-departmental cooperation that has not yet been achieved and which is largely outside the influence of Greater Shankill's communities. There are however positive developments that can help to create the conditions for more effective alignment. The Integrated Children's Services Project, for example, is a Health Action Zone (HAZ) project whose purpose is to develop effective integration across the full range of children and young peoples' services in north and west Belfast. Belfast City Council is also investigating mechanisms for Local Area Working to improve and better coordinate its service delivery in neighbourhoods. These are encouraging developments, but more needs to be done to align public sector investment and coordinate responses to underlying challenges. SRFs across Belfast provide frameworks within which this alignment can be considered.

6.2.4 Service provision

Alignment of public sector programmes

There is substantial recurrent and planned investment in the Greater Shankill area by the Housing Executive, Roads Service, Belfast Regeneration Office, the Department for Employment and Learning, Belfast Education and Library board, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Belfast City Council. This investment requires to be better aligned across Departments and Agencies around a shared plan, which makes connections between programmes that are seeking to address deep-seated challenges such as health inequalities and educational deficits.

Integrating and upgrading public services

In addition to better alignment of investment, there are opportunities to integrate existing public services on a locality basis. The proposed Health and Well Being Centre on the Shankill Road provides a model for more integrated service delivery as does the 'Full Service' approach piloted in the Boys and Girls Model schools, which seeks to better connect teaching and learning with family support and other specialist services. Quality of provision is also an issue. Across the Greater Shankill, there should be an emphasis on quality standards for service delivery, which can be improved. This is true not only for public sector interventions, but also for community sector organisations and community services offered through facilities like shops, banks and Doctors surgeries.

Summary of Sustainable Neighbourhoods Proposals

- a) Housing Programme
- b) Neighbourhood environmental improvements – housing quality, open spaces, play provision
- c) Cross community relations and regular review of Peacewall
- d) Peacewall urban design study
- e) Audit of community facility provision
- f) Public Service Alignment, Integration and Improvement Programme



6.3 Fundamental Improvement in Education and Learning

6.3.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 described how over a period of 50 years the many connections between communities in the Greater Shankill and the overall Belfast economy broke down. In this timeframe, a working population that was heavily involved in manufacturing suffered disproportionately from its decline and was disconnected from the economic life of the city. The loss of traditional manufacturing employment, underpinned by the decline of the linen mills, meant that supporting elements of an aspiring, mobile working class culture in the Greater Shankill were lost. The loss of traditional employment as an anchor for the Shankill and its communities is an important part of the context for regeneration but this loss, plus the impact of insensitive physical development and the legacy of the Troubles, is only part of the story. There is an educational deficit in the Greater Shankill that makes it harder for current generations of residents to connect to jobs and learning opportunities that now exist in the city. As Chapter 2 showed, levels of educational attainment amongst a large proportion of children, young people and adults are low despite the input of schools, training providers, community education projects and support initiatives such as the Early Years programme.

Connecting today's Shankill communities to new opportunities and life chances within Belfast means tackling the combination of factors that drove the decline, placing education and aspiration at the heart of regeneration and creating the conditions for people to value learning. A new and deep-rooted approach is needed to bring about the scale of change that is required.

6.3.2 Designating the Greater Shankill as an Education and Learning Action Zone

The Greater Shankill should be designated as an Education and Learning Action Zone as a clear statement of intent. Designation will begin to create the conditions for actions that embed learning, skills development and innovation within the area. Designation also acknowledges that a comprehensive approach is needed which is dynamic, locally focussed and which accounts for different learning environments and different learners [“A Human Rights Based Approach to Education for All”, UNICEF & UNESCO, Dec 07]. This requires Shankill solutions that prioritise education for all of its residents, ensuring ‘wrap around’ learning chances from early years through to nursery education, schools, colleges and the further education sector.

The intention is that the generation of children born in the Greater Shankill this year will enter adult life with all of the skills and confidence that they need to play a full part in their community and fulfil their potential in a broader context. The Education and Learning Zone would support the development of educational opportunity unconstrained by bureaucracy and over regulation and would seek to change educational outcomes within a generation.

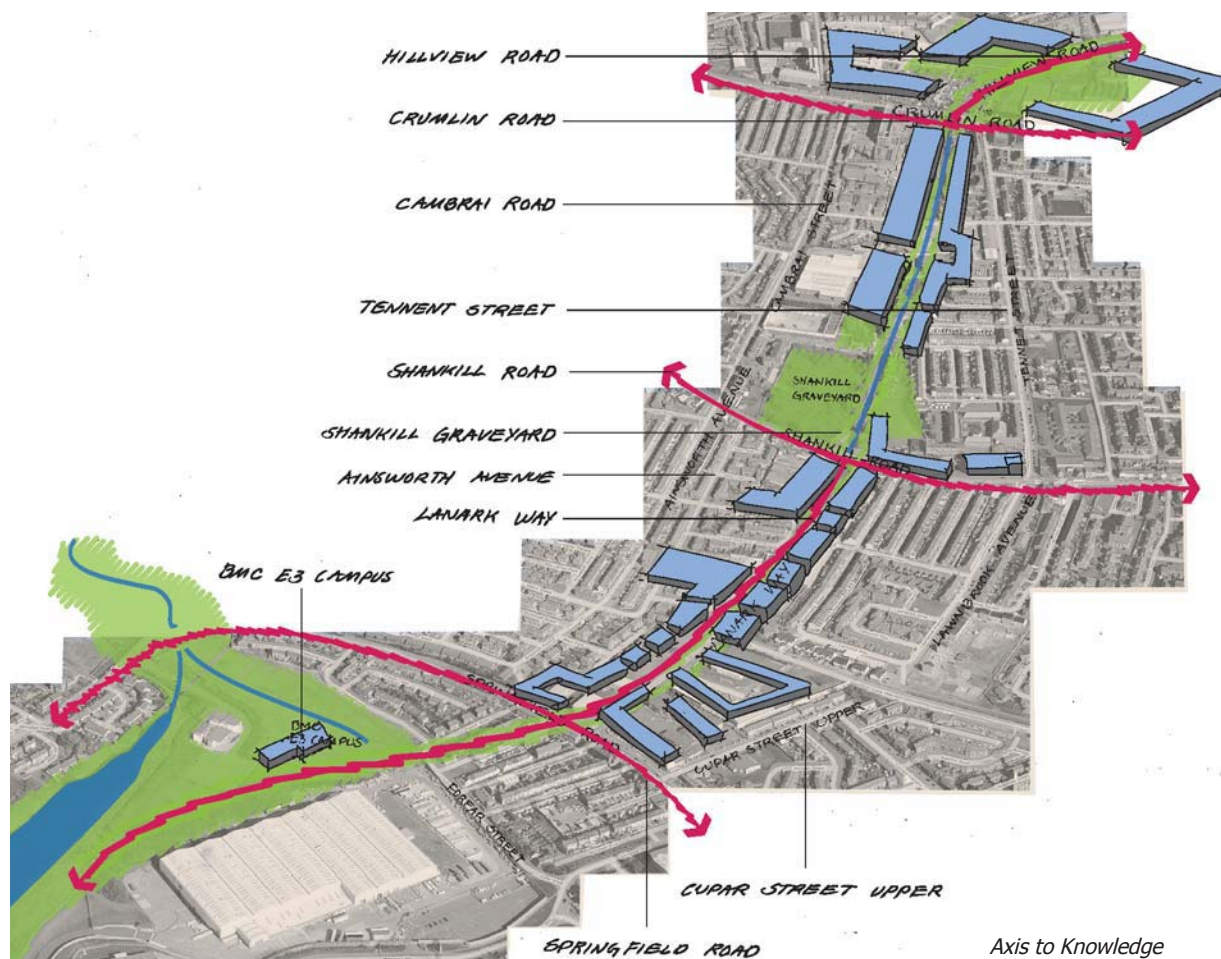


6.3.3 Building an Axis to Knowledge

Within the Education and Learning Zone there is an opportunity to create a catalysing 'Axis to Knowledge'. If the goal of shifting educational outcomes in a generation is to be met, high quality educational opportunities that connect learning with employment and that support entrepreneurial activity are needed.

Bold steps could be taken to fully capitalise on opportunities provided by review of Primary School provision and the planning of Belfast Metropolitan College's E3 Campus at Springvale, by creating a specialised mixed-use location within the Greater Shankill that proactively encourages educational and enterprise excellence.

This Axis to Knowledge would be developed along a cross section of the Greater Shankill, following part of the route of the Farset River as it flows towards the Lagan. The swathe of land is located between Springfield Road and Crumlin Roads, bounded by Tennent Street and Cambrai Street to the north of Shankill Road, and by Lanark Way to the south. It was identified through analysis as a landuse barrier between communities and a zone containing several development opportunities. In addition to housing and a mix of businesses, this area includes two schools, the Spectrum Centre, Shankill Library and the home of Impact Training, all of which have a pivotal role to play in the future of education and training provision in the area.



Within the Axis, investment should be made in Information Technology infrastructure, by providing high-speed Internet access and 'clouds' of wireless connectivity. This would be primarily focussed as a catalyst for development, giving direct benefits to education and enterprise facilities located there and attracting knowledge intensive businesses that require high-speed secure connectivity. The opportunity to create a centre of ICT skills along the axis, ideally near the Shankill Road, should also be explored. This would entail a cutting edge centre at which a range of ICT training courses could take place for the benefits of local schools, businesses and residents. Provision should be formally linked that of Belfast Model School for Girls that specialises in this area and potentially to the new campus at E3.

There is also potential to create a first class educational facility within this Axis, particularly given discussions on the future of the Greater Shankill's Primary Schools. This could cater for primary education during the day and adult and community education opportunities in the evenings and weekends. Such a facility would be complemented along the Axis by the development of small specialist business spaces, including incubator units, hi-tech offices and live / work units, establishing a synergy between education and enterprise. New residential units would also permeate, relating to those already in situ and reducing the current barrier caused by non-residential landuses and ensuring that the Axis is a vibrant focus for people.

The physical environment in this area could be greatly enhanced to create a dynamic, attractive quarter within the Greater Shankill. Contemporary public realm would focus along Lanark Way, comprising of street trees, quality surfacing, lighting and public art. A new pedestrian link should also be established from the Shankill Road to the Crumlin Road, following the path of the River Farset located between Cambrai and Tennent Streets. This would strengthen the physical connection of this area to North Belfast, whilst using this important River to best effect.

Crucially, the Axis would form a new link between the BMC E3 campus and the Shankill and Crumlin areas. This would be safe and accessible to everyone.

Summary of Educational Improvement Proposals

- a) Designation of the Greater Shankill as an Education and Learning Zone
- b) Engagement with schools, community education providers, BELB, BMC, DEL, Impact Training, North City Training and education experts to develop a wrap around programme that seeks to enhance educational outcomes in a single generation
- c) Review primary provision and assess the long term viability of existing school stock
- d) Feasibility study to assess the potential of a new educational facility on the proposed Axis
 - Support for leadership programmes and best practice initiatives in schools
 - Support for better connections between schools and communities
- e) ICT Provision
- f) Public Realm and Linkages
- g) Farset River opening and improvements

6.4 Economic Opportunity

The improvement of economic conditions for the people of the Greater Shankill must be a central priority for government, its departments and agencies. Whilst levels of economic activity are comparable to other deprived areas of Belfast, the pronounced decrease over a 30-year period indicates a trend that is of concern for the future prospect of the area. Global economic conditions that have worsened considerably during the course of the SRF process only serve to sharpen this focus.

Physical analysis of the Greater Shankill mapped the existence of major opportunities for development and economic growth within Greater Shankill itself. The greatest of these is presented at Springvale, once home to the Mackie's engineering works that gave employment to generations of local residents. Today this substantial vacant site provides a unique opportunity for the Greater Shankill, as it does for the city as a whole. Its size and proximity to a large potential workforce are attributes that make the area suited to comprehensive mixed-use development, with scope for office space, research and development and light industry being established there. Similarly, Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks sites on the Crumlin Road present significant economic opportunities to the people of the Greater Shankill, with scope for a high density mixed use development and a synergy with the tourism potential of the Gaol and health related business of Mater Hospital. In addition smaller development sites within the Greater Shankill, many of which related to the proposed Axis to Knowledge, also have potential for small to medium size business opportunities right in the heart of the area.

In the short term, it is the Greater Shankill's proximity to Belfast City Centre and other major employment centres such as the Titanic Quarter and the North Foreshore that is arguably its greatest economic asset. Traditionally residents of the Shankill travelled across the city to access jobs such as those in the shipyards.

However, the latter half of the 20th Century saw reduced travel patterns occur in many Belfast neighbourhoods, linked to a changing landscape of employment centres and increased concern for personal safety during the Troubles. Whilst economic development within the Greater Shankill must remain a priority, vital to the future economic prosperity its residents will be the ability to access employment opportunities across the city. To be met, this goal requires the attainment of relevant skill sets and access to good quality transport linkages.

The Shankill Task Force proposals resulted in innovative initiatives to enhance employability of Shankill residents; a process should be given greater momentum. Minimum wage employment does not take people out of the benefit trap and thus efforts should focus on upskilling both those currently without a job and those in low-paying employment. Even though unemployment is expected to increase, whatever opportunities become available will be taken by those with the best skills and positive aptitudes. Employability measures should continue to be emphasised through continued support, including the Greater Shankill Job Assist Centre and the ongoing work of the Jobs and Benefits office. Improved dialogue with major employers is also necessary, to ensure that specific skill requirements are quickly and accurately identified. An intelligent and nimble system would enable the swift local provision of necessary training programmes.

The quality of public transport linkages is a lifeblood for many residents of the Greater Shankill. Existing bus provision is generally high, with the planned implementation of a Shankill Road bus corridor likely to facilitate rapid access to the City Centre. Continued investment in public transport infrastructure in the area must be upheld, including that the rapid transit system planned for West Belfast. Concerted efforts are required to ensure that this is made fully accessible to Greater Shankill residents.

6.5 Community Greenway

6.5.1 Introduction

The Forth River and its tributary, the Ballygomartin River, flows through the Glencairn and Springvale areas on its way from the Belfast Hills to the River Lagan. Whilst stretches of the river have been recently culverted, large sections remain open providing an important habitat for wildlife amidst built up urban areas.

A Community Greenway should be established to safeguard this important natural feature, whilst also providing valuable recreational space for adjacent communities and a structuring element around which new development can be focused. The Greenway would form part of a citywide project connecting the city to the hills, attracting people from across the city and beyond to the area.

Community Greenways are an established concept, proven to bring many tangible benefits to the communities located along their route. These include:

Health

- Providing good, diverse opportunities for active recreation, important for physical and mental well being
- Promoting walking and cycling over private car use
- Improving environmental conditions including air quality

Community Cohesion

- Creating new and improving existing connections between different neighbourhoods and community facilities
- Providing a shared focus for a range of events and activities
- Contributing to local safety and crime reduction

Education

- Giving more people the opportunity to interact with nature
- Providing an open air classroom for multiple school subjects
- Offering opportunities to be actively involved with conservation and environmentalism
- Celebrating local culture and history
- Improving physical access to local schools

Economics

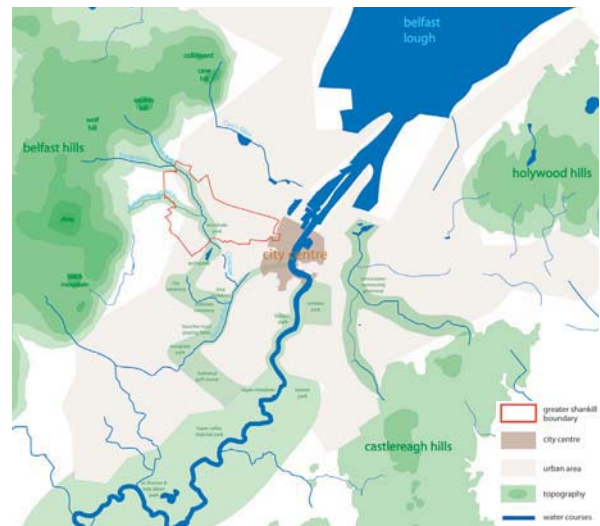
- Providing an investment vehicle for physical and socio-economic regeneration
- Putting in place infrastructure to facilitate new development
- Bringing people to the area leading to new business opportunities
- Continuing emphasis on employability measures
- Adding to the positive identity of the wider area

Environment

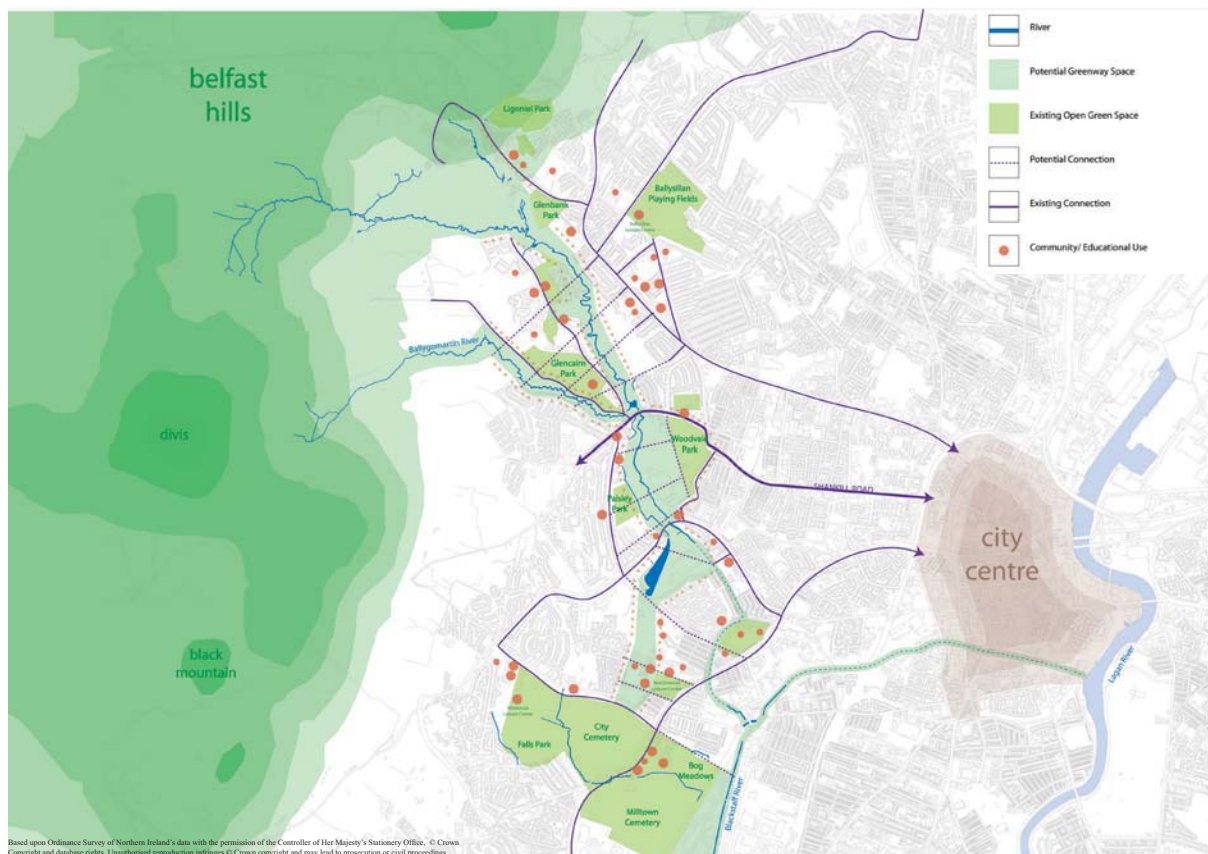
- Safeguarding natural features for the enjoyment of future generations
- Creating a diverse range of wildlife habitats to support biodiversity
- Transforming existing open spaces, parks and waste ground

6.5.2 Greenway Proposals

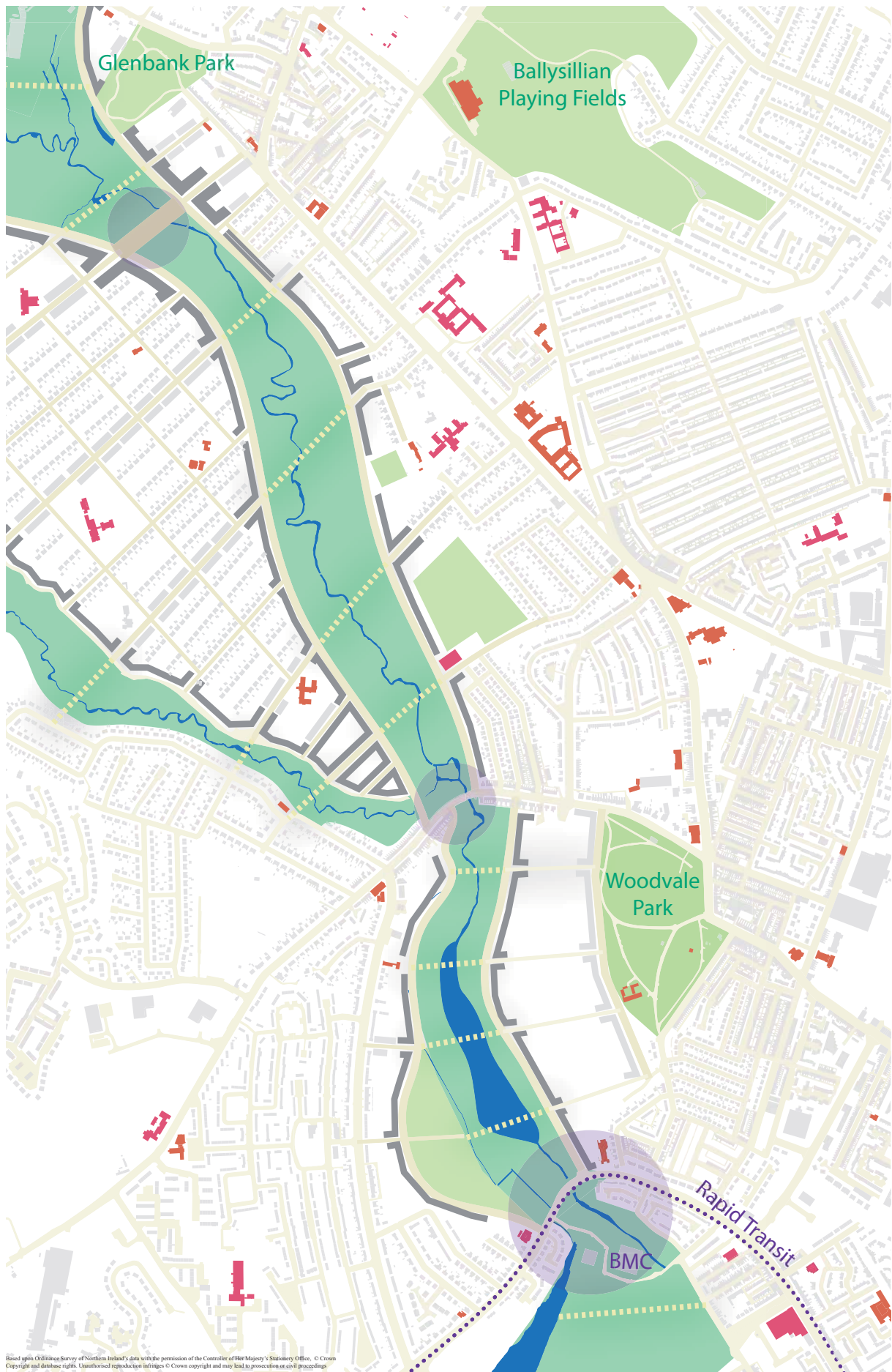
The central component of a greenway would be the establishment of a continuous foot and cycle path along its full length. Ultimately this could extend from Belfast City Centre to the Bog Meadows, through Falls Park into Springvale, up to Glencairn and terminating at the summit of Black Mountain. Linking routes to nearby neighbourhoods and other destinations would also be of importance. This new network of paths would be of value for recreation and exercise, as well as creating new local routes between different areas of the city. For example, new links between Highfield and Woodvale could be established as part of the community greenway.



Greenway Regional Context



Greenway Citywide Context



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Greenway Local Context

Along the route of the Greenway would be located a series of open spaces, some of which are existing, others proposed. These would perform a variety of functions, including sports pitches, play areas, wildlife reserves or picnic areas. By bringing together public spaces on this citywide scale, investment would be attracted to regenerate existing open spaces.

As part of the Greenway, the opportunity to develop and regenerate areas along its length should be taken. Two comprehensive masterplanning exercises are required to direct the regeneration of the Glencairn and Springvale areas.

The Glencairn estate was identified through consultation and analysis as an important Greater Shankill community, but one that faces difficulties related to the physical design and layout of the area. Its steep topography and a lack of through routes mean that Glencairn functions in relative isolation from surrounding parts of the city. Whilst this makes for an attractive setting and views across Belfast, it presents problems for residents who have to travel long distances to access shops and other amenities.

Analysis reveals that Glencairn has a relatively low housing density, evident on the ground by a very generous provision of open space. The result is a population density that is too low to support an appropriate level of local services such as shops.

A masterplan should comprehensively address these issues and explore the potential for increased connectivity with surrounding areas and the potential for additional housing to increase density. The result would be a more sustainable neighbourhood area that can support better local services and activity.

Springvale is a large expanse of wasteland, located between the Springfield and Ballygomartin Roads. It has had a number of former uses including industry and landfill, leaving behind a legacy of ground contamination in certain parts. The site itself presents major opportunities for development. However, to maximise its potential contribution to this part of the city, it should be considered in relation to surrounding areas such as the vacant Forth River Business Park, Paisley Park, Woodvale Park and sites zoned for housing to the north. This would allow for a comprehensive masterplan solution with substantial benefits for Greater Shankill and other parts of the city.



Positive physical relationship between the greenway and adjacent communities



To the south of Springfield Road is a site under development as the Belfast Metropolitan College E3 Campus. This will provide a cutting edge facility for vocational training. Within the context of low educational attainment, it is vital that this centre be safe, welcoming and easily accessible to all communities, including those of the Greater Shankill. This should be achieved by establishing a shared 'neutral' space within its vicinity.

Also of relevance to the Forth River Community Greenway are plans for citywide network of rapid transit. Continued feasibility studies should be progressed so that a form of rapid transit can connect the Shankill and West Belfast with the city centre and beyond. This will facilitate access to commercial and social opportunities, whilst encouraging visitors to the area.

The Greenway itself should also be considered as an ideal means of attracting tourists to this part of the city, with direct access to the Belfast Hills. Feasibility studies should be undertaken to find a practical and attractive mode of transport that can take visitors from the Springvale area to the Belfast Hills. This may include the introduction of Cable Cars or other similar modes.

To heighten the sustainability of a community greenway in this area, provision must be made for its proactive management. In addition to high levels of maintenance, this would include a visitor centre, rangers and a programme of events and activities.

Summary of Community Greenway Proposals

- a) Greenway Strategy development
- b) Forthriver and Ballygomartin River Landscape Improvements
- c) Glencairn Masterplan
- d) Woodvale Park
- e) Springvale Masterplan (including Paisley Park and Forth River Business Park)
- f) BMC E3 Campus
- g) E-Way Rapid transit feasibility study
- h) Visitor Centre development
- i) Hill Access System

7 PROGRAMME FOR ACCELERATED DELIVERY OF CHANGE

The Strategic Regeneration Framework has identified a total of 46 initiatives set within 6 key strategic themes. Some are already underway or already planned, whilst others have been developed through the course of preparing this document. Together they represent a vision of comprehensive regeneration for the Greater Shankill that when implemented will have a substantial and much needed positive impact on this part of the city. Key to the success of this process will be timing. There is no evidence to suggest that the downward socio-economic trend experienced by the Greater Shankill will abate of its own accord. Therefore proactive intervention is required to bring about change over the short to medium term.

Delivering genuine regeneration outcomes over the short term will have a number of catalytic benefits for the future of the Shankill. Firstly the community's confidence in the ability of such processes to impact positively upon the area will be increased. Not only is this a vital component of gaining support for future initiatives, but also can have a profound impact on the community as a whole. Secondly, the private sector's confidence in the Greater Shankill will be influenced by a commitment by the public and community sectors to deliver.

This will have the benefit of attracting much needed investment to the area, resulting in increased economic activity. To this extent, a target private to public sector investment ratio of 5:1 should be pursued. That is to say that broadly for every £1 of public sector investment in the Greater Shankill, a return of £5 private sector investment should be stimulated.

Achieving such comprehensive regeneration over a relatively short timeframe will be a challenge. Existing regeneration mechanisms such as Neighbourhood Renewal have had some successes, but without restructuring, greater inter-departmental priority and an injection of substantial resources, it is unlikely that Neighbourhood Renewal alone can stimulate the scale of regeneration required to impact within the necessary timeframe.

Existing organisational structures must also be examined to ascertain if there is currently the capacity, quality of relationships and expertise to deliver on this scale and within this timeframe. This relates to local and central government departments, but also to community sector organisations such as the Greater Shankill Partnership that is constrained by a lack of resources and issues of community cohesion and representativeness identified earlier in this report.



lounge



Successful delivery of the strategic vision for the Greater Shankill requires a new approach to regeneration delivery. Determining the most appropriate solution must be a process jointly undertaken by key stakeholders, including the Department for Social Development, Belfast City Council, The Strategic Investment Board, the Greater Shankill Partnership and members of the community. As part of this dialogue, consideration should be given to the establishment of a Community led Urban Regeneration Company (URC). This would be formed via the contribution of all key public and private sector stakeholders with the community, providing a vehicle for procurement of resources and expertise and the management of delivery. Focussing primarily on physical regeneration, it would be based in the heart of the Greater Shankill area and be required to rapidly establish the confidence of all communities through an open and transparent working relationship. Ultimately, such an organisation would be judged on its ability to deliver, meaning that the setting and achieving of short-term goals will also be a key factor.

Direct involvement of Greater Shankill communities will be a crucial component in achieving comprehensive transformation. This must be carefully planned to ensure involvement is genuine and sustained, thus ensuring that local people have a central role in shaping the process while benefiting from external expertise. Opportunities for regeneration investment to have direct economic benefits to Shankill residents must also be explored.

For example, a URC would require staff many of whom could be sourced locally and construction companies can be required to implement apprenticeships that involve the training and employment of people from the area.

The future sustainability of the Greater Shankill is intimately linked to its relationship with the wider city. The Strategic Regeneration Framework must therefore be well integrated with those prepared for other areas, with particular reference to neighbouring North and West Belfast. Analysis also identified that the Greater Shankill's physical and socio-economic relationship with Belfast City Centre is critical. Whilst masterplans have been prepared for quarters within the centre, it is noted that a Strategic Regeneration Framework for the city centre is currently lacking. Unless provided, this is likely to hinder the ability of proposals contained within this SRF to be adequately integrated with the city centre. In addition, continued dialogue between stakeholders and improved inter departmental working will be necessary to ensure that the Greater Shankill SRF can be fully incorporated into a future vision for Belfast City as a whole.

The following table identifies stakeholders key to the delivery of each project. This document should form the basis of an Implementation Plan for the Greater Shankill, enabling the scale, content and phasing of each proposals to be developed in further detail.

GREATER SHANKILL STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK - ACTION PLAN								
PROJECTS			Regeneration Benefits			Prioritisation	Timeframe	Financial Scale
			Physical	Social	Economical	Urgent High Medium	Immediate Short-term Medium-term	£ = <1m ££ = 1m - 10m £££ = 10m+
1	SHANKILL ROAD	A Business Opportunity Audit (incl. Retail Health Check)			✓	U	I	£
		B Existing Business Support Programme		✓	✓	U	I	£
		C New Business Incubator Development	✓	✓	✓	H	S	££
		D Shankill Road Branding Initiative		✓	✓	H	S	£
		E Architectural & Urban Design Guide	✓			U	I	£
		F Accelerated Development of Key Sites	✓	✓	✓	H	S	££
		G Frontage Improvements (continued)	✓		✓	H	S	££
		H Rolling Building Stock Regeneration Programme	✓	✓	✓	H	S	££
		I Living & Working Over the Shops	✓	✓	✓	H	S-M	££
		J Lower Shankill Masterplan	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£££
		K Health & Wellbeing Centre	✓	✓		H	S	££
		L Shankill Leisure Centre	✓	✓		M	M	££
		M Comprehensive Public Realm Scheme	✓	✓	✓	H	S	££
		N Linkage Improvements to Key Destinations	✓	✓		H	S	£
		O Transporation Strategy	✓	✓	✓	U	I	£
		P Pedestrian Signage & Cultural Interpretation Strategy	✓	✓	✓	M	M	£
		Q Festivals & Public Arts Programme	✓	✓		M	M	£
		R Woodvale Park Restoration	✓	✓		H	S	£
		S Woodvale Park Activity Programme	✓	✓		H	S	£
		T Woodvale Park Hub	✓	✓		H	S	££
		U Woodvale Park Rangers Programme		✓		H	S	£
		V Woodvale Park Lighting	✓	✓		H	S	££
2	SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD S	A Housing programme	✓	✓	✓	M	M	£££
		B Neighbourhood Environmental Improvements	✓	✓		M	M	££
		C Cross-Community Relations and Regular Review of Peacewall		✓		H	S	
		D Peacewall Urban Design Study	✓	✓		H	S	£
		E Community Facility Provision Audit	✓	✓		H	S	£
		F Public Service Alignment Programme		✓	✓	H	I	
3	FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT	A Education & Learning Zone Designation		✓	✓	U	S	
		B Shankill Education Programme		✓	✓	H	S	
		C Primary Provision Review	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£
		D New Educational Facility Feasibility Study	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£
		E ICT Infrastructure Project	✓	✓	✓	M	M	££
		F ICT Centre	✓	✓	✓	H	M	£
		G Public Realm & Linkages	✓	✓	✓	H	S	££
		H Farset River Opening	✓	✓		M	M	££
		I Development of Key Sites	✓	✓	✓	M	M	£££
4	COMMUNITY GREENWAY	A Greenway Development	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£££
		B Forth River & Ballygomartin River Landscape Improvements	✓	✓		H	S	££
		C Glencairn Masterplan	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£
		D Springvale Masterplan (incl. Paisely Park & Forth River Business Park)	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£
		E BMC E3 Campus	✓	✓	✓	H	I	££
		F W-Way Rapid Transit Feasibility Study	✓	✓	✓	H	S	£
		G Visitor Centre Development	✓	✓	✓	M	M	££
		H Hill Access System	✓	✓	✓	M	M	££
5	ACCELERATED DELIVERY	A Establishment of a Community-led Urban Regeneration Company	✓	✓	✓	H	H	££

GREATER SHANKILL STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK - ACTION PLAN

[illegible]



9 CONCLUSIONS

The Strategic Regeneration Framework for the Greater Shankill sets out an ambitious plan for its regeneration. It establishes the vision of a revitalised and sustainable community to be realised through the accelerated delivery of a number of existing and newly proposed initiatives. For the first time in 40 years, one framework is now in place for the comprehensive physical and socio-economic transformation of Greater Shankill.

The need for change on such a scale has been recognised for many years by people that live and work in the area. This need has now been documented through a process of thorough analysis, confirming a precarious spiral of socio-economic decline. The Strategic Regeneration Framework and accompanying appendices communicate a stark message of the Greater Shankill's current position, leading to the undeniable conclusion that action is urgently required.

However, analysis has also revealed many positive attributes that must not be overlooked, such as Greater Shankill's strategic position in close proximity to the city centre and natural landscape, continued role as a shopping destination, existing programmes of regeneration- some of which are widely regarded across the city and beyond. But the most important positive attribute is the pride and passion of its people, committed to seeing a brighter future for all that live there. It is upon these assets and others that the future revitalisation of the Greater Shankill must be founded.

Achieving such transformation will not be easy. Substantial investment and much closer working partnerships between all parties are central to the fulfilment of the SRF's objectives. Therefore, production of this report is only the beginning of that journey. An extensive and urgent process of dialogue, debate and partnership based around this document is now necessary, both locally and at citywide level. This will determine in detail how comprehensive and sustainable regeneration can take place over the immediate to short term. Fulfilling this challenge must now be the utmost priority for all concerned with the future of the Greater Shankill.