



incorporating



East Border Region Tourism Partnership

Pride in our Rural Villages

Millisle Village Study

March 2008



Prepared for Ards Borough Council and its Enterprise Partners



**PRIDE IN OUR RURAL VILLAGES
MILLISLE FINAL REPORT
MARCH 2008
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"Please note this analysis does not constitute the views or wishes of Ards Borough Council, which is the coordinating body for this initiative".

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Brief

Scott Wilson was commissioned by the East Border Region Tourism Partnership (EBRTP) and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development NI (DARD) to formulate comprehensive strategic plans for 27 villages throughout the District Councils of Ards, Armagh and Down.

The EBRTP has a key role in developing the social and economic activity of rural villages on a cross border basis. The Partnership has secured Interreg IIIA funding under measure 1.4, which is administered by DARD and Border Action (Ireland).

In developing the plans the EBRTP highlighted three priority areas which should form their basis; these were Planning and Infrastructure, Essential Services and Economic and Community Development. Consultation with community representatives and the public formed a large part of the plan preparation process.

This report marks the culmination of the 'Pride in our Rural Villages' project. It aims to provide an overview of the project and the findings at the various stages. The project was undertaken in three main stages which were;

- STAGE 1
 - Literature Review
 - Site visits and walkabouts
- STAGE 2
 - Community questionnaires
 - Collation of questionnaire responses
 - Issues report
 - Consultation on issues report
 - Draft design proposals
 - Presentation of draft proposals to councillors
- STAGE 3
 - Public presentation of proposals
 - Collation and feedback
 - Final report

This report begins with a brief literature review, helping to provide some background information on the study area. This is followed by a list of the key dates during the project to give a view of the timescale in which the project was carried out. The first key stage was the site visit and the issues have been listed in section 2.2 below. The issues were further confirmed through the community questionnaire, which have been summarised in section 2.3. A SWOT analysis was undertaken to establish the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the village and was incorporated into an issues report which was again available to the community for comment. Taking into account the response of the community in relation to the Issues Report, the draft proposals were created. These were placed on public display for a two week period, and the community welcomed to give their

views. Amendments to the proposals were then carried out with input from the council. Section 3 of this report sets out the final proposals.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Background

The village of Millisle is situated along the East of the Ards Peninsula. The nearest town to Millisle is Donaghadee which lies 3 miles north; the larger town of Newtonards lies 7 miles to the east of the village.

County Down is one of the best grain growing areas in Ireland and windmills have long been a prominent feature of the landscape. At one time over 100 windmills were recorded in the county of Down and although there are several remains left, only Ballycopeland Windmills survives.

The windmill at Millisle is situated on the Moss Road about half a mile from the main village, and attracts many visitors each year. It is the only working windmill in N. Ireland.

1.2.2 Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (Draft)

Millisle falls within the remit of the Ards and Down Draft Plan 2015. Originally a small fishing village, Millisle has become a popular tourist centre with a large number of holiday homes and caravan parks. Ards council has plans to improve the existing recreation facilities at the lagoon and along the foreshore.

1.2.3 Community and Tourism Report

The Millisle Community and Tourism Report has highlighted some of the assets of the village, and potential areas for improvement. It is noted that Millisle has the only substantial beach between Ballyholme and Cloughy around 1 mile long. The report highlights the importance of preserving the approaches to the village from commercial development to retain the rural appearance.

The development of Ballywalter Road playing field for recreational facilities was also suggested and a Main St EI scheme to be implemented. The report also noted potential to develop the Woburn and Lisnevin sites for hotel, restaurant etc. there is a clear need for a community hall and the tourism potential of the village should be improved. However the report did highlight some of the problems that the village faces, mainly that of vandalism and graffiti.

The 2001 census records Millisle as having a population of 1800 inhabitants, 19% of which are under 16 years of age, 25.5% aged over 60 and a relatively high unemployment rate of 6.1%.

2.0 CONSULTATIONS

In order to gain an insight into the issues that impact on the town it was considered necessary to gain the knowledge of the local people and encourage public participation throughout the various stages of the project.

2.1 Critical Dates

| STAGE 1 | DATE |
|--|---|
| Literature Review | August 2006 |
| Site visits and walkabouts | September 2006 |
| STAGE 2 | |
| Community questionnaires | 29 th Sept – 13 th Oct 2006 |
| Collation of questionnaire responses | October 2006 |
| Issues report | December 06 |
| Consultation on issues report | 2 nd – 16 th February |
| Draft design proposals | March 2007 |
| Presentation of draft proposals to councillors | May 2007 |
| STAGE 3 | |
| Public presentations of proposals | June 2007 |
| Collation and feedback | July 2007 |
| Final report | August 07 – March 08 |

2.2 Key points noted from the walkabout

This section of the report provides a summary of the key points and issues observed during our site visit on 21st September 2006. Comments from those community representatives and councillors, who attended the visit, have also been recorded.

- Attendee's indicated importance of Millisle as a key settlement, south of Donaghadee
- Diminished holiday resort status, but opportunities for further developments, including regaining its blue flag status
- Beach Park requires attention
- Perceived poor car parking
- Need expressed for a high quality and safe play area
- Poor gateways and approaches to village
- Levels of dereliction within the village
- Increase volume of residential development
- Large number of second homes and commuters
- Speed and volume of through traffic is a significant issue
- Shop frontage scheme initiated by Ards Borough Council, at the pharmacy, should be continued along Main Street

2.3 Key issues from the community questionnaires

As part of the study Scott Wilson sent out questionnaires to a community representative. The questionnaire aimed to elicit views under three main headings; Planning and Infrastructure, Essential Services and Economic and Community Development. A fourth section looked at specific issues which were identified during the site visit. The following is a summary of the twelve questionnaire responses, which were returned from Millisle. Please note that the comments below are an expression of views of those responding to the questionnaire and not necessarily the views of any other party.

Part 1 – Planning and Infrastructure – When questioned about issues or concerns within the village, all respondents had major concerns in relation to the speed of traffic travelling through the village, traffic congestion and parking availability. Millisle is located on the main road along the eastern side of the Ards Peninsula and hence there is a large volume of through traffic. The width of the approach roads and main street result in the majority of traffic not reducing its speed, creating a hazard for those attempting to cross the road, especially the elderly and children due to the proximity of residential homes and the Primary School. We would agree with the suggestion, obtained from the questionnaire responses, that pedestrian crossings should be implemented at appropriate locations along the main street. A major issue, which is by no means exclusive to Millisle, is parking especially during the summer months. Two responses were received from businesses located along the main street who suggest that both they and other village businesses are suffering as a result of the lack of available parking outside their premises. We believe that parking restrictions and delivery bays should be implemented and the provision of good linkages and signage to car parking may aid this situation. It was also identified by the questionnaire that the lack of footpaths in places and inadequate surfaces are a safety hazard for pedestrians and pose a problem for those with disabilities. We would suggest that this may be addressed through the implementation of an environmental improvement scheme.

83% of respondents were concerned about the lack of housing for local people and how this may be resolved without causing further detriment to the village. Concern is centred upon the poor infrastructure provision, which is currently unable to cater for the existing developments. Affordable housing and NIHE housing is not being allocated to local people and the second home market has resulted in most of the local population being priced out of the market. We believe the Council should use its influence in regard to the strategic planning process, concerning affordable housing. We also suggest that some accommodation may be provided through the redevelopment of vacant sites and Living Over The Shop (LOTS).

Various aspects of the local infrastructure have been questioned, including road surfaces and the water and sewerage networks. The main concern identified in the questionnaires is based upon the poor standard of the sewage network; regular spillages behind Shore Road and Seaview Avenue have been documented. The sewerage treatment improvement works invested in by Water Service should lead to significant improvements.

There are several areas of dereliction which provide opportunity sites of varying scales, many of these are located along the Main Street. There are also lands behind Shore Road and Main Street which are

utilised as informal car parks along with the land adjoining the Ballywalter Car Park and Moss Road Car Park. Many respondents have highlighted that the Beach Park has not been updated for many decades. Full analysis and specific recommendations for improvements are required at the Beach park and a specialist report has been commissioned by Ards Borough Council (January 2007). We believe that improved linkages between the shore and Main Street and the creation of active frontage onto the shore will enhance the potential of the village.

Part 2 – Essential Services – The community were asked whether they had concerns in relation to facilities and service provision within the village. Responses showed that there were significant areas of concern. Major concerns were raised about the perceived lack of healthcare (100%) and leisure provision (100%). 80% of respondents also stated concerns in terms of public transport provision, quality of open space and children’s play areas. Whilst Millisle boasts a large amount of open space, much of it has not been developed or marketed to its full potential. We would suggest that improved signage and the implementation of improvement works at the Beach Park and linkages to the village centre, may address this concern.

Many respondents were of the opinion that few services are provided, and hence there is much room for improvement. A range of shops, healthcare facilities and leisure facilities, accommodating all ages, were amongst those services which respondents placed priority. All the existing leisure facilities tend to be owned by the church or other organisations and hence are not open for common use; a new open community facility could be established. It was suggested that the government owned properties at Ganaway and Borstal, may provide opportunities for the community, by those responding to the questionnaire.

Part 3 – Economic and Community Development – When asked about any existing or potential tourist attractions within the village, it was considered that as a coastal and historic village, Millisle has various attractions for both tourists and its residents. We would agree with the community that initially the seafront area should be improved, including the Beach Park. The beach and seafront area must be protected and the quality improved. Other features locally include the Ballycopeland Windmill, the history of the linen industry and Amy Carmichael. We would welcome further comment from the community as to how they envisage these suggestions could be taken forward as proposals.

The community suggest there are limited opportunities for businesses in the village. The Post Office recently incorporated a new coffee shop, which has been developed well and appreciated by locals. Should further businesses be set up it is likely they will succeed if kept to a small scale and aimed towards either growing local needs or tourism.

The majority of the respondents thought that there were insufficient facilities for existing community groups. Those which do exist tend to be owned by the Church or by organisations and are therefore not always available or open to all members of the community, this emphasises the need and desire for a community hall. There are very few community events or festivals; many have these have stopped due to lack of support. Many would like to see the revival of the summer gala. The Abbey Villa FC

grounds and the adjacent pitches are sometimes used for Fundays and informally by children, dog walkers and quad bikes.

Part 4 – General Issues – This section of the questionnaire presented the community with a series of statements about issues and aspects of Millisle, which they were asked to state whether they strongly agreed, agreed or disagreed with. These statements dealt with the attractiveness of the village, legibility, local environment, vandalism, range of shops and facilities, traffic and car parking issues.

This section of the questionnaire illustrated that there are varying opinions amongst the community, as to the village, which enforce the suggestion that whilst Millisle has a lot to offer, many of its resources and facilities have yet to reach their full potential and we may assume that this may be attributed to Millisle being in a transition period from a predominantly tourist resort to a commuter village. Approximately 50% felt that Millisle was an attractive village, however the majority of respondents highlighted that many elements of the built environment would benefit from a series of improvements. We believe that this may be addressed through an environmental improvement scheme, which would include the creation of gateways to enhance the approaches to the village and encourage drivers to reduce their speed. The need for the creation of an identifiable village centre and improved frontages has also been indicated in the community responses, which would help to enhance the vibrancy of the settlement. Along with the environmental improvement scheme, a shop frontage scheme and the redevelopment of vacant units along the main street would address this issue. 70% of respondents suggested that the range and quality of shops, bars and restaurants could be improved through the redevelopment of main street properties.

63% of respondents stated that antisocial behaviour is an issue within the village and 70% stated that safety is a concern. We believe that the redevelopment of the Beach Park and provision of enhanced facilities throughout the village, will engage the youths in activities and that such behaviour will be deterred through the environmental improvement scheme and renewed sense of pride in the village that this brings.

We suggested in the questionnaire that in its current form, the Beach Park is a vastly underutilised resource, where extensive redevelopment should be targeted in order to reinvent this facility, and thereby help Millisle attract the modern tourist market. Many of the respondents strongly agreed with this suggestion and hence the Council's report, in relation to targeted improvements of the Beach Park, is awaited keenly, with the major issue being costs associated with improvements. It has been identified that local people wish to see this area developed into a family orientated facility, which is bright and exciting. However it is crucial that it does not become over commercialised. It is suggested by the community that its redevelopment might include the improvement of the paddling pool, major landscaping to create interest and an attractive environment, an adventure playground, tennis courts and bowling green. Residents are concerned about the upkeep and management of the facility, to ensure this is not a wasted investment, they emphasise that any such improvements should be properly managed.

In summary Millisle should give priority to addressing the following areas:

- Beach Park and shoreline
- Implementation of an environmental improvement scheme
- Creation of gateways as a traffic calming measure
- Implementation of pedestrian crossings
- Improve linkages and signage between the village and shoreline

2.4 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis evaluates the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats within the town, and has been compiled from information gained from the walkabout, results from the questionnaires and general observations by the study team.

Strengths

- History as a small fishing village and popular tourist resort
- Number of caravan parks along this section of the coast
- Provision of the existing beach park and lagoon
- Presence of the only substantial beach between Bangor and Cloughey
- Claimed to be the most significant village on the east of the peninsula, south of Donaghadee
- Volume of existing and proposed residential housing, in that services and infrastructure should also be improved

Weaknesses

- Poor approaches to the village
- Loss of elements of the tourist market
- Loss of Blue Flag status
- Problems with graffiti and vandalism
- Beach Park and lagoon are currently in poor state of repair, improvement has been sought
- Claimed there are no youth facilities
- Levels of dereliction and slow uptake of some vacant properties
- High percentage of commuter and second homes
- Speed and volume of vehicles along the Main Street

- Dangerous corner outside the pharmacy
- No neutral community centre facility
- No pedestrian crossings on the Main Street
- Perceived poor infrastructure, including the sewage network
- Lack of enforcement of parking restrictions

Opportunities

- Need to further develop tourist potential
- Expansion of Shop Frontage Scheme along main street
- Encourage more business to invest into a shop frontage scheme
- Investment into the beach park and sea front
- Utilise Primary School as a community centre
- Significant population growth
- Market driven opportunities will exist for private sector
- Improved linkages between the village and shoreline

Threats

- No investment for Beach Park improvements may be available
- Some caravan sites do not have contemporary appeal

2.5 Converting Weaknesses to Strengths

| WEAKNESSES | ACTION |
|--|--|
| Poor approaches to the village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the gateways to the village using landscaping and better signage |
| Loss of elements of the tourist market | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and market the tourism potential of the village |
| Lack of Blue Flag status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular beach cleaning • Assessment of sewage infrastructure to ensure that it is not impacting on the water quality around the shore |
| Problems with graffiti and vandalism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve surveillance around problem areas • Improve recreational/social facilities for young people to aim to reduce anti social behaviour within the village |
| Beach Park and lagoon are currently in poor state of repair, improvement has been sought | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider improvements to the beach park and lagoon |
| Claimed there are no youth facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify site for a new community centre to provide recreational/social facilities for young people |
| Levels of dereliction and slow uptake of some vacant properties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider overall environmental improvement scheme throughout the village to enhance the townscape character and encourage building improvements |
| Speed and volume of vehicles along the Main Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imposition of traffic calming measures and more pedestrian crossings |
| Dangerous corner outside the pharmacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imposition of traffic calming measures on the approach to the bad corner, pedestrian crossing |
| No neutral community centre facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the shared use of facilities, mixed community group may help achieve this |
| No pedestrian crossings on the Main Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify suitable crossing points for pedestrians |
| Perceived poor infrastructure, including the sewage network | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the sewage infrastructure network, and upgrading where appropriate |
| Lack of enforcement of parking restrictions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stricter enforcement on parking needed by DRD • Identification of key sites for car parking with good links to the village centre |

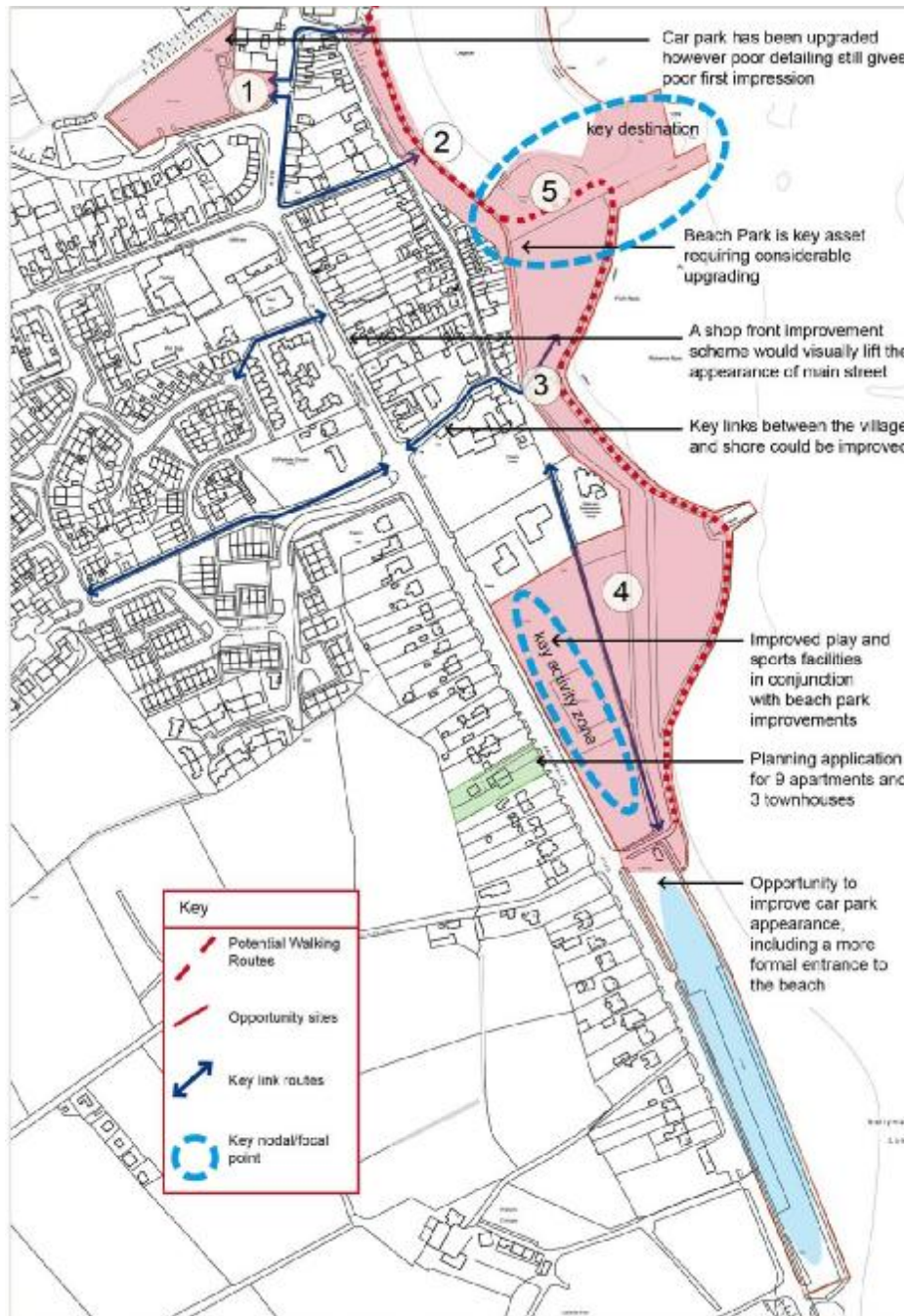
2.6 Matching Strengths with Opportunities

| STRENGTHS | OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|--|
| History as a small fishing village and popular tourist resort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to further develop tourist potential • Expansion of Shop Frontage Scheme along main street to improve the appearance of the village • Investment into the beach park and sea front • Utilise Primary School as a community centre • Improved linkages between the village and shoreline |
| Number of caravan parks along this section of the coast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to further develop tourist potential • Provide better linkage between the caravan parks, the beach and the village |
| Provision of the existing beach park and lagoon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and market the tourist potential • Investment into the beach park and sea front • Improved linkages between the village and shoreline |
| Presence of the only substantial beach between Bangor and Cloughey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to further develop tourist potential • Investment into the beach park and sea front |
| Claimed to be the most significant village on the east of the peninsula, south of Donaghadee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the retail and commercial potential of the village • Encourage more business to invest into a shop frontage scheme |
| Volume of existing and proposed residential housing, in that services and infrastructure should also be improved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market driven opportunities will exist for private sector • Significant population growth |

3.0 PROPOSALS

3.1 Overview of Proposals

The main elements of the proposals for Millisle involve the development and enhancement of the waterfront. There is a substantial amount of open space at the sea front that will be improved using furniture, lighting and landscaping. Proposals also involve an EI scheme throughout the village to improve the overall visual amenity of the area, incorporating traffic calming measures. There are several car parks throughout Millisle which should be made more visually appealing using paving and landscaping.



Opportunity sites as highlighted in this report are not an indication of the final version of what is going to happen or likely to happen up to 2015, which will be the remit of the (draft) Ards and Down Area Plan 2015. For the purpose of this report, opportunity sites can be considered as follows:

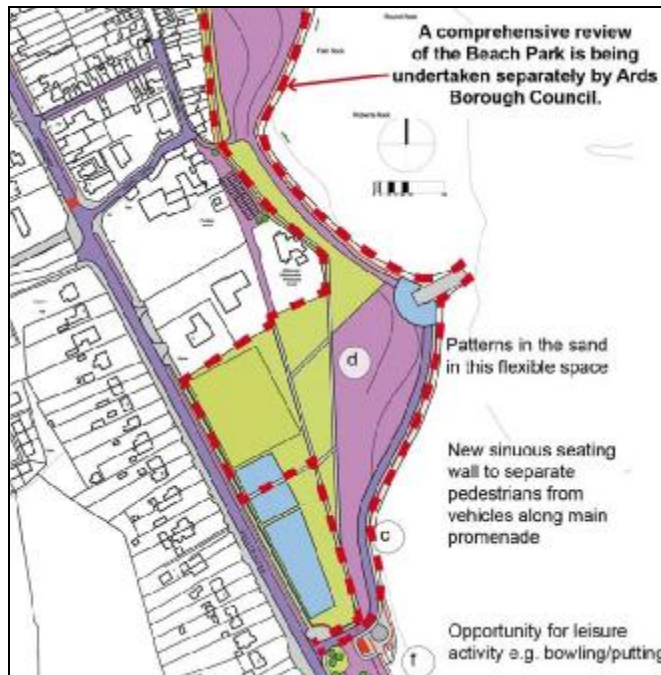
“They are often under utilised sites or contain uses which could be relocated to make way for a more appropriate activity in order to achieve an overall vision for the area as a whole. There is however, no presumption that all or even any of the land uses in the area will definitely change.”

3.2 Project 1 – Car Park/Gateway



The existing car park on the Moss Road would benefit from softening with some paving and tree planting, creating a more welcoming arrival point into Millisle. The site on the corner of Moss Road/Main Street has recently been upgraded to a more formal car park by DOE. This could also be softened by planting the slopes on either side of the ramp, as well as some tree planting.

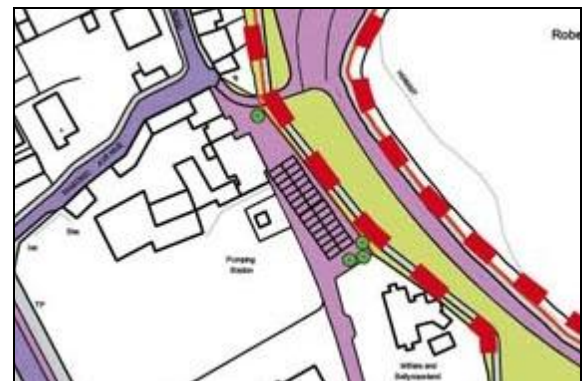
3.3 Project 2 – Environmental Improvement Scheme



Speeding traffic is a major concern for the residents of Millisle. By reducing the width of the carriageway in places, and incorporating traffic calming measures along Main Street, may help reduce speed in the area. Parking should only be allowed on the shore side of Main Street, with the introduction of engineered solutions to discourage vehicles from parking on the land side of Main Street, such as trees and bollards. A zebra crossing has been approved by Roads Service outside the pharmacy, although it will be necessary to incorporate further crossing points at various locations along Main Street. Millisle requires an environmental improvement scheme to include the introduction of flowerbeds, planters, trees and lighting. Broken paving slabs should be replaced and footpaths resurfaced and extended in some places, such as Masonic Avenue and overhead power cables should preferably be underground.

3.4 Project 3 – Car Park

The car park at the bottom of Masonic Avenue along the shore should be resurfaced and formalised as a car park, incorporating hard and soft landscaping to make a more attractive place.



3.5 Project 4 – Sea Front



a Barcelona Bridge



d Whitehead



f Warrenpoint

Millisle has the benefit of having a substantial amount of open space at the sea front. This asset should be enhanced with a strategy of improved access, including improved paths from linking side streets and the introduction of entrance gateways. Interesting materials, sinuous walls, sculptural seating and lighting together with new textures courtesy of grasses and wildflowers, will bring a new exciting dimension to the sea front. Adventure play and sports facilities would ensure the year round visitor appeal of the beach park.

A comprehensive review of the Beach Park is being carried undertaken separately by Ards Borough Council. Full consultation will take place between now and November 2007 – the expected completion of the concept plan.

4.0 ACTION PLAN

| Projects /Actions | Possible funding sources* | Delivered by | Priority | Indicative costs** |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Traffic management</i> | | | | |
| Reduced carriageway width at specific locations | DRD | DRD | 1 | £25,000 – 50,000 |
| Traffic calming measures along Main Street | DRD | DRD | 1 | £50,000 – 150,000 |
| Parking only allowed on shore side of Main Street, discourage parking on land side | DRD/Council | DRD | 1 | £250,000 – 500,000 |
| Zebra crossing point outside pharmacy, additional crossing points along Main Street | DRD | DRD | 1 | £50,000 – 100,000 |
| Car park at bottom of Masonic Avenue resurfaced and formalised | DRD/Council/Private | Council/Private | 2 | £25,000 – 50,000 |
| <i>Image and role of the village</i> | | | | |
| Enhancement of the Moss Road car park to create a more welcoming arrival point | Council/Private | Council | 2 | £25,000 – 50,000 |
| Environmental Improvement Scheme | Council/DSD/Interreg | Council | 1 | Incl. |
| Overhead power cables moved underground | NIE/Council | NIE/Council | 2 | Dependent on existing surfaces |
| Improvement of the open space at the sea front | Council/DSD | Council | 1 | £50,000 – 1m |
| Comprehensive review of Beach Park | Council | Council | 1 | N/A |

* It should be noted that a number of funding sources are coming on stream in 2008 which could lead to investment for schemes including: New Rural Development Programme; Peace III, INTERREG IV and DETI Business Competitiveness. Partnership groups are presently being formulated to help distribute this funding.

** Costs noted in this action plan are entirely indicative and exclude VAT, future inflation, professional fees and statutory authority charges. Final and more precise costs will only be possible following the detailed design stage and may be subject to planning conditions and market values.

5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 Community Questionnaire Responses

As part of the study Scott Wilson sent out questionnaire to a community representative. The questionnaire aimed to elicit the views of under three main headings; Planning and Infrastructure, Essential Services and Economic and Community Development. A fourth section looked at the specific issues which were identified during the site visit. The results are as follows:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----------|---|-----------------|---|------------|---|
| 1. | What is your interest? | Business | 2 | Community Group | 1 | Individual | 9 |
|----|------------------------|----------|---|-----------------|---|------------|---|

Section 1 – Planning and Infrastructure

2. Please indicate which of the following issues are of concern or interest to your group:

| ISSUE | Major Concern | Some Concern | No Concern |
|---|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Traffic congestion/ Speeding through traffic | 9 | 3 | - |
| Parking availability | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| Pedestrian accessibility | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| Vehicular accessibility | 1 | 9 | 2 |
| Accessibility for disabled persons | 7 | 5 | - |
| Availability of housing for local people | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Impact of new housing on your village | 6 | 6 | - |
| Quality of existing road network in the village | 8 | 4 | - |
| Sewage and Mains Water supply | 7 | 4 | 1 |

If you indicated that you have concerns about any of the above issues please expand on your answers below or on a separate sheet:

- Pedestrian crossings needed for the village
- Too many planning applications being granted for new developments without infrastructure surveys being done
- Planning permission being granted for new developments with no regard for updating infrastructure; roads, sewage, water, schools etc.
- May-Sept no parking- not enforced
- Roads not accessible for wheelchairs or mobility scooters, also beachpark/road surface in the village is also in a bad state
- NIHE homes not going to local people, given to Belfast people
- In the summer months, parking is very hard to find, also some drivers are driving too fast through the village
- Housing for local people needs to be sorted out
- Need something to slow down cars who speed through village – especially as no crossing along Main Street
- Customers find it difficult to park at shops

- I am very concerned about sewage spillage behind Shore Road because of inadequate system
- I am concerned too that the abundance of new housing does not lead to a deteriorating in sewage standards
- Drainage on Shore Road is bad; particularly water running down from Seaview Avenue. Sewage is a major problem with 2 manholes which blow each time there is heavy rain and sewage flows on car parks and lagoon. Not very healthy for families who holiday in Millisle as well as local residents
- Traffic in area travels at high speeds and doesn't adhere to limits. No footpath on road out to Ballywalter and is dangerous to pedestrians
- Car boot sale causes traffic congestion

3. Are there any development opportunity sites (i.e. sites or buildings which are derelict, or underused/vacant land, or something that may be described as an 'eyesore') within the village that you are aware of? If yes, where and what would you like to see developed?

- There are several 'eye sores' amongst the shops on the Main Road. Also, electric wires crossing over the same area
- There are a couple of shops on Main Street that are vacant and ugly
- The car park behind Shore Road is frequently waterlogged
- Land behind Main Street beside vacant Indian restaurant used as a car park of sorts, vacant restaurants and shops
- Car park at bus stop although work appears to have started there
- Field beside Ballywalter car park – Play park seriously needs updated, same as it was 40 years ago
- Moss Road car park area – beach park area
- The Main Street has a few eye-sores such as vacant properties next to Spar; also the lane connecting the housing estate to the Main Street is a dump which is never clean and bad surface for pedestrians
- Building beside bookmakers and Spar on Main Street needs to be developed

Section 2 – Essential Services (Please expand on answers if possible)

4. Please indicate which of the following issues are of concern or interest to your group:

| ISSUE | Major Concern | Some Concern | No Concern |
|---|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Provision and access to local healthcare facilities | 9 | 3 | - |
| Provision and access to educational facilities | 1 | 6 | 5 |
| Quality of public open space | 1 | 9 | 2 |
| Availability of play areas for children | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| Public transport service in the area | 2 | 8 | 2 |
| Provision of public leisure facilities | 9 | 3 | - |
| Quality and provision of retailing/local shops | 4 | 5 | 2 |

5. What services are you aware of and are you happy in general with the range of services currently provided?

- Good array of shops
- Plenty of good shops
- A community centre and/or leisure centre would be of great benefit to the community
- GP service removed – very difficult for those who have no transport
- Play areas not well maintained and not sited close to housing
- Tourists always looking to use toilets in businesses
- No facilities in Millisle for leisure
- Yes
- No health services in Millisle – taken away
- Excellent mobile library and chemist

6. What other facilities or services do you feel should be provided for the village? What sort of recreational facilities should be provided for young people?

- Community centre/leisure centre
- All public buildings tend to be churches or belonging to separatist organisations. We need something for common use
- Community centre for all to use – not linked to churches or other organisations – could also be used for youth events so they are not loitering in the streets
- The village should have a community centre as there is nowhere for the youth of the village to go at evenings or weekends
- Youth club, more choice of sports
- Doctors surgery
- Young people who engage in anti-social behaviour are not interested in youth activities organised by church groups etc. This is a wider problem in society and cannot be solved in Millisle alone
- Beach Park has huge potential for attracting more visitors if redeveloped. Why not something like Dundonald Ice Bowl such as crazy golf, surely we need to be brought into the 21st Century
- If group leaders want to kids to attend swimming etc. they have to travel out, which is difficult now with child seat laws and protection
- We have two facilities close to the village, Ganaway and the Borstal and the local community are not allowed in either of them

Section 3 - Economic and Community Development – (Please expand on answers if possible)

7. Are there any attractions which you feel could be developed for tourists or for use by local people?

- Beach Park area/area next to civic amenities site could be improved
- Ballycopeland Windmill – highlighted
- Beach Park/Seafront and beach area
- Community house or hall/bowling green/tennis courts/picnic facilities
- Windmill/linen tradition/Amy Carmichael history/Beach Park – Lagoon
- Make better use of the lagoon area, a leisure centre would be good
- Improve sea-front, usually flooded and a dirt track for joy riders and quad bikes

8. Are there any features or assets within your village which you feel should be actively conserved?

- Beach and Park
- Anything that was worth keeping has already been developed
- Windmill – lit up at night
- Maintain good beach quality
- Too late to do so

9. Are there good small business opportunities?

- We have recently developed the Post Office to include a coffee shop which the residents seem to appreciate
- No
- No, though broadband is available
- Yes, this is the type of village with the right small input would do very well – especially if it capitalises on tourism
- Good restaurant needed

10. Are there sufficient facilities available to local community groups and are they well used?

- Yes e.g. church halls/parish halls/school
- No, church halls/school hall no always available
- Not particularly – no community centre – groups meet in premises linked to other organisations which can leave some people out
- Not sufficient, but we hope in the future to make good use of the school
- Hindered by not having a community centre

11. Are there regular or well known community events or festivals? If not, what would you like to see?

- No. Stopped Gala, lack of support and interest in midsummer festival would be

nice

- No – the other villages in peninsula have good events
- Revival of summer carnival
- The ‘twelfth’ could be made into a family festival with no flag waving
- Gala week had to be stopped as no local facilities to hold things in

12. Are the pitches at Abbey Villa FC used only by the football team?

- Council pitches beside are used by children and school. No play park this side of Millisle
- No. Local RBL branch use for fundays. Children and adults use for football
- Dog walkers, golfers, quads

Section 4 - General

Please tick the following statements to indicate your opinion:

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|-------------------|
| The village is a generally attractive environment | | 5 | 6 |
| The village centre has good places to eat and drink | | 3 | 8 |
| The village is easy to find | 4 | 7 | |
| Directions to public facilities are clearly signed | | 7 | 4 |
| The village has an identifiable centre | | 3 | 8 |
| The approach to the village is attractive and welcoming | | 3 | 8 |
| The streets are kept clean of litter | | 7 | 4 |
| Graffiti and vandalism in the village are a problem | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| There is a clear vision for the village centre | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Street furniture is well maintained | | 3 | 6 |
| Pavements are uncluttered and in good repair | | 4 | 6 |
| There is value for money in local shops | | 5 | 5 |
| There is a good choice and range in shopping | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| There are suitable traffic calming measures | | 1 | 9 |
| The police are involved in initiatives to cut crime | | 6 | 4 |
| There are distinct and well used car parks | | 6 | 5 |
| Building fronts and facades are well looked after | | 4 | 7 |
| The village has a vibrant atmosphere | | 3 | 8 |
| There is sufficient streetlighting | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| The village is safe to walk around at all times | | 3 | 8 |

If you wish to expand on your answers to any of these statements please do so below or on a separate sheet:

- Vandalism undermines efforts to keep street furniture well maintained
- The vibrant atmosphere is beginning – long way to go
- The village has great potential, but suffers from recent lack of investment or from unwise investment
- There are some people who take pride in their village but unfortunately there is apathy amongst the majority and this reflects in all that is done and proposed to be done in the village
- Village needs to be more colourful and bright. Give people pleasure to belong and pride to keep it that way
- The village is not attractive, has nowhere to eat or drink in acceptable surroundings. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour are major problems. There is one Spar shop with no choice
- Village is unattractive – no decent restaurants, no floral displays owing to anti-social behaviour – one shop available for groceries
- I have lived on the lower part of the Abbey Road for approx. 2 years and unfortunately had no choice but to move because of constant noise and disturbance
- One shop on Main Street is a disgrace – owned by Lord Dunleath – derelict
- The car parks are distinct but a lot of people do not use them in summer months and don't care about parking on peoples driveways and double yellow lines

13. What sort of development or features would you like to see being put in place specifically at the Beach Park?

- Improve or remove paddling pool. In its present condition it can not be used
- The paddling pool is bleak and needs to be made attractive
- There could be a small shop but please do not over-commercialise the place
- Something bright, interesting and exciting to attract tourists and locals alike e.g. bowling green, tennis courts, adventure playground, nice and garden and most important improve paddling pool
- Ideas to encourage families and young people to use it more – not just on hot days e.g. funfair, boat rides etc.
- Should be landscaped as it currently has no features and is used as a car park with little upkeep by the council
- Something for teenagers to do, tennis courts or crazy golf
- Leisure facilities at Beach Park – auto bank machine
- Solar powered lights
- The wall to be removed at the marina/boat park to be cleaned/proper knowledge of how to use boats

5.2 Public Exhibition Consultation Responses

The public exhibition of initial ideas was held in June 07. The public were asked to give their views on the proposals in the questionnaires provided. The results were as follows:

What do you like about the proposals?

- Welcomes proposals/ will help promote tourism
- All proposals look good
- The activity are for children and generally cleaning up the appearance of the village
- Car park at bottom of Masonic Ave is overdue improvement
- Foot path on Masonic Ave
- Plants and shrubs etc will improve visual character of the village
- Parking proposals are welcomed

What do you not like about the proposals?

- Parking on Main Street during summer months
- Need more planting around Lagoon Area
- Suggests there is no need for pedestrian crossings, money could be put to better uses such as the derelict properties and the two closed restaurants
- Speed restrictions need extended to the edge of the built up area
- Parking must be enforced along Main St in summer months
- Proposals may be ruined by youths and vandalism.
- Doesn't go far enough along sea front
- No indoor area for young people
- Townhouses
- Safe path needed along from the back of the war memorial to the play park to facilitate prams
- No wet weather hall on the beach
- Hopefully there will be regular maintenance of the proposals
- Would not put seasonal food outlet on beach, would take away from the shops
- Proposed crossing at the pharmacy is on blind corner - dangerous

Is there anything which you feel you would change?

- Wet weather facilities for kids needed
- Footpath down Masonic Avenue
- Replica Kilns in grounds of Masonic Hall
- Public toilet for Main Street
- Shore St should be made one way
- Speed ramps – placed at both ends of Main St
- More trees, waste bins, public toilets
- First thing that needs to be done is to address the litter problem, broken glass etc
- Speed along Ballywalter Rd needs to be reduced
- No more car parks needed, planning should be kept to a minimum so as not to encroach on sea views
- More shopping facilities to complement the increased number of people and wealth in the village – tourism potential should be explored
- Footpaths need to be lowered on sea-side of road to facilitate wheelchairs and prams
- Sewage must be addressed

-
- Proposed crossing at the pharmacy may prove to be dangerous - lighting along the promenade would be beneficial
 - Electric lines should be diverted underground, replaced with more planting
 - More facilities needed, cash machine, doctors surgery etc
 - No parking facilities for boat trailers
 - More lighting along the sea front, raft to attract kids to water-based activities
 - More signage needed
 - More tourist activities needed, skateboarding, crazy golf, BBQ area