

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Brief**

Ferguson McIlveen LLP was commissioned in January 2005 by Armagh City and District Council, under the sponsorship of the DETI, to carry out a town centre development study in Keady. The study coincides with the preparation of the Armagh Area Plan 2018. DOE Planning Service is carrying out town and city centre studies, which will consider retail provision and the general health of town centres.

The brief sought:

- to support and enhance the work of DOE Planning Service in connection with City and Town Centre Studies
- to identify and formulate a vision for the centre of Keady
- to provide a detailed proposal and course of action
- a partnership approach involving Council, Planning Service and local Community Groups
- analysis of the town centre, summary of consultation and an action plan with funding sources and delivery agents

### **1.2 Background of Keady**

The name of Keady has been recorded as long ago as 1674, when the name is mentioned in a letter from Symore Richardson to the Provost of Trinity College Dublin. It is the largest of the local towns in the Armagh District, with a population of around 3000, and is situated approximately 7 miles to the South West of Armagh City.

The Clay River runs through the heart of the present day town, and was important to its initial growth. It was noted that the numerous falls in the river attracted a number of entrepreneurs, who developed a large bleaching establishment in 1750, which in turn laid the foundations for the linen trade in the town. The town emerged as an important centre for linen production, and the availability of waterpower led to the construction of many mills and factories. The Keady monument was erected to William Kirk, whose mills brought so much prosperity to the town.

Before World War I the town became a centre for tailoring. The advent of the railway brought much commercial benefit to the town, although both the goods and passenger lines have closed. The town is of interest to the industrial archaeologist

because of the large number of derelict watermills. One of the old mills has been redeveloped as a visitor centre and place for community enterprise, and the riverwalk, which runs alongside is another feature of the town centre.

### **I.3 Policy Context**

#### **a. Regional Development Strategy 2025**

Although Keady is not specifically mentioned in the document, there are a number of strategies, which will have an effect on the town. The RDS, through various policies, aims to support smaller towns, making them more sustainable; such as SPG-RNI 3: *support the network of service centres based on main towns, small towns and villages in Rural Northern Ireland*. This policy aims to develop a network of strong main towns as the major locations providing employment, services and a range of cultural and leisure amenities for both townspeople and rural communities. ENV 3.3: *Conserve the character of cities, towns and villages* will control and manage development within settlements, emphasising local identity and sense of place; and encouraging the retention of locally important buildings and features.

#### **b. Armagh Area Plan 2004**

This plan was adopted in 1995. Keady was noted in this plan as one of three designated local towns within the Armagh district, and would function as an important local service centre. Proposals put forward in this plan aimed to accelerate the economic and physical regeneration of the town, which showed limited growth over the previous decade.

Around 26.4ha of land was zoned for housing within the town to help accommodate this anticipated growth. With regard to open space provision, it was identified that the topography of the area created a problem, however further recreational space was designated at Madden Row and Victoria Street area. 4.2 ha of land was zoned for industry on the Annvale Road, and it was hoped that this area would provide Keady's future industrial needs.

A number of key sites were identified in the town centre for development, including the Mill; cattle market and the former swimming pool site at Crossmore Road. The Department aimed to encourage the renovation of derelict buildings to maintain the good quality of architecture already found in the town. The plan also recognised that Keady town centre carried a large volume

of through-traffic, and thus the importance of fully utilising traffic management techniques was noted.

### **c. Armagh Area Plan Issues Paper 2018**

This paper aims to assess some of the issues regarding Armagh District and, following public consultation, will result in the creation of a new area plan superseding the 2004 plan. The paper suggests a housing growth allocation of 500 for Keady over the plan period. The 2004 plan offered 26.4 ha of land for residential development, however 10ha remains undeveloped and the potential of this land is to be reassessed, as the population growth has not reached the level previously anticipated. The 4.2 ha of land designated for industrial use on the Annvale Road in the 2004 plan remains entirely undeveloped.

### **I.4 Purpose of Study**

This Development Study has been commissioned by Armagh City and District Council to draw together local opinion as to how Keady should be shaped in the future and has been prepared in conjunction with local community representatives, Councillors, local school students and the general public. The consultation process identified the strengths and weaknesses in

Keady and opportunities to build on these strengths to make the town a more vibrant place to live, work and visit. The document deals with issues such as urban design, vehicle movement, parking, development constraints and poor environmental quality and suggests actions and ideas to rectify current problems. These actions are then prioritised and funding sources are identified.

The recommendations within this study are intended to generate debate and initiate constructive thinking about the future of the town. It is intended to act as a framework to guide potential investors and developers, as well as being part of the Council's submission to Planning Service, by way of input into the preparation of the Armagh Area Plan 2018. The proposals, actions and recommendations within this document will be further investigated by Planning Service, who may or may not incorporate them within the forthcoming Area Plan. The Area Plan, once published, will be the main policy tool through which these proposals will be implemented.

## 2.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

In preparing this document, the following consultations were carried out.

- a. Meeting and walkabout held with community representatives and local Councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2005.
- b. Student photographic exercise, April 2005 – pupils from St Patrick’s High School in Keady were supplied with disposable cameras and asked to photograph positive and negative elements of the urban area within Keady and document their opinions.
- c. Public Exhibition and Questionnaires – draft ideas showing a number of potential projects in Keady were displayed in Keady Library from 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005. Questionnaires were supplied seeking opinions on the contents of the display. No questionnaire responses were received during the consultation period.
- d. Drop-in Session – a Ferguson McIlveen representative was available on at the Library on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005 between 5pm and 8pm to meet with local people and discuss the draft proposals.

There was a good attendance and many interesting views were expressed.

Issues raised during these consultations have been incorporated within the document as much as possible. Details of the key issues raised are contained within the Appendices.

### 3.0 APPRAISALS

#### 3.1 Townscape Appraisal

Keady developed in a linear fashion along Kinelowen Street. The buildings on this street provide a strong frontage and limited commercial uses exist beyond this frontage. Despite the occasional vacant unit, the town centre is a busy vibrant place, which is not translated into a fully occupied street, probably due to the traffic problems. Traffic volume and congestion is at its worst where Kinelowen Street narrows into Davis Street, and combines with the traffic from Bridge Street and Market Street. Only a complete by-pass of the town centre will solve the traffic problems here, but junction realignment could be considered as a shorter-term measure. The historic layout of the town would have been centred on the area around the Cow Fair and Bridge Street. This would have been the main meeting place and the location for markets and other events. The significant increase in car use over the years has reduced the attractiveness of this space for such uses, but the existing form of the space exists and has the potential to be recreated. The library building is an important facility in the town and is in the right part of the town for easy access by the community. However, the site of the Old Mill Building and the

Library is not being used efficiently and the library building inhibits the potential to use the area as a civic/ events space. Its removal would reinstate the visual link between Market Street and the Cow Fair and facilitate the redevelopment of the space for civic use.

Keady Glen is wedged between the buildings of Kinelowen Street and the housing on Fair Green Avenue. Unfortunately, none of these land uses face the Glen and it is a back land site struggling to find a purpose. The Glen needs to be used more and frontage development and good linkages from the town centre to adjacent housing areas would help to eliminate its derelict appearance and increase usage.

#### 3.2 SWOT

The following list is compiled from the results of the consultations and general observation.

##### a. Strengths

- Main route to Dublin and mid-lands from Armagh
- Nightlife – new pub / club / restaurant being built near Cow Fair
- A lot of food shops

- Keady Glen – open space in the town centre
- Good community facilities based on the Old Mill and Library
- High School allows its facilities to be used as leisure centre
- Community interest in proposals

#### **b. Weaknesses**

- Congestion is a major issue
- Dereliction
- Bridge Street / Kinelowen junction causes tail-backs along Victoria Street – traffic lights needed.
- Very few clothes shops
- No employment – factory closed recently
- No public sector employment
- Clay River (Glen) is a drinking area and dumping ground.
- Lack of lighting in the Glen
- Facilities for youth in the town in general are very poor.
- Dual use scheme (school leisure facilities) is considered, by some locals, as not being accessible to all.
- No leisure centre / swimming in the town
- Lack of signage, bins etc

#### **c. Opportunities**

- Madden Road to be widened
- Ring Road originally planned from north of town towards High School on St. Patrick Street
- There is room on the street for parking restrictions (eg. double yellow lines) on one side
- Clay Lakes and the coarse fishing.
- Very good civic/ events space potential at the lower end of Market Street, Bridge Street and the Cow Fair
- Scope for bus shelter outside the Old Mill Centre.

#### **d. Threats**

- Competes a lot with Newry and cross border
- Library is reducing hours

In summary, Keady is potentially a thriving market town being hampered by traffic congestion and lack of investment. The Glen is a key asset and could be the town's main recreation area. However, the lack of overlooking from the main streets and the fact that it does not lead anywhere has resulted in it being a backland site and the focus for anti-social behaviour. There is a strong community identity in the town and the Old Mill and Library are important uses and should be consolidated.

Dereliction is a big issue and environmental improvement combined with improvement to the appearance of buildings should be a priority. The town centre has good civic space potential based on the historic layout of the streets centred on Bridge Street, Cow Fair and Market Street. The town's location on a main traffic route is both an opportunity and a disadvantage. The road infrastructure is not able to cope with the volume of traffic, especially the lorries. On the other hand, there is the opportunity to develop the town as a key service centre, capturing passing trade with niche shopping and tourist facilities based on the local fishing lakes. The lack of leisure facilities is a major problem and it could be argued has contributed to the anti-social behaviour in the Glen.

### 3.3 Converting Weaknesses to Strengths

WEAKNESSES	ACTION
Traffic Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduce time restrictions and enforce</li> <li>- develop more off street parking and better signage</li> <li>- consider developing alternative traffic routes through the town</li> </ul>
Vacant and Derelict Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promote a shop frontage improvement scheme</li> <li>- develop town centre design guide</li> <li>- implement an EI scheme for the main streets to improve general appearance of townscape and encourage building improvements</li> </ul>
Bridge Street / Kinelowen junction causes tail-backs along Victoria Street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- explore the use of traffic lights with Roads Service</li> <li>- consider realignment of Bridge Street junction to create greater separation from Davis Street</li> </ul>
Limited range of shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- define a town centre boundary to contain and strengthen the role of retailing within the main streets</li> <li>- consider financial inducements such as reduced rates to attract retailers to the town</li> <li>- ensure that planning policies do not restrict the physical development of retailing units in the main streets (e.g. unit size)</li> <li>- identify a niche market for Keady and promote</li> </ul>
No employment – factory closed recently. No public sector employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consider the development of small business units/ enterprise centre</li> <li>- promote the development of tourist accommodation</li> <li>- ensure Area Plan policies promote office development in main streets</li> </ul>

Keady Glen is a drinking area and dumping ground. Lack of lighting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- realign river to create usable open space</li> <li>- improve access into the Glen from Kinelowen Street and Bridge Street</li> <li>- create legible pedestrian and cycle network through the Glen connecting town centre with housing areas</li> <li>- provide clear signage at all entrances to the Glen</li> </ul>
Facilities for youth in the town in general, are very poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop open space uses within a redeveloped Keady Glen</li> <li>- consider the development of youth facilities in an expanded Old Mill building or on the site of the Community Centre</li> </ul>
Dual use scheme is not considered to be accessible to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council should consider working in partnership with the school to further develop additional facilities on the school site or on other sites in the town</li> </ul>
Lack of signage, bins etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implement an EI scheme for the main streets</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Matching Strengths with Opportunities

Strengths	Opportunities
Main route to Dublin and mid-lands from Armagh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of tourism industry based on fishing in Clay Lakes</li> <li>- Development of niche shopping market</li> <li>- Increase restrictions on on-street parking and provide more off-street parking</li> <li>- Development of employment opportunities associated with servicing users of this route</li> </ul>
Good nightlife – new pub / club / restaurant being built near Cow Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve parking and appearance of Cow Fair and open up space between Cow Fair and Market Street for civic space</li> </ul>
Keady Glen – open space in the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop for recreation use and connect to housing areas</li> </ul>
High School allows its facilities to be used as leisure centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further develop more leisure uses on the school site for community use</li> </ul>
Good community facilities based on the Old Mill and Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very good civic/ events space potential at the lower end of Market Street, Bridge Street and the Cow Fair</li> <li>- Scope for bus shelter outside the Old Mill Centre.</li> </ul>

## **4.0 THE WAY FORWARD**

### **4.1 Key Themes**

The following key themes have emerged from the public consultations, the SWOT and general observations by Ferguson McIlveen LLP. They form the basis for the Action Plan under Section 6.

#### ***a. Traffic and Parking***

While being on a main route could be an advantage to Keady, the large number of vehicles, especially lorries, cause congestion on the main streets and detract from the quality of the environment. The congestion on the main streets is exacerbated by cars parked on both sides of the narrow streets. There is a lack of parking restrictions on the main streets and a lack of accessible car parking offering an attractive alternative. Madden Row is often used as an alternative route to Kineloven Street by local people. It is widely agreed that this should be developed further as an informal bypass. However, local residents on Madden Row are concerned about traffic speeds and it is suggested that it should be one way going out of town and should include traffic calming. The Bridge Street junction with Kineloven Street and Davis Street is a cause of considerable

congestion. Action needs to be taken to reduce the congestion and improve traffic flow in all directions.

#### ***b. Creating Recreation Facilities***

There is a lack of recreational facilities in Keady, both open space and indoor recreation. St Patrick's High School operates a dual use scheme whereby the school uses the facilities during the day and is open to the public in the evenings. This clearly has limitations and local people state that the facilities are not accessible to all. The need therefore exists to either develop leisure facilities for the town or work with the school to expand their facilities. There is scope within a redeveloped Keady Glen to create outdoor recreation facilities such as a sports pitch.

#### ***c. Improving Environmental Quality***

The basic fabric and layout of central Keady is considered to be relatively good quality. However, the appearance of the streetscape and the buildings is poor and would benefit from environmental improvement and building frontage improvement. Kineloven Street from its junction with Glen Road to Davis Street should be considered for considerable improvement. This should also include the space in front of

the Old Mill Building, which is not being used to its full potential at present and could accommodate a new bus stop and shelter. Buildings on the main street would benefit from a shop front improvement scheme. The production of design guides and the use of policy designations such as Areas of Townscape Character should be employed to retain the character of the streetscape. Realignment of various junctions, as mentioned in the Traffic and Parking section above, could provide the opportunity for civic space provision. Underused or less accessible areas, such as the Cow Fair and the Community Centre, should be considered for redevelopment with better physical and visual connection to the main street.

#### **d. Realising Key Assets**

The cross-border location and the local fishing lakes (eg. Clay Lake) provide small-scale tourism opportunities for Keady. There is a significant need for tourist accommodation. Keady Glen is probably the main asset within the town centre but, due to its backland nature, it is not well used. Section (b) above on Recreation refers to the redevelopment of the Glen for recreation use. The Area Plan should protect the Glen for its natural and recreational

value and the existing paths should be developed further for walking and cycling to provide connections to nearby housing and beyond.

#### **e. Improving the Service Centre Role**

Keady is the second largest town in the Armagh District. Despite its size and local importance, the town centre lacks retailing and office uses. Any such developments in the future should be concentrated within the central area of the town. Development of retailing outside the town centre can often dilute commercial activity within. A well-defined town centre boundary should be considered to contain retail and office development within the central area, and discourage such uses outside. Competition from cross-border and nearby large towns, mean that Keady needs to focus on a niche market for retail. Small business/ enterprise units should be considered for the town and financial inducements considered to attract retailers and other commercial.

## 4.2 Vision

In many ways the Vision for Keady is a simple one. It does not envisage significant change from being a small market town, but seeks to create a settlement that builds on its current assets, in order to become a successful tourist base and service centre for South Armagh. Having considered the views of the community groups, business people and the general public, it is considered that the future development of Keady through to 2018 should be driven by the following Vision.

*By 2018 Keady is a vibrant market and tourist centre. Taking advantage of being on the main Armagh to Dublin route, the town has benefited from significant physical improvement and has a good range of shops and a number of tourist accommodations. Traffic congestion and parking problems have been dealt with by improved parking facilities and alternative traffic routes. At the heart of Keady, the vastly improved Keady Glen and the civic space around Keady Mill now function as the social and recreation centres for the town.*

## 4.3 Strategy

The strategy to be adopted to achieve this vision should be considered as a sequential series of projects. The suggestions in the Themes above together with proposals of Section 5 and the Action Plan of Section 6, when added together, should result in an improved town centre for Keady. In summary, those steps should firstly consider immediate cosmetic improvements. Physical improvements to parking and traffic should then follow. Finally developing better connections from the town centre to the wider area, including the better use of the Glen. What follows should be the redevelopment of the opportunity sites and the creation of new retail and office development in the central area.

Environmental improvement of the main streets, especially Kineloven Street, is the first priority along with shop front improvements. Such improvements should include paving, street furniture, parking bays, undergrounding of overhead cables, painting of buildings and improvement to window displays to eliminate derelict appearance. Such improvements automatically increase confidence in the area and often in themselves can attract investment to the town.

As suggested above, the EI scheme should also deal with on street parking and signage. Alternative parking off-street should be investigated in tandem with this. The proposals in section 5 show possible areas of additional parking, but this should be investigated further in a specific study, which will take into consideration landowner and local resident viewpoints. Any changes to parking arrangements should also include the introduction of parking enforcement. Improvements to the parking situation and therefore traffic flow through the town needs to be tackled from both sides - firstly reducing the choice on the street, coupled with enforcement, while at the same time offering attractive alternatives for parking. Junction improvements, and in particular the installation of traffic lights, are the next steps in improving traffic flow and improving the quality of the environment in the town centre. Detailed consideration should be given to the realignment of Bridge Street, and it is recommended that a traffic impact assessment be undertaken to consider the benefits or otherwise of various different arrangements. One of the options for Bridge Street realignment includes the removal of the Library building and its relocation within the Old Mill Building. This has the double advantage of allowing space for the road while opening up the space and consolidating similar community uses in one building.

The improvements to the quality of the environment and the appearance of the street and the buildings should by this stage in the process be attracting investment in terms of new retail and office uses. This ongoing redevelopment should be the impetus to improve the appearance of the Cow Fair and the Community Centre Building to create a quality public events space. Improvements to the main streets should also be coupled with the development of Keady Glen. It is vital that the town centre is accessible to those living around it and outside the town. Improved connections into and through the Glen should be implemented, along with the realignment of the river and the creation of an open space/ sports pitch.

The overall aim of all this work should be to bring life and a quality environment to the Glen, control traffic in the main streets and thereby improve their quality, ultimately attracting new investment to the town in the form of retail, offices and tourism development. The result will be an attractive vibrant town, which is pedestrian friendly, with good civic space, good parking facilities, well controlled traffic and a quality green space connecting the town with the wider area.

## 5.0 OPPORTUNITY SITES/ PROPOSALS

### 5.1 Opportunity Sites

For the purposes of this study, opportunity sites should be considered as follows:

*Under-utilised sites or those which contain uses, that 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.*

Figure 1 indicates a number of opportunity sites for the central area of Keady. The red line represents a suggested town centre boundary. This boundary has been defined on the basis of the existing concentration of retail and other commercial uses. Whilst some retail uses may exist outside this boundary, its designation is important in order to focus future retail and office development within the main streets, in the traditional commercial heart of the town. The designation of a tightly defined town centre boundary has the effect of improving the vibrancy and vitality of commercial centres and can help in reducing vacancies and dereliction.

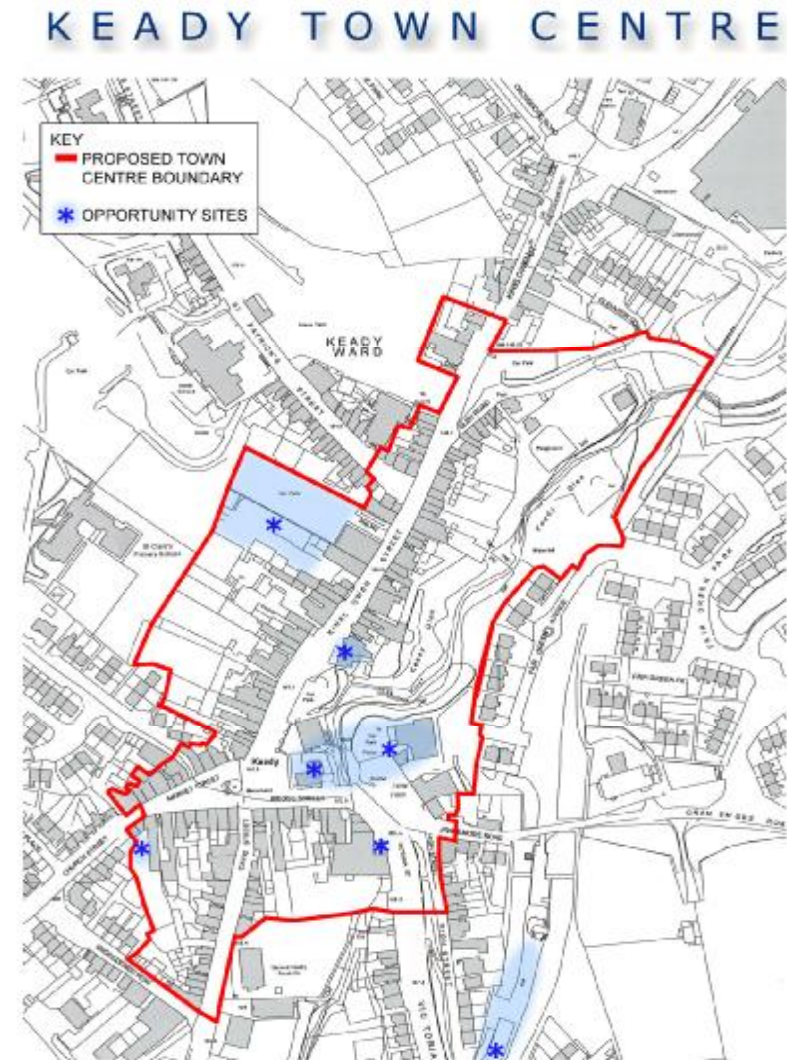


Figure 1 – Opportunity Sites & Proposed Town Centre Boundary

**a. Library Building**

The original function of this area has been lost over time. The library building should be removed to open up the space. The Library function could be incorporated into the Mill building. Realignment of the junctions would provide the opportunity for civic space creation, which could be in conjunction with the Cow Fair/Community Centre.

**b. Community Centre Site and Cow Fair**

This is an area of land situated at a significant place at the centre of the village. It has a derelict appearance and would benefit greatly from an environmental improvement scheme and proper car park layout, or use as civic space linked to the Library. The community centre building and public toilets should be redeveloped in a contemporary style, especially given the imminent completion of the Caledonian Bar. At the moment it would be seen as a significant visual detraction from the new development.

**c. Open Space to Rear of High Street Housing**

This is a very poor space visually, and has a vacant appearance. The removal of the concrete square in the middle would open the space up, and a new path could be put in its place. It presents the opportunity to provide a pedestrian link to the Glen from this side of the town. Creation of a high quality space may discourage the littering and anti-social behaviour in this area. There would need to be improved access to the area to indicate its use as an important public link.

**d. Garage and Filling Station on Corner Site at Victoria Street**

This is a key corner site on this main road, which should provide a focal point for the town. The current garage on this site is out of scale with buildings either side, and is not a good place for vehicles to stop and fill up. A building of suitable scale and frontage to provide a stronger corner should be considered here.

**e. Vacant site on Church Road Opposite GAA Club**

This vacant piece of land is visually unpleasant and used for dumping. It is considered as an opportunity site as it marks the boundary between the residential area and the town centre. A building here should aim to fill the gap, which exists and thereby help the natural building flow into the town.

**f. Old Hall and Adjoining Building on Kinelowen St.**

These two large and derelict buildings are a visually weakness in this part of the town. This should be considered as a key opportunity site. There is an opportunity for a landmark building here, which could complement the Old Mill and help create an impressive gateway into the Glen, and into the core of the town. Its development should ultimately be seen as a way of drawing people to the Glen area, and should aim to provide an attractive frontage from every side. This is important in order to provide good views to and from the Glen.

**g. Land Adjoining the Main Car Park at Kinelowen Street**

The buildings and yard along this car park are derelict and could be redeveloped as office or retail use. The back wall of the car park cuts off a large area of open space adjacent to the school. There is a development opportunity here, and also potential to create a pedestrian link through this land towards the direction of St. Patrick's Street. The existing car park could be used to service any new development, as it appears to be underused on weekdays. In its current form, this car park should be better promoted as a main car park, in order to alleviate some of the on street parking on this section of Kinelowen Street.

## 5.2 Proposals

### a. Improving Junctions and Creating Civic Space

The main focal point in the town is found around the junction of Bridge Street/ Kinelowen Street and the Cow Fair. This is the location where all the main routes into and through the town meet, and due to the traffic volumes combined with the narrowness of the streets, suffers from significant traffic congestion. It is also the focus for most pedestrian activity, an element which should be capitalised upon rather than lost with any redevelopment of the town. It is also the historic centre of the town and would have been the location for markets. It is now the location for the Kirk Monument, the Library, Community Centre and Old Mill Building.

The following sketch (Figure 2) shows an option for the redevelopment of this area. The aim of the proposal is to improve traffic flow and car parking provision, while at the same time increase the provision of civic and events space. During the consultation stage two options were considered. The two options varied in the degree of change that would occur, with this option involving the most radical change, but ultimately resulting in more benefits in terms of traffic management, access to the Glen and civic space provision.

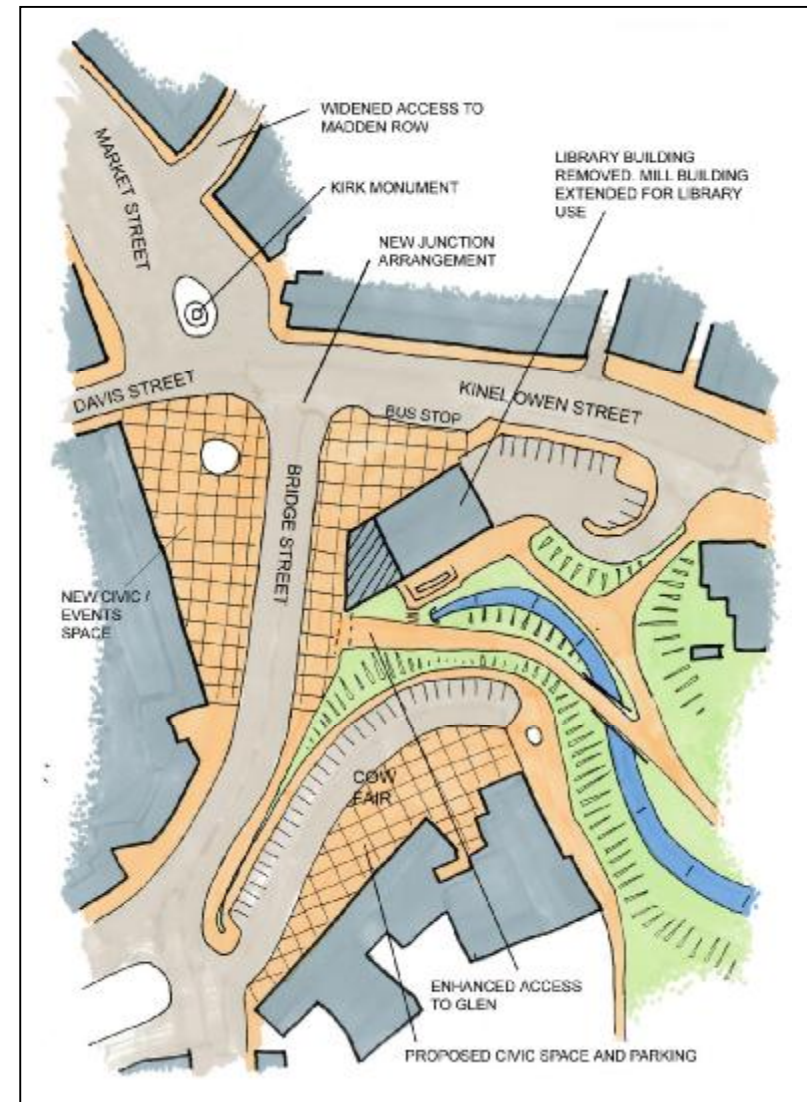


Figure 2 – Bridge St./Kinelowen St. Junction Realignment

The most significant difference is the removal of the Library building to allow for the realignment of Bridge Street. The aim is to move the Bridge Street junction further away from Davis Street thereby allowing improved traffic flow. It should be noted that this suggested layout should include the installation of traffic lights at the Bridge Street junction.

The Library function is considered to be very important and this proposal does not suggest its complete removal. Rather, it is suggested that it be included within a redeveloped Old Mill Building, so as to consolidate all such public uses in one place.

The other significant advantage of this option is the improved access to Keady Glen from Bridge Street. Realignment of the road will allow for the creation of a prominent, more open, access point. It also provides the opportunity to create a large area of civic space on the southern side of Bridge Street.

#### **b. Keady Glen**

The rationale behind the suggested improvements to the Glen is to increase its usage and make it more attractive. If the Glen was a main route for pedestrians and cyclists to and from the town centre, and was one of the main areas for outdoor sport and recreation, its use would increase, and the anti-social behaviour would reduce.

Figure 3 shows the suggested proposals for the Glen. The sketch is drawn to incorporate the option for the Bridge Street junction.

Ideally building frontage onto the Glen is required, which would provide surveillance of the Glen and bring life to the space. However, as this is not possible due to available space and level differences, enhanced planting is suggested to soften the edge.

The realignment of the Clay River would increase the useable space within the Glen, allow for an improved path network, and improve the riverside environment. Most importantly it provides the scope to create an open space/ sports area at the northern end of the Glen. This is combined with a new play area and sports/ community building and car parking. The paths are

shown to connect with the railway viaduct and the housing to the east of the Glen.

Signage is essential at every possible access to the Glen, both in the town and outside, to encourage its use by pedestrians and cyclists. The access points therefore need to be improved and these are shown in the sketch at Kinelowen Street, Glen Road and Bridge Street, as well as the ones from the housing at Fair Green and the viaduct. These need to be open and legible, whereas the existing access points create an enclosed and uninviting entrance to the Glen. As part of the aim to remove cars from the main streets, improved parking facilities are shown at Glen Road; again it is vital that this is combined with very clear signage.

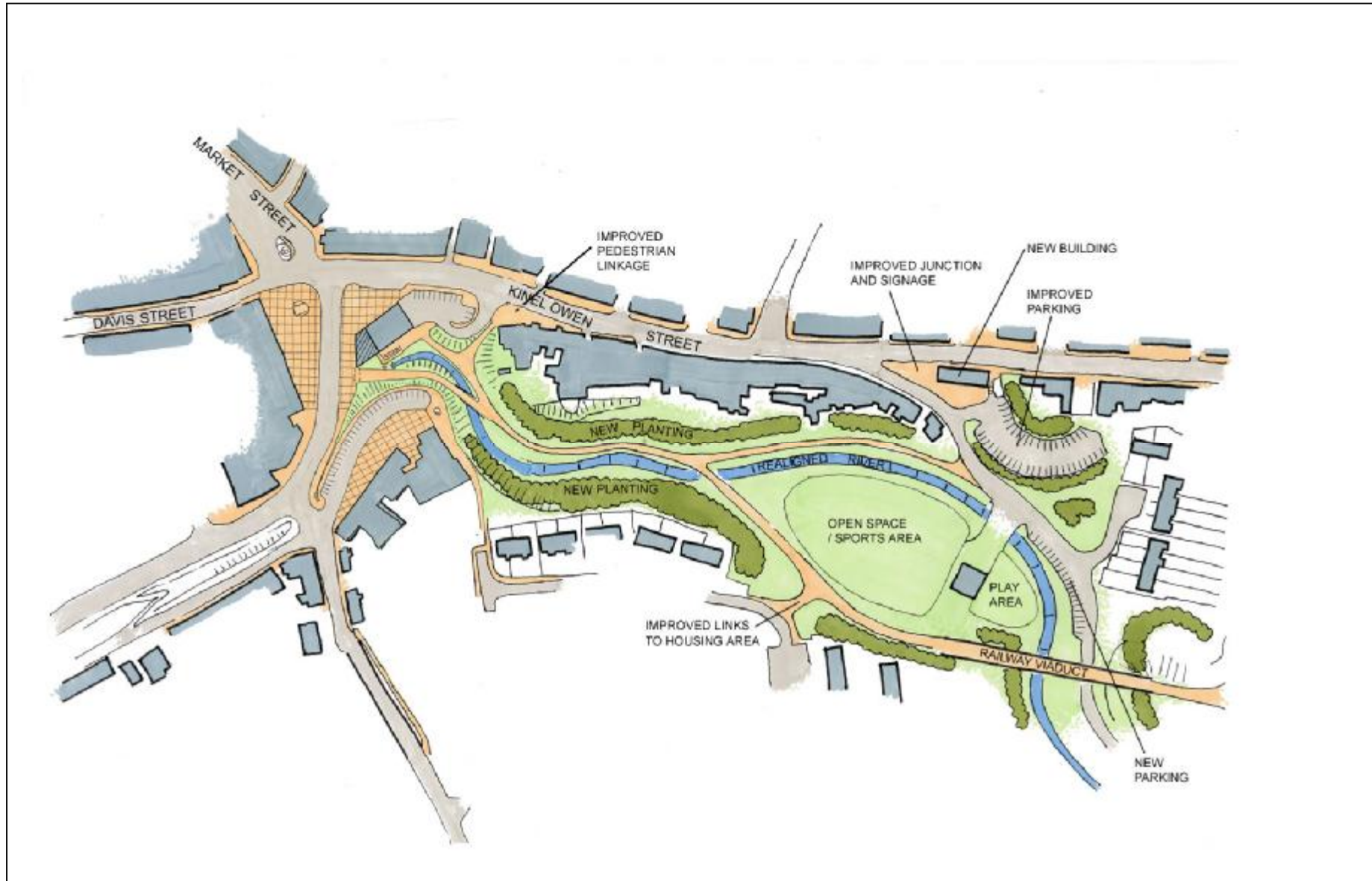


Figure 3 – Keady Glen Improvements

## 6.0 Keady Action Plan

### a. Traffic and Parking - congestion is a major issue; bypass; off-street parking; traffic calming, footpaths and street lighting

Projects/ Actions	Possible Funding Sources	Delivered By	Priority
- Introduce time restrictions to reduce on street parking on Kinelowen Street and ensure a commitment to enforcement	DRD	DRD/PSNI	1
- Develop more off street parking opportunities by redevelopment of Cow Fair car park and at Glen Road	Private/ACDC/ DRD	DRD/ACDC/ Private	1
- Install signage directing to off street parking	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	1
- Explore the possibility of making Madden Row one way going up the hill and include traffic calming by road narrowing	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	3
- Improve traffic flow from Davis Street to Madden Row by realignment of junction with Market Street and widening of Madden Row/ Market Street junction	DRD	DRD/ACDC	2
- Explore the possibility of realigning Bridge Street to improve its junction with Kinel Owen Street and introduce traffic lights	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	2
- Explore the possibility of widening Kinel Owen Street near the Patricks Street junction to facilitate better traffic flow	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	3
- Explore the possibility of developing the existing road network to the west of the town (Lagan Road) for a bypass.	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	3

**b. Creating Recreation Facilities** - no swimming pool/cinema; poor open space; no facilities for youth

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Explore the possibility of extending the dual use scheme – partnership between school and Council	School/ACDC/Sports Council Lottery	School/ACDC	2
- Develop open space/ football field and play area as part of the Keady Glen redevelopment	School/ACDC/Sports Council Lottery	School/ACDC	2
- Develop long distance walking routes in conjunction with Keady Glen redevelopment	ACDC	ACDC	2
- Explore the possibility of developing a golf course in the vicinity of Tassagh/ Glen Roads	ACDC/Private	ACDC/Private	3

**c. Improving Environmental Quality** - derelict buildings; EI Scheme; signage, bins, bus shelter

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Consider the relocation of the library building and redevelopment within an extended Old Mill complex to facilitate realignment of Bridge Street.	DSD/Private/ ACDC/DRD	DoE/Private/ ACDC/DRD	2
- Commission Environmental Improvement works to the front of the Old Mill Building with an aim to create a more level usable space. Works should include a proper bus halt and shelter	DSD/ACDC	DSD/ACDC/ Translink	2
- Promote the redevelopment of the Community Centre building for a new library building or commercial/ entertainment use.to include the redevelopment of the car park at the Cow Fair into a more efficient layout with civic/ events space.	DRD/DSD/ ACDC	ACDC	2
- Ensure that any redevelopment of the Community Centre includes the redevelopment of the car park at the Cow Fair into a more efficient layout with civic/ events space.	DRD/Private/ DSD	Private/DRD/ ACDC	2
- Ensure that pedestrian links to Fair Green Avenue is improved during any redevelopment of the Community Centre.	DRD/Private/ DSD	Private/DRD/ ACDC	2
- Ensure that the Area Plan includes policies to regulate the design quality of buildings so that they make a positive contribution to the town centre	-	DoE	1

- Establish a painting scheme and shop front improvement scheme for the main streets and provide grants for owners to encourage enhancement of shop fronts paint buildings	DSD/IFI	DSD/ACDC	I
- Improve the façade appearance of vacant buildings	ACDC/EU Funding	Private	I
- Consider an EI scheme for Kinelowen Street, Bridge Street, lower Market Street and Davis Street within proposed town centre boundary – street enhancement, traffic management, parking signage and bins.	DSD/ACDC	DSD/ACDC	I

**d. Realising Key Assets** – angling; tourist accommodation (Hotel/ hostel); gateway with the ROI. Keady Glen (drinking area; dumping ground; lack of lighting).

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Promote the area for angling trips – Clay Lakes	ACDC/NITB/ Angling Club	ACDC/Private/ Angling Club	2
- Explore the possibility of realignment of the Clay River through the Glen to facilitate the development of a large useable open space area at the northern end adjacent to Glen Road.	DSD/ACDC/ Rivers Agency	DSD/Rivers Agency/ACDC	1
- Develop a legible pedestrian and cycle path network through the Glen with clear accesses from Kinelowen Street and Bridge Street into the Glen with connections onto the railway viaduct and into the housing area at Fair Green Avenue.	DRD/Sustrans/ ACDC	ACDC	2
- Provide signage at Bridge Street and Kinelowen Street access points indicating access to housing areas, open space/ play area and railway viaduct via the Glen.	DRD/ACDC	DRD/ACDC	2

- e. Improving the Service Centre Role** –need for the role of retailing and offices to be strengthened in the town centre; competition from Newry and cross border.

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Define a town centre boundary to contain and strengthen the role of retailing within the main streets	-	DoE	1
- Identify a niche market for Keady and promote	ACDC/EU Funding	Private/ACDC/ CoC	2
- Consider financial inducements such as reduced rates to attract retailers to the town	ACDC	ACDC	2
- Ensure that planning policies do not restrict the physical development of retailing units in the main streets (e.g. unit size)	-	ACDC/DoE	1
- Consider the development of small business units/ enterprise centre	Keady Business Centre/EU	Keady Business Centre/INI/ ACDC	2
- Explore the feasibility of developing tourist accommodation (hotel/ hostel) within the town	NITB/ACDC	Private	1

## APPENDICES

### I. Councillor/ Community Group Walkabout

A walkabout and meeting was held with local Councillors and Community Representatives on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2005. The main points raised were as follows:

- Madden Road to be widened
- Congestion is a major issue
- Main route to Dublin and mid-lands from Belfast
- Ring Road originally planned from north of town towards High School on St. Patrick Street
- Room on street for parking restrictions on one side
- Congestion from Glen Road into town
- Bridge Street / Kinelowen junction causes tailbacks along Victoria Street – traffic lights needed.
- No time restrictions – businesses would want a 1-hour in every 2 hours waiting time to allow greater turnover of people.
- Competes a lot with Newry and cross border
- A lot of food shops, but very few clothes shops
- No employment – factory closed recently
- No public sector employment
- Nightlife – new pub / club / restaurant being built near Cow Fair
- Walkway (back of town) – Keady Glen – drinking area
- Youth Club – but nothing for 14-15+
- High School allows its facilities to be used as leisure centre – no leisure centre / swimming in the town. The dual use scheme is being extended to include astro-turf pitch. School uses it during the day and open to public at night.
- Facilities for youth in the town, in general, are very poor. Dual use scheme is not considered to be accessible to all.
- Lack of signage, bins etc
- Clay River (Glen) is a dumping ground. Lack of lighting. Council to fund new railings.
- Derelict buildings – make owners maintain buildings. They have to pay rates now on derelict buildings.
- Lighting on Keady Glen – who would pay for it?
- Big angling area – 8-10 lakes nearby
- No tourist accommodation and only a small amount of eats. One B&B in area
- Library is reducing hours
- No bus shelter – should be outside the Old Mill Centre.
- Skateboard parks – required.

## 2. Student Photographic Exercise

### Positive Issues

- Environmental improvements and landscaping schemes along the roadside at Victoria Street and High Street are considered to be visually pleasing. New planting leading to, and along, the River Walk is also cited as a good example. There is a need for more of these improvements.
- There are some good facilities for children and young people, including Keady Park; the Gaelic Grounds; community centre and development of the 'Caledonian' club.
- Some important streetscape features in the town. The town monument was noted as an important focal point. The waterfall at the Old Mill provides a pleasant setting in the area and the mural outside the Mill building is noted as a good example of streetscape design.



## Negative Issues

- There is a clear problem of dereliction throughout the town. Some key sites mentioned include the old Warner's factory site; old store on Keady Road; and houses at the bottom of Madden Road.
- Littering and dumping was noted as a problem, particularly along the River Walk and alleyways. There is also a problem of broken glass on the playing fields at Madden Road.
- There is a need for renovation and amelioration of some of the buildings, including the library, town monument and numerous shops. The old snooker club should be converted to youth facilities. Fencing along the River walk needs to be repaired, and the park at Matthews Estate is in poor condition and needs to be reclaimed.
- Congestion is seen as another problem, which is exacerbated by double parking and narrow streets. Davis Street is cited as an example.



### **3. Public Exhibition Questionnaire Responses**

The Public Exhibition of initial ideas was held between 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005, including an open evening on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005 when the consultants were on hand to discuss the ideas. Following this the sketches were also displayed on the Council web site and later extended to the end of August.

No questionnaire responses were received during the consultation period. However, notes were taken of public opinion by the consultant during the public display, as follows:

- Madden Row should be made one way going out of town and should include traffic calming
- Agree with the realignment of Bridge Street but should include pedestrianisation of opposite side of Market St. to that shown in Option 2 sketch
- Traffic lights should be considered at the Bridge Street junction
- Traffic warden or similar needed
- Library function in town should be retained – perhaps in the community centre or Old Mill building
- Community Centre should be sold