

## **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 and the EU Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme, Measure 4 'Local Economic Development,' to carry out a town centre development study in Tandragee. The study coincides with the preparation of the Armagh Area Plan 2018, for which DOE Planning Service is carrying out town and city centre studies, which will specifically consider retail provision and the general health of town centres.

The brief sought:

- to support and enhance DOE Planning Service work in connection with City and Town Centre Studies
- to identify and formulate a vision for the centre of Tandragee
- 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 Tandragee**

Located on the main Portadown to Newry (A27) Road around 9 miles east of Armagh, Tandragee sits on the banks of the Cushier River. The town is dominated by a baronial style Castle, built in 1837 by the sixth Duke of Manchester, which now houses the Tayto Crisp Factory.

The town has seen a 75% population increase since 1971, which now stands at approximately 3500. The broad and diverse range of industry provides a significant number of jobs for the towns inhabitants, however, there are also a large number of people who commute to other towns for employment, making Tandragee a mainly dormitory town.

### **1.3 Policy Context**

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

Although Tandragee is not specifically mentioned in this document, there are a number of strategies, which will have an effect on the town. The strategy, 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**

When this plan was published it noted a town population of around 2650 people. The plan anticipated a growth to around 3500 over the plan period. It recognised that the town had a fairly diversified industrial base, which provided the local population with a number of employment opportunities in such fields as potato processing, textile manufacture and flour milling.

Around 30 hectares of land was zoned for housing to meet the predicted growth. It was noted that there was a shortfall in the provision of open space in Tandragee. A proposal at the time by Armagh District Council for a town park on

Madden Road was expected to be more than sufficient in addressing this shortfall.

It was felt that there was little pressure or necessity to extend office and retail uses in the commercial core of the town, and so no plans were made to this effect. It was noted that any future retail expansion should be contained within the existing frontages. Sites at Cornmarket Street and Market Street were marked as offering potential redevelopment sites, and it was suggested that the Square would benefit from environmental upgrading. Congestion was noted as a problem at certain times of the day and this was to be monitored to assess the need for further parking and traffic management requirements.

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

The plan highlights the 2001 census figure as being 3018; this is a 75% increase from the 1971 figure. The number of dwellings has almost doubled over that same period. Of the 29 hectares proposed for housing, only 12 has been developed, the remaining 17 will be reassessed to see their potential for development. A large portion of the sites allocated for industry has been granted permission for

housing. The paper continues to recognise the importance of industry to the town and so the remaining sites will be reassessed.

#### **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 Tandragee 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 Tandragee 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 possible funding sources are identified.

The recommendations within this study are intended to generate debate and to 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 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, consultation was held with the following.

- 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 Tandragee Junior High School were supplied with disposable cameras and asked to photograph positive and negative elements of the urban area within Tandragee and document their opinions.
- c. Public Exhibition and Questionnaires – draft ideas showing a number of potential projects in Tandragee were displayed in Tandragee Library from 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005. Questionnaires were supplied seeking opinions on the contents of the display. Questionnaires and the draft ideas were also sent to local businesses for their views.

- d. Drop-in Session – a Ferguson McIlveen representative was available on at the Library on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2005 between 5pm and 8pm to meet with local people and discuss the draft proposals.

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**

Being on the main Portadown to Newry route, Tandragee has developed in a linear fashion. The Castle occupies a site on the highest part of the town and the main streets have developed as a sort of avenue to this castle. The importance of the site has been reinforced over time with the development of the Tayto factory, which is a main employer in the area. The town centre is elongated, and occupies the buildings and the back yards of uses along Church Street, the Square, Market Street and Mill Street. Beyond this very natural boundary the rest of Tandragee is residential.

The quality of the streetscape varies all along these streets, but is generally of a higher standard on Church Street and the Square, than on lower Market Street and Mill Street. In addition, there have been fewer changes of uses on the Square and Church Street over the years and the original character has therefore been retained. The scale of buildings on Market Street is good and the street is wide providing scope for development of larger scale buildings. Mill Street has a mix of styles, including low quality 1960s style blocks, which contribute little to the streetscape.

The town centre appears to have two main focal points. The first is the area at the top of the hill around the Square and Church Street. The main attraction here is obviously the Tayto Factory and the Castle. As a result there is a concentration of shops and commercial uses in this area. The second focal point is at the bottom of the hill centred on the Library and the car parking opposite. This focal point will be reinforced soon by the imminent development of town houses on the current derelict site.

It is noted that there is a significant amount of underuse of land and buildings in the town central area, with a number of derelict sites, vacant buildings and inefficiently used backland sites. It is also noted that while the castle is at the top of the hill, it does not occupy as visually dominant a position over the town as it ought.

### 3.2 SWOT

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

#### a. Strengths

- Plenty of community facilities available
- Tayto factory provides an attraction
- Location on the main Portadown/Newry road
- Refurbishment of some buildings is required
- On street parking is sufficient

#### b. Weaknesses

- Problem of a number of vacant buildings and derelict sites
- There is a general lack of off street parking
- Need for better signage throughout the town
- Traffic speed and congestion is a major problem
- Through traffic is excessive and dangerous
- There is no central focus to the town or linkage of civic space
- People are not stopping but travelling straight through
- Rates are problem, which is preventing businesses from settling
- Local economy and investment is weak

- The absence of a Chamber of Commerce means traders are not always informed when funds are made available
- Footpath at lower end of town damaged by vehicles
- Need more attractions to create activity at evenings and weekends
- Lack of public open space
- Many retail frontages and building facades are of poor design
- Lack of parking for Tayto and bank employees

#### c. Opportunities

- Development of a bypass to relieve traffic travelling through the town
- Build on the attraction of the Tayto factory with better links into the town, create new link road along west of Market Street and Square to run from Sinton Park to the Castle
- The development of housing and retailing in the centre of the town to create a focus in the area
- Environmental improvement scheme extended to roundabout at Southern end
- Use of parking time restrictions to make on street parking more efficient

- Traffic measures such as double yellow lines at Mill Street to alleviate congestion that parking causes here
- Review of rates and creation of a Chamber of Commerce to allow more effective allocation of funds
- Improved retail frontages and residential facades to improve visual quality
- Refurbishment of municipal buildings to trigger the redevelopment of buildings opposite, including those at the Square and Cornmarket Street
- Reopening of public access at Preaching House Lane would improve accessibility in that area
- Improve employment base to reduce Tandragee's status as a dormitory town
- Creation of a dedicated bus stop at the public toilet block
- Ensuring retail uses are approved at Market Street

#### **d. Threats**

- Continues to develop as a dormitory town and fails to provide employment in the local area
- Lack of new attractions mean people continue to travel through the town without stopping

In summary it is clear that steps need to be taken in order to attract business back to the town and generate local employment. The Tayto factory currently provides the only real attraction to the town and more needs to be done to encourage people to stay, instead of merely passing through. Opportunities exist to create better linkages to the Castle and the Tayto factory. Implementation of environmental improvement schemes and encouragement to improve retail facades will help build the attractiveness of the town. The following tables show how the weaknesses may be addressed and how the current strengths may be used to the advantage of the town.

### 3.3 Converting Weaknesses to Strengths

WEAKNESSESS	ACTION
Large number of vacant and derelict sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of key sites and encouragement of redevelopment of these sites and buildings</li> <li>- Improve the appearance of properties initially through painting schemes</li> </ul>
Lack of on street car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of a key site for a car park with good links to the town centre and main retail areas</li> </ul>
Traffic speed and congestion in some areas such as Mill Street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application of parking restrictions such as double yellow lines and time restrictions to limit on street parking</li> <li>- Imposition of traffic calming measures and more pedestrian crossings</li> <li>- Dedicated parking, particularly for Tayto and other workers/all day parkers</li> </ul>
No central focus to the town or linkage between civic spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open up backland sites such as to the rear of Cornmarket Street for development</li> <li>- Create improved vehicular and pedestrian movement to these spaces</li> <li>- Create link from the town to Castle and factory</li> <li>- Increased retail provision on main streets, also use of upper floors for residential and offices will help create a more compact and vibrant centre</li> </ul>
Problem of perceived high rates which is deterring businesses from settling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider rates relief to attract initial investment</li> <li>- More robust information provided to traders to make them aware of available funding</li> <li>- Rezoning of sites specifically for industrial and commercial use</li> </ul>
Footpath at lower end of the town is damaged, other physical problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EI scheme currently in operation should be extended to roundabout at southern end of town to include this area</li> </ul>

Lack of attractions for evening and weekend activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of a fixed town centre boundary, where all retail and business uses should be concentrated, this should develop a core centre which is vibrant with improved vitality</li> <li>- Give positive consideration to entertainment, restaurant/café proposals</li> </ul>
Lack of public open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open up certain underused street frontage sites for pedestrian use</li> </ul>
Very few people stopping in the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of a dedicated bus stop at a key point within the town</li> <li>- Improved signage outside the town to draw attention to facilities on offer and to maximise potential from main Newry/Portadown route</li> </ul>
Poor quality of building design, frontages and facades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure Area Plan places emphasis on the design quality</li> <li>- Recognition of the character of the town and develop a design guide for new development</li> <li>- Refurbishment of municipal buildings to trigger the redevelopment of buildings opposite, including those at the Square and Cornmarket Street</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Matching Strengths with Opportunities

Strengths	Opportunities
Plenty of community facilities	- Ensure the continued provision of these services as a benefit to the community
Attraction of Tayto factory as a destination	- Enhance its tourism potential and improve linkages into main streets to ensure maximum benefit to the town
Location on main Portadown/Newry road	- Drawing visitors in from this route with improved signage
Refurbishment of some buildings has begun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to encourage the redevelopment of buildings, and ensure that there is a design procedure to follow to maintain the character of the area</li> <li>- Potential to set the standard for further new development and renovation</li> </ul>
Good availability of on street parking	- Use of time restrictions on parking to allow for greater availability and rotation of spaces

## **4.0 THE WAY FORWARD**

### **4.1 Key Themes**

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

#### ***a. Improving townscape quality***

Tandragee has benefited from an EI scheme recently, which should be considered as the first step in transforming the town centre. Some consultees suggested that this should be extended to the entrance to the town centre at Mill Street. The main goal of this theme is to maximise the use of all available land and buildings within the town centre, while retaining the traditional character. Strict policies on design should be included in the Area Plan and reinforced with design guides. There are a number of vacant and underused sites and buildings that should be redeveloped.

#### ***b. Traffic and Parking***

Like most small market towns, all day on-street parking is a problem. There are no restrictions in the town centre that would prevent shop and office workers from parking all day

on the main streets. Those visiting shops in the Square and on Market Street therefore have limited choice, and it has been argued do not stop in the town as a result of poor parking choice. On-street enforcement of all day parking should be combined with greater choice off-street. Being on a main route can be advantageous to a town but can also lead to significant traffic flow and thus dangerous and unattractive shopping streets. Traffic speed tends to be high in Tandragee, but significant traffic calming is not welcome.

#### ***c. Realising Visitor Potential***

The Tayto factory is already a visitor attraction in the town. The Castle plays a subservient role to the factory, yet could have the potential to act as a tourist facility in its own right. Better connections to the Castle are required from Market Street and a potential tourist use for the Castle should be explored.

#### ***d. Retaining a local service centre***

The town is regarded as a dormitory town, with a large residential population, and very few shops and offices in the main streets. The town has to capitalise on this residential population, and the existence of the Tayto Factory, and

create more opportunities for retail and office use in the town centre. Town centre housing is important for bringing activity to the main streets, but this is only going to happen in the evenings. Planning policies for the town should aim to concentrate future retail developments into the main streets. Reductions in rates and other financial inducements should also be considered in order to attract businesses to the town and importantly, make them stay.

#### **4.2 Vision**

The vision for Tandragee paints a picture of a town that is not just on the route to somewhere else, but is a destination in itself. The Castle and the surrounding demesne and golf course are not at present developed to their full potential. Dereliction needs to be eliminated and retail and office uses need to dominate the main streets and occupy existing underused sites.

*By 2018 Tandragee is realising the full benefit of its location on the Portadown/ Newry route. Commercial and residential development has brought life back to the centre and has combined with environmental improvements to create a quality townscape. The Castle is operating as a hotel/tourist facility and a new residential street connects it with Market Street and the rest of the central area. The town is rejuvenated as a service centre for the area and has a good mix of retail units and town centre housing.*

### 4.3 Strategy

Tandragee needs to attract people to live, work and shop in the centre of the town. The main obstacle to this is the derelict and underused appearance of many of the sites and buildings. Progress to achieving the vision is a series of steps. The first step should be to improve the general appearance of the town, followed by encouraging retail and office use back into buildings and sites on the main streets. Having established the town as a service centre, moves could then be made to develop the tourist potential of the town, capitalising on the current assets of the Castle, Demesne and golf course and Tayto Factory.

Some environmental improvement has already taken place from Church Street to the junction of Market Street with Madden Road. The next priority should be to extend this scheme to include the lower part of Market Street and Mill Street, from the Madden Road junction to the junction with Scarva Road. This is the most run down part of the street and while the rest of the town centre will benefit from the EI scheme, this part is in the direst need of improvement. The improvements currently being carried out need to consider signage, enforceable parking, off-street parking alternatives

and new lighting. Following on from this should be provision of grants to property owners to paint building frontages and incentives to maintain quality window displays, in order to eliminate derelict appearance. Design guides and measures in the Area Plan should be put in place that would prevent poor quality design, and steer developers towards a certain standard of design for the town centre. The aim of this stage of the process is that through the input of public funds, building and site owners will be encouraged to improve their property and in turn the image of the entire street will be improved. It is a team effort involving public and private funding and should be considered as an on-going project that needs to be maintained on an annual basis, rather than a one off which lapses after a period of time. In the long run, such improvements automatically increase confidence in the area and can attract investment to the town.

As suggested above, the EI scheme should also deal with on street parking and signage. Alternative off-street parking should be investigated in tandem with this. Some of the opportunity sites described in more detail in Chapter 5 could include off-street parking. This should be investigated further in a specific study, which will take into consideration

land owner and local resident view points. Any changes to parking arrangements should also include the introduction of parking enforcement. Improvements to the parking situation need to be tackled from both sides, firstly reducing the choice on the street and increasing vehicle turnover, coupled with enforcement, while at the same time offering attractive alternatives for parking off-street.

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 into the town. The housing development proposed for the existing derelict site in the centre of town should now have been constructed and will be bringing life into the centre of town. Other forms of investment need to be facilitated in some way, both through positive planning policies that actually state that certain uses will be encouraged by Planning Service, and also by financial inducements, perhaps through reduced rates. These should be considered as methods of “pump-priming” potential investment so as to encourage the development of retail and office uses. Of particular importance for any service centre town is a supermarket and there is sufficient land in the centre of Tandragee for such a use. This is an

example of the sort of use that could be positively encouraged through active Area Plan policies.

The last piece in the jigsaw will be to attract visitors to the town. The Castle has been highlighted as a key asset and there has been interest in using it as a tourist facility in the past. An improved link to the Castle, making it the dominant building in the town is the first step. The proposals in Chapter 5 suggest one option for improving the link to the Castle that will bring it into the fabric of the town. Clearly this sort of physical improvements should be coupled with significant marketing of the product on offer.

## 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 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.*

Figure 1 indicates a number of opportunity sites for the central area of Tandragee. 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. While 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.

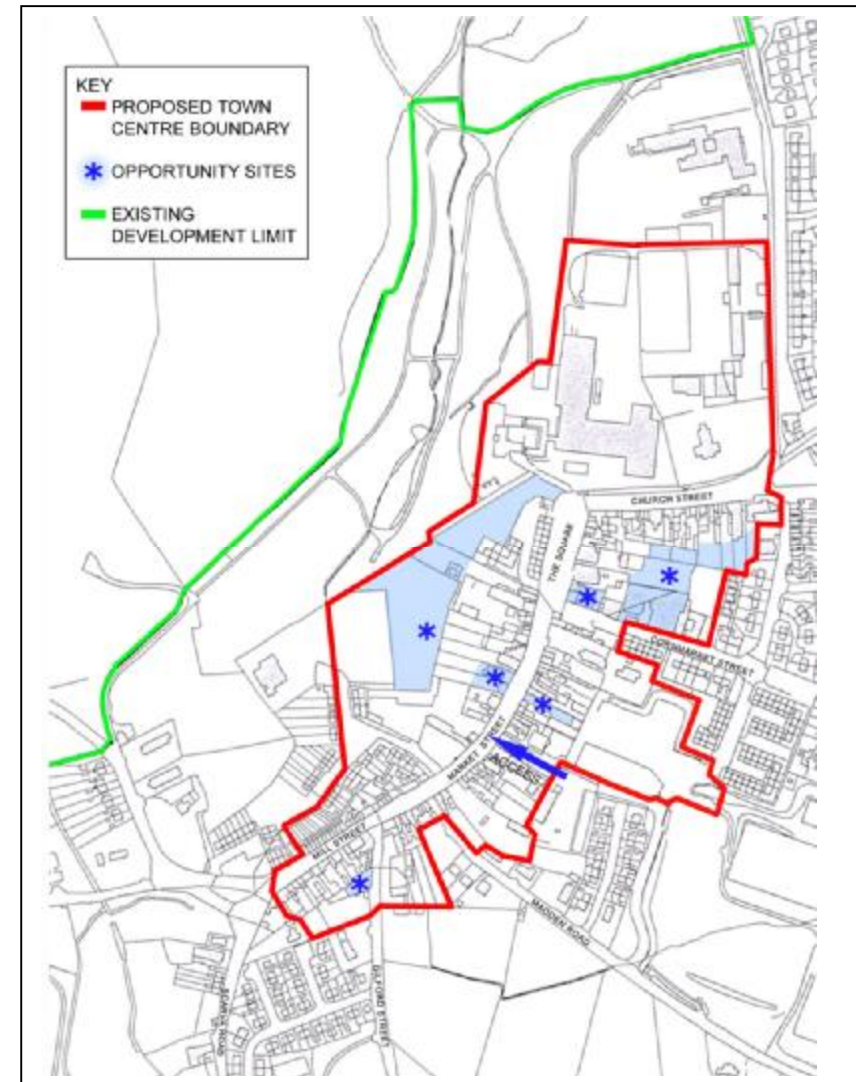


Figure 1 – Opportunity Sites and Town Centre Boundary

**a. Land to the west of Market Street**

Planning permission was granted in August 2005 for 31 No dwellings on the current derelict site to the rear of the Ulster Bank. This opportunity site could take advantage of the access road to be created for the housing. An extended road could link the lower part of Market Street with the Castle (a potential tourist facility) and residential development could line the route.

**b. Vacant site adjacent to Ulster Bank**

The planning application referred to above has made reference to the site immediately north of the Ulster Bank, stating that it would be subject of a future application. This site should be used for retail use with possible residential use on the upper floors. Parking should be provided to the rear as a courtyard car park

**c. Land behind buildings on Cornmarket St./ The Square/ Church St**

Buildings which front Church Street, The Square, Cornmarket Street and Montague Street all back onto a large unused space. If this space were to be opened up, it could be the location for a mix of commercial and residential

uses, parking and a new road link. More detail is provided on this site under the Proposal section.

**d. Corner of Cornmarket St and The Square**

Adjacent and connected to (c) above is a number of large, prominent buildings on the corner of The Square and Cornmarket Street. The scale of the buildings is ideal for the location and any redevelopment should aim to replicate this. The prominence of the site makes it suitable for a retail or entertainment (bar/ restaurant) use.

**e. GM Tyres, Market Street**

This is a large, inefficiently used site. While the business is appropriate for the location, if it were ever to become available it would be the ideal location for town centre car parking.

**f. Land at Gilford St.**

This is a backland site with partial frontage onto Gilford Street. Despite being within the proposed town centre boundary, its location is detached from the main commercial area and it may be more suitable for low cost housing.

## 5.2 Proposals

### a. New Residential Street

The recently approved housing proposal for the 31 No units shows a site road that has the potential for future expansion into the lands to the rear of existing properties on the western side of Market Street.

In line with the objective of attracting more visitors to the town and the suggestion that the Castle may have tourist potential, Figure 2 indicates the construction of a road to link the lower part of Market Street with the Castle and thus recreating the long avenue which once existed. It is important to create a long vista that will give prominence to the Castle. Either side of this road should be lined with housing.

Given the size of some of the plots on the western side of Market Street, efforts should be made to use some of this land for housing which would front the new road. It would also be important to retain and if possible improve access to the recreation land to the west.

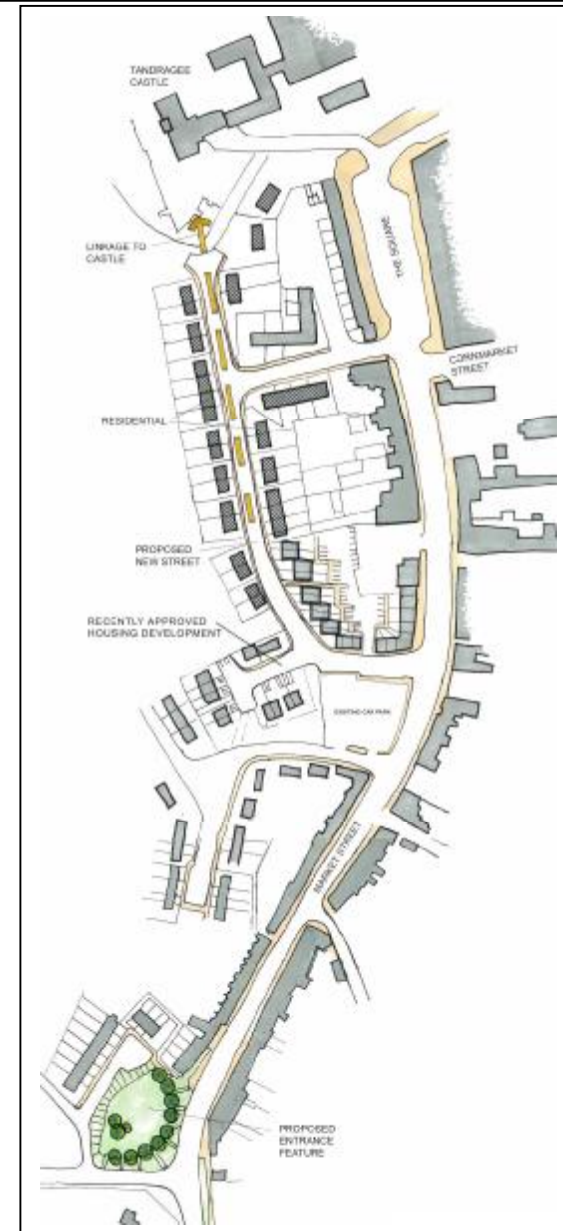


Figure 2 – New Housing and Proposed New Street

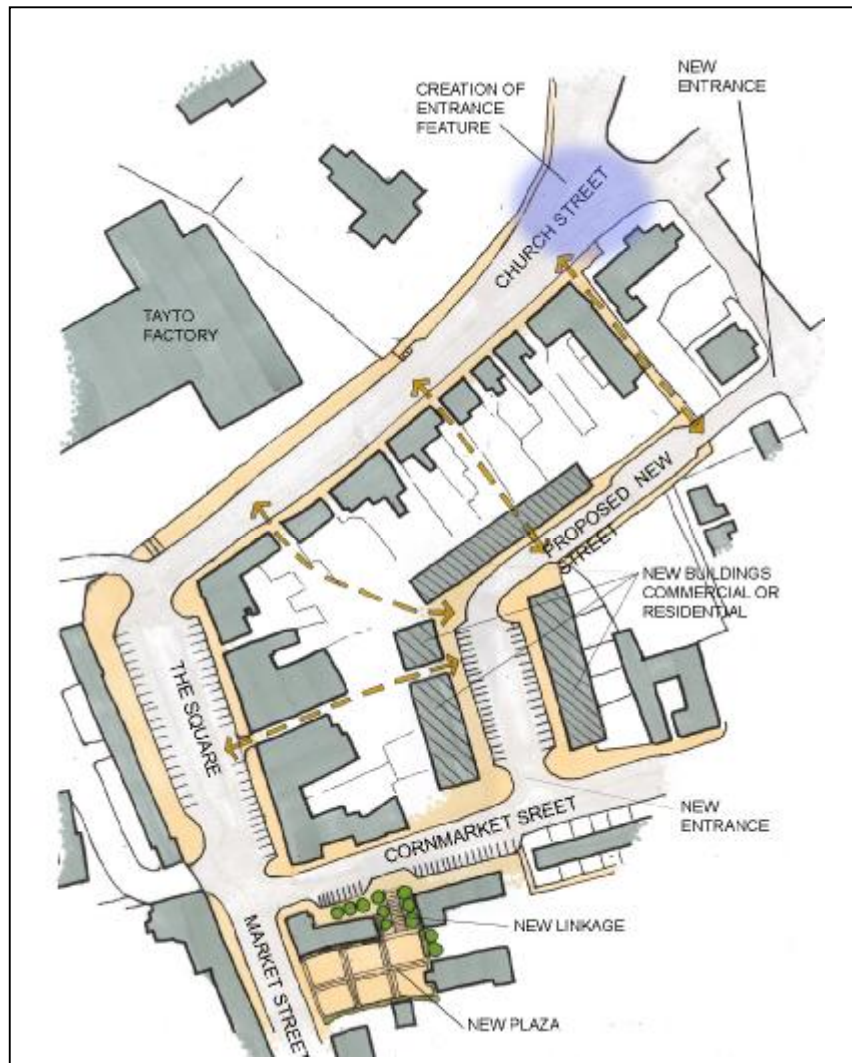


Figure 3 – Cornmarket/ Montague Street Connection – Retail and Parking

### b. New Retail Street

There is a large area of underused land to the rear of Cornmarket Street, which is at present all but landlocked by existing buildings on each of the four sides.

Much of the Cornmarket frontage is derelict and would be the ideal location to create a new vehicular access to open up the lands to the rear. Figure 3 also suggests that a vehicular access could be created off Montague Street if space can be found between the existing buildings. While some residential use may be suitable, it would be ideally suited for the site for a supermarket and possibly small workshop/ business units.

**c. New Plaza**

Figure 3 also shows a new plaza to the front of St James Church. This is an open underused area of land used mostly at church times for parking. The suggestion is to open the space up for use as civic space when it is not required for parking and thus make it more part of the street as opposed to a vacant site. It is also suggested that a pedestrian connection be made through from Cornmarket Street to open up the space from this side also.

**d. Entrance Feature**

Figure 3 also indicates a proposal for a new entrance feature. It should be considered at the Church Road/Portadown Road junction so as to highlight to the visitor that they are entering the town centre. It should also act to slow traffic and attract the visitor to the town.

## 6.0 Tandragee Action Plan

**a. Improving townscape quality** – EI scheme; damaged footpaths; vacant/derelict sites and buildings; new town Square; protect existing quality buildings and spaces.

Projects/ Actions	Possible Funding Sources	Delivered By	Priority
- EI should be extended to roundabout at southern end of town – footpath repairs	ACDC/DSD/IFI	ACDC	2
- Create feature entrance for both the northern and southern access to Market Street at the Church Street/ Portadown Road (in conjunction with development of roundabout) and Scarva Road/ Markethill Road junctions.	DSD/IFI/ACDC	DSD/ACDC	2
- Promote the immediate redevelopment of the Cornmarket/ Square junction site. Redevelopment should aim to construct a building of similar design and scale to former building.	Private/ACDC	Private/ACDC	1
- Seek to improve façade appearance of all vacant buildings within the town	Private/ACDC	Private/ACDC	1
- Ensure that there are policies within the Area Plan to regulate the design quality of buildings so that they make a positive contribution to the town centre	-	DoE	1
- Establish recognisable character for the main streets and publish a Design Guide to assist in retaining this character and promoting a uniformity in design	-	DoE/ACDC	2

- Establish a painting scheme for the main streets and provide grants for owners to encourage enhancement of shop fronts and to paint buildings	Private/ACDC	Private/ACDC	I
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**b. Traffic and Parking** – off street parking; signage; disabled parking; traffic speed; parking time restrictions; bus parking

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Tighten parking restrictions (double yellow lines) on eastern side of Mill Street	DRD	DRD/PSNI	1
- Promote the idea of dedicated parking for workers – Banks and Tayto & Others	DRD/Private	DRD/Private	1
- Ensure better choice of off-street parking through redevelopment sites and provide good signage	DRD	DoE/DRD/ ACDC	1
- Seek further measures to reduce traffic speed, but not at the expense of increasing congestion	DRD	DRD/PSNI	2
- Encourage parking time restrictions on Market Street and the Square and promote on street parking for shoppers only. Ensure business/ shop owners promote this initiative with their staff	-	DRD/PSNI	1
- Ensure a commitment to enforcing parking restrictions	PSNI	PSNI/DRD	1
- Explore possibility of providing off street parking opportunities at GM Tyres site should it become vacant.	Private/DSD	Private	2
- Provide clear access and signage to off street car parks	DRD	DRD/ACDC	1

**c. Realising Visitor Potential** – Tandragee Castle potential; Portadown/Newry route; nightlife; community facilities.

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Seek to maximise benefit of the Tayto factory within the town and promote better links between factory and the town	Private/NITB/ ACDC	ACDC/NITB/ Private	2
- Explore the potential for reusing the Castle as a tourist facility (hotel/ restaurant) and promote its future use as a base for walks.	Private/NITB/ ACDC	ACDC/Private	3
- Explore the feasibility of developing the “Oaks” walk from the town centre to Clare Glen.	ACDC	ACDC	1
- In conjunction with recent housing development, create new link road along west of Market Street and Square from Sinton Park to the Castle.	DRD/Private	DRD/Private	2
- Promote the development of a dedicated bus stop at the toilet block	DRD/Translink	DRD/Translink	1

**d. Retaining a local service centre** – town centre living; retailing; businesses moving in and not staying.

<b>Projects/ Actions</b>	<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<b>Delivered By</b>	<b>Priority</b>
- Opening up of Preaching House Lane to create pedestrian link from housing and leisure centre into Market Street	DSD/DRD	DRD/ACDC	2
- Investigate LOTS above properties on Market Street and the Square.	DSD/Private/ NIHE	DoE/Private/ ACDC	1
- Promote retailing in main streets through appropriate planning policy	DSD	ACDC/DoE	1

## APPENDICES

### I. Councillor/ Community Group Walkabout

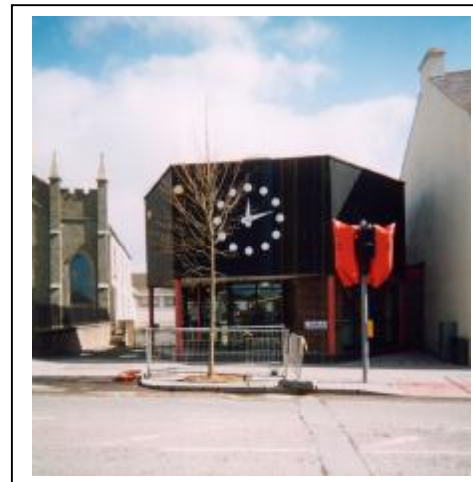
A walkabout and meeting was held with local Councillors and Community Representatives on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2005. The main issues raised are:

- EI should be extended to roundabout at southern end
- Parking – off street
- Disabled parking
- Traffic speed is a problem
- Traffic congestion on busy days
- Traffic calming not allowed
- Pelican crossing going in at the library
- Bus stops
- Park on Square beside public toilets
- Municipal Buildings on Cornmarket Street being refurbished
- Consider redevelopment of Cornmarket Street buildings, derelict buildings
- Vacant site opposite library to be all housing fronting the street. Used to be commercial. A Square would be an idea.
- Primary School is under threat – possible opportunity site
- Businesses moving in and not staying
- People not stopping
- On main Portadown /Newry
- Rates are big problem
- One or two attractions in the town – Tayto, Shoe shop, Fashions
- Nightlife – one or two pubs – Montague Arms
- Plenty of community facilities
- Reasonable parking on street – more off street needed. Parking time restrictions needed.
- Tayto staff parking on the street

## 2. Student Photographic Exercise

### Positive Issues

- A number of streetscape improvements were noted throughout the town. These include, improvements to footpaths on Market Street; use of planters on Church Street; replanting of trees throughout the town; traffic management improvements, including new crossings, which are welcomed.
- Quality of end terrace building on Market Street is seen as a good example for others to follow.



### Negative Issues

- There is a fairly high rate of dereliction in the town. A number of buildings and sites were noted as being derelict and unsightly with a need to redevelop. Sites and buildings on Market Street were given as key examples. The old Tandragee Municipal Offices is another example.
- There are still some improvements needed in relation to the streetscape including repair of cracked paving slabs. Need for a bus shelter on Market Street.
- There is a small problem of littering in the town, but dumping on derelict sites is considered to be significant.
- There is a problem of congestion at certain times of the day on Market Street; more parking is perhaps needed.
- The derelict public toilets on Cornmarket Street are specifically mentioned for vandalism and of creating an unsafe environment.



### 3. Public Exhibition Questionnaire Responses

The Public Exhibition of initial ideas was held between 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2005, including an open evening on 27<sup>th</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. Members of the public were asked to complete a questionnaire on the content of the exhibition. The results are as follows:

#### Q1. Vision – this is a draft statement as to how Tandragee Town Centre might look in 2018.

- **Do you agree with this statement?**

Y - 8

N - 3

No Response – 2

- **If not, what would your vision be for central Tandragee?**

- It will never happen. Armagh Council never has, and never will spend money on Tandragee
- I don't mind what you do with the different sites as long as it benefits the town and doesn't cause the havoc it is causing at present
- To be a hive of business activity, retailing, eating houses – people walking through, not just passing through

#### Q2. Opportunity Sites – these are sites that could be improved or put to better use and are shown as stars on the map. If you had your way what would you do with these sites?

##### a. Land behind buildings on Market Street

- Housing or commercial buildings
- Shops
- As long as no car parking spaces are removed/shops used as street frontage
- Swimming Pool
- Recreational area for young people

##### b. Vacant site behind Ulster Bank

- Retail units
- Low cost housing and some commercial
- Cinema
- Parking for bank staff
- Shops/coffee houses/parking

##### c. Land behind buildings on CornmarketSt./The Square/Church Street

- Further residential/open space provision
- Car parking

- Town houses
- Supermarket
- New road system

**d. Tyre centre on Market Street**

- Low cost housing for first time buyers
- Car Park
- Central car park

**e. Land at Gilford Street**

- Low cost housing

**• Are there any other potential opportunity sites that we have missed?**

- The old Mill buildings/ frontages along Mill Street could be better developed
- What about all the derelict buildings on the corner of Cornmarket Street and Market Street?

**Q3. Town centres are the main focus for retailing, offices, entertainment uses and some residential. Drawing a town centre boundary will ensure retail and commercial uses are concentrated within and can assist in reducing vacancies.**

- *Do you agree with this boundary?*

Yes –7

No – 0

No response - 6

- *If not, where should we adjust it?*

- N/A

**Q4. Sketches – the sketches show initial ideas for a number of sites in the central area. Do you like each of the following?**

- a. *New Street to be created linking Cornmarket St. With Montague Street*

Yes - 6

No - 2

No response - 5

b. *New plaza in front of St James Church and linkage through to Cornmarket Street*

Street

Yes - 5

No - 3

No response - 5

c. *New civic space behind toilet building*

Yes - 7

No - 1

No response - 5

d. *Residential street linking proposed Civic Space with the Castle*

Yes - 6

No - 1

No response - 6

e. *Courtyard development of retail and residential beside and behind Ulster Bank*

Bank

Yes - 7

No - 0

No response - 6

• *Please comment on your answers? What changes would you make?*

- How can you link a road from Cornmarket Street to Montague St as shown? There is no space between Tandragee Medical centre and first house on Montague St.
- Montague Street is busy with small children walking to school. Is it wise to increase traffic here?
- Residential street linking Civic space with the castle a good idea if it brings customers into the town.

**Q5. What issues do you consider are of key concern within Tandragee Town Centre and how should these be prioritised?**

- Derelict sites and buildings on Main St. Should be first priority
- Rates and rents are too expensive for shops to open. There is no work in Tandragee now with all the businesses closing.
- We do not need more houses
- Need for more car parking spaces
- Widening the pavements of the main street and taking away parking spaces has been a really bad move.
- Increase in traffic including heavy lorries which are causing congestion

- The existence of a number of semi-derelict buildings that are currently up for sale or at least make the facades of acceptable appearance.
- On street parking/need to improve retail frontages and developing a better attitude toward design
- Empty land needs developed/need more shops/need an attraction to bring people in- e.g. use of the castle/we need greenery through the whole town

**Q6. Please tell us about any other ideas you may have for improving the town centre?**

- More low cost housing for first time buyers/leisure facilities
- Make the people who own the property fix them up
- More places to relax and socialise e.g. parks
- Improved public transport links
- You could make the main street wider again
- Need a Chamber of Commerce- we feel there is no money made available in the town/ when funds are made available traders are not informed.