

# OUR VISION FOR NEWTOWNARDS ROAD



THE BEATING HEART OF EAST BELFAST, THE  
NEWTOWNARDS ROAD WILL FLOURISH AS A UNIQUE AND  
VIBRANT DESTINATION, CONNECTED WITH OUR CITY AND  
WELCOMING TO ALL.

# FOREWORD

This plan sets out a bold vision for the future of the Newtownards Road—one that is built on the values of inclusivity, sustainability, and shared prosperity. It is the culmination of extensive collaboration, informed by the voices of local residents, businesses, and stakeholders who share a common desire to see this historic neighbourhood realise its full potential.

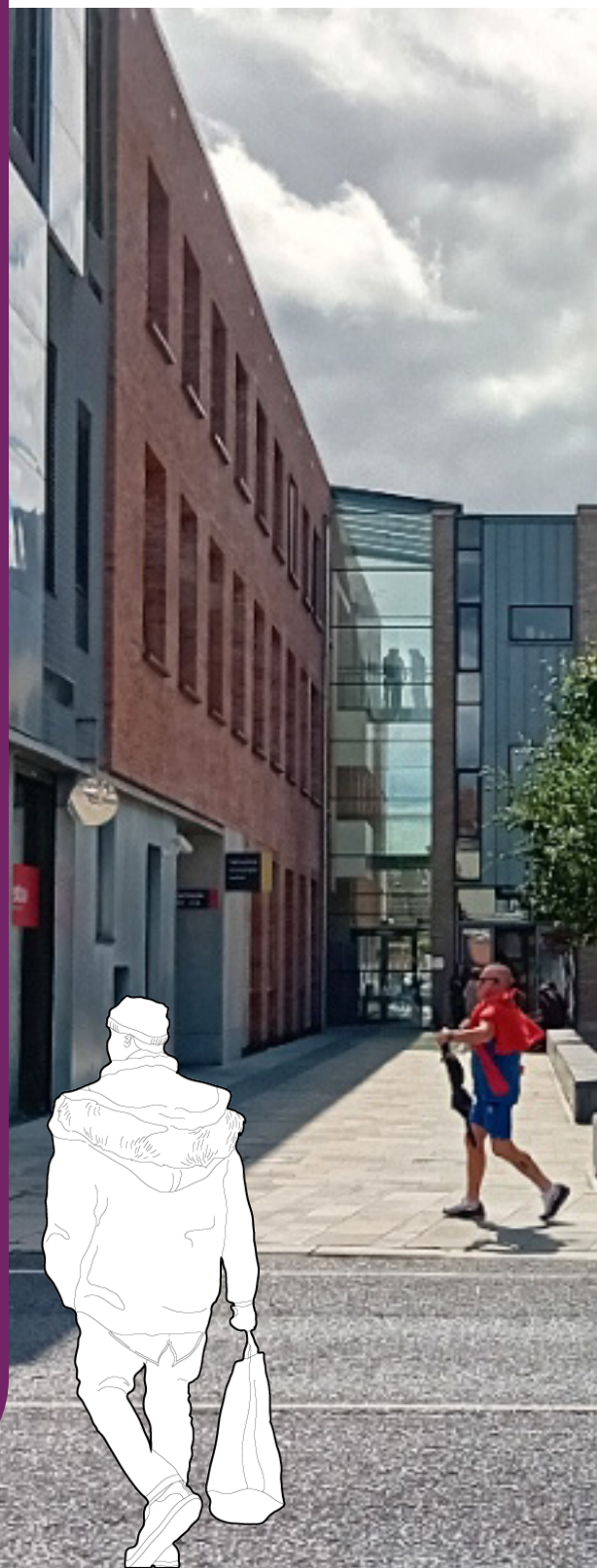
This is a 'living' plan with ambitious and realistic actions requiring a broad range of stakeholders to come together and help deliver the vision:

**“The beating heart of East Belfast the Newtownards Road will flourish as a unique and vibrant destination, connected with our city and welcoming to all.”**

The plan will be used to attract potential investors, developers, businesses, and residents and contribute to East Belfast's ongoing regeneration.

We invite all who care about the Newtownards Road to contribute, and to share in the responsibility of shaping its future; a place where tradition meets innovation.

***Michele Bryans, Chief Executive  
EastSide Partnership***



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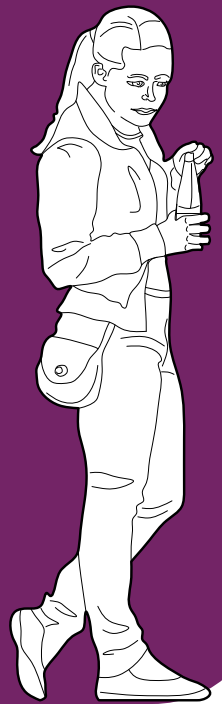
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# INTRODUCTION

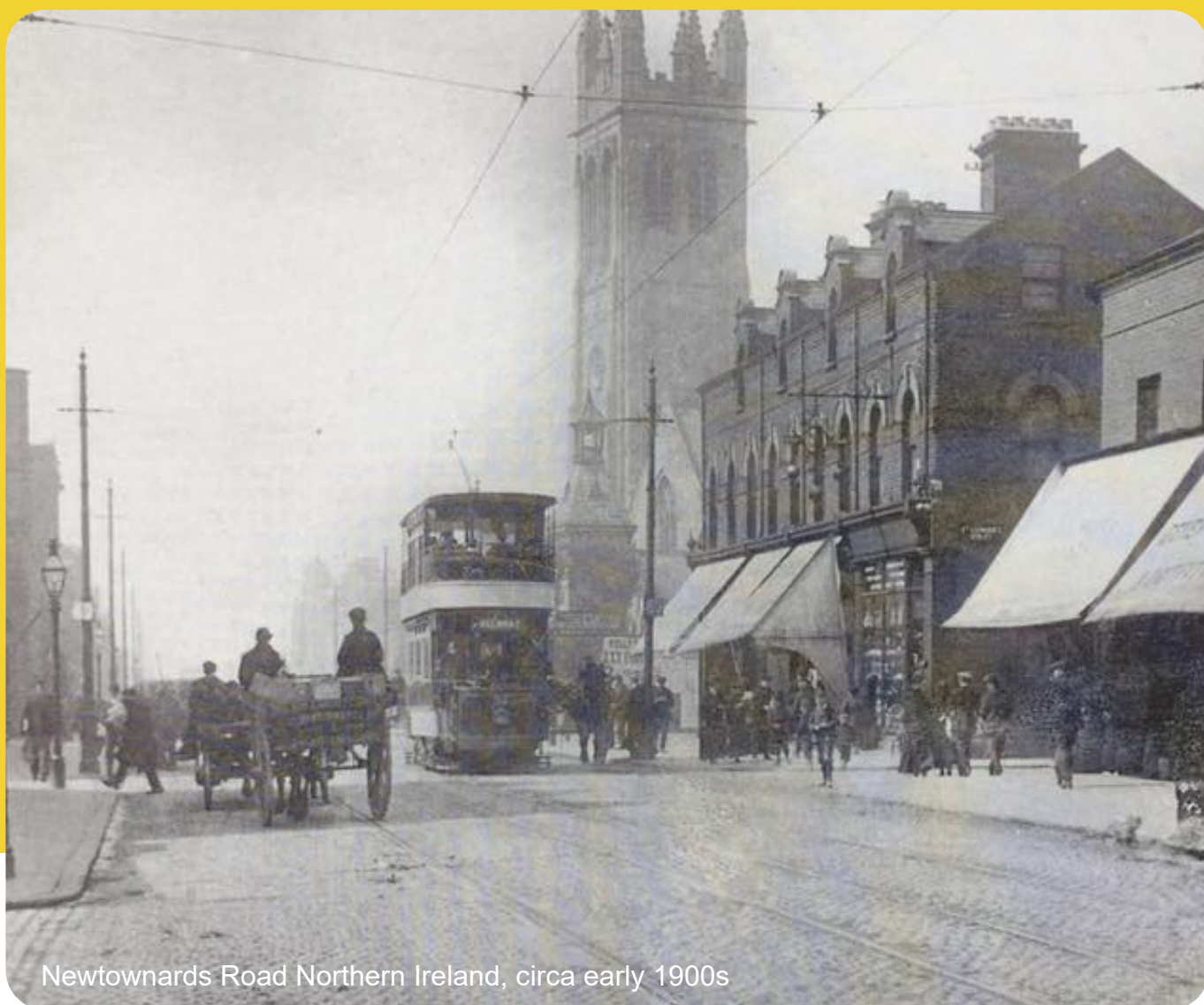
The Newtownards Road is the **heart of East Belfast** and a vital arterial route emanating from the city centre. With a long and proud history, the road is home to many residents, businesses, churches and community organisations. Over the years it has seen significant investment, but like many places, continues to face challenges such as vacant buildings and heavy traffic. To further unlock its potential, EastSide Partnership has facilitated a collaborative approach. Working through the Newtownards Road Action Group, urban design consultants, and the local community, a strategic development plan has been created to **breathe new life into the area**.

This ambitious project aims to **further rejuvenate the Newtownards Road** as a vibrant and attractive destination for residents, businesses, visitors, and investors. Utilising co-design and creative principles, the plan seeks to position the road as a catalyst for the ongoing regeneration of the area. By enhancing social and economic connections, the project envisions transforming the Newtownards Road into a thriving place where people are **eager to live, work, enjoy and invest**.



NEWTOWNARDS ROAD





Newtownards Road Northern Ireland, circa early 1900s



# Living High Streets Framework Place Change Model

## Theme 1 **People:**

Growing your skills and resources

## Theme 2 **Place:**

Knowing your high street

## Theme 3 **Imagining:**

What your high street could become

## Theme 4 **Delivering:**

How to focus and prioritise

## Theme 5 **Monitoring:**

Confirming progress

## Theme 6 **Maintaining:**

Loving your place

## Living High Streets Framework

The vision for Newtownards Road was shaped through the Living High Streets Framework Place Change Model, a comprehensive approach to urban revitalisation. Launched by the Ministerial Advisory Group and Department for Communities in 2024, Living High Streets focuses on transforming high streets. It emphasises a holistic understanding of place, considering physical, social, economic and environmental factors. The model involves stages such as assessment, engagement, visioning, planning, implementation and monitoring. It encourages collaboration among stakeholders and sets clear goals aligned with the community's aspirations.



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thepaulhogarthcompany

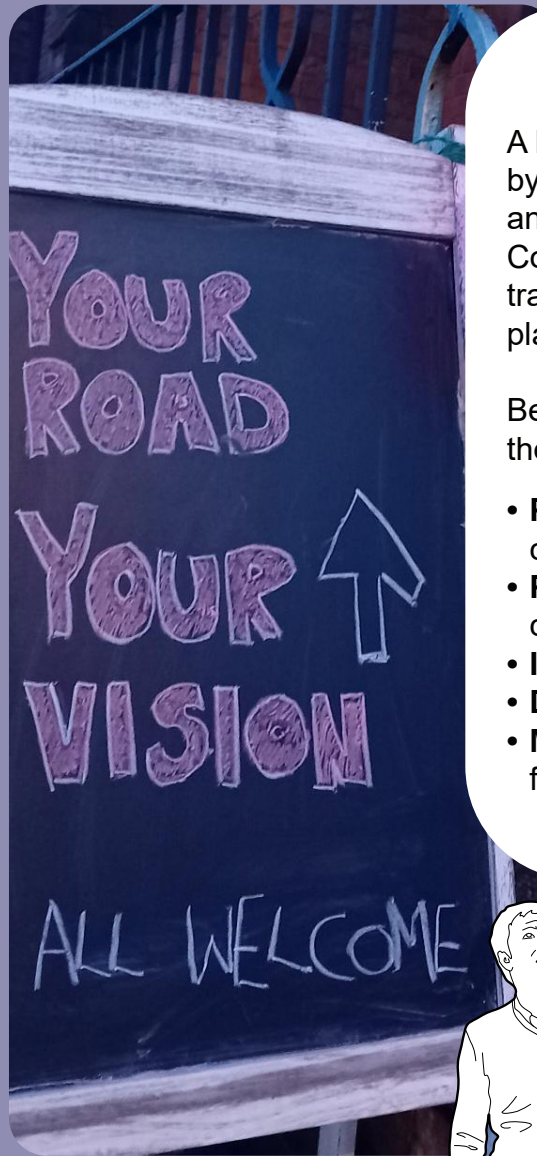
HousingExecutive







# PROCESS



A highly collaborative process to shape this vision was led by the newly formed Newtownards Road Local Action Group and facilitated by Eastside Partnership and The Paul Hogarth Company. The Living High Streets Framework guided the transformation effort, emphasising community engagement, place-based knowledge, and actionable urban design principles.

Beginning with a series of workshops, the process involved key themes such as:

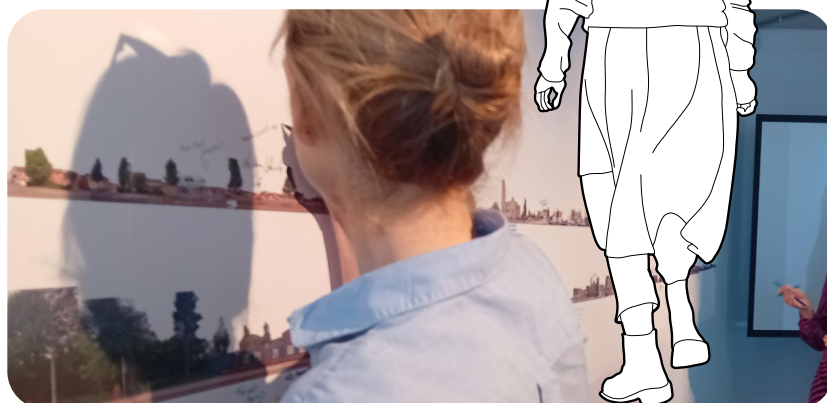
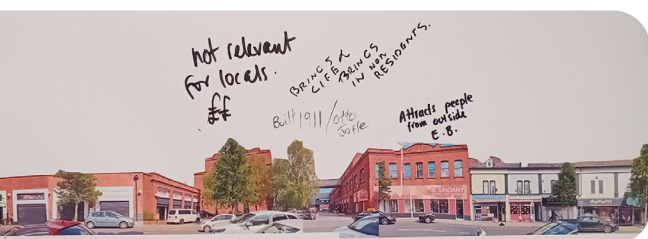
- **People:** Building skills and resources through community input.
- **Place:** Understanding the unique characteristics and challenges of the Newtownards Road.
- **Imagining:** Envisioning what the street could become
- **Delivering:** Prioritising and focusing on actionable goals
- **Maintaining:** Ensuring long-term care and sustainability for the area





These workshops were held over a 9 month period, gathering input from various stakeholders through discussions and activities. Public engagement played a crucial role, particularly in October 2023, when a wide range of residents and business owners participated in shaping the plan. This consultation phase received robust community feedback, with over **350 responses** collected, which informed the strategic direction of the plan.

The collaborative workshops and public consultations culminated in the creation of a community-driven vision for the Newtownards Road, focused on enhancing the area as a vibrant and sustainable space for living, working and shopping. Further input from the community was welcome upon the draft vision, before finalisation in November 2024, marking a key milestone in the ongoing transformation of Newtownards Road.

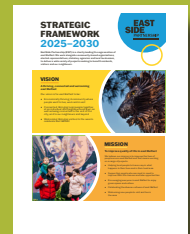


# POLICY CONTEXT

This section summarises some key policies of relevance to the Newtownards Road and urban regeneration as a whole.

## Eastside Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030

The 5 year plan for Eastside Partnership seeks to help fulfil a vision of a thriving, connected and welcoming East Belfast. This will be achieved through a commitment to facilitate and co-ordinate relevant partners to work together for the regeneration of east Belfast

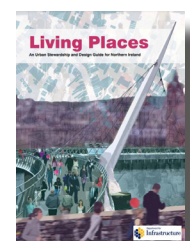
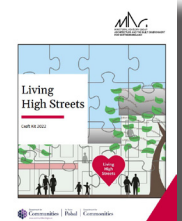


## East Belfast Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF)

The East Belfast SRF provided a strategic approach to regenerating the broader area, including Newtownards Road. This framework aimed to address social and economic inequalities by boosting investment, creating job opportunities and improving the physical environment. It highlighted the importance of community-led regeneration and the role of collaboration between local government, residents and private sector stakeholders.



1. **The Living High Streets Initiative** is aimed at revitalising urban high streets across Northern Ireland. Led by the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture and the Built Environment (MAG), this initiative focuses on transforming declining town and city centres into vibrant, thriving places that support economic growth, community engagement, and sustainable living. It aligns well with the vision for Newtownards Road as a destination, prioritising Community Involvement, Public Realm Enhancements and Cultural and Economic Vitality.
2. **Living Places – An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide** – This national guidance document emphasises the importance of high-quality urban design in creating vibrant, sustainable communities. It stresses the need for well-designed public spaces that foster social interaction and contribute to a sense of place, relevant to transforming Newtownards Road's underutilised spaces. (Department for Infrastructure)
3. **Draft Programme for Government (PfG)** – The PfG sets the strategic direction for Northern Ireland's government, emphasising inclusive growth, sustainability, and reducing inequalities. It highlights the importance of regenerating urban spaces to improve economic opportunities and community well-being across Northern Ireland. (Northern Ireland Executive)





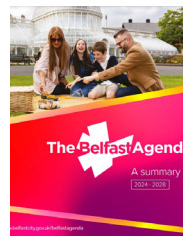
4. **Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)** – This documents provides planning guidance on various aspects of land use. It focuses on open space and recreation, encouraging the provision and enhancement of public spaces, which is directly relevant to plans for utilising dead space along Newtownards Road (Department for Infrastructure)



5. **Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP)** - The LDP guides the city's growth and development, emphasising sustainable, inclusive, and connected communities. It encourages revitalisation efforts like those proposed for Newtownards Road to enhance economic growth, improve public spaces, and promote social cohesion. (Belfast City Council)



6. **Belfast Agenda (Community Plan)**: Focuses on transforming Belfast into a city of equal opportunities, with an emphasis on regenerating key areas such as Newtownards Road. It supports increasing public spaces, improving infrastructure, and fostering a sense of community. A recently published Action Plans sets out how the objectives are to be achieved. (Belfast City Council)



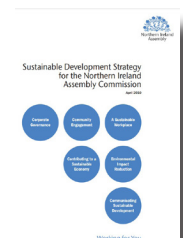
7. **A Bolder Vision for Belfast** – This plan aims to reimagine the city centre, making public spaces more accessible and connected, reducing congestion, and enhancing the overall environment. The approach can be mirrored along the Newtownards Road to enhance public spaces and promote pedestrian-friendly zones. (Belfast City Council)



8. **Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland** – This strategy emphasises sustainable economic growth through environmental improvements, energy efficiency, and the development of green spaces. It supports the transformation of urban areas, like Newtownards Road, into more environmentally sustainable and vibrant spaces by incorporating green infrastructure. (Northern Ireland Executive)



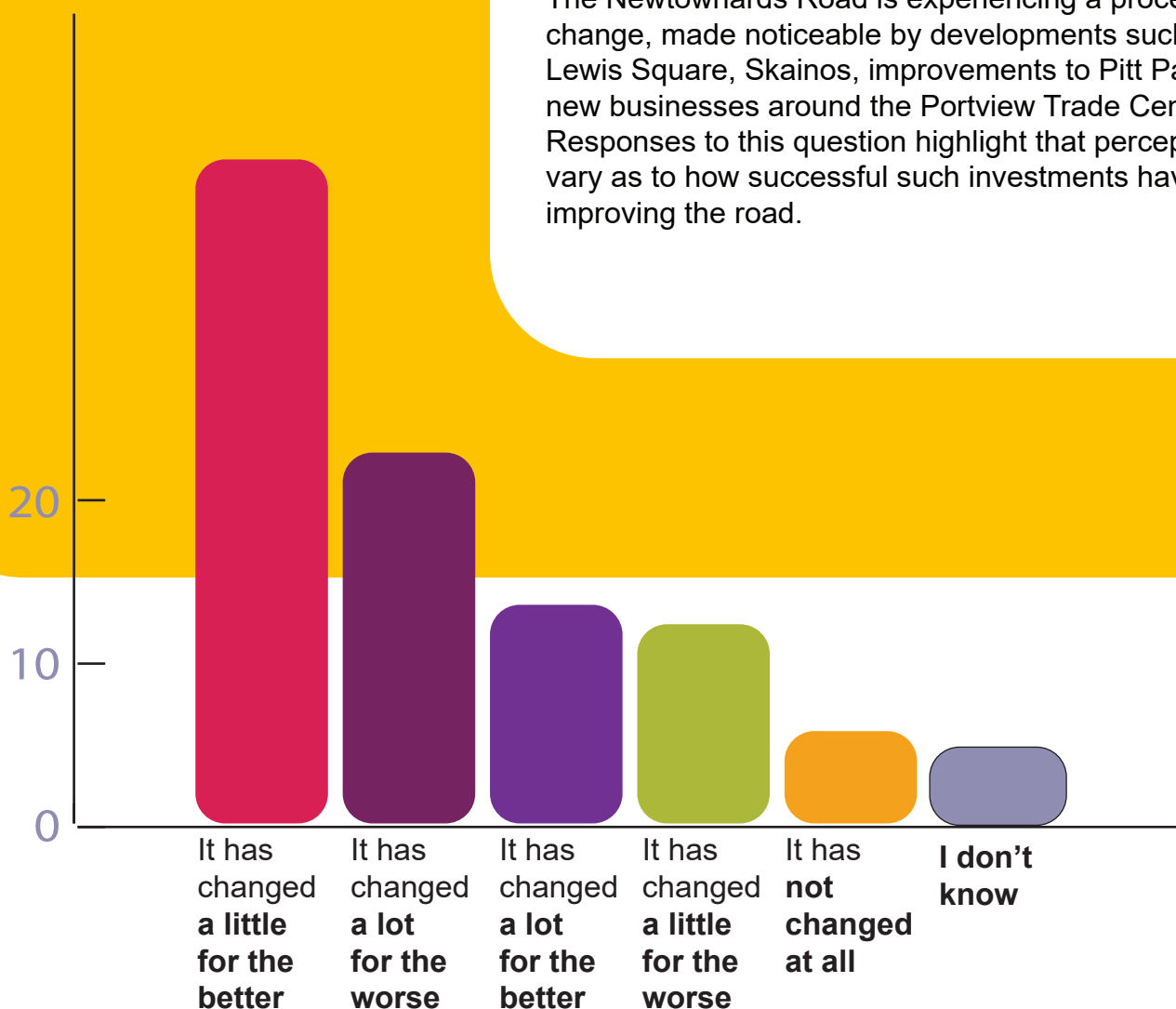
9. **Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland** – This strategy focuses on creating sustainable communities by encouraging economic, social, and environmental improvements. It is relevant to Newtownards Road's regeneration as it promotes reusing land, enhancing public spaces, and fostering social inclusion (Northern Ireland Executive)



# ENGAGEMENT

A collaborative approach has been taken to ensure that the voices of local residents, businesses, and key stakeholders are central to shaping the future of the area. Through a series of consultations, workshops, and surveys, feedback has been gathered to understand the community's aspirations, concerns, and priorities. The following pages summarise local responses to a community survey developed to inform this vision.

How do you feel the Newtownards Road has changed over the past 10 years?



The Newtownards Road is experiencing a process of change, made noticeable by developments such as CS Lewis Square, Skainos, improvements to Pitt Park and new businesses around the Portview Trade Centre. Responses to this question highlight that perceptions vary as to how successful such investments have been in improving the road.

143 resp. **41%**

"New additions such as CS Lewis Square, East Side Arts Festival, Boundary, Bullhouse, Banana Block."

"It's a bit better with some new shops opening but I think their needs to be more done."

80 resp. **22.9%**

"Boarded up shops, unused buildings in disrepair."

"It's the lack of community & shops on the road itself that has taken away from the Newtownards Road....."

47 resp. **13.5%**

"It is a more welcoming environment for all communities with a more diverse offer."

"I feel it's more vibrant and more inclusive."

43 resp. **12.3%**

"Flags on lamp posts have got a lot bigger and stay up for longer even when tattered and frayed."

"Issues re access to housing and poverty have increased."

20 resp. **5.7%**

"Boarded up shops, unused buildings in disrepair."

"Some aesthetic improvements, but still highly polluted, car heavy, dangerous junctions and high levels of deprivation. Some good new businesses but feels like papering over cracks."



38\*

**Moving Around**

It's easy to walk, cycle or use a mobility scooter etc. to get around.

(1 Strongly disagree – 7 Strongly Agree)

☆☆☆☆☆☆

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4\*

**FUTURE:**

What is your **ONE** big wish for the Newtownards Road over the next 10 years?

Description (optional)

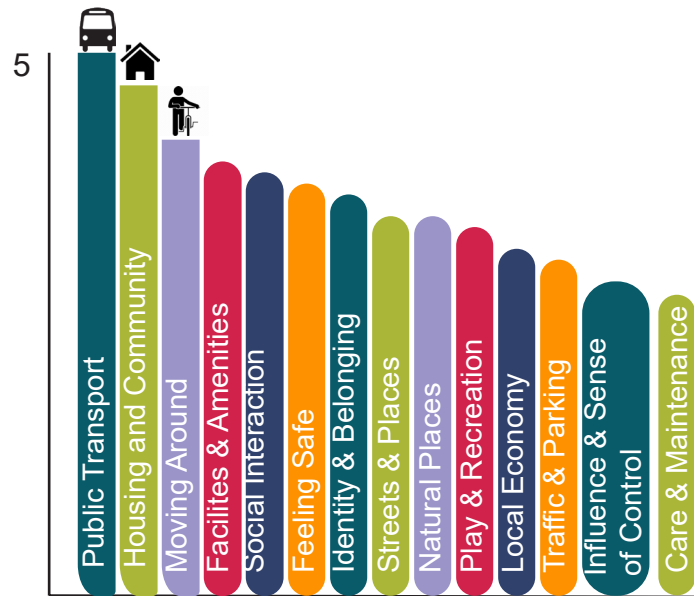
Type your answer here...



## What is your ONE big wish for the Newtownards Road over the next 10 years?

The respondents expressed a wide range of desires and aspirations for the Newtownards Road area, focusing on themes such as community vibrancy, economic revitalisation, cultural diversity, safety and inclusivity. There is a strong desire to see the area return to its former bustling state with thriving local businesses and a variety of amenities. Many emphasise the need for improved infrastructure, including better transport options, cycle paths and pedestrian-friendly spaces. There is also a call for the removal of paramilitary murals and flags, alongside a desire for more green spaces, social housing and activities for children and families. Overall, the community seeks a cleaner, safer and more welcoming environment.

## How would you score the Newtownards Road out of 7 for the following? (Averages shown)



*Thriving businesses and employment opportunities*

*A more inclusive space which doesn't leave long established communities and residents behind but empowers them as part of an improved future.*

*Getting rid of horrible murals & changing them for lots of proper artwork to brighten up the road & attract more visitors but also make it a pleasant place 'for people to live'.*

*To clear up all the run down abandoned shops and units that look derelict!*

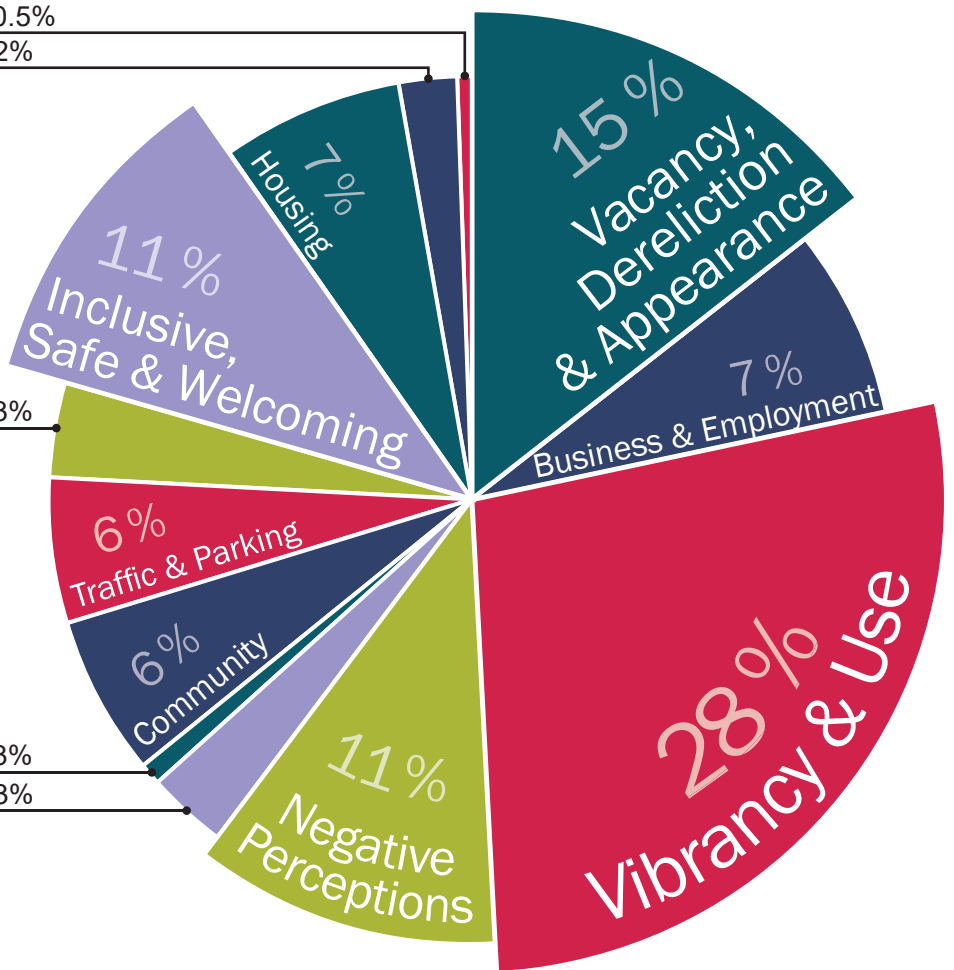
*More opportunities for enjoying spending time on the Newtownards Road rather than being a commute to the city.*



Heritage 0.5%  
Young People 2%

Pedestrian, Cycle  
& Public Transport 3%

Deprivation 3%  
Green Spaces 3%



Less intimidating flags and murals. More inclusion for everyone and incentive for new businesses to make use of existing properties.

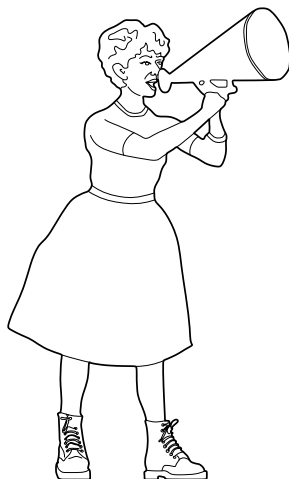
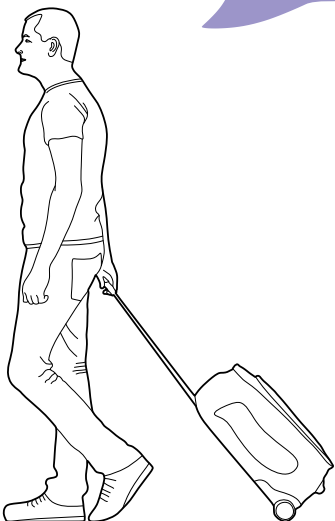
For the lower end of Newtownards Road to be more like the upper end.

My wish is to see an increase in accessible housing.

A more positive and inclusive area. Representing one society for all.

Help for local businesses!

That it becomes a vibrant area where people are proud to live, work and socialise.





# ANALYSIS

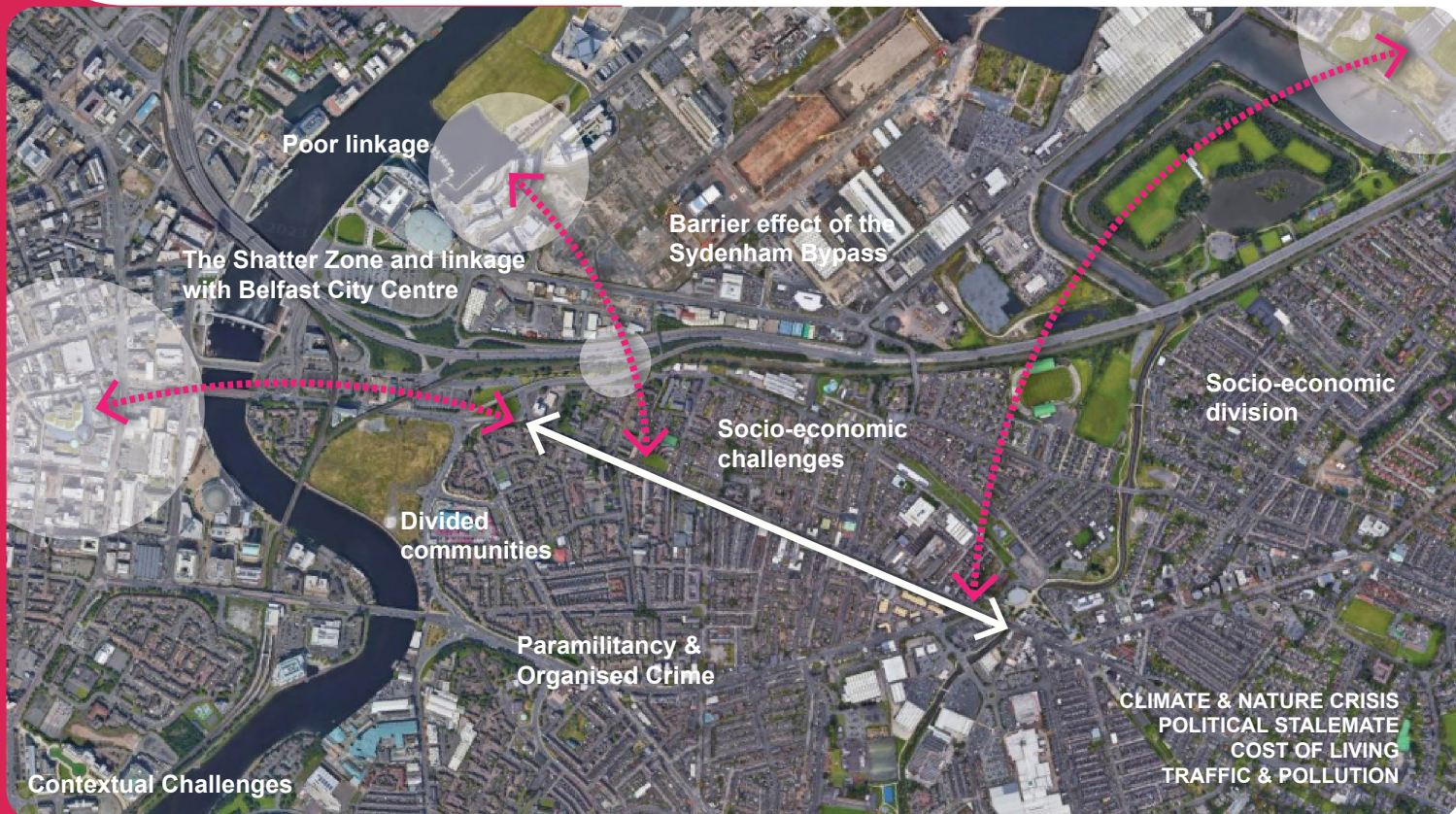
The existing condition of Newtownards Road presents a mix of opportunities and challenges that reflect its historical significance and current urban dynamics.

## 1. Community:

The existing social fabric of Newtownards Road reflects a diverse community with varying needs and aspirations. While there are opportunities for community engagement and involvement in decision-making processes, there is a need for more sustained dialogue to ensure that the voices of residents and local businesses are heard.

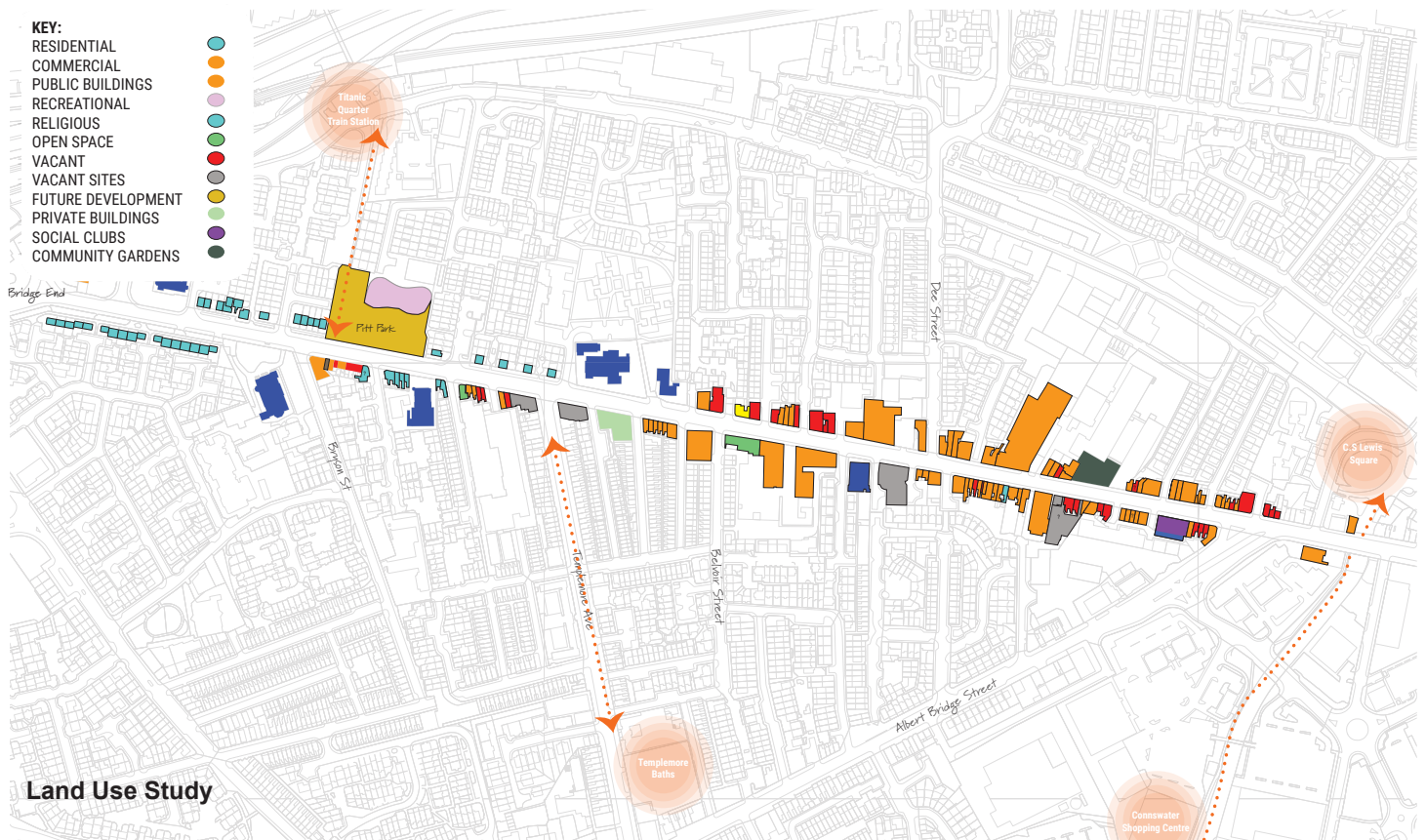
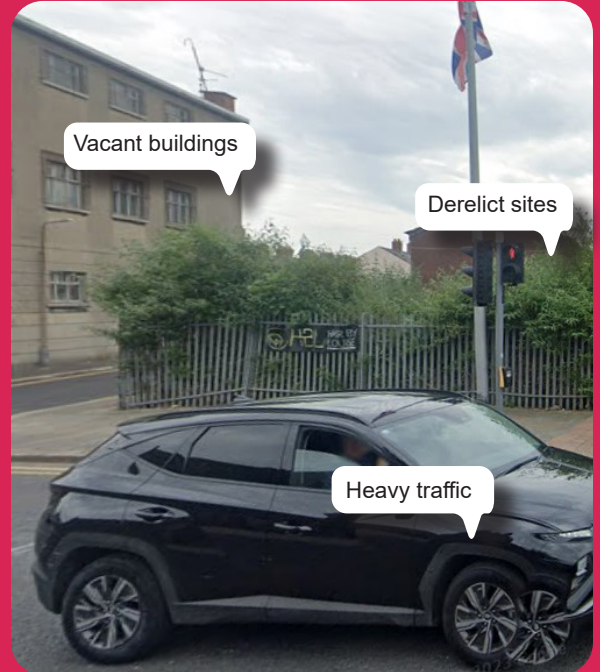
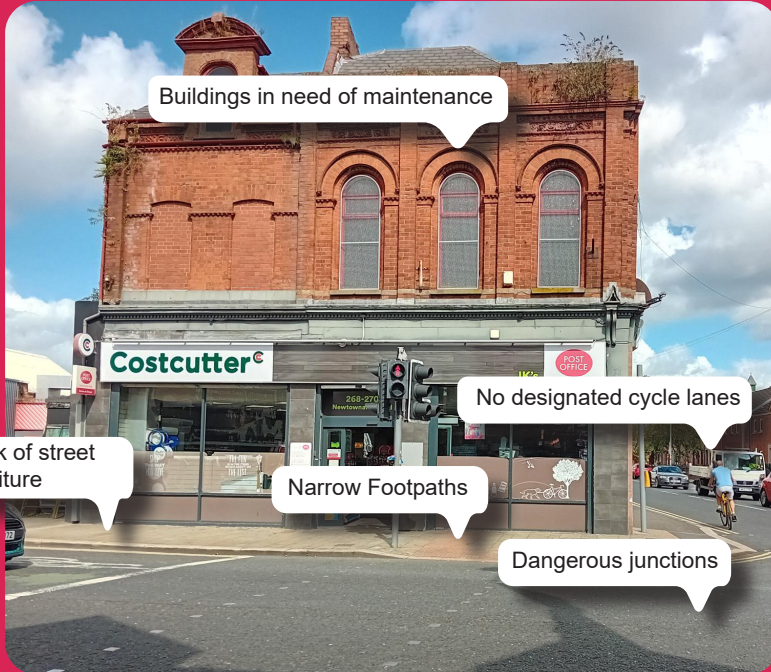
## 2. Connectivity and Accessibility:

The road functions as a key arterial route, linking East Belfast to the city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods. However, the existing infrastructure presents challenges in terms of pedestrian and cyclist safety. Narrow paths, limited crossing facilities and heavy vehicular traffic create barriers for people, discouraging foot traffic and cycling. A key challenge for the Newtownards Road is to balance its role as a movement corridor with its need to provide a central focal point for the local community.





# UNDERSTANDING NEWTOWNARDS ROAD



# ANALYSIS

## 3. Public Spaces and Green Spaces:

Current public spaces, such as Pitt Park and CS Lewis Square, serve as valuable community assets, providing opportunities for recreation and social interaction. However, the presence of greenery along Newtownards Road is limited, contributing to a less inviting streetscape for people and nature.

## 4. Urban Design:

The architectural character of Newtownards Road is varied, with some fine historic buildings showcasing the area's heritage, while others reflect more modern designs. However, inconsistent building façades and a lack of cohesive design elements can detract from the overall aesthetic appeal.

## 5. Commercial Activity and Diversity:

Newtownards Road has historically served as a commercial hub, characterised by a diverse mix of shops, services and community facilities. While many businesses contribute to the vibrancy of the area, several store-fronts remain vacant or underutilised, indicating a need for revitalisation efforts. This disparity suggests that while the road retains its potential as a commercial corridor, strategic interventions are required to attract new businesses and enhance overall economic vitality.

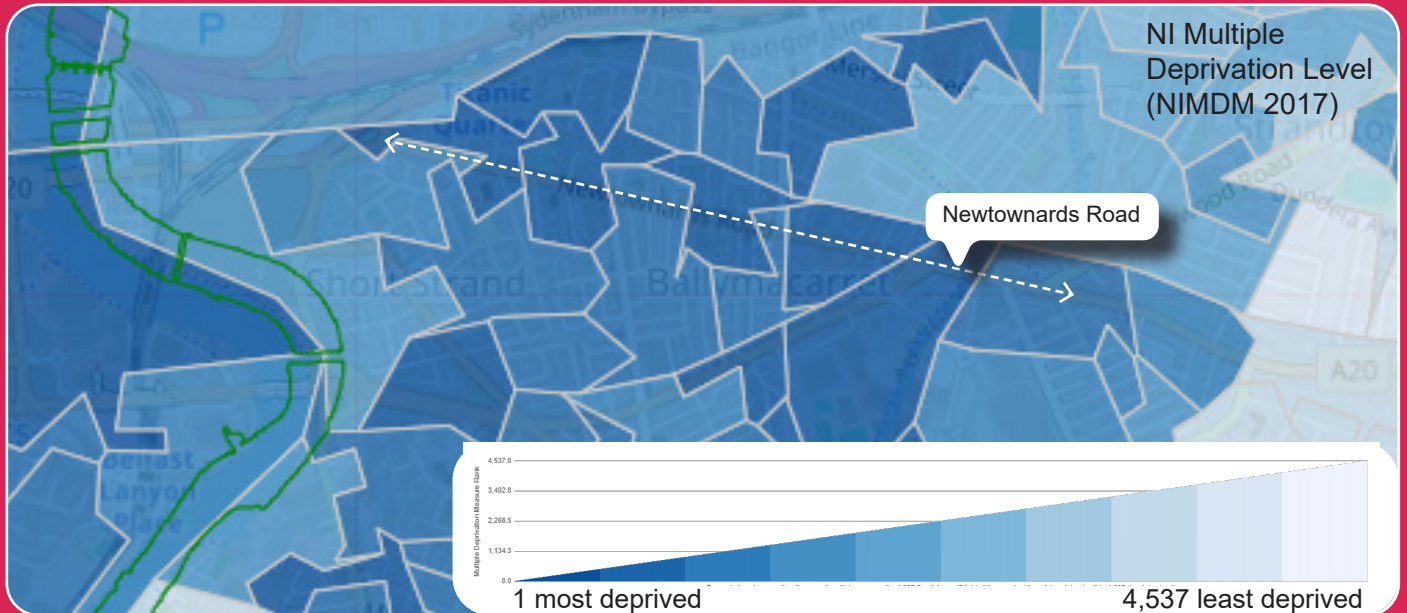


**circa 120**  
organisations on the Newtownards Road

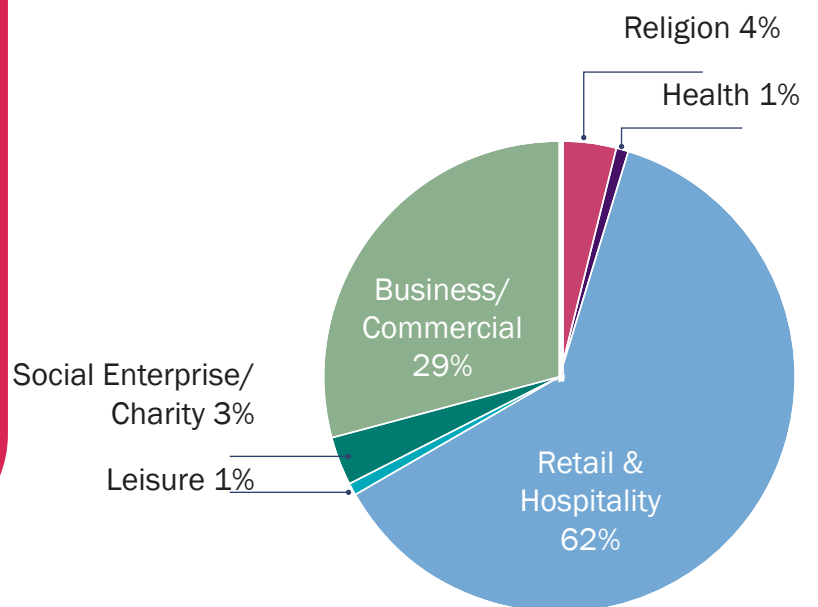




# UNDERSTANDING NEWTOWNARDS ROAD



Newtownards Road highlights both the potential for revitalisation and the challenges that must be addressed. By focusing on enhancing commercial activity, improving connectivity, increasing green spaces, establishing cohesive urban design, and promoting community engagement, there is significant opportunity to transform Newtownards Road into a vibrant and thriving urban corridor.





# OUR VISION

The beating heart of East Belfast, the Newtownards Road will flourish as a unique and vibrant destination, connected with our city and welcoming to all.

The vision for Newtownards Road was developed during the **'Imagining' Newtownards Road Workshop** and refined through **public consultation**. During these sessions, members of the Action Group and the local community chose words that captured their vision, reflecting their desire for a revitalised, active and welcoming space that provides for the community, while drawing people for both business and leisure.

A destination, (from go through to go to)

A place for people

Natural  
Busy  
Mixed  
Tidy  
Dynamic  
Safe  
Close Knit  
Connected

Historic

Vibrant

Connected

Safe

Mixed

Friendly  
&  
Welcoming

The  
heart of East  
Belfast



**The Heart of East Belfast:** Newtownards Road is the beating heart of East Belfast, serving as a focal point for economic, social and cultural activities. It is a place where locals gather to shop, socialise and connect with one another.



**A Place for People:** Above all, Newtownards Road is a place for people – a place where individuals can live, work and thrive. We prioritise community engagement, empowerment and participation, ensuring that the voices and needs of residents are heard and valued in shaping the future of our road.



**A Destination:** Newtownards Road is a must-visit destination, drawing visitors from near and far to experience its unique charm and character. Whether exploring historic landmarks or shopping, there is something for everyone to discover along the road.



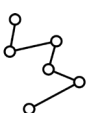
**Mixed:** Newtownards Road is a diverse and inclusive community, welcoming people from all backgrounds. We celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity through mixed-use developments, housing options and community spaces that cater to the needs of everyone.



**Vibrant:** Newtownards Road should be a vibrant and dynamic destination, bustling with activity.



**Historic:** Newtownards Road embraces its rich history and heritage, preserving and celebrating its historic buildings, landmarks and cultural traditions. We honour the past while looking towards the future, ensuring that future generations can appreciate the history that shaped our community.



**Connected:** Newtownards Road is well-connected, both physically and digitally, with excellent transport links. We prioritise pedestrian-friendly streets and efficient public transportation to ensure easy access for all.



**Friendly and Welcoming:** Newtownards Road is known for its warm and welcoming atmosphere. We foster a sense of community through events, festivals and initiatives that bring people together.



**Safe:** Newtownards Road is a safe and secure environment for residents, visitors and businesses alike. We prioritise community policing, proactive measures to prevent crime, and foster a sense of security for all.

# THE FRAMEWORK

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1. **Connecting people and organisations more effectively around a reinvigorated positive identity.**
2. **Transforming the Road through shared endeavour and the cumulative impact of small interventions.**
3. **Enlivening the Newtownards Road as a place for people at the heart of our community.**
4. **Increasing the Road's population by planning and promoting site specific developments.**
5. **Making the Newtownards Road a safer and healthier environment for everybody who uses it.**





# OUR PEOPLE

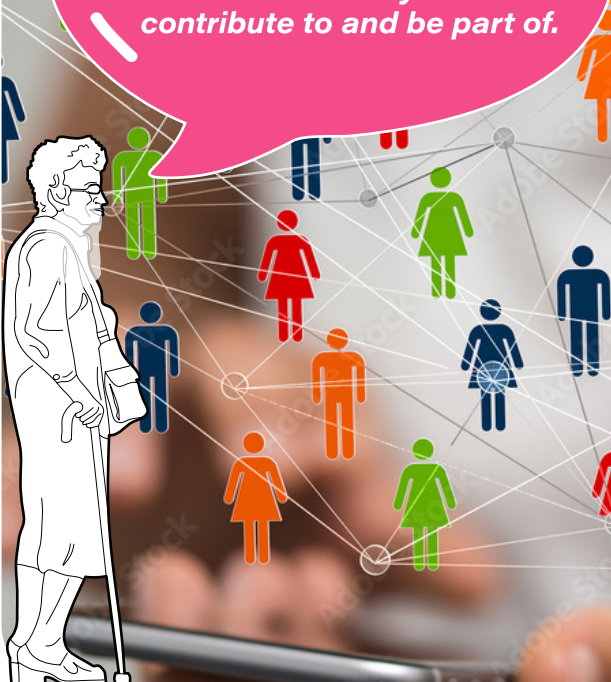
Connecting people and organisations more effectively around a reinvigorated positive identity for the Road.

*Newtownards Road is the heart land of east and we should be proud of the whole road, not just certain areas.*



A communication, place-branding and events initiative is proposed for the Newtownards Road, aimed at celebrating its past, present, and future. Central to this proposal is bringing our residents, our many businesses and our community groups closer together.

*An identity which respects history but which current residents feel they can contribute to and be part of.*



## a. Communication

**Fostering more effective communication along the road and about the road - its past, its present and future.**

This initiative introduces a dynamic communication hub along Newtownards Road, celebrating its past, present, and future. We will work to improve communication networks and groupings, nurturing a greater spirit of togetherness from one end of the road to the other.



## b. Place brand

Developing and rolling out a positive and engaging place brand identity for the Newtownards Road

The proposal focuses on developing and implementing a positive and engaging place brand identity for Newtownards Road. This initiative aims to create a cohesive, attractive and authentic image and messaging that resonates with residents, businesses, and visitors alike. By highlighting the unique characteristics and heritage of the area, the new place brand will promote a sense of pride and belonging within the community. Through various marketing strategies, including visual branding, signage, and promotional materials, the initiative will enhance recognition and appeal, ultimately attracting more visitors and investments to Newtownards Road.

## c. Festival

Working to bring people together on the Newtownards Road through existing and new events and activities, both indoors and out.

The aim is to bring the community together on Newtownards Road through a variety of existing and new activities and events. By collaborating with local organisations, businesses and residents, the initiative seeks to create a vibrant festival atmosphere that fosters social interaction and community spirit. This festival will showcase the unique culture and diversity of the area, providing opportunities for entertainment, education and engagement. Through inclusive programming that appeals to all ages, the festival will strengthen connections among community members and enhance the overall vibrancy of Newtownards Road.



## 1. Our People



# 101 ACTIONS

Transforming  
the Road through  
shared endeavour  
and the cumulative  
impact of small  
interventions.

While we have attractive buildings on the Newtownards Road, we also have many that feel tired and a little unloved. But by working together we can make a real impact one building and space at a time.

*Clean up the whole area,  
the green spaces are weed  
infested, the empty  
buildings are left  
to rot and in general  
show nothing but neglect.*

Fixing- Vegetation removed

Greening - Window  
flower boxes

Fixing- Building repairs

Cleaning - Graffiti removal

Fixing- Repainting

Activating - Shutter redesign

Cleaning - Pavements cleaned



## a. Greening

**Growing, weeding, floral displays and biodiversity projects**

A key component of the 101 Actions Project is enhancing the natural environment through greening initiatives. This includes the removal of weeds, the planting of trees, creating biodiversity pockets, and incorporating more green spaces along Newtownards Road. These efforts aim to improve air quality, reduce noise pollution, promote sustainability and make the road more inviting.

## b. Cleaning

**Community litter picks, graffiti removal and awareness drives**

This involves community-led clean-up efforts to tackle issues like litter and graffiti. By organising regular clean-up drives, residents, businesses, Belfast City Council and other agencies can take an active approach in improving the appearance and upkeep of the area, fostering a cleaner and more welcoming environment.

## c. Fixing

**Frontage repair tasks from painting, fixing and removing of clutter**

Focused on repairing and maintaining the built environment, this aspect includes storefront refurbishments, frontage repairs and the removal of unnecessary street clutter. These actions help improve the visual appeal of the road and ensure spaces are well-maintained and accessible.

## d. Activating

**Positive artworks and murals, shutter redesigns and pop-up initiatives**

To breathe life into public spaces, the project incorporates and expands on creative elements such as colourful murals, artistic shutter designs, and pop-up events. These initiatives encourage community interaction, boost local pride, and transform the road into a lively, engaging space for residents and visitors.



## 2. 101 Actions

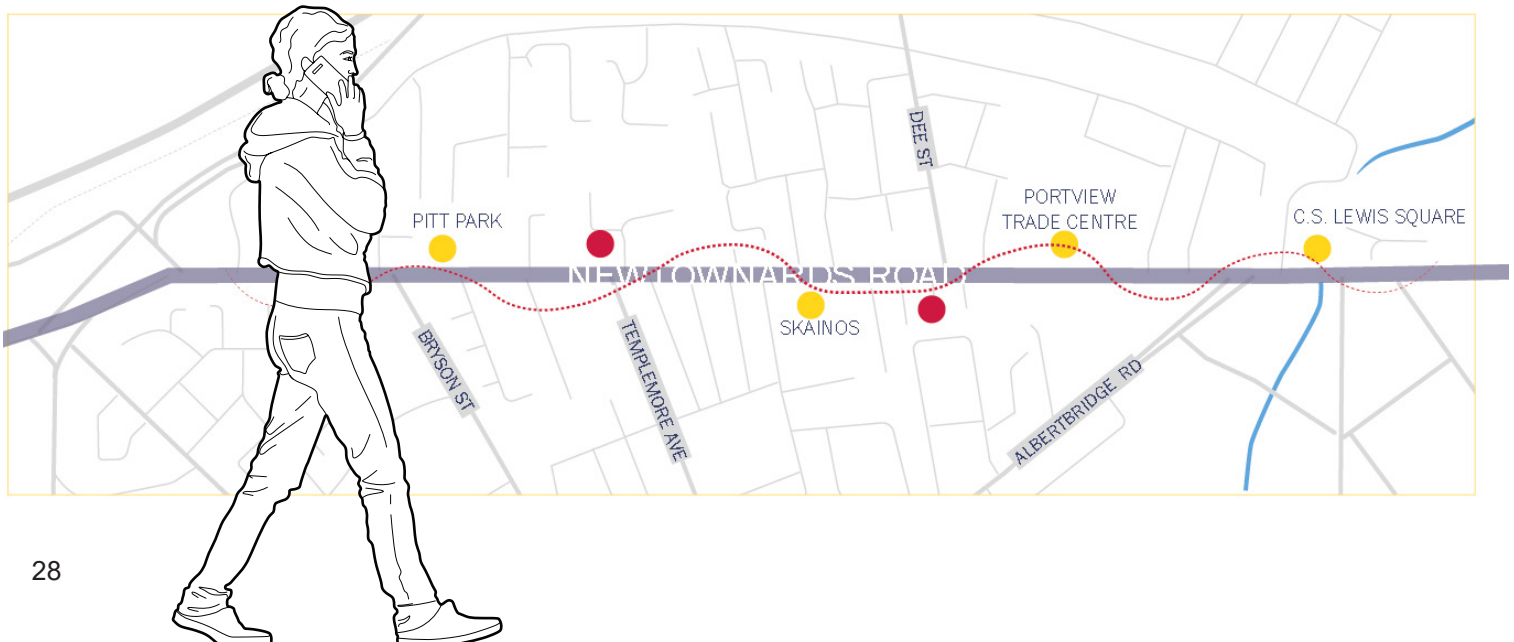
# SOCIAL SPACES

Enlivening the Newtownards Road as a place for people at the heart of our community.

*It should become the hub again with the buzz of shopping and eating.*

*Creating a meeting place again!*

The “Social Spaces” project seeks to maximise the limited space along Newtownards Road by revitalising existing areas and creating new opportunities for community engagement. By creatively utilising amenities such as benches and enhancing public spaces like Pitt Park, Skainos Square, Portview Square and CS Lewis Square, the project aims to breathe new life into these locations. The vision goes beyond improving what already exists, exploring the potential for new public spaces to further expand community interaction and social connections. Strategic interventions at key locations will help create dynamic social spaces that enrich the fabric of Newtownards Road, fostering a sense of belonging, pride and connectivity for users.





## a. Existing Pavement Space

**Making the most of existing limited space.  
(Eg benches)**

Maximising the existing, limited pavement space along Newtownards Road is crucial to enhancing the road. Adding benches and seating areas would provide resting spots for pedestrians, encourage social interactions and invite people to spend more time enjoying the area. Simple yet impactful additions, like planters, bike racks and well-placed street furniture, will transform otherwise underutilised spaces into welcoming areas, making the road more pedestrian-friendly and community-oriented.

## b. Existing Public Spaces

**Animating our squares and parks along the Road  
(Pitt Park, Skainos Square, Portview Square,  
CS Lewis Square)**

This offers a key opportunity to foster community life and engagement. These spaces can be further energised with interactive elements like public art installations, seasonal events and community activities that draw in residents and visitors. By bringing energy and purpose to each of these areas, the project aims to transform them into lively hubs for socialising, relaxation, cultural and artistic expression, creating a sense of place and enhancing the overall vibrancy of Newtownards Road.



## 3. Social Spaces

# SOCIAL SPACES

There is approx

**6,530 m<sup>2</sup>**

potential  
public realm



Along the Newtownards Road, there exists a significant opportunity to create approximately 70% more public space by revitalising currently unused or underutilised areas. These spaces, often overlooked or deemed as “dead space,” have the potential to be transformed into vibrant hubs of activity, contributing positively to the overall sense of place and belonging in the area. By re-purposing these underused spaces, we can enhance the livability and attractiveness of the Newtownards Road, fostering a more inclusive and engaging environment for residents and visitors.

There is an  
opportunity to  
create

**70%**  
more public spaces  
along Newtownards  
Road

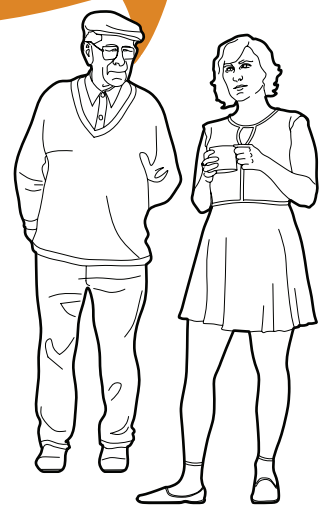


## c. Potential Public Spaces

Expanding our public realm at key locations, creating new social spaces for the Newtownards Road

By transforming underutilised areas into accessible social spaces, the project can introduce welcoming areas for relaxation, socialising and community events, fostering a vibrant atmosphere that encourages people to dwell and engage with their surroundings, community and businesses.

*I would like to see some of the character come back to the Road, spaces for families and places for our younger people to access*



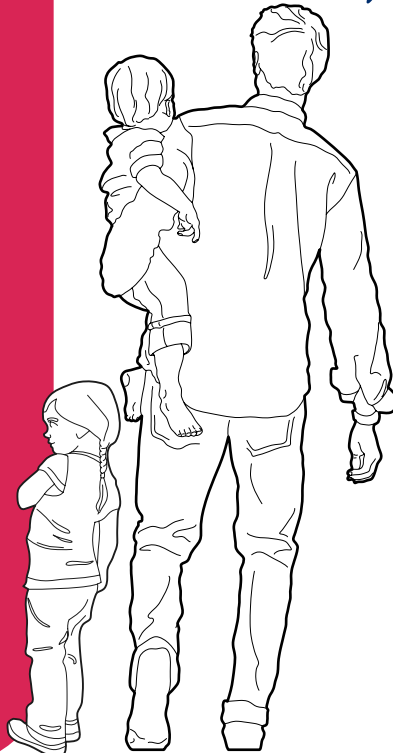
Illustrative concept only

## 3. Social Spaces



# PLACES TO LIVE, WORK & SHOP

Increasing  
the Road's  
population by  
planning and  
promoting  
site specific  
developments.



The “Places to Live, Work, and Shop” project focuses on transforming Newtownards Road into a vibrant, mixed-use area. At the core of this initiative is gently increasing the population of the Newtownards Road, helping to bring back the buzz. This will involve good quality, sustainable development that is appropriate in character and scale of the street. A mix of private, social and affordable housing should be joined by new business and employment opportunities along the road.

## a. Engagement

**Regular and sustained dialogue with building owners, potential partners and planning authority**

These continuous conversations enable proactive coordination, build strong partnerships and ensure alignment on development goals. By engaging all stakeholders regularly, the project fosters collaboration, streamlines planning processes and helps address concerns, paving the way for a united and impactful transformation of the area.

## b. Design Guide

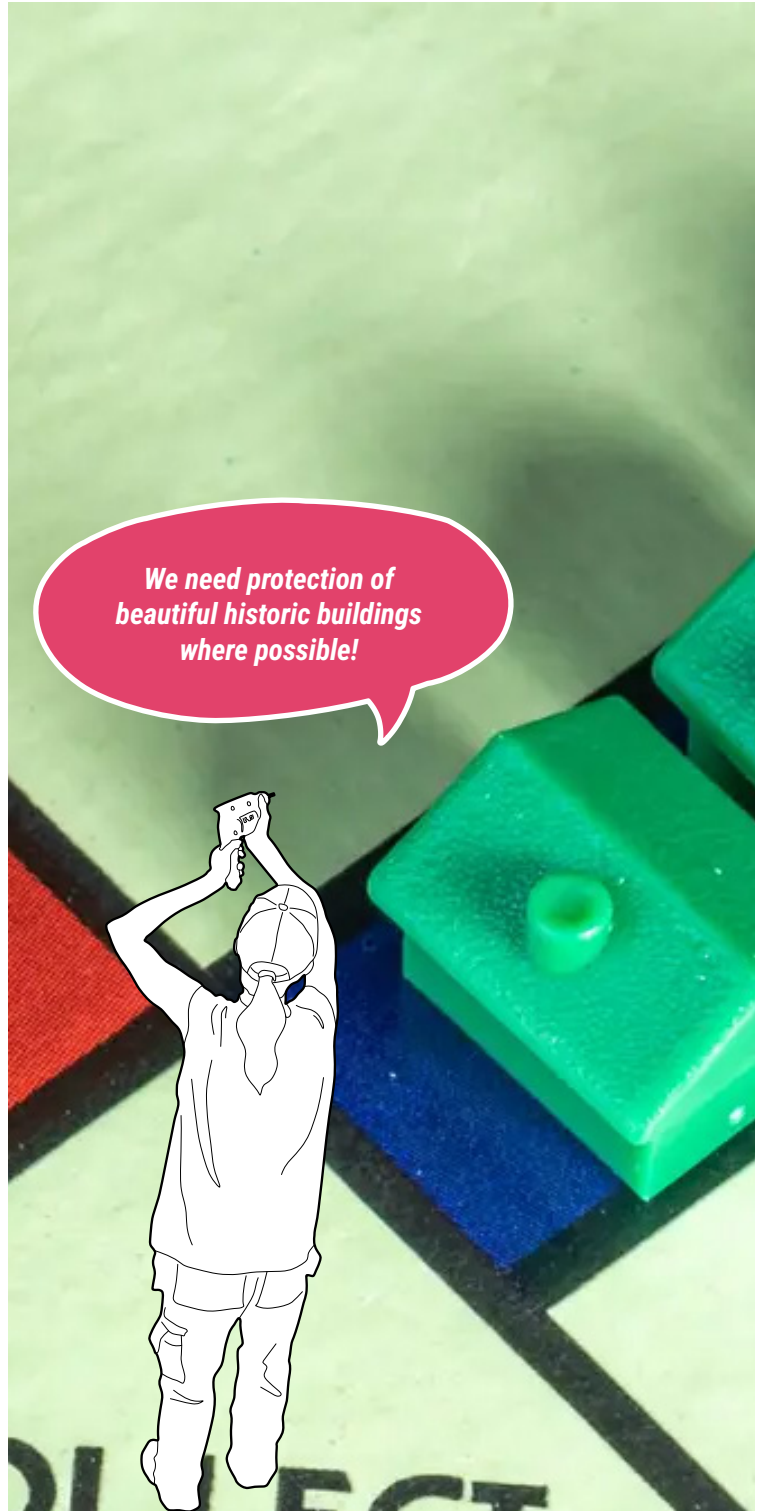
### Urban design principles for the Newtownards Road (Heritage, Density, Typologies, Mixed Use Development)

The guide seeks to protect historical buildings, integrating them into modern developments. Density principles encourage a mix of residential and commercial spaces, creating an active streetscape. Typologies consider architectural styles that maintain the area's character, enhancing visual cohesion. Finally, promoting mixed-use development supports residential, retail and recreational spaces, ensuring the area serves diverse community needs and becomes a lively, multi-functional destination.

## c. Acquisition

### Where necessary, the acquisition and development of vacant properties

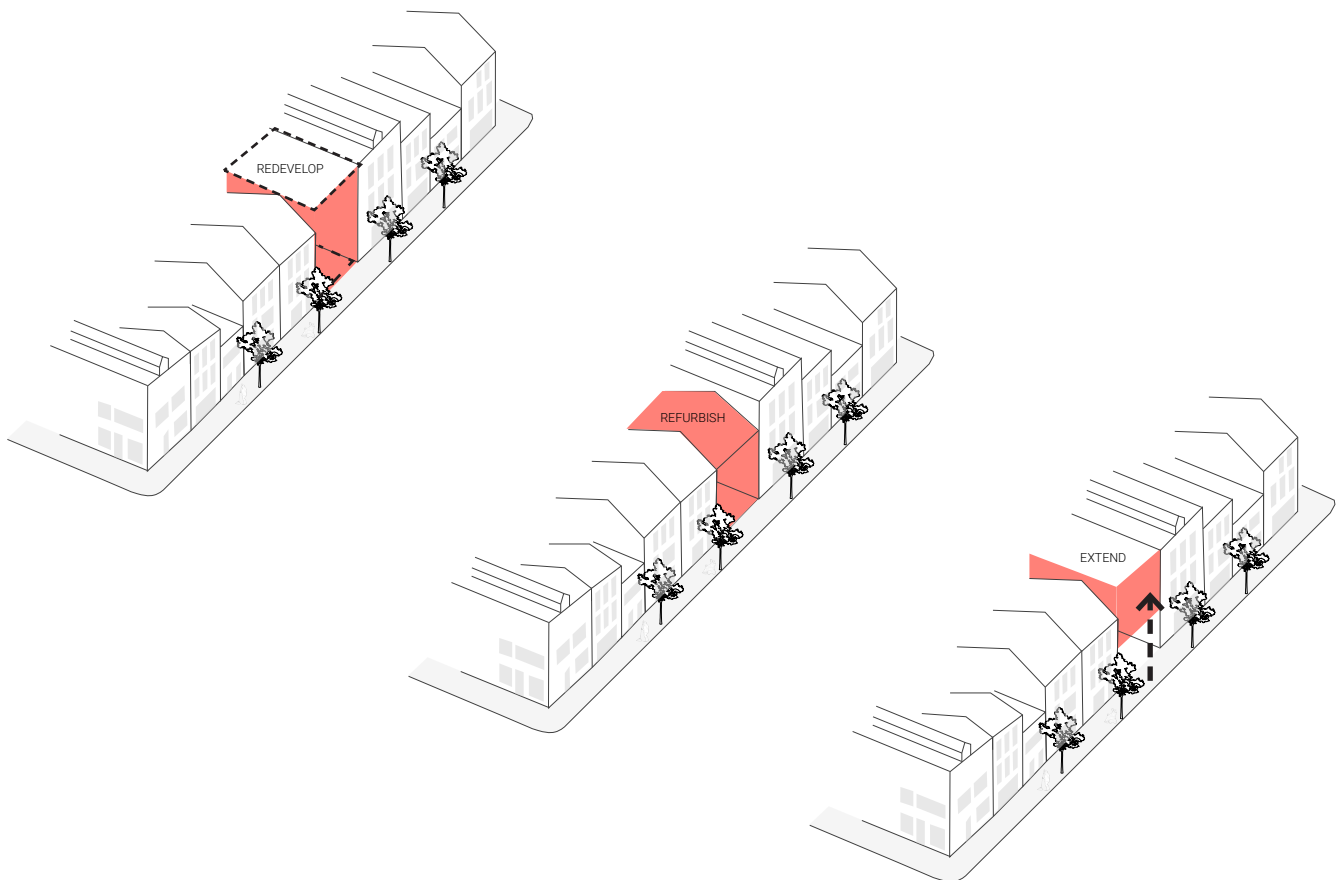
Should buildings or spaces remain undeveloped for too long, efforts are required to acquire them and bring forward development. This can introduce new residential, commercial and community-focused uses that contribute to a lively and cohesive urban environment. This approach not only addresses issues of dereliction but also provides opportunities to attract investment, stimulate economic growth, and strengthen community ties by bringing life back into unoccupied buildings.



## 4. Places To Live, Work & Shop

## Revitalising Newtownards Road: Extending, Refurbishing, and Redeveloping Buildings for Vibrant Living Spaces:

In response to the "Places to Live, Work and Shop" project's mission of enhancing urban living along Newtownards Road, the strategy of extending, refurbishing and redeveloping buildings emerges as a transformative solution. This approach envisions a dynamic urban environment where existing structures are revitalised to meet the evolving needs of the community.



**1. Redeveloping** underutilised spaces presents a chance to reimagine Newtownards Road's built environment, introducing innovative mixed-use developments that integrate residential, commercial and communal spaces. This approach creates streetscapes where residents can live, work and socialise.

**2. Refurbishing** focuses on restoring and modernising derelict buildings breathing new life into historic façades and interiors. By incorporating sustainable design principles and energy-efficient technologies, refurbished buildings become exemplars of eco-friendly urban living.

**3. Extending** buildings offers an opportunity to maximise existing space and create larger living areas, accommodating families and a modern way of living while preserving the architectural heritage of the street.



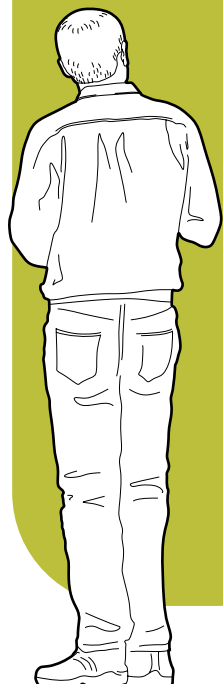
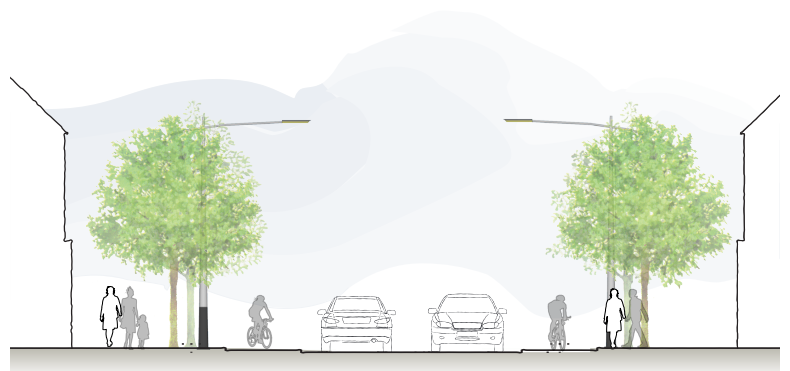


## 4. Places To Live, Work & Shop

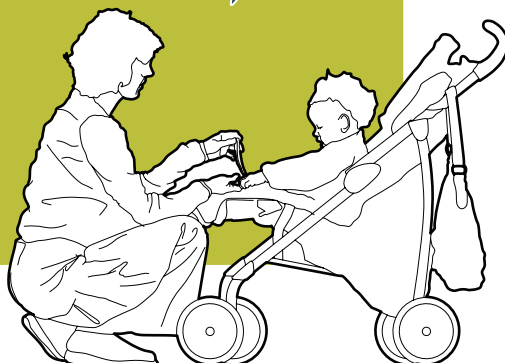
# RE- IMAGINING THE ROAD

Making the  
Newtownards Road  
a safer and healthier  
environment for  
everybody who uses it.

Safety is important in the project's effort to re-envision Newtownards Road. The project is focused on slowing traffic and enhancing pedestrian crossing facilities to ensure the well-being of all road users. Its commitment to improving air quality and reducing noise pollution includes planting more street trees along the thoroughfare. Additionally, the project is exploring the possibility of reallocating road space to accommodate widened footpaths, improved cycle lanes, and on-street parking, fostering a more balanced and inclusive streetscape for the community.



To be safer and more  
opportunities for next  
generation





## a. Safety

**Slowing traffic and improving pedestrian crossing facilities**

By introducing measures like reduced speed limits, traffic calming features, and well-marked crossings, the project aims to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment that prioritises safety for all road users. These improvements will encourage more foot traffic, making the road feel more accessible, safe and welcoming to residents and visitors.

## b. Air Quality

**Planting more street trees to counter air and noise pollution**

Enhancing air quality along Newtownards Road can be achieved in part by planting more street trees to help counteract air and noise pollution. Trees act as natural air filters, absorbing pollutants and reducing noise levels, creating a healthier and more pleasant environment for pedestrians and residents. To have real impact this must be complemented by further measures to improve air quality in this part of the city and beyond.

## c. Rebalanced Space

**Exploring a potential reallocation of road space for widened footpaths, improved cycle lanes and on street car parking**

Rebalancing road space along Newtownards Road presents a valuable opportunity to improve accessibility and create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment. By exploring the potential for reallocating road space to include widened footpaths, improved cycle lanes and on-street parking, the project can create a safer and more inclusive space. This approach also promotes active travel, encourages walking/cycling and enhances the overall experience for all users of Newtownards Road.



# 5. Reimagining the Road



# DELIVERING THE VISION

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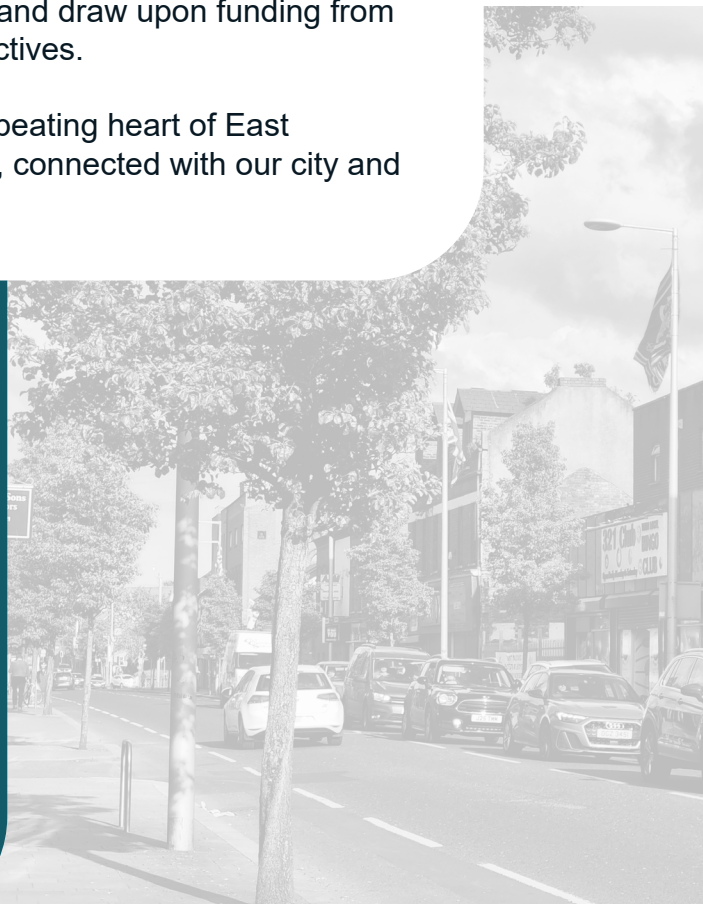
Our Vision for Newtownards Roads has been shaped by a collaborative process involving residents, business owners, community groups and government officials. It represents an upbeat and confident approach to rejuvenating the road, tackling challenges head on while helping guide the development of the Newtownards Road in a positive direction.

Above all this vision is about people. It is about us all working together towards the same goals and realising change for the better, one step at a time.

The hard work starts now. Engagement with the community will continue through the Action Group and its members and opportunities to advance initiatives will be identified. These will be led by different organisations and draw upon funding from various sources, all working together to the same objectives.

Join us in ensuring that the Newtownards Road is the beating heart of East Belfast, flourishing as a unique and vibrant destination, connected with our city and welcoming to all.

**The beating heart of East Belfast,  
the Newtownards Road will  
flourish as a unique and vibrant  
destination, connected with our  
city and welcoming to all.**





# TIME- FRAMES FOR ACTION

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The following page outlines the roadmap to achieve Our Vision for Newtownards Road, breaking down key projects and initiatives into phased timeframes, subject to funding. Each project represents a coordinated effort by local organisations and local and central government, all working together to create a thriving, accessible, and inviting Newtownards Road.

## **Short-Term (0-2):**

Initiatives in this phase focus on laying the groundwork for revitalisation, with an emphasis on quick wins that build momentum and encourage community engagement. Short-term projects may include community clean-ups, temporary art, improved pedestrian safety measures, and early branding efforts to enhance the street's appeal. These actions set the stage for bigger changes.

## **Medium-Term (2-4 Years):**

Building on the foundation of initial efforts, medium-term projects aim to create lasting enhancements. This phase may involve expanded green spaces, planting trees and frontage improvements for local businesses. Efforts to support local enterprises, activate vacant properties and introduce public art will help foster a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere along the road.

## **Long-Term (3+ Years):**

The long-term phase focuses on transformative projects with significant impact on the road's future. These initiatives could include larger-scale developments such as substantial infrastructure upgrades, the creation of multi-use public spaces and the establishment of cultural and community hubs. Continued community collaboration and alignment of funding will be essential to ensure these final stages bring the vision to life.

By setting clear timeframes, we can track our progress and ensure each step brings us closer to the shared vision of Newtownards Road.



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)	MEDIUM TERM (2-4 Years)	LONG TERM (5+ Years)
<b>1. Our People</b>				
<b>a. Communication</b>	Fostering more effective communication along the road and about the road - its past, its present and future	★		
<b>b. Place Brand</b>	Developing and rolling out a positive & engaging place brand identity for the Newtownards Road	★		
<b>c. Festival</b>	Working together to bring people together on the Newtownards Road through existing & new events.		★	
<b>2. 101 Actions</b>				
<b>d. Greening</b>	Growing, weeding, floral displays and biodiversity projects	★		
<b>e. Cleaning</b>	Community litter picks, graffiti removal and awareness drives	★		
<b>f. Fixing</b>	Frontage repair tasks from painting, fixing and removing of clutter	★		
<b>g. Activating</b>	Positive artworks and murals, shutter redesigns and pop-up initiatives	★		
<b>3. Social Spaces</b>				
<b>h. Existing Pavement Space</b>	Making the most of existing limited space.		★	
<b>i. Existing Public</b>	Animating our squares and parks along the Road	★		
<b>j. Potential Public Space</b>	Expanding our public realm at key locations, creating new social spaces for the Newtownards Road			★
<b>4. Places to Live, Work &amp; Shop</b>				
<b>k. Engagement</b>	Regular and sustained dialogue with building owners, potential partners and planning authority	★		
<b>l. Design Guide</b>	Urban design principles for the Newtownards Road		★	
<b>m. Acquisition</b>	Where necessary, the acquisition and development of vacant properties.			★
<b>5. Reimagining the Road</b>				
<b>n. Safety</b>	Slowing traffic and improving pedestrian crossing facilities		★	
<b>o. Air Quality</b>	Planting more street trees to counter air and noise pollution		★	
<b>p. Rebalanced Space</b>	Exploring a potential reallocation of road space for widened footpaths, improved cycle lanes and on street car parking			★



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