



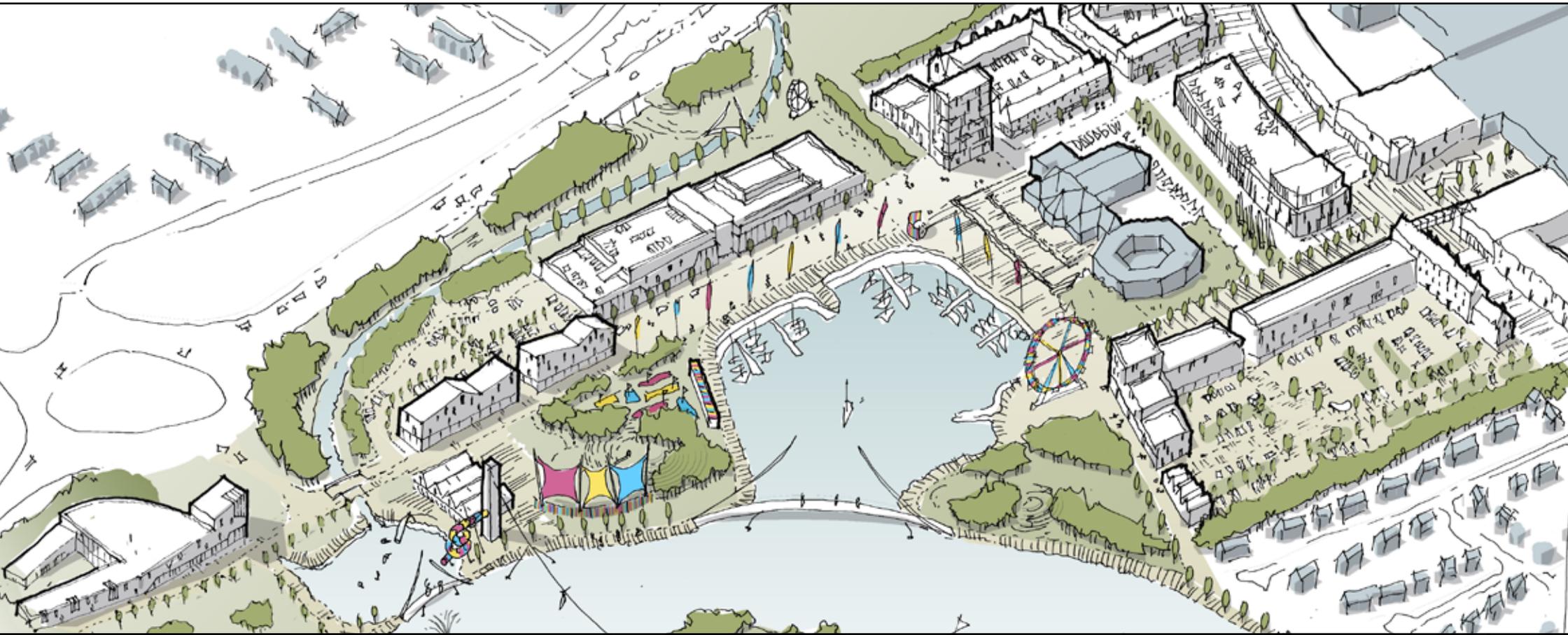
SOUTH LAKESHORE MASTERPLAN - NOT COMPLETED

In November 2014 Craigavon Borough Council, one of the predecessors to the current Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (the "Council") commissioned consultants to produce the South Lakeshore Masterplan, a high level visionary plan with conceptual designs.

The South Lakeshore Masterplan remains unfinished, was never publically consulted upon or adopted by either Craigavon Borough Council or the Council. The document therefore should not be relied upon or interpreted to be the Council's adopted position on development in this area.

South Lakeshore Masterplan

Central Craigavon



The **Masterplan**
September 2015

GM
DESIGN
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**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council



The South Lake. A peaceful and tranquil place at the heart of Craigavon.

Foreword

The South Lake and its environs were at the heart of the Craigavon New Town project. This area has been transformed from the raw engineered earth works and structures of the "Balancing Lakes" of the early 1970's to today's most attractive, naturalised landscape, valued by local residents and by visitors.

While much has been achieved in the creation of a greatly valued recreational asset, the challenges remain to improve the linkages to the nearby housing areas and integrate the functioning of this area with the adjoining extensive and particularly successful commercial facilities.

In addition there are emerging development opportunities which could enhance this area without detracting from its recreational value or environmental qualities.

This Masterplan is commended as a sound basis for delivering this area's development potential in a considered, co-ordinated manner and enhancing its integration into the wider functioning of Central Craigavon, while ensuring the essence of its very considerable natural and recreational assets are not only protected but positively enhanced.

The Masterplan

South Lakeshore . Central Craigavon

by

GM Design Associates Ltd.

for

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

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Front Cover - Artist's impression of a rejuvenated South Lake shore.

Executive summary

The South Lakeshore is at the heart of the Region's second largest urban area outside of Greater Belfast. It is centrally located within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area, with a population of 203,800 in mid 2013.

This area was originally conceived as a large central park with extensive built development on three sides when Craigavon was laid out in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The ground level of an area of low, marshy land was further reduced, along with the construction of complex barriers with engineered water outlets, to create two artificial lakes on either side of the railway. The associated substantial earth movement and re-contouring of this area, was followed by extensive woodland planting on the surrounding amenity lands. These woodlands have now generally reached maturity. Consequently this area now appears as a mature landscape based around a prominent and attractive water feature.

There are major roads on three sides which are of a high standard and directly connect the area into the wider Regional strategic road network. Therefore it is not expected that either access or existing road network capacity will be a significant impediment to development, although some adjustments to the road network may be necessary, especially if major uses generating substantial volumes of traffic are introduced. If these proposals progress, it can be expected that Transport Assessments will be required as an integral part of the planning process for the consideration of all major development proposals.

In terms of neighbouring uses this area is a typical "New Town" type of place, with relatively low density modern development that has a rather fragmented character. This is partly due to the implementation of the original masterplan for Craigavon with its housing areas set within generous swathes of open space, and partly due to subsequent events, when a number of "hard to let" housing estates were either wholly or partly cleared. Many of these cleared areas are just beyond the southern boundary of the South Lakeshore area. More recently there has been a build-up of commercial development immediately to the east of this area, in and around Rushmere Shopping Centre. Again this has a fragmented, car orientated character, severed from the South Lakeshore by busy roads. These developments tend to be inward looking and self-contained, with the appearance of a large out of town commercial zone rather than a "town centre". To the south west of this commercial area, within the past 15 years, there has been considerable housing development.

The primary planning document guiding development in this area is the Craigavon Area Plan (CAP) adopted in August 2004. This is now considerably past its intended expiry in 2010. In many respects it is of diminishing relevance to the contemporary situation, even though it remains an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The western section of these lands, for the entire area between the South Lake and the Rushmere Centre, including the Civic Centre and

the adjoining undeveloped lands to both the south and north of it, are within the designated Craigavon Town Centre. Therefore these lands are deemed suitable, in principle, for a wide range of uses including retail, office, other commercial, entertainment, leisure, hospitality and civic purposes.

It is expected that Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will prepare a replacement development plan for CAP within the next five years. As this Plan progresses towards its completion it will acquire increasing weight in the making of future planning decisions. This Masterplan will inform the preparation of this replacement development plan (but would not be binding on its final form), by providing an up to date assessment of appropriate and desirable development, based on a thorough review of contemporary circumstances.

Other planning policies and guidance contained in a range of Planning Policy Statements and Development Control Advice Notes are also relevant to the planning consideration of development proposals within this area.

On review of the main background considerations it would suggest that there is considerable housing development potential (near/mid term future), especially on sites with significant amenity or other attributes, including within the central Craigavon area. In this context, the immediate vicinity of the South Lake can be expected to provide an attractive environment for new housing.

There appears to be scope for additional commercial development within the South lake site adjacent to the retail core of Craigavon, on lands to the east between Rushmore and Lakeview Road. The development of these lands would represent the opportunity for an appropriate retail-led scheme, while also creating a frontage that addresses Lake View Road, where the existing arrangement turns its back. There would also be scope to re-consider the current bus interchange facilities and their adequacy relative to additional development proposals on the shores of the South Lake.

The recreational offer of this area has considerable potential for expansion with the proposed Leisure Centre – including swimming, gym, keep fit, squash & indoor football; the South Lake - including boating, yachting, canoeing & fishing; the surrounding recreational lands – including walking, cycling, mountain biking, jogging, other aerobic activities, informal play & children's play.

Although Craigavon has many and varied leisure and tourism assets along with several unique facilities in its regional context, such as the ski slope, it is not perceived as a significant visitor destination, either by residents of N.Ireland or those from “out of state”. It is not within any of the recognised key tourism destinations in the Region, but it is easily accessible to the Greater Belfast area, the Kingdom of Mourne and those places with the closest associations with Saint Patrick. With increasing local economic activity along with future progress on major proposals

particularly those in the heart of the Craigavon area, such as the large consolidated campus for the Southern Regional College, the feasibility of an appropriate hotel facility can be expected to improve and may, at the right time, become a commercially viable proposition. In these circumstances it would be prudent for this master plan to reserve an appropriate site or sites for such a hotel facility, which would enhance and complement the existing functioning and status of the South Lakeshore area.

There is significant spare capacity in the school estate in the wider area around the South Lake, both at the primary and post primary levels, particularly in the controlled sector. The main educational need and proposal relevant to this Master Plan is that of the Southern Regional College. In the circumstances where the existing buildings of this College, on both their Lurgan and Portadown sites, will require major expenditure or replacement in the near future, coupled with the opportunities that will be created by an integrated, central, purpose designed and built facility, with excellent accessibility to all, the College is at present progressing a proposal for a single facility. After a review of the alternatives, a site adjoining the South Lake has been identified as best meeting all the College's requirements. In essence, this proposal is wholly consistent, with the broader planning objectives for Central Craigavon and this area.

The major existing, public service, facilities in the area around the South Lake include the Civic

Centre, Marlborough House (accommodating various Central and local Government Departments and Agencies including the Department for Social Development, the Council's planning department and Transport NI (part of the Department of Regional Development) and Craigavon Courthouse. None of the other statutory agencies have identified any significant plans within the central Craigavon area. Hence it is unlikely within the South Lakeshore area, that there will be any significant need for additional land for public services.

Although the railway passes along the northern boundary of the site and there has been a long term proposal to construct an additional railway station close to the South Lake.

The main issues relating to public transport are the location and physical character of the existing Rushmere bus facilities. There may be the opportunity to adjust and improve the present public transport arrangements, improving passenger comfort and facilities, enhancing accessibility and relating better to existing and future important destinations in the local area including those of the South Lakeshore.

Although the South Lake area is close to a dense network of high quality transport links, it is not particularly accessible from its immediate environs. The major four lane dual carriageway, which defines the southern boundary of this area is the opposite of an urban street, rather it was designed and functions as a self-contained conduit for

vehicles and thereby is a very considerable barrier in the local context. Compounding issues relating to accessibility, Eastway along the eastern boundary is a major road which also functions as a barrier for most movement, emphasised by its high embankments and the series of north-south major roads immediately to the west of the South Lake are a triple barrier to easy and attractive movement from the South Lake area westwards. Similarly the Belfast to Dublin railway which defines the northern boundary of the South Lake area, is a major physical impediment to movement towards the north; although punctuated by several predestrian/cycle underpasses these are within a rather unattractive environment.

Having regard to the attributes, opportunities and needs of the wider community, the future vision for the South Lake Shore is that of:-

The development of a vibrant waterfront along the western side of the South Lake;

- ***expanding the size;***
- ***widening the functions; and***
- ***improving the accessibility of Craigavon Town Centre***

..... for the benefit of all the community, creating an exceptionally attractive regional centre, while protecting the essence of the natural features of the area in and around the South Lake as a valued leisure and amenity asset.

It is important to recognise that the Master Plan proposals for the South Lake area have a wider context. They will be of significance for the surrounding area and they will equally be affected by any future development that takes place beyond its boundary. Hence the following measures are incorporated within the Masterplan to achieve and improvement in the wider context:-

- The provision of a rail station/ rail halt adjoining the north western corner of the South Lake area, providing direct rail links with the Belfast-Dublin rail corridor and improved public transport links with much of Northern Ireland.
- The redevelopment and relocation of the bus station so that it is visually and functionally wholly integrated more effectively into the wider area, providing a higher quality of local service and better and more convenient access for users of public transport to the wide range of facilities both existing and proposed.
- The provision of additional direct road links into the South Lake area from the adjoining road network, improving legibility and accessibility.
- The long term creation of a surface level urban street, incorporating safe and convenient pedestrian and cyclist passage, east-west through the heart of Craigavon Town Centre, eliminating or at least reducing the barrier effects of the three existing major north-south roads.

- The enhancement of the underpasses and bridges and their surroundings, southwards across Lake Road into the heart of the neighbouring communities, and north under the railway with more sensitive and appropriate landscaping, detailing, lighting and higher standards of future maintenance.
- In association with any longer term major development, improving the directness and legibility of the proposed Greenway linking this area to the centre of Lurgan and Portadown and their railway stations.

The major proposals of the Master Plan are summarised as follows:-

- Leisure Centre;
- Southern Regional College;
- Commercial/Hotel;
- Residential;
- Offices;
- Retail;
- Rail Station/Halt;
- Park and Ride facility;
- Relocated bus station; and
- Shared car parking.

In addition to these core elements of the Master Plan there are a range of potential ancillary features, attractions and developments, whose implementation would be complementary to the main proposals of this Master Plan. These are worthy of further investigation and consideration including:-

- Events space;
- Public art;
- Wildflower meadow;
- Observation tower;
- Use of the existing island for recreational purposes;
- A "zip-line" between the observation tower and the island; and
- Childrens play zone;

A major element, key to many of these proposals, is the creation of an attractive and safe route from the heart of the Rushmere complex, directly through to the western edge of the South Lake, either by a traffic calmed crossing of Lake View Road at grade, or possibly with a bridge crossing above, (or both) with appropriate high quality facilities to move pedestrians without impediment between the different levels. This enhanced route would connect at a central position on to the proposed waterfront, promenade.

It is recommended that the reserved road line along the north shore of the South Lake, which was originally proposed in the 1960s is finally abandoned; because it is un-necessary in traffic terms, visually detrimental to the environmental quality of the lakes, would have a major additional severance impact, would be very detrimental to the visual and functional integrity of the area, and would detract from the quality of the leisure experience of the wider lakes area. It is a proposal that, if retained, will blight the more appropriate future potential of the north shore of the South Lake.

A major objective of the Master Plan is the enhancement of the existing recreational facilities of the area around the South Lake. It is recommended that this area should continue to primarily function as a leisure/recreational resource for all the local community and visitors. With the maturing of the landscape setting coupled with the intensification of adjoining uses this area has become a very important and valued community asset. Any development should not detract from the integrity of its character as a large, well used and very attractive area of parkland.

The Masterplan summarises the actions required to implement it's proposals. It identifies both the time-scale for implementation and the primary agency who would be responsible for taking the proposal forward to implementation. Many of the actions are relatively modest and are capable of delivery in the short term; others are substantial and complex and completion is likely only in the longer term. It will be important to balance the benefits of short terms gains and the need for flexibility as the market and community needs change, ensuring long term major gains are not lost through inappropriate incremental changes.

In this context it is recommended that this master plan is regularly reviewed, preferably every 5 years to ensure that it remains appropriate and relevant to contemporary circumstances. This master plan should inform the preparation of both ACBCBC's Community Plan and their Development Plan and subsequently any future revisions to the Master-Plan should have regard to these Plans.

Considerable progress has been made in the past decade in enhancing the quality of life, the economic performance and the environmental quality of Central Craigavon. In this favourable context new opportunities are emerging, particularly in the vicinity of the South Lake.

There is the potential to create a place of the highest quality over the next decade, but this will require fully addressing and resolving any remaining weaknesses and ensuring new development proceeds in a planned, co-ordinated and integrated manner, rather than as the product of a series of incremental, ad-hoc decisions.

The aim should be the creation of a place with a truly vibrant and urban character, rather than an assemblage of disjointed individual and poorly linked elements and activities.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will have a key role in the implementation of this Masterplan, because it is both the major landowner in this area and also now has a very wide range of functions, responsibilities, powers and resources. In addition to those proposals, which the Council has a direct role in implementation, it also will have a major role in facilitating and assisting in the implementation of many other proposals.

... end

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Wildlife at the South Lake.

1.0 The Context

Introduction

1.1 In December 2014 G M Design Associates were appointed by Craigavon Borough Council (now Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council) to prepare a Masterplan for the area in and around the South Lake in the centre of Craigavon, responding to current circumstances and opportunities. This area includes approximately 104 hectares of land and water in the ownership of the Council, of which 3.5 hectares is already developed (that is the Civic Centre and the Water-sports Centre including their ancillary car parks and service areas). The Master Plan area also extends into an area of developed land, on both sides of Lakeview Road immediately to the north east of Rushmere Shopping Centre, which is in the ownership of either the Department of Regional Development or private owners.

1.2 This Masterplan overlaps with the area designated for a new town centre in the original plans of the late 1960s for the development of Craigavon as a 'New Town'. With progress on the implementation of this town centre frustrated between the early 1970s and late 1990s, in the past 15 years there has been significant development, particularly of retailing. Rushmere and the adjoining commercial developments now function as a major regional shopping centre, drawing considerable trade from all of County Armagh along with the adjoining parts of Counties Down, Monaghan and Tyrone. Its role however, has remained based on retailing along with some administrative functions. It has a more limited range of services and facilities than what would normally be expected within a town

1.3 There are emerging opportunities however, to widen the role and the functions of Craigavon Town Centre. This Masterplan will facilitate availing of these opportunities, providing a framework for future orderly development, without detriment to the recreational value and qualities of these lands and respecting their amenity value for both the local community and visitors to this area.

The South Lake has naturalised over the past 40 years becoming a valued recreational resource with its engineered origins no longer obvious.

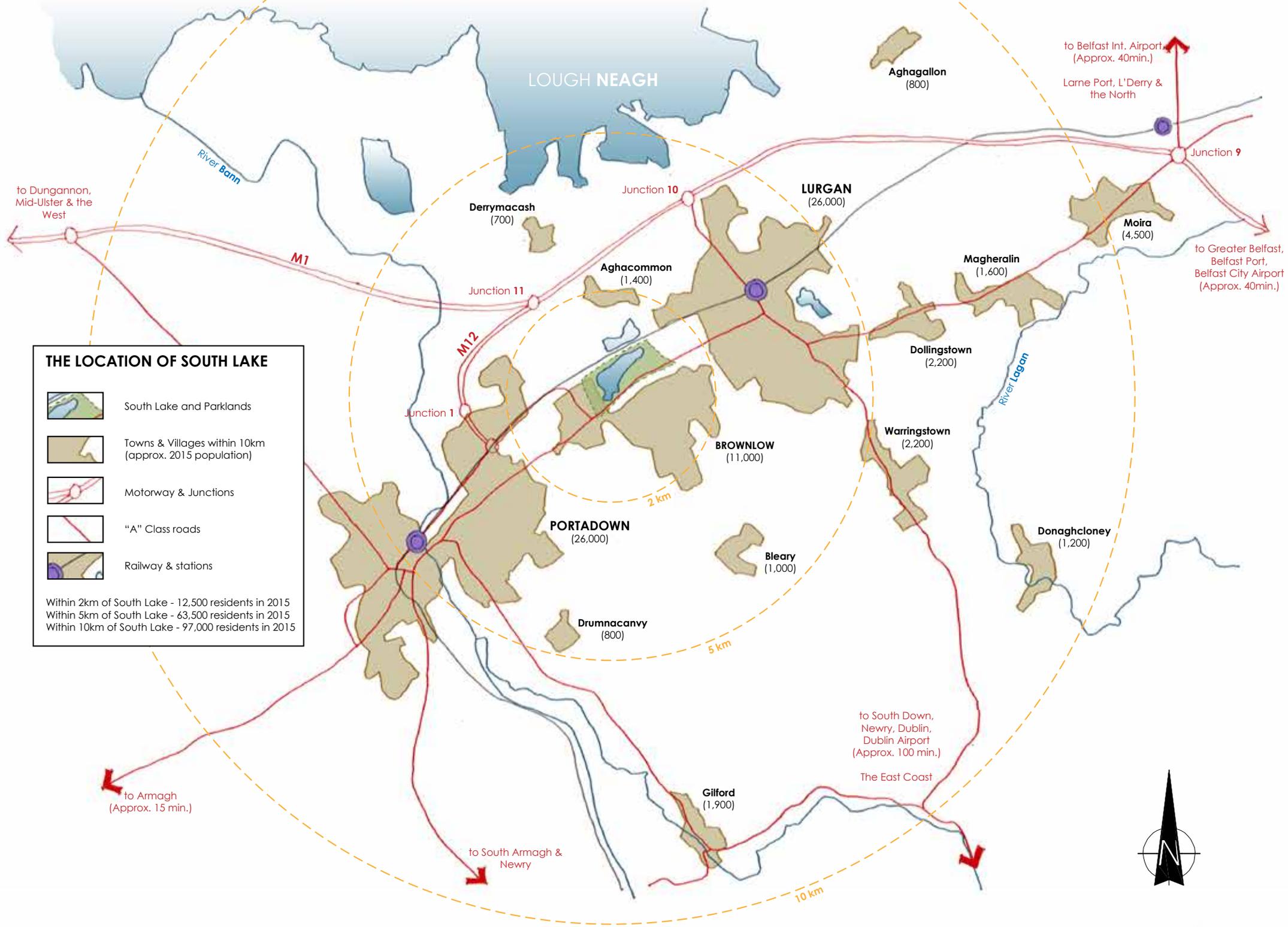


The location of South Lake

1.4 The South Lakeshore is at the heart of the Region's second largest urban area outside of Greater Belfast. It is centrally located within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area, which had an estimated population of 203,800 in mid 2013. Compared to the rest of Northern Ireland, the UK or indeed Europe, this is an area with both a markedly growing population, (there was a 16% increase between 2001 and 2013) and a youthful population (25% of residents were aged under 18 in 2013). This is also a location with excellent road and rail connections, within Ireland's main concentration of population and economic activity, which extends from Greater Dublin to Greater Belfast. It is also close to the major urban communities of the cities of Lisburn and Newry, both within 20 miles of these lands.

1.5 There has been major development over the course of the past 45 years of the lands to the south east, south, south west and west of the South Lake. A short distance to the south east and south are the extensive housing areas of the "New Town" of Brownlow. Immediately to the west there is a large commercial/services complex, which includes Rushmere Shopping Centre, Marlborough Retail Park and other large retailers and retail warehouses, a range of civic buildings including the Council offices, Marlborough House and the Courthouse and a large cinema complex completed in 2015.





THE LOCATION OF SOUTH LAKE

-  South Lake and Parklands
-  Towns & Villages within 10km (approx. 2015 population)
-  Motorway & Junctions
-  "A" Class roads
-  Railway & stations

Within 2km of South Lake - 12,500 residents in 2015
 Within 5km of South Lake - 63,500 residents in 2015
 Within 10km of South Lake - 97,000 residents in 2015

to Belfast Int. Airport
(Approx. 40min.)

Larne Port, L'Derry & the North

Junction 9

to Greater Belfast,
Belfast Port,
Belfast City Airport
(Approx. 40min.)

to Dungannon,
Mid-Ulster & the
West

M1

Junction 11

M12

Junction 1

Junction 10

LURGAN
(26,000)

Derrymacash
(700)

Aghacommon
(1,400)

Magheralin
(1,600)

Moira
(4,500)

Dollingstown
(2,200)

Warringstown
(2,200)

BROWNLOW
(11,000)

PORTADOWN
(26,000)

Bleary
(1,000)

Donaghcloney
(1,200)

Drumnacavy
(800)

Gilford
(1,900)

to South Down,
Newry, Dublin,
Dublin Airport
(Approx. 100 min.)

The East Coast

to Armagh
(Approx. 15 min.)

to South Armagh &
Newry



The location of South Lake (continued)

1.6 In the immediate vicinity of the Civic Centre; that is within 2 kilometres, there are now about 12,500 residents. Within 5 kilometres, which includes most of Lurgan and Portadown and several large villages, there are approximately 63,500 residents. Within 10 kilometres, in an area approximately coincident with the Borough of Craigavon, there are almost 100,000 residents.

1.7 Furthermore this local area also has a markedly increasing population. Since 1991 there has been an increase of 26% in the number of Craigavon residents, the fourth highest rate of increase of the 26 districts in the Region. After a particularly difficult period through the 1970s and into the 1980s, particularly in Brownlow, due to local and regional economic, social, community and physical factors, subsequently there has been considerable housing development in the wider Brownlow area, resulting in a steadily increasing local population.

1.8 This is a very accessible location with good connections from the Regional motorway network. Junction 10 of the M1 is less than 4 kilometres to the north east of the South Lake. For traffic from the west, there is quick and easy access from the M1 at junction 11 on to the M12 and then along the A3 (Northway), directly into these lands.

1.9 There are also relatively good local bus services within Craigavon. The Central bus station is a short distance to the west, with a major bus stop within the eastern boundary of the Master Plan area. The main Belfast to Dublin railway abuts the northern boundary of these lands. Lurgan Railway Station is only 3.5 kilometres to the north east and Portadown Railway Station, with its cross border service, is only 4.5 kilometres to the south west. Furthermore there is a long term proposal to provide a new railway station at a location immediately to the north of the South Lake.

1.10 The central Craigavon area is particularly generously endowed with open space and recreation areas. The extent of existing provision relates more to the original "design" population of 180,000 for the New Town rather than the current population of this area of slightly less than 100,000. Existing open space facilities in the centre of Craigavon, in addition to the lands of the Masterplan, include extensive amenity lands immediately to the north, in a large area around the North Lake that includes Tannaghmore Gardens, extensive amenity lands in and around the Central Playing Fields to the west and large areas of formal and less formal open space within the housing areas to the south east and south of the South Lake.

1.11 Hence the provision of open space in Central Craigavon is greatly in excess of the long established and widely recognised "National Playing Fields Association" standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents. In this context there is considerable scope for a review of the quantum of open space in the centre of Craigavon and a corresponding opportunity to consider the release of carefully chosen, relatively small areas, which are presently undeveloped, for appropriate development, which would bring wider benefits.



The South Lake is close to large residential areas and the vibrant commercial and civic facilities in and around Rushmere immediately to the west.

The Landscape Character of South Lakeshore

1.12 This area was originally conceived as a large central park with extensive built development on three sides when Craigavon was laid out in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The ground level of an area of low, marshy land was further reduced, along with the construction of complex barriers with engineered water outlets, to create two artificial lakes on either side of the railway. The associated substantial earth movement and re-contouring of this area, was followed by extensive woodland planting on the surrounding amenity lands. These woodlands have now generally reached maturity. Consequently this area now appears as a mature landscape based around a prominent and attractive water feature.

1.13 The South Lake is a substantial body of water of approximately 36 hectares, it includes two small islands both with considerable tree cover. The lake is suitable for and is used extensively for a wide range of water-sports.

1.14 There are approximately 65 hectares of recreational land around the South Lake, which includes an extensive network of combined cycle/footpaths, a mountain bike trail, extensive areas of mown grass, less maintained open areas, woodlands and a large area of parkland. This is an area of mostly gentle slopes. The most prominent topographical features are the large, artificial, mounds at the south west of the lands.



Aerial photograph of the South Lake (not to scale).



| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER | |
|---|---|
|  | 1 Formal parkland, more open with extensive areas of mown grass |
|  | 2 Less formal parkland, with extensive less maintained open areas |
|  | 3 Informal parkland with many hedgrow trees and former field patterns |
|  | 4 Planted woodlands at various stages of maturity |
|  | 5 The large expanse of water that is the South Lake |
|  | 6 Buildings and car parks |
|  | 7 Suburban housing |

The Landscape Character of South Lakeshore (continued)

Zone 1

Along the southern and western sides of the South Lake there are sizeable open and relatively high maintenance areas with mown grass and formal paths. This appears as a more formal environment, where the adjoining buildings and associated car parks, service yards, paved areas and high perimeter fencing, all contribute to the sense that this is a semi urban environment.



Aerial image of part of Zone 1.



The maintained open spaces along the southern and western shores of South Lake.

Zone 2

Along the northern, eastern and south eastern edges of the South Lake, along with the wedge of land between the Civic Centre and the housing to the west of the South Lake, there are extensive open spaces where there is a lower level of maintenance. These areas are particularly characteristic of the areas immediately adjoining the South Lake.



Aerial image of part of Zone 2.



The less maintained northern shore of the South Lake, with its more natural appearance.

The Landscape Character of South Lakeshore (continued)

Zone 3

In the eastern corner of these lands, further away from the South Lake, there is a gently undulating area, where the original field pattern has survived intact, hedgerows have been allowed to mature and have been supplemented by the planting of considerable numbers of hardwood trees. With its mix of small paddocks and numerous trees this area has a distinctive and attractive parkland character.



Aerial image of part of Zone 3.



The undulating and more open eastern area adjoining Eastway.

Zone 4

There is a broad belt of woodland, which is now semi mature, planted and established over the past 40 years, extending from Lake Road continuously to Eastway. This includes about 18 hectares (that is about 45 acres) of woodland. In addition there are also three smaller areas of woodland, elsewhere within these amenity lands, including the two wooded islands.



Aerial image of part of Zone 4.



The maturing woodlands with sheltered paths.

The Landscape Character of South Lakeshore (continued)

Zone 5

At the heart of this area is the wedge shaped South Lake, which is 1,300m in length and tends to widen towards its south western end, with a maximum width of 500m. There are attractive open views of the Lake from outside the area, including from the railway for over a kilometre of the rail journey and from the eastern edge of the Rushmere Shopping Centre (which at present generally turns its back on the Lake). From the cycle path/footpath network around the Lake there are almost continuous views across this major water feature, which range from views towards the south west that are dominated by built development to views that are exceedingly “natural” towards the south east and east. The two wooded islands close to the eastern shoreline enhance the visual attractiveness of the Lake.



Aerial image of part of Zone 5.



A view east across the major water feature of the South Lake, with little evidence of the nearby extensive urban developments.

Zone 6

The buildings and associated hard surfaces of the Civic Centre and the Water Sports Centre, both at the south eastern edge of the area, are at present somewhat visually incongruous, not helped by the high and functional security fencing and absence of any significant softening landscaping within their grounds.



Aerial image of part of Zone 6.



The view from the south east towards the Civic Centre, which would benefit from appropriate landscaping to soften its appearance.

The Landscape Character of South Lakeshore (continued)

Zone 7

In the western extremity of the Master Plan area, there is a large area of modern suburban housing extending down a moderate slope almost to the eastern shoreline. Where this is without boundary walls or fences and the houses face directly towards the Lake, this built development merges relatively harmoniously into the Lake edge. The southern part of this housing area however, is visually less successful relative to the South Lake, where the dwellings have boundary fences backing on to the amenity lands and where they fail to front directly on to the Lake



Aerial image of part of Zone 4.



Lakeside housing along the western shore, bringing residents close so that there is natural overlooking of this part of South Lake.

1.15 In response to these landscape characteristics it is recommended:-

- **Zone 1** is an obvious area for expansion of a high quality, urban environment creating an attractive waterfront and enhancing the functioning of the rest of the South Lakeshore.
- **Zone 2** is generally suitable for appropriate development. It has potential for a high density urban form where the land abuts the existing Rushmere Centre and for a lower profile and less dense form along the north shoreline of South Lake.
- **Zone 3** may be appropriate for suburban housing in the longer term, provided it fully respects and retains existing trees and hedgerows.
- **Zone 4** should generally be retained as managed woodland providing an important amenity and habitat asset,.
- The South Lake (**Zone 5**) should be retained as a major amenity asset, supporting appropriate water sports, preferably those that do not generate noise or disturbance and are compatible with a valued wildlife habitat.
- The buildings of **Zone 6** should be enhanced whenever there is the opportunity. Specifically they could be better visually integrated into the wider functioning of the area by the removal or replacement of the existing high and functional perimeter fences with more visually sensitive and/or lower boundary definition, if at some time in the future this should become feasible.
- **Zone 7** – no action necessary or appropriate.

Topography and orientation of the lands around South Lake

1.16 The terrain around the South Lake, with reference to the adjacent map, can be characterised as follows:-

- There is an almost flat area around the margins of the lake. The lowest part of this area is calculated to be at risk from a 1 in 100 year flood event (allowing for future anticipated climate change). There is however, no record of any significant flooding event since the South Lake was created about 40 years ago, in the circumstances where it was designed to receive large volumes of flood water from the relatively minor watercourses that drain into its south side and are then released, in a controlled manner, through outlets from its north east corner. The system has worked for many decades as intended and designed.
- On the eastern side of South Lake there are a cluster of steep sided mounds that were artificially created 40 years ago. Two of these form small islands within the South Lake and a third projects as a promontory out into the Lake. There is also a particularly large and high mound in the southern corner of this area, where it adjoins the very large roundabout at the intersection of Central Way and Lake Road. These mounds are prominent features and with slopes that, to some extent, limit their suitability for development.



The engineered link between the North and South Lake and the associated rather forbidding underpass under the railway.



TOPOGRAPHY AND ASPECT

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Low and almost flat margins of the lake with potential flood risk |
|  | Mounds and islands |
|  | Significant slopes - land facing east and north east |
|  | Modest slopes - land facing south east |
|  | Modest slopes - land facing north west |
|  | Gently undulating |
|  | Physical barrier - cutting |
|  | Physical barrier - embankment |

Topography and orientation of the lands around South Lake (continued)

- From the western shore of the South Lake, the land which rises up with a moderate slope averaging about 1 in 15 has been partially developed with both the Civic Centre and housing. This slope is not a major impediment to the future development of the remaining undeveloped areas.
- The north shore of the South Lake has a modest south facing slope, in the relatively narrow band of land that extends for almost a kilometre between the railway and the lake
- The wooded area behind the south east shore of the South Lake has a modest north west facing slope that would not be a significant impediment to any potential development.
- The eastern area between Lake Road and Eastway is gently undulating with no significant impediments for potential development.
- The South Lake area is surrounded on all sides by significant barriers of major roads and the railway. These functional barriers are physically reinforced by the associated embankments and cuttings. Particularly to the west of South Lake the parallel roads of Lakeview Road and Central Way, which are set into artificial cuttings, form major functional and topographical barriers to all east - west non-vehicular movement.



The high mound in the southern corner of the area with the amenity feature waterheel.



The semi natural north shore slopes gently down from the railway with a warm southern aspect.



There is a considerable slope up from the western shore to the rear of Rushmere.



This gently undulating area close to Eastway has a more neglected appearance.

The physical barrier of Lakeside Rd. along the western edge, reduces easy movement of pedestrians.



Access

1.17 The adjacent map illustrates the range of road, cycle and pedestrian accesses that link into and from this area at present.

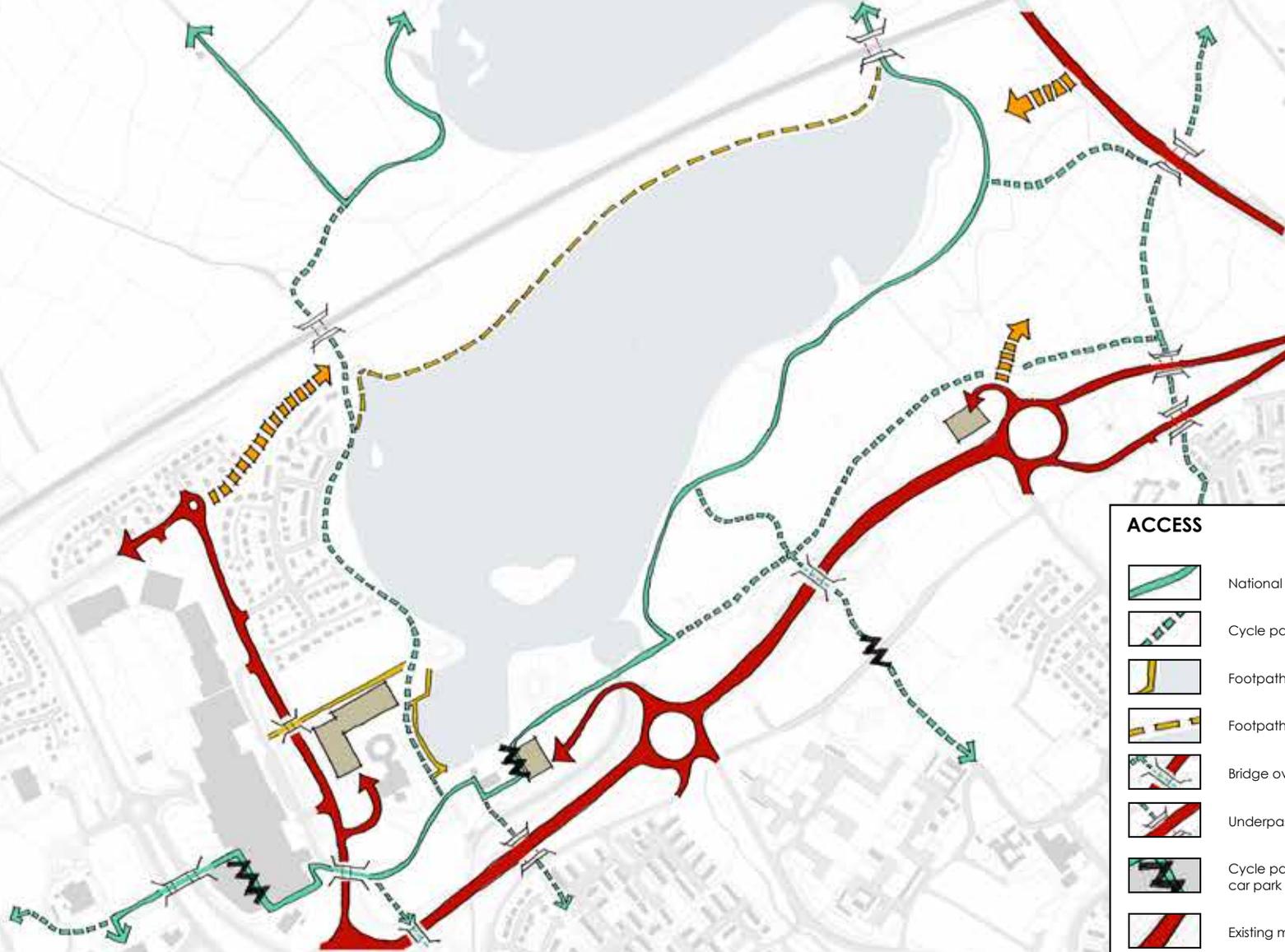
1.18 There are major roads on three sides providing high quality local and district wide road links. There are also high standard, direct connections to and from this area, into the wider Regional strategic road network.

1.19 At present there are three road connections from the major routes to the south, into these lands. There is also potential, if required, to provide additional road links, particularly from Eastway and Lakeview Road without significant planning/traffic policy, ownership or other obvious technical constraints. The road network in the surrounding area generally has considerable spare capacity, although there is localised nearby congestion at peak times, associated with access and egress from the Rushmere Shopping Centre.

1.20 Therefore it is not expected that either access or existing road network capacity will be a significant impediment to development, although some adjustments to the road network may be necessary, especially if major uses generating substantial volumes of traffic are introduced. If these proposals progress, it can be expected that Transport Assessments will be required as an integral part of the planning process for the consideration of all major development proposals.



Lake Road. A dual carriageway at the southern boundary of the study area, provides easy vehicular access from a series of roundabouts but is also a barrier to pedestrians even with a number of bridge and underpass crossings.



| ACCESS | |
|---|--|
|  | National cycle route & footpath |
|  | Cycle path / footpath (tarmac) |
|  | Footpath (tarmac) |
|  | Footpath (loose stone) |
|  | Bridge over major road |
|  | Underpass under major road |
|  | Cycle path / footpath through car park / across road |
|  | Existing major road |
|  | Existing car park |
|  | Potential road access |

Access (continued)

1.21 This area is at the heart of an exceptional, high quality and dense, cycle/footpath network, generally grade separated from all road traffic. In theory this should create a very safe and pleasant environment, but in practice many sections of this network have been poorly maintained and tend to follow routes between the backs of houses, with to some extent, associated problems of anti-social behaviour and unattractive environments. This cycle/footpath network extends into and through the South Lakeshore area, with links from the south west (including Portadown, Craigavon Hospital and Rushmere), the south (Knockmenagh, Drumgor and Moyraverty neighbourhoods), the south east (Legahory, Tullygally and Monbrief neighbourhoods), the east (Lurgan) and the north (the North Lake, Tannaghmore Gardens and Aghacommon village). These links, probably partly due to their poor physical quality, are not as well used as might be expected, but are capable of considerable enhancement. The network within the South Lake area, along with the links to the north however, is particularly attractive and reasonably well used. The DRD funded Active Travel project is upgrading surfaces throughout the local cycle network as well as painting and lighting underpasses. This work is due to be completed in 2015.

1.22 In recent years Sustrans has developed an extensive network of cycle routes that link the heart of this area with both Greater Belfast and Newry City. The latter route passes through

Portadown and then along the Newry Canal tow-path, with a continuous, attractive and safe path, which for almost all its length, is off road.



Even in mid winter, on a bright day, much of the cycle / footpath is well used.

Many of the external links to the site are poor, particularly the underpasses, which are both dismal and rather intimidating places.



Neighbouring uses

1.23 This area is a typical “New Town” type of place, with relatively low density modern development that has a rather fragmented character. This is partly due to the implementation of the original masterplan for Craigavon with its housing areas set within generous swathes of open space, and partly due to subsequent events, when a number of “hard to let” housing estates were either wholly or partly cleared. Many of these cleared areas are just beyond the southern boundary of the South Lakeshore area.

1.24 The combined effect of these extensive swathes of cleared former housing areas, along with extensive areas of tree planting and the barrier of the major A3 dual carriageway, results in the amenity lands around the South Lake feeling and appearing relatively remote from these New Town housing developments.

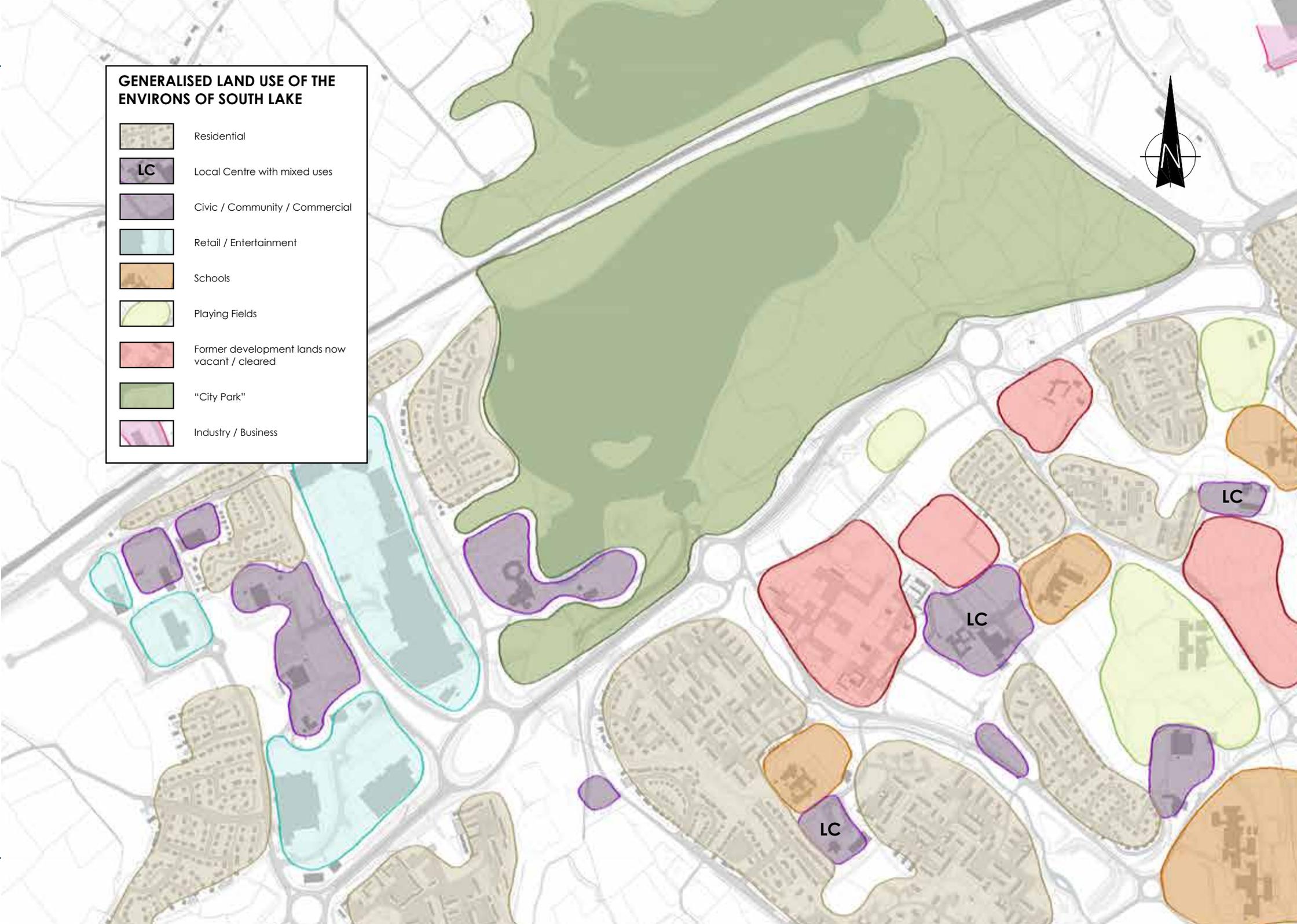
1.25 More recently there has been a build-up of commercial development immediately to the east of this area, in and around Rushmere Shopping Centre. Again this has a fragmented, car orientated character, severed from the South Lakeshore by busy roads. These developments tend to be inward looking and self-contained, with the appearance of a large out of town commercial zone rather than a “town centre”. To the south west of this commercial area, within the past 15 years, there has been considerable housing development.



Many of the links into the residential neighbourhoods of Brownlow to the south have a neglected and in places abandoned feel that discourages their use by local residents.

GENERALISED LAND USE OF THE ENVIRONS OF SOUTH LAKE

-  Residential
-  Local Centre with mixed uses
-  Civic / Community / Commercial
-  Retail / Entertainment
-  Schools
-  Playing Fields
-  Former development lands now vacant / cleared
-  "City Park"
-  Industry / Business



Neighbouring uses (continued)

1.26 The area immediately east of the South Lakeshore is dominated by extensive but again fragmented business uses, with cleared sites of former industrial uses, along with residual pockets of undeveloped land. This area, east of Eastway and north of the A3, towards the edge of Lurgan, is particularly visually unattractive. To the south of the A3, some house-building continues, which is slowly consolidating the urban form, but it has a long way to go before this area will achieve visual coherence and integrity.

1.27 Immediately to the north of the railway, the area in and around the North Lake, which again was artificially created in the early 1970s, has a particularly natural character, more typical of a country park rather than a “city park”. This is very attractive area of mature woodlands, gardens and walks and cycle routes, greatly valued by local residents and visitors alike, which should be protected from any future significant development.

1.28 To the north west of the South Lakeshore, across the railway, there remains a rural area with significant scattered development, stretching towards Lough Neagh.



The adjacent Rushmere Shopping Centre as viewed from the site.



The view north across the greatly valued amenity and conservation asset of the North Lake.



The industrial zone to the east of the South Lake is a major visual and functional barrier separating it from the town of Lurgan.

A glimpse of the open countryside through the underpass at the western end of the South Lake area.



Planning policy context

1.29 The primary planning document guiding development in this area is the Craigavon Area Plan (CAP) adopted in August 2004. This is now considerably past its intended expiry in 2010. In many respects it is of diminishing relevance to the contemporary situation, even though it remains an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

1.30 The western section of these lands, for the entire area between the South Lake and the Rushmere Centre, including the Civic Centre and the adjoining undeveloped lands to both the south and north of it, are within the designated Craigavon Town Centre. Therefore these lands are deemed suitable, in principle, for a wide range of uses including retail, office, other commercial, entertainment, leisure, hospitality and civic purposes.

1.31 The lands immediately south east of the South Lake were designated in CAP as a planning zoning with two sub areas:-

- the western area was defined as suitable for tourism, recreational and cultural development; and
- the eastern area was defined as suitable for tourism, cultural, community, civic and recreational development.

1.32 CAP required any development in this zoning to:-

- integrate with its surroundings;
- have no detrimental impact on any conservation interest;
- have no detrimental impact on amenity, traffic movement or road safety;
- incorporate access for the disabled;
- include adequate car and cycle parking and accommodate bus and taxi access;
- provide accessibility for a range of means of transport;
- accommodate public access and walking and cycling routes;
- be of an appropriate form, scale, design and incorporate landscaping; and
- be without detrimental impact on the nature conservation interest of the North Lake.

1.33 Other planning policies and guidance contained in a range of Planning Policy Statements and Development Control Advice Notes are also relevant to the planning consideration of development proposals within this area.

1.34 The remainder of the South Lakeshore was identified as existing open space by CAP. As such, current planning policy generally protects it from development.

1.35 It is expected that Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will prepare a replacement development plan for CAP within the next five years. As this Plan progresses towards its completion it will acquire increasing weight in the making of future planning decisions. This Masterplan will inform the preparation of this replacement development plan (but would not be binding on its final form), by providing an up to date assessment of appropriate and desirable development, based on a thorough review of contemporary circumstances.

Parkland at the east of South Lake. This is part of the area identified in the Craigavon Area Plan 2004 as existing open space and is therefore generally protected from development.



2.0 The potential

Development potential - Residential

2.1 Craigavon has been a very successful district in the past two decades, particularly in terms of commercial, industrial and recreational development. There has also been a major influx of new residents, as evident in Table 1.

2.2 Following a decade of stagnation between 1971 and 1981, the rate of growth of Craigavon's population increased considerably. This has been sustained into recent years, whereas in NI the high rate of growth in the years immediately after 2000, subsequently significantly declined. These changes are reflected in the increasing proportion of the Region's population who live in the Borough. This increased from 4.69% in 1991 to 5.22% in 2013. Since 1991 Craigavon has been one of the fastest growing districts in the Region. Until 2007 there was a corresponding very high rate of house-building but this has greatly reduced as documented by Table 2.

2.3 In the period from 1998 to 2013, an average of more than 600 dwellings was completed each year in Craigavon Borough. As is evident in Table 2 the very high rate of house building in Craigavon Borough throughout the period from 1998 to 2008 has not been sustained subsequently. In fact, in recent years, only about 200 houses have been completed in all of Craigavon Borough, that is a rate of about 2 new dwellings per 1,000 residents; a very low rate by both National and Regional standards. The continued high rate of population

growth suggests there is now considerable latent demand for new housing within Craigavon. As calculated in Appendix 1, it can reasonably be projected that there will be a need for more than 500 dwellings per annum throughout the 2011 to 2021 period to meet the need for new homes. Central Craigavon is well placed to provide for a considerable proportion of this need.

2.4 With the local housing market gradually returning to normal, after the extremes of the past 15 years, there is the potential for an increase in the supply of new houses to meet demand. There already is some evidence of this, with a significant increase in house building activity within Craigavon District in the past couple of years.

| Year/Period | Craigavon District's Pop. | Craigavon's Pop. (% of N.I) | Annual average increase in Craigavon's population | Annual average % change in Craigavon's Pop. |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 1981 | 73,500 | 4.76% | | |
| 1981 to 1991 | | | +210 | 0.29% |
| 1991 | 75,400 | 4.69% | | |
| 1991 to 2001 | | | +530 | 0.68% |
| 2001 | 80,700 | 4.77% | | |
| 2001 to 2011 | | | +1,230 | 1.42% |
| 2011 | 93,000 | 5.14% | | |
| 2011 to 2013 | | | +1,240 | 1.32% |
| 2013 | 95,500 | 5.22% | | |

Source - NISRA

Population change in Craigavon District relative to Northern Ireland, 1981 to 2013.

2.5 Hence this review of the main background considerations would suggest that there is considerable housing development potential, both in the near and in the mid term future, especially on sites with significant amenity or other attributes, including within the central Craigavon area. In this context, the immediate vicinity of the South Lake can be expected to provide an exceptionally attractive and high quality environment for new housing development.

2.6 Additional housing in this area would strengthen the functioning of the Craigavon area by supporting existing services many of which have considerable spare existing capacity.



Recent housing has been of benefit; e.g. providing overlooking, discouraging anti-social behaviour.

| Period | Craigavon Urban Area | Craigavon Villages | Craigavon Total |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1999-2000 | 585 | 178 | 763 |
| 2000-2001 | 353 | 107 | 460 |
| 2001-2002 | 491 | 149 | 640 |
| 2002-2003 | 759 | 231 | 990 |
| 2003-2004 | 701 | 261 | 962 |
| 2004-2005 | 766 | 271 | 1,037 |
| 2005-2006 | 954 | 299 | 1,253 |
| 2006-2007 | 697 | 324 | 1,021 |
| 2007-2008 | 371 | 188 | 559 |
| 2008-2009 | 194 | 107 | 301 |
| 2009-2010 | 122 | 66 | 188 |
| 2010-2011 | 138 | 40 | 178 |
| 2011-2012 | 128 | 46 | 174 |
| 2012-2013 | 106 | 61 | 167 |
| 1998-2003 | 2,539 | 772 | 3,311 |
| 2003-2008 | 3,489 | 1,343 | 4,832 |
| 2008-2013 | 688 | 320 | 1,008 |
| 1998-2013 | 6,716 | 2,435 | 9,151 |

Source - Planning Service (NOTE: Craigavon total refers only to urban communities and excludes dwellings completed on rural sites.)

House completions in Craigavon Borough from 1998 to 2013.

Development potential - Commercial

2.7 There have been major changes in retailing in the past generation. While many town centres have stagnated and some have markedly declined, there has been massive growth of car orientated, out of town, shopping centres and retail parks. More recently, changes in technology with increasing use of the internet to either “click and deliver” or “click and collect” has been another major factor in the rapidly changing world of retailing. Although the recent changes in methods of shopping may have reduced the demand for the development of additional retail floor-space, it is unlikely that there will be any significant reduction overall in retail space in the medium term future, as the shopping trip continues for many, not just to be a functional task, but also a convivial leisure activity.

2.8 In this context there are likely to be “winners and losers” within the existing range of shopping locations. It can be expected that many traditional High Streets will continue to be under pressure. Traditional town centres will probably have to change their range of functions if they are to prosper. Equally there is likely to be increasing competition between out of town shopping centres. There will be those that continue to very successfully trade alongside an increasing number that are perceived as less attractive. For the latter the trend of recent years towards increasing vacancy and difficulty in letting space is likely to continue.

2.9 Rushmere Shopping Centre, especially in the past decade, has established itself as one of the most successful shopping centres in the south of the Region. Increasingly it has performed as the dominant sub regional shopping centre for much of County Armagh and adjoining areas, with a significant draw of trade from as far away as West Down, most of County Monaghan and much of South Tyrone. This is also an area with an increasing population, now in excess of 300,000.

2.10 At present the Rushmere Centre is effectively fully let. The owners are confident that there is the potential for significant expansion in the near future. The existing site however, is greatly constrained physically on three sides; to the south, the west and the north, either by existing road infrastructure or by established adjoining uses.

2.11 There is scope, however, for additional development within this part of the retail core of Craigavon, on lands to the east between Rushmore and Lakeview Road. The development of these lands would represent an opportunity for appropriate retail-led development, while also creating a frontage that addresses Lake View Road, where the existing arrangement turns its back. There would also be scope to re-consider the current bus interchange facilities and their adequacy relative to additional development proposals on the shores of the south Lake.



The extensive range of commercial outlets already available at Rushmere (Source - Bing Maps).

Rushmere - continues to function like an out of town shopping centre. It is commercially very successful, benefiting from easy accessibility by car, but typically is inward looking and self contained.



Development potential - Recreation

2.12 There has been considerable progress in the enhancement of the recreational facilities in the South Lakeshore area and in the quantum of use by the public in recent years. This is a place with many leisure assets:-

- A central location for extensive housing areas.
- Excellent footpath and cycling links to the adjoining communities.
- Within an area with a relatively young, active and growing population.
- It includes a large lake suitable for a wide range of water sports, surrounded by a mature landscape suitable for a wide range of outdoor activities.
- Highly accessible with very good road links and relatively good public transport.

2.13 There remains some concern about on-going anti-social behaviour, especially on the margins of the park lands. There are particular issues on occasions in and near the underpasses and also sometimes in the evenings. It would appear however, that these concerns have eased in recent years. It can reasonably be expected that these concerns can be further reduced, if the increase in recreational activity continues to be sustained and if future developments, as proposed in this masterplan, introduce additional natural "policing" with more overlooking by residents and by other occupants of neighbouring buildings, into a greater extent of the park area.

2.14 There is the potential to greatly expand the range and level of use of these assets including:-

- The proposal to develop a large, modern, leisure complex to replace three existing aging leisure centres, with a much wider range and with higher quality, up-to-date, facilities, within the South Lakeshore area.
- The works to develop a Community Greenway, providing a safe and attractive cycle and pedestrian route continuously between Lurgan and Portadown railway stations, passing directly through this area, significantly enhancing the usability and attractiveness of this as a place for cycling, walking, jogging and similar, aerobic type, leisure activities.
- There is also the opportunity along with other development proposals to more closely integrate public transport with this area, possibly by relocating and improving the main bus passenger facility so that it is closer to the South Lakeshore than the existing facility, which at present is located at Rushmere's "back-door".
- Finally if the plans to construct a railway station close to the South Lakeshore progress, this will further enhance the accessibility of

2.15 Hence the recreational role of this area has considerable potential for expansion both within the proposed leisure centre and also outdoors to include:-

- The proposed Leisure Centre – including swimming, gym, keep fit, squash & indoor football.
- The South Lake - including boating, yachting, canoeing & fishing.
- The surrounding recreational lands – including walking, cycling, mountain biking, jogging, other aerobic activities, informal play & children's play.

This wider South Lake area is a most attractive environment and has become well used for recreational cycling, walking and jogging.



Development potential - **Tourism and hospitality**

2.16 Although Craigavon has many and varied leisure and tourism assets along with several unique facilities in its regional context, such as the ski slope, it is not perceived as a significant visitor destination, either by residents of N.Ireland or those from “out of state”. It is not within any of the recognised key tourism destinations in the Region, but it is easily accessible to the Greater Belfast area, the Kingdom of Mourne and those places with the closest associations with Saint Patrick.

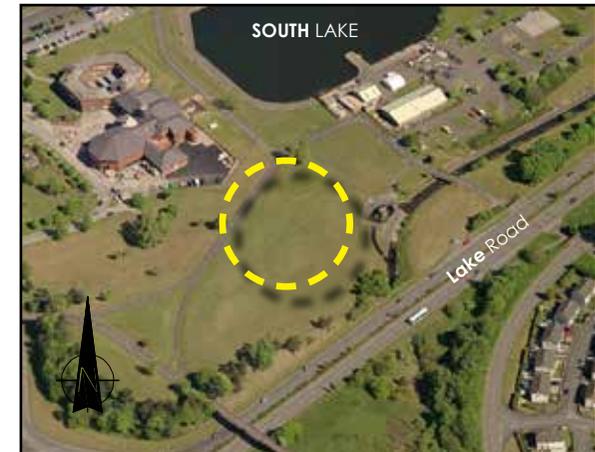
2.17 The limited range and quantity of existing visitor accommodation reflects wider perceptions of Craigavon. At present there are only 11 tourism businesses that provide overnight accommodation, with the capacity of a maximum of 220 visitors in 102 lettable rooms, consisting of:-

- Two relatively small hotels (both 3*) providing a total of 103 bed-spaces in 49 rooms,
- Two guest houses providing a total of 26 bed-spaces in 12 rooms, and
- Seven providing bed and breakfast with a total of 91 bed-spaces in 41 rooms.

None of this accommodation is within the centre of Craigavon.

2.18 The most recently available data from NITB, indicates that Craigavon Borough attracts about 2.5% of the Region's overnight visitors and a similar proportion of total tourist spending; that is about 100,000 annual overnight visits bringing about £20,000,000 of expenditure, each year, into the Borough.

2.19 An earlier attempt about 2009 by Craigavon Borough Council to market a hotel development opportunity overlooking the South Lake, did not attract significant interest, but it is likely that any potential interest was dampened at that time, by the post 2007 recession. With increasing local economic activity along with future progress on major proposals particularly those in the heart of the Craigavon area, such as the large consolidated campus for the Southern Regional College, the feasibility of an appropriate hotel facility can be expected to improve and may, at the right time, become a commercially viable proposition. In these circumstances it would be prudent for this master plan to reserve an appropriate site or sites for such a hotel facility, which would enhance and complement the existing functioning and status of the South Lakeshore area.



Two potential location options for a hotel development, both with strengths and weaknesses.

Development potential - Education

2.20 There is significant spare capacity in the school estate in the wider area around the South Lake, both at the primary and post primary levels, particularly in the controlled sector

2.21 On the basis of information available from the Southern Education and Library Board:

- The 2 controlled primary schools (Tullygally and Drumgor) have a physical capacity for 609 places but a 2014/15 enrolment of only 297, that is less than half the physical capacity.
- The 3 nearest Catholic Maintained primary schools (St Anthony's in Tullygally, St Brendan's in Moyraverty and St Patrick's in Aghacommon) have a combined physical capacity of 1,393 places but a 2014/15 enrolment of 1,162.
- Similarly there is spare capacity in the two post primary schools within this area; Brownlow (Controlled Integrated) and Lismore Comprehensive (Catholic Maintained), which together have a capacity for 1,650 pupils but a 2014/15 enrolment of 1,399.

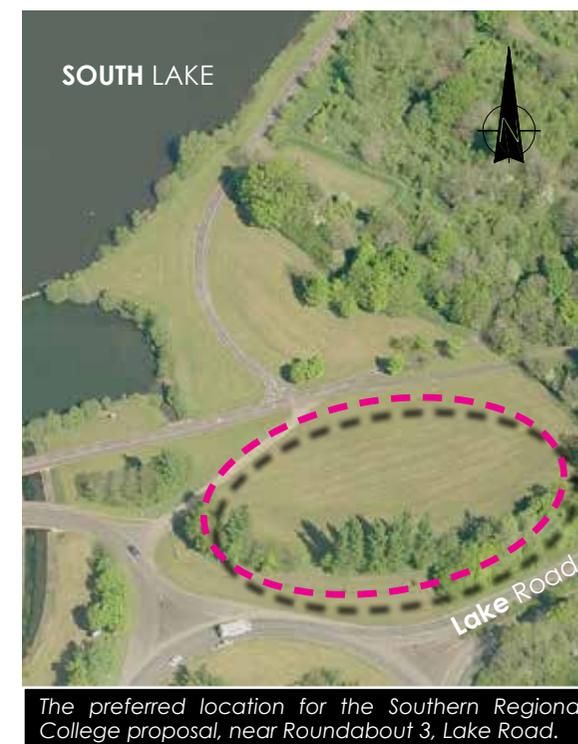
2.22 The main educational need and proposal relevant to this Master Plan is that of the Southern Regional College. In the circumstances where the existing buildings of this College, on both their Lurgan and Portadown sites, will require major expenditure or replacement in the near future, coupled with the opportunities that will be created

by an integrated, central, purpose designed and built facility, with excellent accessibility to all, the College is at present progressing a proposal for a single facility. After a review of the alternatives, a site adjoining the South Lake has been identified as best meeting all the College's requirements. In essence, this proposal is wholly consistent, with the broader planning objectives for Central Craigavon and this area.

2.23 Apart from the educational benefits, the development of an appropriately designed and sited College for Higher Education, fully integrated into the wider functioning of this area, has the potential to make a major contribution to creating a high quality waterfront experience, contributing visually and functionally to the improvement of the centre of Craigavon.

2.24 It will be important that the proposed College delivers a high quality, architectural 'statement', positively contributing to the urban environment. It is equally important that it is fully integrated into the functioning of this important waterfront location. Any development will need to relate positively both to the South Lake frontage and on the opposite side of the proposed site towards Lake Road. The proposal should be of an appropriate scale, height and mass, with merit in careful consideration being given to the main building being of at least three floors to avoid an unduly elongated, low set structure and to

maximise efficiency in the use of space. It will also be important that the provision of car parking is sensitively designed without significant adverse effects on the quality of the adjoining, existing naturalised landscape.



The preferred location for the Southern Regional College proposal, near Roundabout 3, Lake Road.

Development potential - Public Services

2.25 In the context of recent changes and transfers of responsibilities from central to local government, there remains a considerable degree of uncertainty for any possible land use implications. The major existing, public service, facilities in the area around the South Lake include the Civic Centre (the home of local government in the Borough of Craigavon), Marlborough House (accommodating various Central Government Departments and Agencies including the Department for Social Development, Planning Service (part of the Department of the Environment) and Transport NI (part of the Department of Regional Development) and Craigavon Courthouse.

2.26 There are considerable existing health related facilities within a number of the local centres within the wider Brownlow neighbourhood. Generally these facilities include ample available space and land for any health related expansion that may be required in the future.

2.27 None of the other statutory agencies have identified any significant plans within the central Craigavon area. Hence it is unlikely within the South Lakeshore area, that there will be any significant need for additional land for public services.



Craigavon Civic Centre sits proudly on the South Lakeshore. More could be made of it's overlooking of South Lake. This connection could be enhanced by removing barriers and creating public terracing down to the waters edge.

The "brutalist" architecture of Marlborough House is particularly distinctive within Central Craigavon. It accommodates a range of central government departments with a large number of employees.



3.0 The challenges

Public transport infrastructure

3.1 The centre of Craigavon is relatively well served by local and regional bus services, as summarised by Table 3 below, which refers to all the existing bus services that stop at Rushmere.

| Route | Service No. | No. of buses- Monday to Friday | No. of buses- Saturday | No. of buses- Sunday |
|---|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Local services from Lurgan to Portadown via Rushmere, through the Craigavon housing estates | 46, 46A & 47 | 43 | 21 | 2 |
| Ulsterbus service from Belfast to Rushmere via Lisburn, Moira & Lurgan | 51 | 17 | 12 | 2 |
| Ulsterbus service from Rushmere to Portadown | 51 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Goldliner service (express) - Belfast to Rushmere | 250 & 251 | 7 | 4 | 0 |
| Goldliner service (express) - Rushmere to Armagh via Portadown | 250 & 251 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Goldliner service (express) from Rushmere to Portadown | 250 & 251 | 6 | 4 | 0 |
| Total services from Rushmere to Lurgan | | 67 | 37 | 4 |
| Total services from Rushmere to Belfast | | 17 | 12 | 2 |
| Total services from Rushmere to Portadown | | 52 | 26 | 3 |
| Total services from Rushmere to Armagh | | 4 | 4 | 0 |

NOTES: There are a number of different routes of the local bus through the Brolow area between Rushmere and Lurgan. these services stop at the "Lakeside" bus stop.

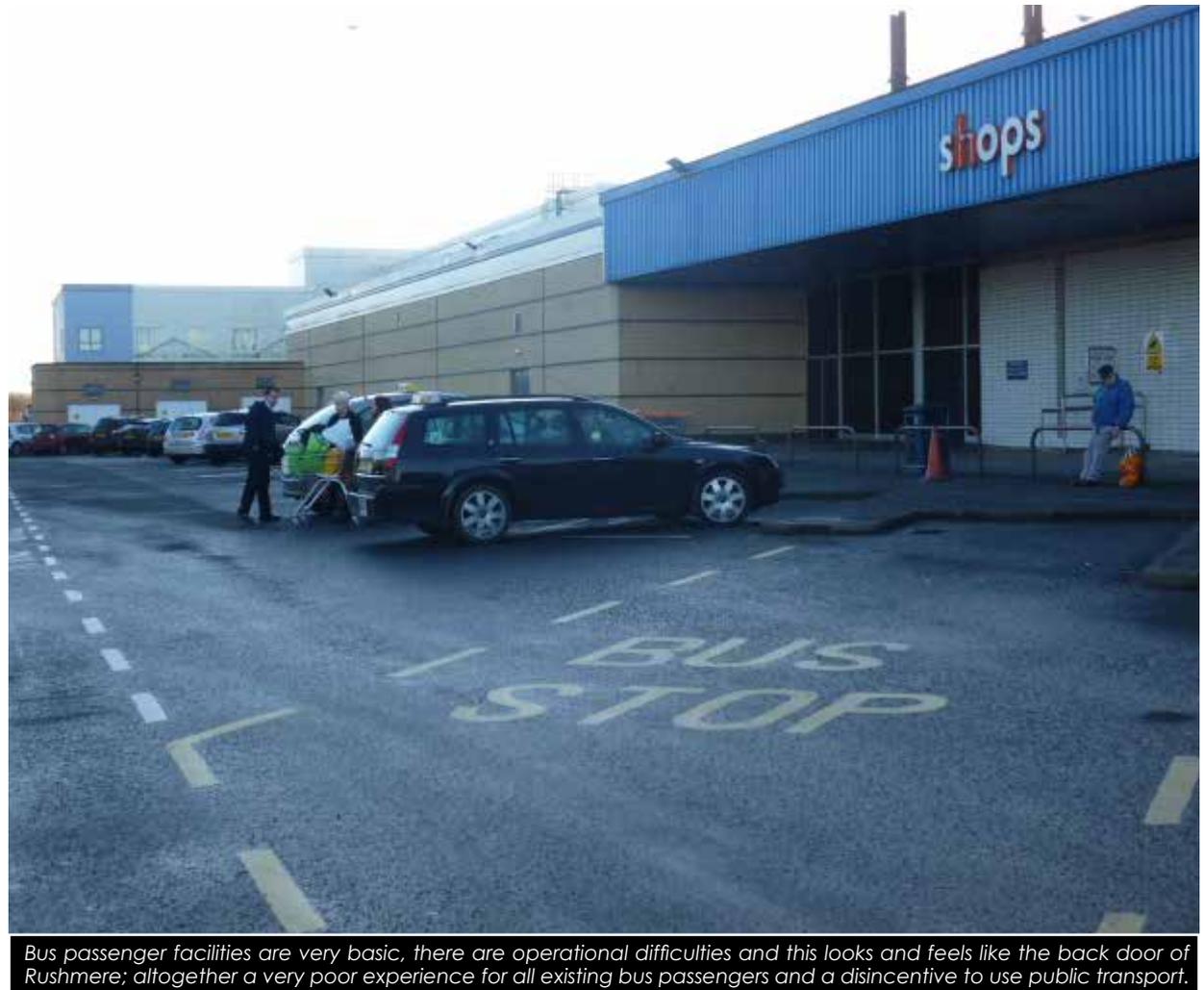
The numbers in the Table refer to services in a single direction.

Bus services connecting with Rushmere.

3.2 Although the railway passes along the northern boundary of the site and there has been a long term proposal to construct an additional railway station close to the South Lake, the nearest railway stations remain those at Lurgan 3.5 kilometres to the north east and Portadown 4.5 kilometres to the south west. The latter is a stop for the Belfast to Dublin "Enterprise" service. There is a frequent local rail service (every 30 minutes throughout the day and evening and more frequently throughout the morning and evening peaks) between Belfast and Portadown. From Portadown and to a lesser extent Lurgan there are wider public transport connections. From Belfast there are extensive bus and rail connections to all the main Regional towns and many of its villages.

3.3 The main issues relating to public transport are the location and physical character of the existing Rushmere bus facilities. There may be the opportunity to adjust and improve the present public transport arrangements, improving passenger comfort and facilities, enhancing accessibility and relating better to existing and future important destinations in the local area including those of the South Lakeshore.

3.4 The development of the proposals of this Masterplan will strengthen the case for implementing the proposed Central Craigavon railway station. The exact site will require careful identification to ensure the optimum links with Rushmere and the wider commercial area, along with the existing and proposed South Lake waterfront buildings and facilities and the 12,500 existing residents of the centre of Craigavon. There is also the opportunity to provide a major “park and ride” facility adjoining any future railway station on the surplus adjoining lands already in public ownership, in the context of the limitations of existing car parking facilities at both Portadown and Lurgan railway stations, the continued growth in demand for “Park and Ride” and the easy accessibility along Northway for commuters coming from the south west and west. This would enable a greater number of commuters to avoid the major disruptive congestion, morning and evening, along the southern M1 approach, to and from Greater Belfast.



Bus passenger facilities are very basic, there are operational difficulties and this looks and feels like the back door of Rushmere; altogether a very poor experience for all existing bus passengers and a disincentive to use public transport.

Severance issues

3.5 Although the South Lake area is close to a dense network of high quality transport links, it is not particularly accessible from its immediate environs. The major four lane dual carriageway, which defines the southern boundary of this area is the opposite of an urban street, rather it was designed and functions as a self-contained conduit for vehicles and thereby is a very considerable barrier in the local context. Compounding issues relating to accessibility, Eastway along the eastern boundary is a major road which also functions as a barrier for most movement, emphasised by its high embankments and the series of north-south major roads immediately to the west of the South Lake are a triple barrier to easy and attractive movement from the South Lake area westwards. Similarly the Belfast to Dublin railway which defines the northern boundary of the South Lake area, is a major physical impediment to movement towards the north; although punctuated by several pedestrian/cycle underpasses these are within a rather unattractive environment.

3.6 The 1960s New Town transport strategy for Craigavon of separate road and pedestrian/cycle networks, while well intentioned as a means of providing easy and relatively safe vehicle movement with relatively fast urban roads with numerous roundabouts at all junctions, divorced from pedestrians and cyclists, in practice never worked well for a number of reasons. The pedestrian/cycle routes tended to

become neglected back-lands, at the rears of dwellings, often between high privacy fences. The bridges and especially the underpasses of these routes, while avoiding at grade road crossings, were perceived by many pedestrians as rather intimidating and unpleasant places to be. They were also built in an era when cycling was particularly unfashionable and in decline.

3.7 Relative to the links from the neighbourhoods of Brownlow to the South Lake area, these physical constraints have been compounded by the subsequent events, notably the extent of clearance of failed housing areas, leaving cleared areas, which now appear as 'no-man's-land', a rather bleak and intimidating environment for all but the most confident. These changes have exacerbated the sense of severance of the South Lake area from what would normally be its natural, residential hinterland.

3.8 The health, well-being and economic benefits of walking and cycling however, are now increasingly recognised throughout all the community and this same infrastructure could be a very considerable asset of the wider Craigavon area, especially if the weaknesses can be addressed. The Craigavon lakes are increasingly used for informal recreation and leisure, particularly for walking and cycling and these recreation lands are now recognised as a major amenity asset by the wider community.

3.9 Even for motorists the connection to South Lake from the adjoining road network is neither transparent nor direct and could be improved.

3.10 There are short term and longer term responses to these weaknesses. In the short term the links, particularly the underpasses, would benefit from relatively inexpensive works, improved surfaces, replacement of graffiti with murals, improved lighting and high standards of on-going maintenance including regular removal of litter. Similarly the bridges would benefit from simple repainting along with improved lighting. Also many of the paths would greatly benefit from resurfacing and higher standards of on-going maintenance. Again the more they are used, the safer they will feel, especially in the evenings.

3.11 In the longer term, if the opportunity arises, there are two particular sections of the main cycle/footpath through the South Lake area which should be improved. Both are on sections of the proposed Greenway, where at present there is no direct route through and the path has been diverted in the past in a rather convoluted manner around the buildings and car parks of the Water-sports Centre and the southern end of Debenhams. The unsatisfactory nature of these physical arrangements is further compounded by the lack of "legibility" for any user who is a newcomer. For unfamiliar cyclists it is not at all obvious how these two sections of the National

Cycle route are to be negotiated. There would be considerable merit in altering these sections of path to create straighter and more direct links in association with any future major building alterations or redevelopment.

3.12 Also in the longer term, in association with any possible re-arrangement of traffic circulation in the area of commercial development in and around Rushmere, the opportunity should be taken, where-ever possible, to reduce the existing triple barrier of the three north-south main roads by creating a direct, surface, east-west pedestrian/cycle path through the heart of this area.



The railway is a major physical barrier between the South and North Lakes.



Central Way is a major traffic artery, with great swathes of adjoining grass margins that bisects the commercial and civic area. Despite the foot-bridge it is another barrier resulting in many short and local journeys being made by car.

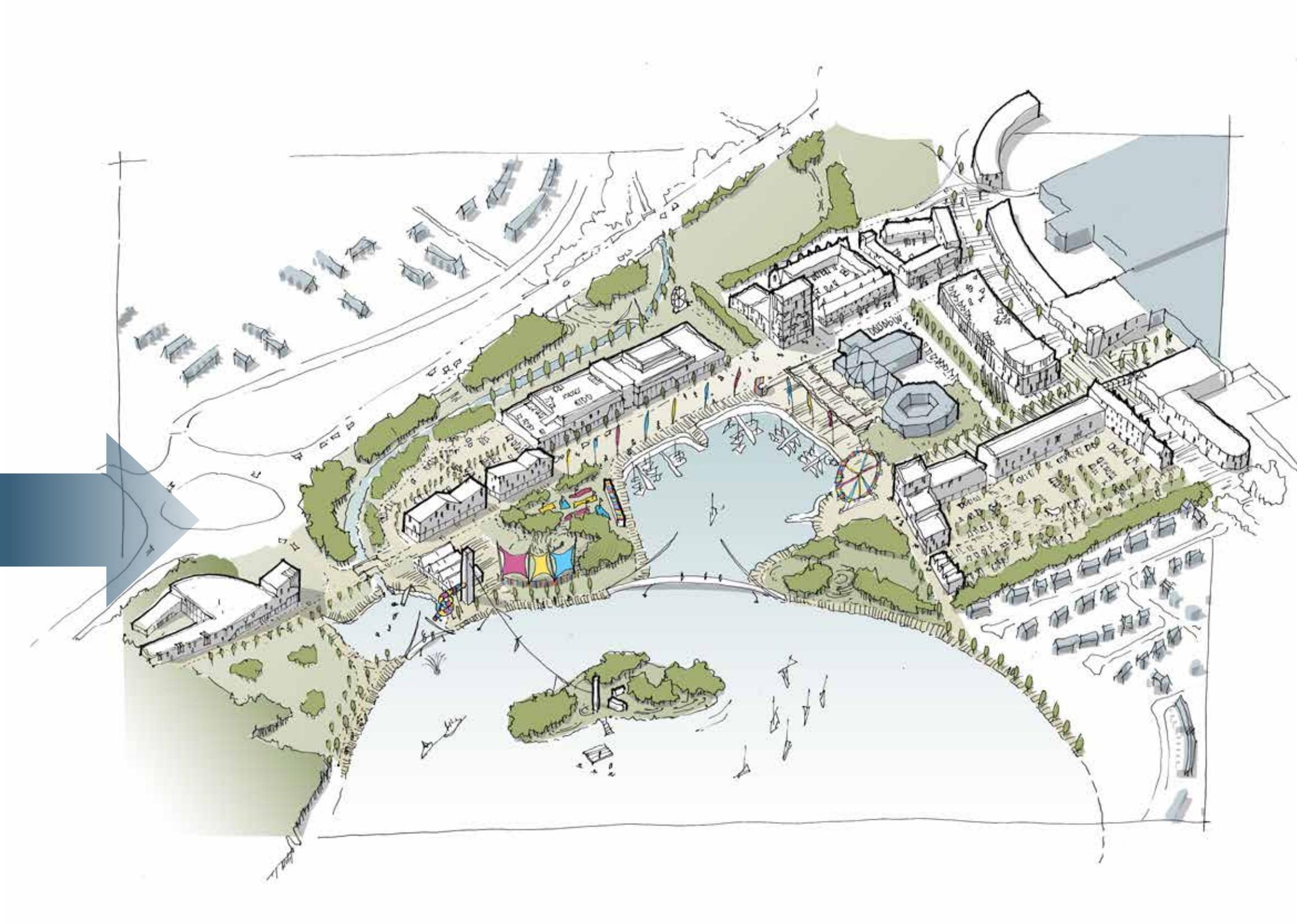
4.0 The vision

Having regard to the **attributes, opportunities** and **needs of the wider community**, the future vision for the South Lake Shore is that of:-

*The development of a **vibrant waterfront** along the western side of the South Lake;*

- *expanding the **size**;*
- *widening the **functions**; and*
- *improving the **accessibility** of Craigavon Town Centre*

*..... for the benefit of **all the community**, creating an exceptionally **attractive regional centre**, while **protecting the essence of the natural features** of the area in and around the South Lake as a **valued leisure and amenity asset**.*



5.0 The masterplan

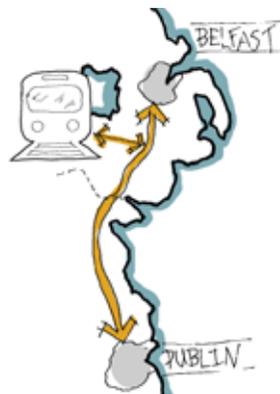
The strategic context of the masterplan

5.1 It is important to recognise that the Master Plan proposals for the South Lake area have a wider context. They will be of significance for the surrounding area and they will equally be affected by any future development that takes place beyond its boundary.

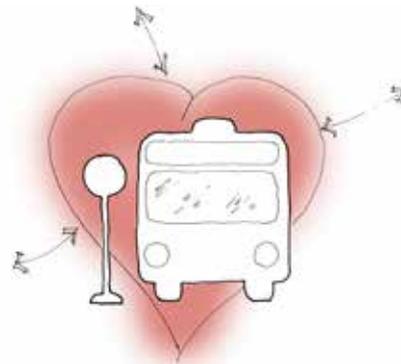
5.2 While there has been considerable consolidation of and improvements to the Brownlow neighbourhoods over the past generation, there remain many opportunities here for significant residential development, over the next generation, resolving issues related to the residual blighted areas.

5.3 The main developments likely in the adjoining areas are further commercial and business expansion of the successful Rushmere complex and further housing developments within the Brownlow neighbourhood. In addition there is considerable scope for further development and consolidation of the extensive industrial/

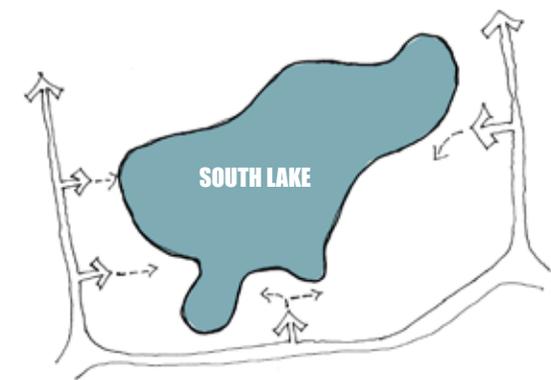
1 The provision of a rail station/ rail halt adjoining the north western corner of the South Lake area, providing direct rail links with the Belfast-Dublin rail corridor and improved public transport links with much of Northern Ireland.



2 The redevelopment and relocation of the bus station so that it is visually and functionally wholly integrated more effectively into the wider area, providing a higher quality of local service and better and more convenient access for users of public transport to the wide range of facilities both existing and proposed.



3 The provision of additional direct road links into the South Lake area from the adjoining road network, improving legibility and accessibility.



business area, between the South Lake area and Lurgan, which at present is very poor visually, with fragmented development, many gap sites, numerous semi derelict sites and an absence of structural landscaping.

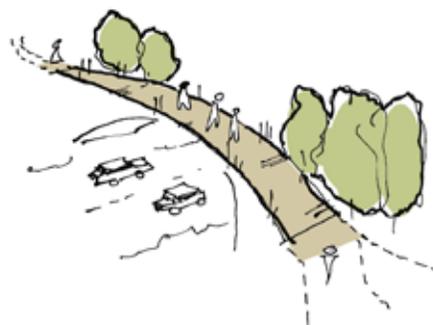
5.4 Future development in these areas will generally be complemented by the proposals of this Master Plan. There will be a need however, to greatly improve the existing links, if the South Lake area is to fully benefit from these potential developments and if the neighbouring communities are to fully avail of the opportunities

arising from the proposals of this Master Plan. In addition the local links from the South Lake area to the Regional transport networks would benefit from strengthening. Hence the following measures are incorporated within the Masterplan to achieve these objectives:-

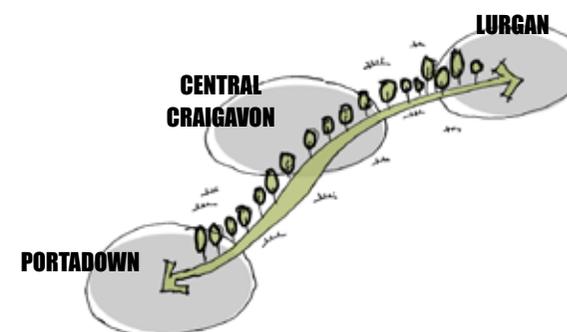
- 4** The long term creation of a surface level urban street, incorporating safe and convenient pedestrian and cyclist passage, east-west through the heart of Craigavon Town Centre, eliminating or at least reducing the barrier effects of the three existing major north-south roads.



- 5** The enhancement of the underpasses and bridges and their surroundings, southwards across Lake Road into the heart of the neighbouring communities, and north under the railway with more sensitive and appropriate landscaping, detailing, lighting and higher standards of future maintenance.

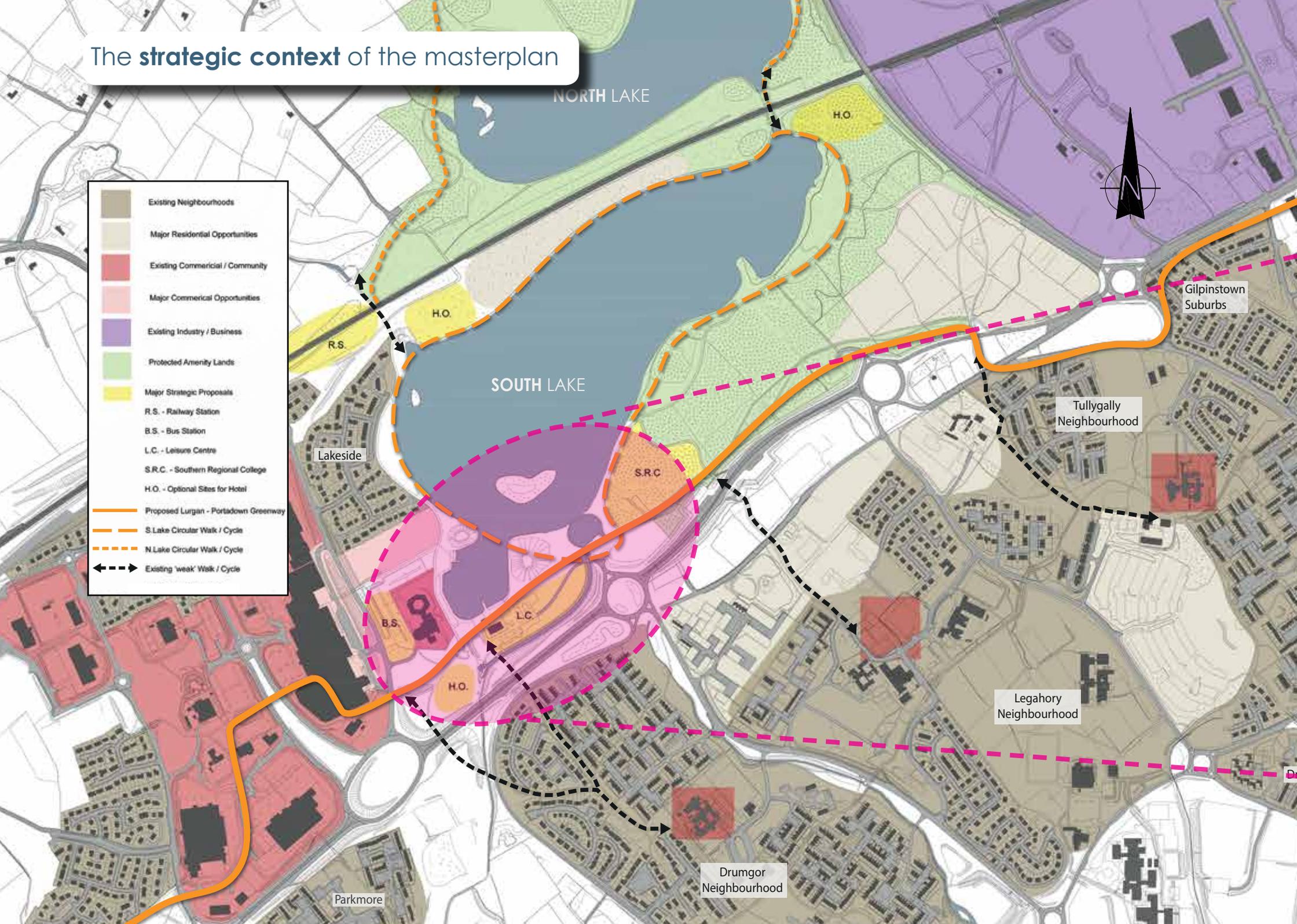


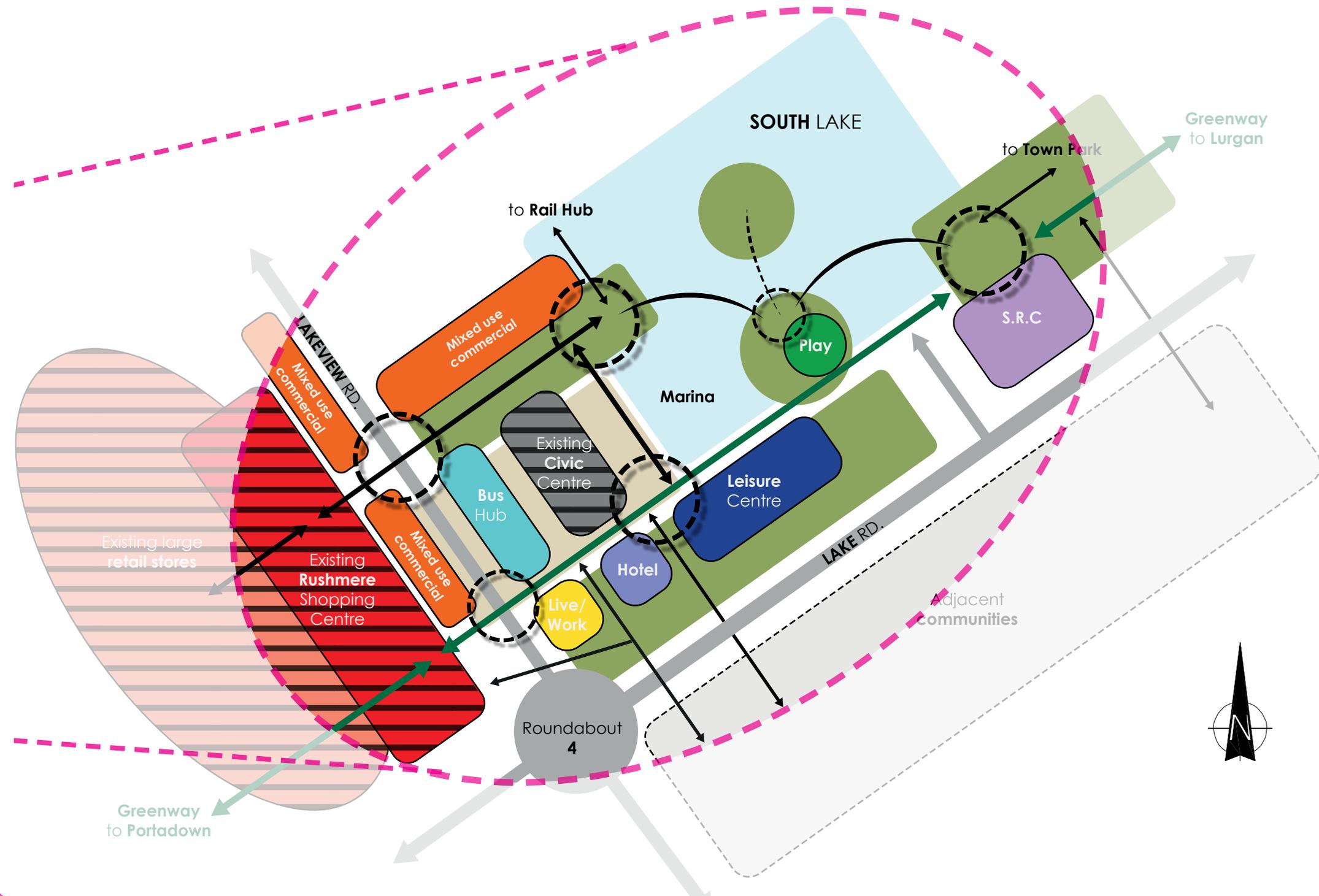
- 6** In association with any longer term major development, improving the directness and legibility of the proposed Greenway linking this area to the centre of Lurgan and Portadown and their railway stations.



The strategic context of the masterplan

- Existing Neighbourhoods
- Major Residential Opportunities
- Existing Commercial / Community
- Major Commercial Opportunities
- Existing Industry / Business
- Protected Amenity Lands
- Major Strategic Proposals
- R.S. - Railway Station
- B.S. - Bus Station
- L.C. - Leisure Centre
- S.R.C. - Southern Regional College
- H.O. - Optional Sites for Hotel
- Proposed Lurgan - Portadown Greenway
- S.Lake Circular Walk / Cycle
- N.Lake Circular Walk / Cycle
- Existing 'weak' Walk / Cycle





SOUTH LAKE

Greenway to Lurgan

to Town Park

to Rail Hub

S.R.C.

Play

Marina

Leisure Centre

Existing Civic Centre

Bus Hub

Hotel

Live/Work

LAKE RD.

LAKEVIEW RD.

Mixed use commercial

Mixed use commercial

Existing Rushmere Shopping Centre

Existing large retail stores

Roundabout 4

Adjacent communities

Greenway to Portadown



SOUTH LAKE MASTER PLAN



Rail Hub, Scotland

transport

lakeside housing

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS



RESIDENTIAL DESIGNED AROUND EXISTING FIELD PATTERN / BOUNDARIES



courtyard layout



attractive frontage



simple materials



turn the corners

residential example



education

recreation



events



A1 to C3 Proposed built development and features of the masterplan

- 1 Park and Ride facility linked to proposed Rail Hub
- 2 Wildflower meadow
- 3 Water feature
- 4 Zip-line
- 5 Observation Tower and cafe
- 6 Equipped children's play area using the existing mound
- 7 Landscaped events space (including band stand, terraced steps and ramping to "open up" the Civic Centre)

VEHICULAR ACCESS

RUSHMERE SHOPPING CENTRE

LAKEVIEW ROAD TRANSFORMED INTO A "STREET", WITH BUILDINGS FRONTING AND ENCLOSED SPACES

IMPROVED WATERWHEEL FEATURE

The proposed built development and features of the masterplan

5.5 The major proposals of the Master Plan (see adjacent page) are summarised as follows:-

- **Proposed Leisure Centre (reference A1)**– This site has many advantages including easy accessibility by a range of means of travel from a large catchment population, a high profile, perception as an attractive neutral space by all the community and it is also suitable for servicing the water sports of the South Lake.
- **Proposed Southern Regional College (reference A2)** - On a 3 hectare site (that is about 7 acres) the proposed Southern Regional College, is capable of accommodating a 18,000 sq.m. (about 200,000 sq.ft.) senior and landmark building, with preferably three levels of accommodation, along with ancillary amenity and essential servicing spaces.
- **Proposed Commercial/Hotel Option (reference B1)** - In the middle to long term, particularly in association with the development of any adjoining rail station/halt, there will be the opportunity to develop approximately 6,000 sq.m. (that is about 65,000sq.ft) of high quality, office accommodation.
- **Proposed Residential (reference B2)** – In the longer term and subject to the development plan process there is merit in developing approximately 45 dwellings on the northern shoreline, availing of the superb views to the parkland and woodland on the far side.
- **Proposed Residential (reference B3)** - In the longer term and subject to the development plan process there is merit in introducing medium density, low rise, suburban housing in an area of approximately 7 hectares, within the eastern corner of these lands. All existing cycle routes and footpaths, along with the trees and hedgerows which bound the small former fields of this area, should be respected and retained in any development, which could deliver about 120 homes.
- **Proposed Offices, Other Commercial or Residential with a Hotel Option (Reference B4)** - This prominent site could be developed with office or other commercial uses. It is also another option for a site for a good size hotel. This site is capable of accommodating either approximately 9,000 sq.m. of commercial floor-space or possibly a large hotel with up to 100 bedrooms, along with all necessary services, including parking. Another option would be the provision of a considerable number of “live/work” units accommodating new enterprises and living spaces.
- **Proposed Retail, Cafes, Restaurants, Leisure, Offices, Residential or some combination (Reference B5)** - This site has considerable potential for future extensions to the successful retail core and could be used to introduce a wider range of activity including office accommodation, cafes, restaurants and possibly appropriate entertainment facilities. It has the capacity to provide up to 35,000 sq.m. (that is about 375,000 sq.ft.) of floor-space in a range of two and three storey buildings that would create a series of street frontages; along with substantial car parking on a series of levels and service areas.
- **Proposed Offices, Other Commercial and Residential or some combination (Reference B6)** – This high profile site has the capacity to provide about 9,000 sq.m. (that is almost 10,000 sq.ft.) of floor-space in a two or three storey building along with ancillary car parking and service area.

The proposed **built development** and **features** of the masterplan (continued)

- **Proposed Rail Station/Halt (reference C1)**
 - There has been a long term proposal to provide a rail halt serving the centre of Craigavon, but partly due to the extent of the physical separation of the rail line from the 1970s housing developments, this proposal up to the present, has always been regarded as premature. With the expansion of development to the west of the South Lake, especially in the past 15 years along with implementation of the proposals of this Master Plan, there are major existing and proposed generators of travel in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site. Hence the rail station/halt proposal may now be approaching viability, justifying detailed examination and the preparation of a possible business case. At the very least it will be prudent to reserve this opportunity throughout the life time of this Master Plan, avoiding any action or decision that prejudices its future implementation. There are a range of possible sites for this railway station, but the identified site has the advantages of high visibility, proximity to the growing range of facilities to the west of the South Lake, an existing crossing under the railway and proximity to surplus public sector owned land that could be used for a major park and ride facility.
- **Proposed Park and Ride Facility (reference C1)** – There is an existing need for this facility, particularly in the context of the physical and space limitations of the existing park and ride facilities at both Lurgan and Portadown stations. This site has the advantages of being existing vacant land that is in public ownership, with easy access for vehicles along Northway travelling from the western part of County Armagh.
- **Proposed Relocated Bus Station (Reference C2)** – This would enable the provision of a high quality, purpose built facility that could incorporate other ancillary uses such as cafes and some office space. This would resolve many of the deficiencies, visual, functional and safety, of the present arrangements. This proposal would need to be connected by a visually attractive link (such as a transparent lift or escalator to the main Rushmere floor level) with continuous active “street” frontages along the entire length of this route. At this location the bus station would be not just be closer, but also much more accessible to a wide range of existing and proposed facilities including the Civic Centre, the Leisure Centre and the Southern Regional College; all of which will generate considerable numbers using public transport. It should also accommodate taxis collecting and dropping off passengers.
- **Proposed Shared Car Park (Reference C3)** – This facility could provide shared car parking for both the proposed leisure centre and the Southern Regional College, with their individual peak parking demand during complementary periods; that is the normal “working day” for the College and the evening for the Leisure Centre. It is envisaged that this facility would provide around 350 car parking spaces over two or three levels. In addition there is the opportunity to provide about 2,500 sq.m. of ancillary space, which include cafes, uses relating directly to the recreational use of the adjoining amenity lands and potential use as an “Expo” space accommodating local and regional exhibitions.

5.6 In addition to these core elements of the Master Plan there are a range of potential ancillary features, attractions and developments, whose implementation would be complementary to the main proposals of this Master Plan. These are worthy of further investigation and consideration including:-

- The highly accessible corner of the South Lake, with a substantial passing “foot-fall” lends itself to being landscaped (mainly hard surfaces) and set out as an events space, building on existing successful events. This is a suitable location for a major piece of public art. Particularly appropriate would be a high quality feature, which includes a reference to some aspect of the area's historical associations.
- A small wind-farm on the more exposed northern bank of the South Lake where it would benefit from optimum exposure to the prevailing winds.
- A proposed wild-flower meadow planted close to the east bank of the South Lake, further enhancing the amenity value of the lakes.

- The use of the existing island could be enhanced as a water feature with specialist recreational activity.
- Related to the enhanced use of this island, a feature such as a ‘zip line’ connecting from the south shore could be a novel and exciting attraction, complementary to the other recreational activities of this part of the South Lakeshore lands.
- There is the opportunity to introduce a feature within this section of the South Lake shore-line, such as a café /observation tower.
- This is a suitable location for a high quality children's play area, which would increase the draw of the wider amenity lands for families.

5.7 A major element, key to many of these proposals, is the creation of an attractive and safe route from the heart of the Rushmere complex, directly through to the western edge of the South Lake, either by a traffic calmed crossing of Lakeview Road at grade, or possibly with a bridge crossing above, (or both) with appropriate high quality facilities to move pedestrians without impediment between the different levels. This enhanced route would connect at a central position on to the proposed waterfront, promenade.

5.8 The promenade would also provide a high quality, direct pedestrian/cycle link from any future railway station/halt past the commercial proposals, the Civic Centre and the proposed Leisure Centre to the proposed Southern Regional College.

5.9 It is recommended that the reserved road line along the north shore of the South Lake, which was originally proposed in the 1960s is finally abandoned; because it is un-necessary in traffic terms, visually detrimental to the environmental quality of the lakes, would have a major additional severance impact, would be very detrimental to the visual and functional integrity of the area, and would detract from the quality of the leisure experience of the wider lakes area. It is a proposal that, if retained, will blight the more appropriate future potential of the north shore of the South Lake.

Improvements to the **public realm, orientation** and **signage**

5.10 A major objective of the Master Plan is the enhancement of the existing recreational facilities of the area around the South Lake. It is recommended that this area should continue to primarily function as a leisure/recreational resource for all the local community and visitors. With the maturing of the landscape setting coupled with the intensification of adjoining uses this area has become a very important and valued community asset. Any development should not detract from the integrity of its character as a large, well used and very attractive area of parkland.

5.11 This is primarily a place at present for informal active recreation; including walking, cycling, jogging and other similar aerobic exercise. The proposed, large, multi-functional leisure centre will complement this existing role. The necessary infrastructure of paths and routes exists but would benefit from significant investment in their improvement. There is also a need for a higher standard of maintenance of some of the existing cycle/footpaths.

5.12 Work is underway on the creation of a community greenway, which will provide a continuous link between Lurgan and Portadown railway stations. The greater length of this route is in place as an existing cycle/footpath, much of it off road and free of traffic crossings (using existing over-bridges and under-passes). The existing route will be extended at both ends with dedicated

cycle lanes through the centre of Lurgan and Portadown. This project involves enhancing the safety of those places where there are road crossings, along with improved signage and road markings. In the longer term it is recommended

that any opportunity to create a more direct and transparent link past the Water-sports Centre and the Rushmere Centre should be taken to optimise this greenway.

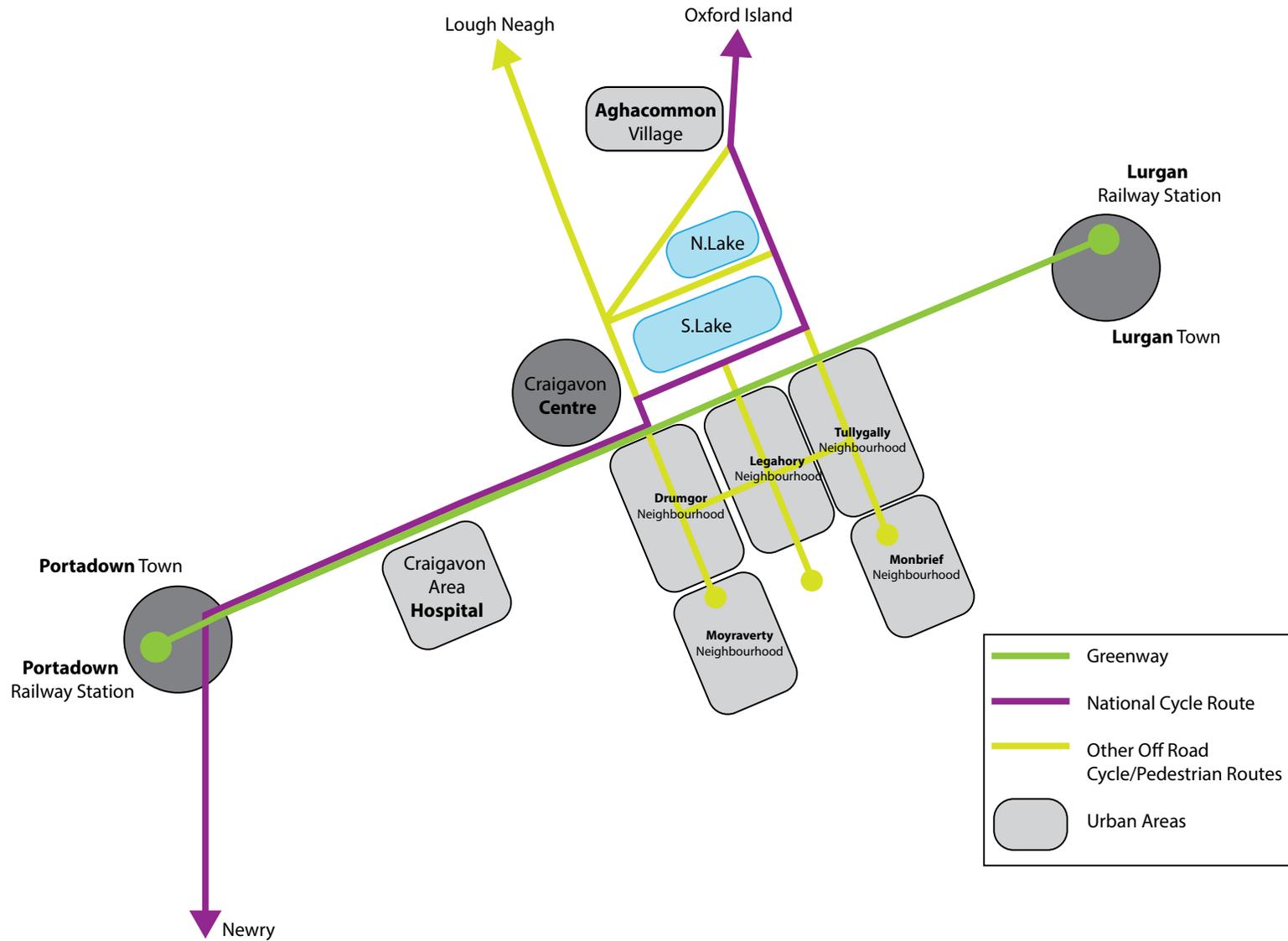


This section of the Greenway sweeps down directly into a high security fence. Any Leisure Centre development should ensure a more direct and transparent route is restored.

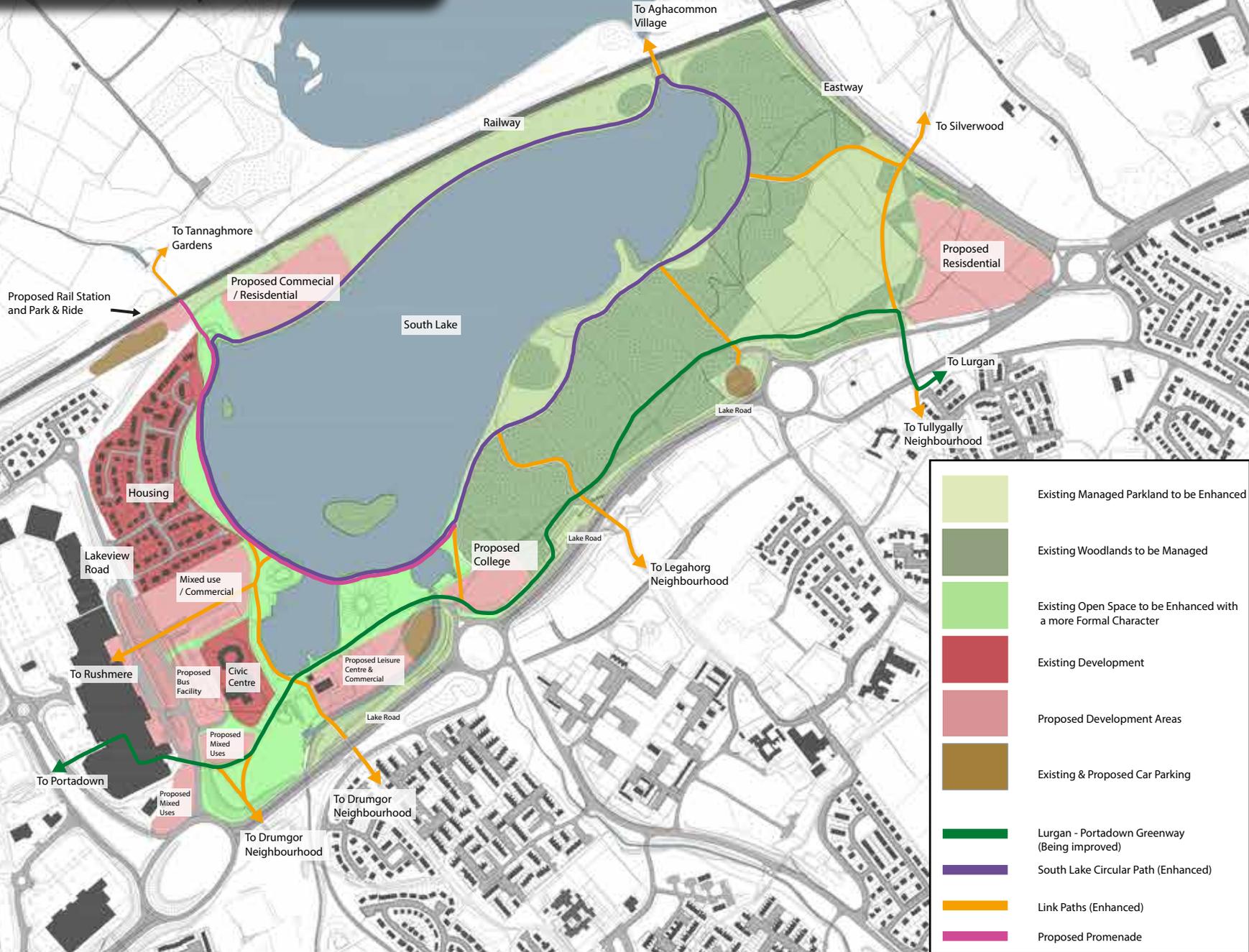


Westward along the proposed Greenway the user presently encounters a forbidding and dark corner at the back of Rushmere. The enhancement of this section would be of major benefit to the route.

The South Lake at the Hub of Wider Dedicated Pedestrian / Cycle Routes



Open space / Recreation Strategy



To Tannaghmore Gardens
 Proposed Rail Station and Park & Ride

Proposed Commercial / Residential

South Lake

To Aghacomon Village

Eastway

To Silverwood

Proposed Residential

To Lurgan

To Tullygally Neighbourhood

Housing

Lakeview Road

Mixed use / Commercial

To Rushmere

Proposed Bus Facility

Civic Centre

Proposed Leisure Centre & Commercial

To Portadown

Proposed Mixed Uses

Proposed Mixed Uses

To Drumgor Neighbourhood

Proposed College

To Legahorg Neighbourhood

Lake Road

Lake Road

Lake Road

Lake Road

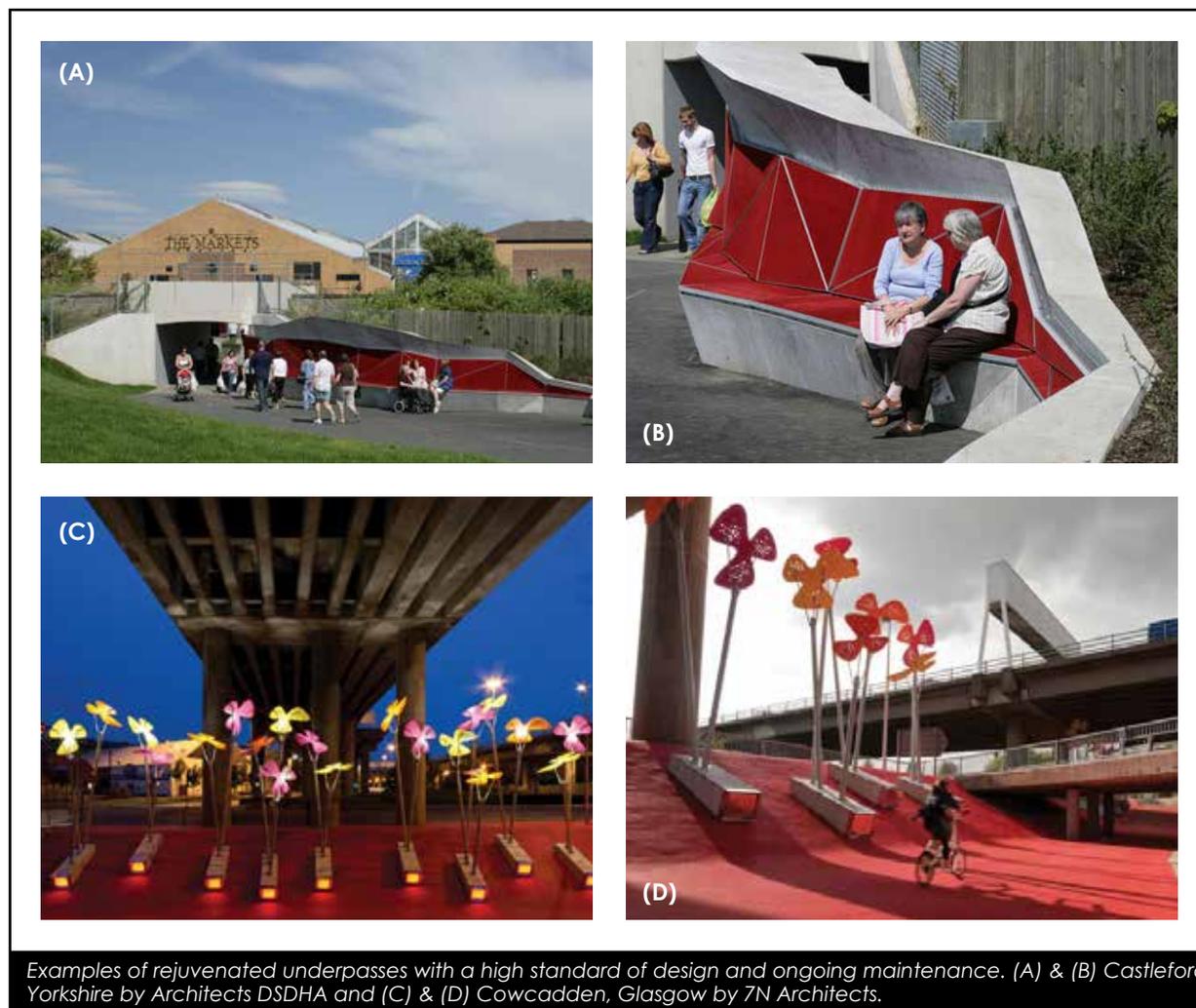
Lake Road

Lake Road

Improvements to the public realm, orientation and signage (continued)

5.13 To enhance the existing infrastructure and achieve further increases on current levels of use, it is recommended that:-

- The national cycle route through this area should be upgraded, by resurfacing those sections where there has been deterioration of the surface and by providing high quality signage, particularly at all junctions.
- The path along the north shore of the South Lake should be upgraded by providing a bound surface rather than the existing loose stone, thereby creating a very attractive circular route for all, including families, of about 3 km around the entire South Lake.
- The resurfacing (where necessary) and better maintenance of the cycle/footpath links to the housing areas to the south and south east, including maintaining the full width of the path by cutting back the encroaching turf.
- The enhancement of the 6 existing underpasses by improved lighting, repainting and higher standards of maintenance. It would be beneficial to encourage local 'ownership' of these, for example by involving each local primary schools in painting and maintaining lively and colourful murals on the walls (rather than graffiti) celebrating positive aspects of local life or heritage.



Improvements to the public realm, orientation and signage (continued)

5.14 This Master Plan advocates retaining the 'country park' character of much of this area, especially in the central section and towards its eastern side, but recommends the further development of the more formal recreational character of the eastern and south eastern shoreline by:-

- Constructing a wide promenade along the water-front, continuously for almost a kilometre, from the site of the proposed railway station in the north, to the site of the proposed Southern Regional College on the south eastern shore, with direct links to the existing Civic Centre, the possible major eastward expansion of the Rushmere Centre, the proposed Leisure Centre and the numerous connecting cycle/footpath links to the neighbouring communities and other commercial and community facilities. This promenade should be of at least 5 metres width, capable of comfortably accommodating a wide range of activity from sitting on benches through gentle strolling to walking, cycling, jogging and other compatible leisure, including roller-skating type activity. This facility would avail of the attractive views across the lake to the opposite sides.

- Closely associated with this proposed promenade, is the proposal for a high quality, contemporary children's play area on the southern shore adjoining the proposed Leisure Centre. This facility could avail of the slopes of the existing mound on the edge of this site for safe slide equipment etc.
- There is the opportunity to create an appropriately landscaped space for events in front of the Civic Centre, adjoining the water-front.
- In addition, there is the potential in this general area, to introduce novel attractions, such as a zip line across 100 metres of water to the small island within the southern bay of the South Lake.
- The incidental areas of remaining open space along the southern and eastern shore of the South Lake should be landscaped to a high standard, with appropriate planting ranging from spring flowers to specimen individual trees and groups of trees. There is the opportunity to create a formal tree planting structure within this wider area, similar in character, when mature, to that created by the two rows of lime trees alongside the main route through Lurgan Park.

5.15 Signage within the area at present is of very varied age and quality. It should be replaced by good quality, robust, consistent signage throughout all of the wider park area, enabling visitors to move easily around its attractions and simultaneously be informed of the many features and how to access them. Any signage should be an attractive feature in itself, effective but reasonably discrete and co-ordinated. It should include directions to neighbouring facilities and locations including the North Lake, the Rushmere Centre, the Civic Centre and nearby neighbourhoods along with any future major proposals when they are completed. It is important that all new signage achieves the appropriate balance of being easily visible without being intrusive.



Signage has accumulated in a confusing manner over the years. Some of it is now in poor condition and ready for replacement. The wider area would benefit from coordinated signage suitable for both pedestrians and cyclists.

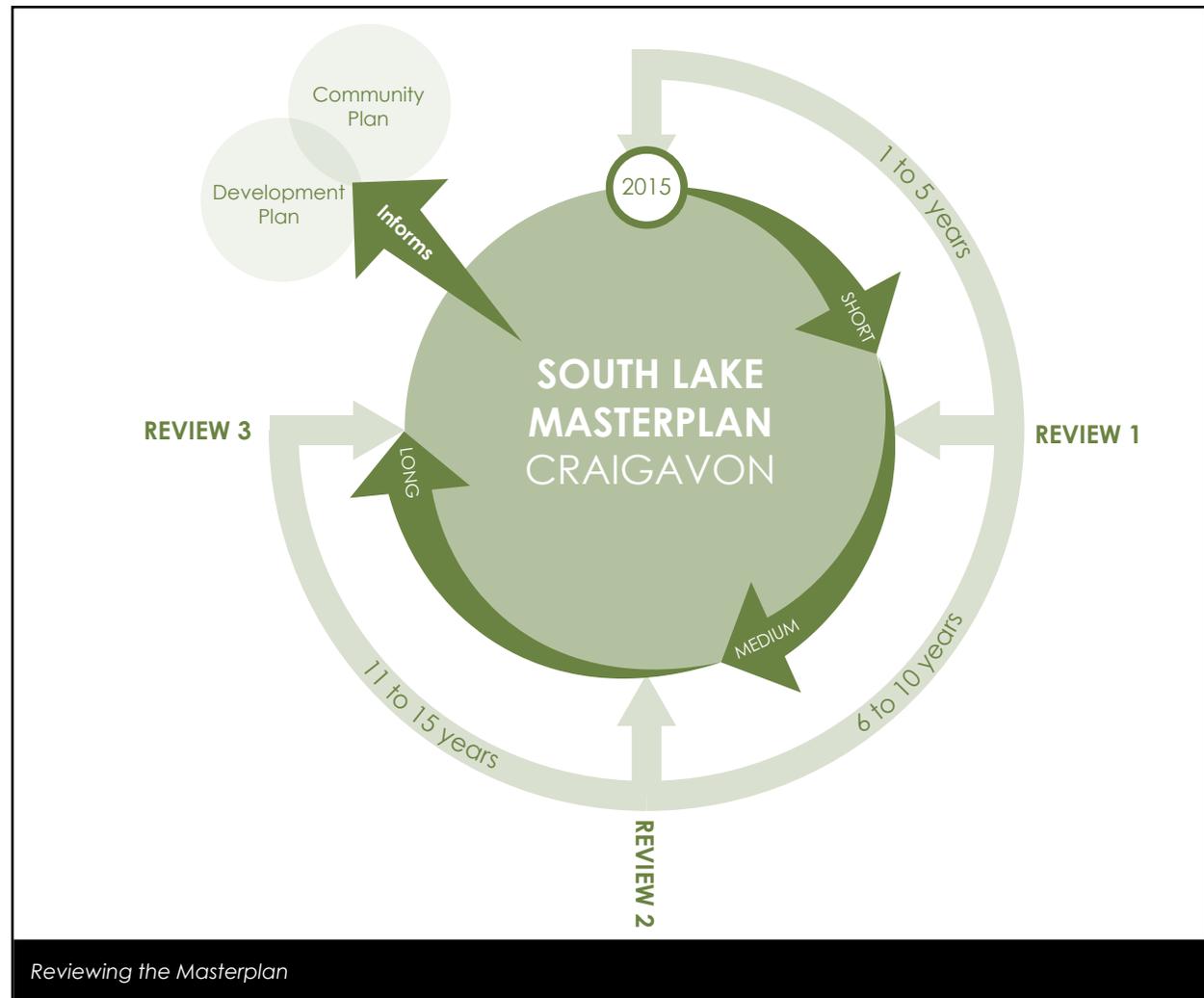
6.0 The action plan

"A plan to ensure the **co-ordinated delivery** of the masterplan"

6.1 The following table (Table 4) summarises the actions required to implement the proposals of this master-plan.

6.2 Table 4 identifies both the time-scale for implementation and the primary agency who would be responsible for taking the proposal forward to implementation. Many of the actions are relatively modest and are capable of delivery in the short term; others are substantial and complex and completion is likely only in the longer term. It will be very important to balance the benefits of short terms gains and the need for flexibility as the market and community needs change, with ensuring long term major gains are not lost through inappropriate incremental changes.

6.3 In this context it is recommended that this master plan is regularly reviewed, preferably every 5 years to ensure that it remains appropriate and relevant to contemporary circumstances. This master plan should inform the preparation of both ACBCBC's Community Plan and their Development Plan and subsequently any future revisions to the Master-Plan should have regard to these Plans.



| Category | Reference | Proposal | Implementing agency | Time scale | Notes |
|----------------|-----------|--|-------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Civic building | A1 | Leisure Centre - design | ACBCBC | Short | Subject to Council decision to proceed |
| Civic building | A1 | Leisure Centre - build | ACBCBC | Medium | |
| Civic building | A2 | Southern Regional College - design | SELB | Short | Subject to planning process |
| Civic building | A2 | Southern Regional College - build | SELB | Medium | |
| Other building | B1 | Commercial/Hotel - feasibility | ACBCBC | Short | Economic appraisal of options |
| Other building | B1 | Commercial/Hotel - marketing & build | ACBCBC & Private | Medium | |
| Other building | B2 | Housing - zoning | ACBCBC | Medium | Subject to development plan process |
| Other building | B2 | Housing - build | Private & Housing Association | Long | |
| Other building | B3 | Housing - zoning | ACBCBC | Medium | Subject to development plan process |
| Other building | B3 | Housing - build | Private & Housing Association | Long | |
| Other building | B4 | Mixed use - marketing of site | ACBCBC | Short | Prepare an economic appraisal |
| Other building | B4 | Mixed use - build | Private | Medium | |
| Other building | B5 | Office/hotel/residential - marketing of site | ACBCBC | Short | Prepare an economic appraisal |
| Other building | B5 | Office/hotel/residential - build | Private | Medium | |
| Other building | B6 | Commercial extension - land assembly & marketing | ACBCBC & DRD | Short / Medium | Commercial assessment, then preparation of a development brief |
| Other building | B6 | Commercial extension - build | Private | Medium / Long | |
| Transport | C1 | Rail station - feasibility | Translink / DRD | Short | Prepare an economic brief |
| Transport | C1 | Rail station - build | Translink | Medium | |
| Transport | C1 | Park & Ride facility | Translink / DRD | Medium | Subject to road connections |
| Transport | C2 | Bus facility - feasibility | Translink / DRD | Short | Prepare an economic appraisal |
| Transport | C2 | Bus facility - build | Translink / DRD | Medium | |
| Transport | C3 | Car park construction | ACBCBC & SELB | Medium | Servicing Civic Centre, proposed Leisure Centre & College |
| Public realm | D1 | Greenway cycle & pedestrian route | ACBCBC | Short | Under construction with improved surfaces, markings & geometry |
| Public realm | D2 | The "Promenade" | ACBCBC | Medium | 6 metre wide shared route for pedestrians, cyclists etc. |
| Public realm | D3 | South Lakeshore path (circular route) | ACBCBC | Short | Resurface as required and surface with permanent bound surface as necessary |
| Public realm | D4 | External cycle/footpath links | ACBCBC | Medium | Resurface, markings, lighting and maintenance as required |
| Public realm | D5 | Five cycle/footpath underpasses | ACBCBC | Short | Refurbish by resurfacing, painting & lighting |
| Public realm | D6 | Four cycle/footpath over bridges | ACBCBC | Medium | Refurbish by resurfacing & remodelling |
| Public realm | D7 | Children's play area | ACBCBC | Short | |
| Public realm | D8 | Events space | ACBCBC | Medium | |
| Public realm | D9 | Wildflower meadow | ACBCBC | Short | |

Table 4: The action plan

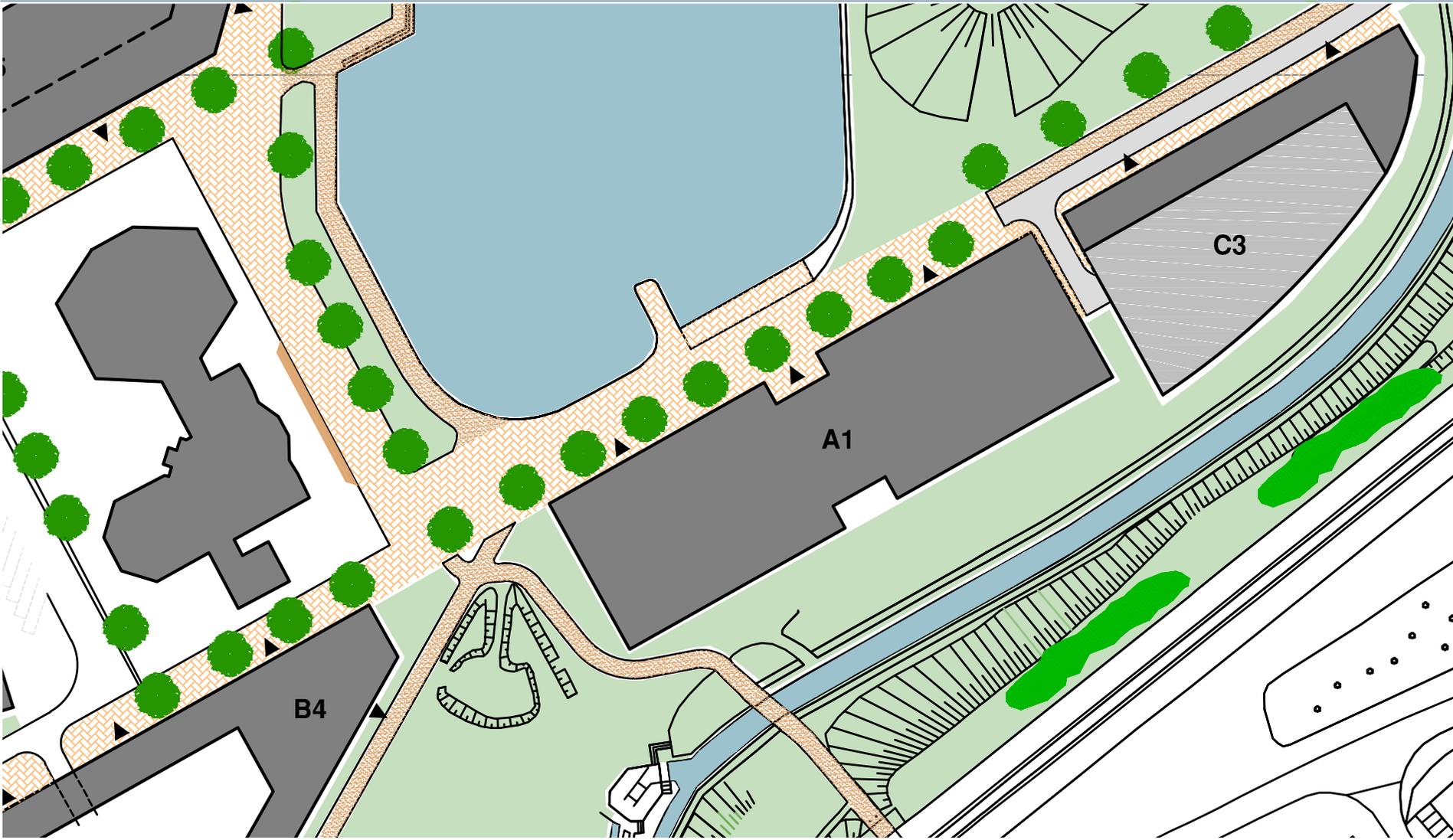
Implementing agency: ACBCBC - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
 SELB - Southern Education & Library Board
 DRD - Department of Regional Development

Timescale: Short term - within 5 years
 Medium term - 5 to 10 years
 Long term - more than 10 years

7.0 Development and design principles

Proposed **Leisure Centre** north of Lake Road (ref. A1)

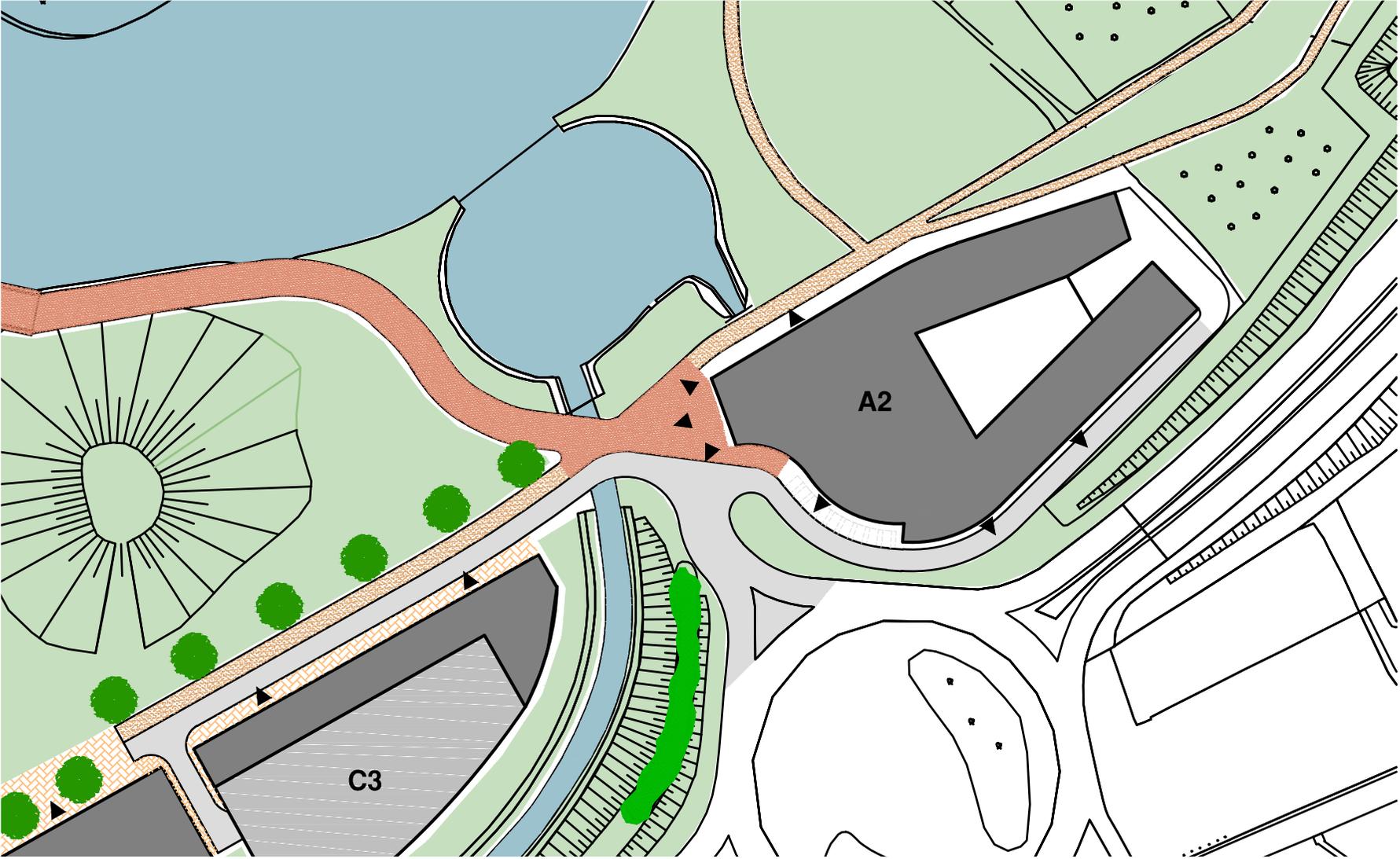
| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Proposed uses: | A wide range of regional scale leisure facilities |
| Levels: | This will be the equivalent of 3 storeys. |
| Design: | This is a visually important site with a high profile both to Lake Road and the South Lake. There is the opportunity and the need to create a high quality, visually prominent, landmark building, through skilled design. |
| Orientation: | Built development on this site should have an attractive elevation to Lake Road and also fully avail of the views north across the South Lake. It requires a lively frontage, particularly towards the lake. |
| Access: | This can use the existing access from the Lake Road/Drumgor Road roundabout. |
| Car parking: | There is the opportunity to provide a large car parking facility immediately to the east of the proposal that commonly meets the proposed Leisure Centre needs along with those of the proposed Southern Regional College. There should be benefits to both proposals by the requirement for less overall car parking spaces overall as a result of their symbiotic relationship, in the circumstances where peak car parking demand for the College will be during the day, whereas for the Leisure Centre it will be through the evening. The opportunity to create this car park at several levels should be carefully considered to maximise the use of land efficiently and to avoid the visual detriment of very large surface car parks. |
| Servicing: | All servicing should be away from the road frontages and achieve minimal visual intrusiveness. |
| Landscaping: | This proposal should be fully integrated with the proposed 'Promenade' and other adjoining recreational uses, visually and functionally. High quality surface, natural materials should be preferred for the main pedestrian links, complemented by appropriate tree planting with a more formal arrangement. It will be particularly important to effectively landscape the area alongside the small river between this proposal and Lake Road. |
| Potential floor square: | 10,000 sq.m. |



Leisure Centre (ref: A1) - Concept plan

Proposed **Southern Regional College** north of Lake Road (ref. A2)

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Proposed uses: | Further education with large scale teaching and ancillary facilities. |
| Levels: | For this large, 'senior' building, 3 storeys will be most appropriate. |
| Design: | This is a visually important site with a high profile both to Lake Road and the South Lake. There is the opportunity to create a high quality, visually prominent, landmark building, through skilled design that reflects the vision of a 'state of the art' facility, of the highest, contemporary, quality. |
| Orientation: | Built development on this site should have an attractive elevation to Lake Road and a frontage towards the South Lake, fully availing of the particularly attractive views to the north and west across the lake. |
| Access: | This can use the existing access from the Lake Road/Drumgor Road roundabout. |
| Car parking: | There is the opportunity to provide a large car parking facility immediately to the west of the proposal that commonly meets the needs of both the Southern Regional College and the proposed Leisure Centre. There should be benefits to both proposals by the requirement for less overall car parking spaces overall as a result of their symbiotic relationship, in the circumstances where peak car parking demand for the College will be during the day, whereas for the Leisure Centre it will be through the evening. The opportunity to create car parking on several levels should be carefully considered to maximise efficiency of the use of land and to avoid the visual detriment of very large surface car parks. |
| Servicing: | All servicing should be away from the road frontages and achieve minimal visual intrusiveness. |
| Landscaping: | High quality surface, natural materials should be preferred for the main pedestrian links, complemented by appropriate tree planting with a more formal arrangement. |
| Potential floor square: | 18,000 sq.m. |



Southern Regional College (ref: A2) - Concept plan

Site on the north west shore (ref. B1)

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Appropriate uses: | Offices/ Hotel Option |
| Levels: | 2 or 3 storeys |
| Design: | Provide a substantial focal point on the edge of the lake, set back to accommodate the existing footpath along with generous margins. Avoid high or intrusive boundary fences, particularly where there are public footpaths. |
| Orientation: | This should be primarily towards the south and east to avail of views and of the relatively sunny aspect. The rear will require careful design where it is close to the railway. If the proposed railway station proceeds, the primary frontage should define the main approach to this facility. |
| Access: | 250m long road link required from the existing roundabout and road spur at the northern end of Lakeview Road (this can also serve the proposed railway station and housing to the east). |
| Servicing: | Any service space should be alongside the northern boundary with the railway. |
| Landscaping: | Alongside the northern boundary should be planted with a 5 metre wide buffer of native tree species. |
| Potential floor square: | 6,000 sq.m. |



Site at the north west shore (ref: B1) - Concept plan

Site on the north shore (ref. B2)

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Appropriate uses: | Residential |
| Levels: | 2 or 3 storeys |
| Design: | Provide detached, semi-detached or town houses. |
| Orientation: | This should be primarily towards the south and east to avail of views and of the relatively sunny aspect. The rears will require careful design where they are close to the railway. |
| Access: | 400m long road link required from the existing roundabout and road spur at the northern end of Lakeview Road (this can also serve the proposed railway station and development to the west). |
| Car parking: | It is preferable that all parking is provided alongside the northern boundary with the railway with the southern side of all homes used as gardens. |
| Landscaping: | Alongside the northern boundary should be planted with a 5 metre wide buffer of native tree species. Fences alongside should be of the minimum height necessary with the open southern aspect retained. |
| Potential floor square: | 6,000 sq.m. (approximately 45 homes) |



Site on the north shore (ref: B2) - Concept plan

Site within the eastern parklands (ref. B3)

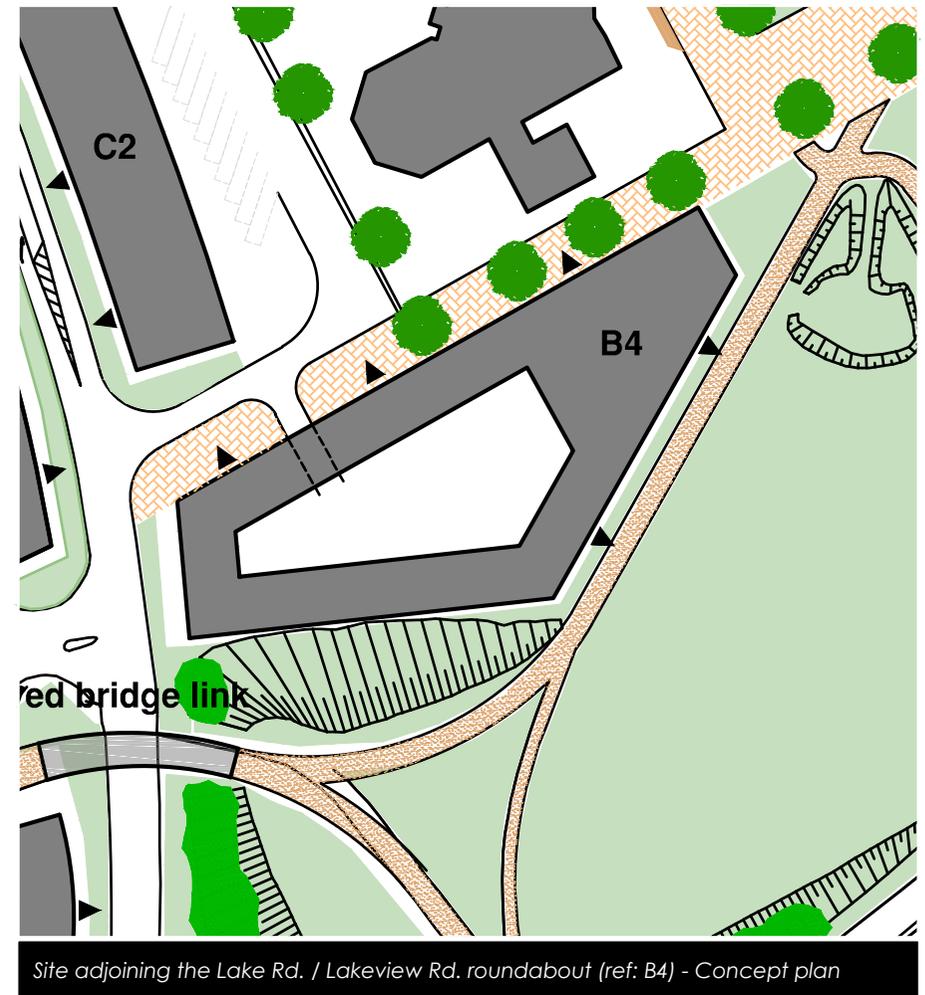
- Appropriate uses:** Residential
- Levels:** Not more than 2 storeys
- Design:** Provide detached, semi-detached or town houses.
- Orientation:** Where this site adjoins Eastway and Lake Road, it is important that the layout facilitates the arrangement of all houses to front these public roads with appropriate separation. Where there are significant views out, including possibly towards the South Lake all homes should avail of these. All houses should also front onto all existing paths through this area; rear gardens abutting these paths are to be avoided as they result in neglected backlands.
- Access:** These can be either from the existing roundabout at the Lake Road, Tullygally Road junction and/or via the construction of a new access of appropriate detailing on Eastway.
- Car parking:** This should be to the normal planning standards and mostly in curtilage.
- Landscaping:** The very considerable asset of the many significant existing individual trees, tree groups and hedgerows within this area should generally be retained and incorporated into the proposed layout.
- Potential floor square:** 10,000 sq.m. (approximately 120 homes)



Site within the eastern parklands (ref. B3) - Concept plan

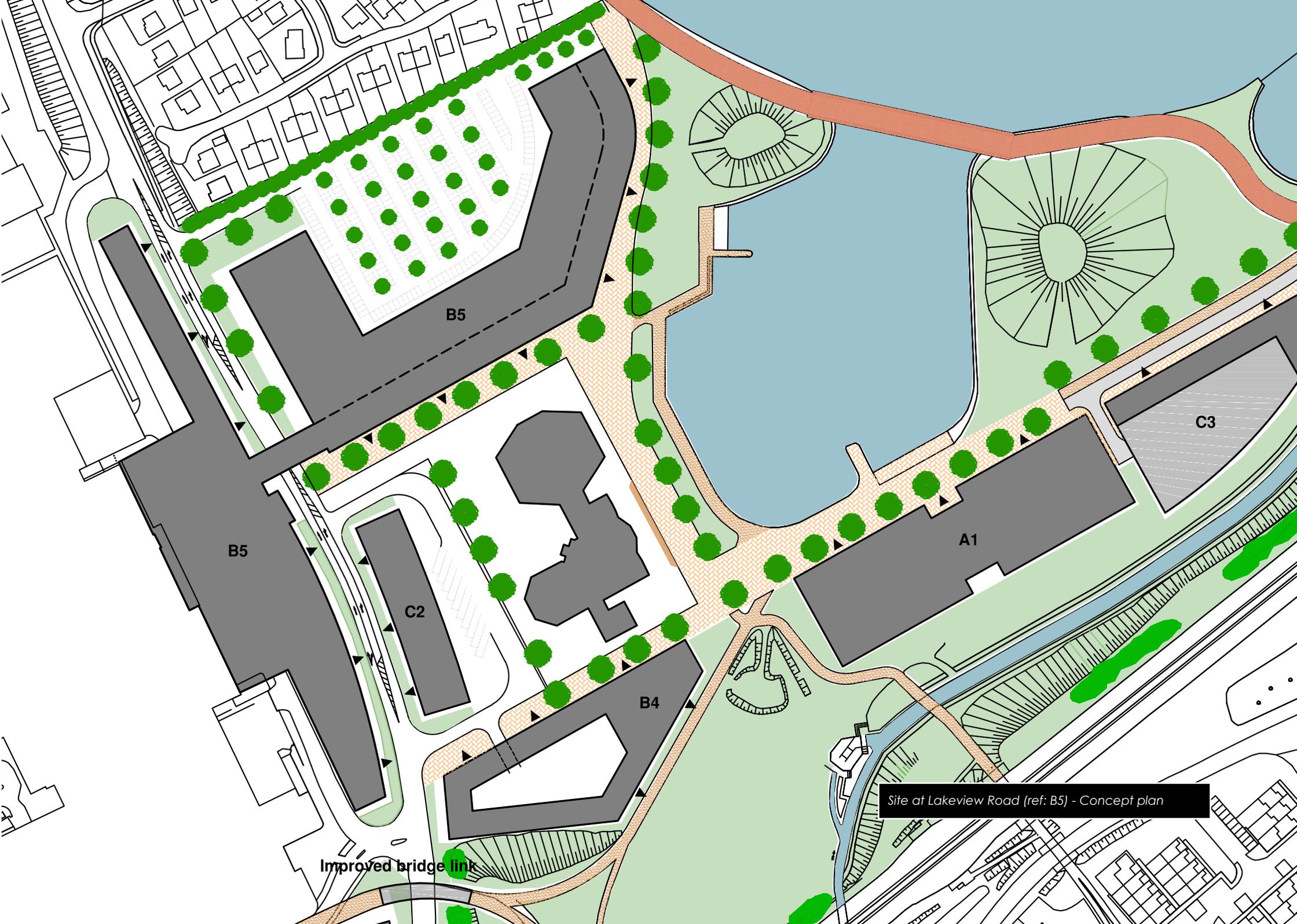
Site adjoining the Lake Rd. / Lakeview Rd. roundabout (ref. B4)

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Appropriate uses: | Offices, Other Commercial, Residential |
| Levels: | 2 or 3 storeys |
| Design: | This is a high profile site requiring an appropriate design quality. Any building should have significant 'presence', especially from Lakeview Road. |
| Orientation: | Any building on this site should front both Lakeview Road and Greenway pedestrian/cycle route, which abuts the northern boundary. |
| Access: | This should be from Lakeview Road, at the maximum achievable distance from the roundabout. |
| Landscaping: | The space between the adjoining roads and any building should be appropriately landscape. |
| Servicing: | Any service space should be away from the road frontages and achieve minimal visual intrusiveness. |
| Potential floor square: | 9,000 sq.m. |



Lakeview Road site (ref. B5)

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Appropriate uses: | Retail, Cafes, Restaurants, Leisure, Offices, Residential or some mix of these uses |
| Levels: | Generally 3 storeys, possibly reducing to 2 storeys closer to the South Lake. |
| Design: | This is a complex, large, high profile, site requiring an appropriate design quality with a considerable difference in levels between the western side and near the South Lake. It's mass and form will need to relate to the Rushmere Centre. This is a site that is not only capable of accommodating a substantial building, but if appropriately designed and detailed this will enhance the urban character of Craigavon Town Centre. It is also essential that the design facilitates easy and attractive pedestrian movement from the existing commercial area towards the South Lake area. |
| Orientation: | Built development on this site should provide frontage development onto Lakeview Road and also onto a proposed east-west link from the South Lake towards the Rushmere Shopping Centre. Any development should also fully avail of the views east across the South Lake. |
| Access: | These should be from Lakeview Road, meeting normal standards. |
| Car parking: | This should be to the normal planning standards with the minimal of visual intrusiveness. Most car parking (and servicing) should be located on the northern side of the site, but respecting the adjoining residential development. |
| Servicing: | There is the opportunity to provide service spaces within the complex on the eastern side of Rushmere and close to the northern boundary, east of Lakeview Road. All servicing should be away from the road frontages and achieve minimal visual intrusiveness. |
| Landscaping: | A pedestrian urban street linking Rushmere directly with the South Lake should be appropriately landscaped with street trees to enhance its visual quality. |
| Potential floor square: | 35,000 sq.m. |



B5

B5

C2

B4

A1

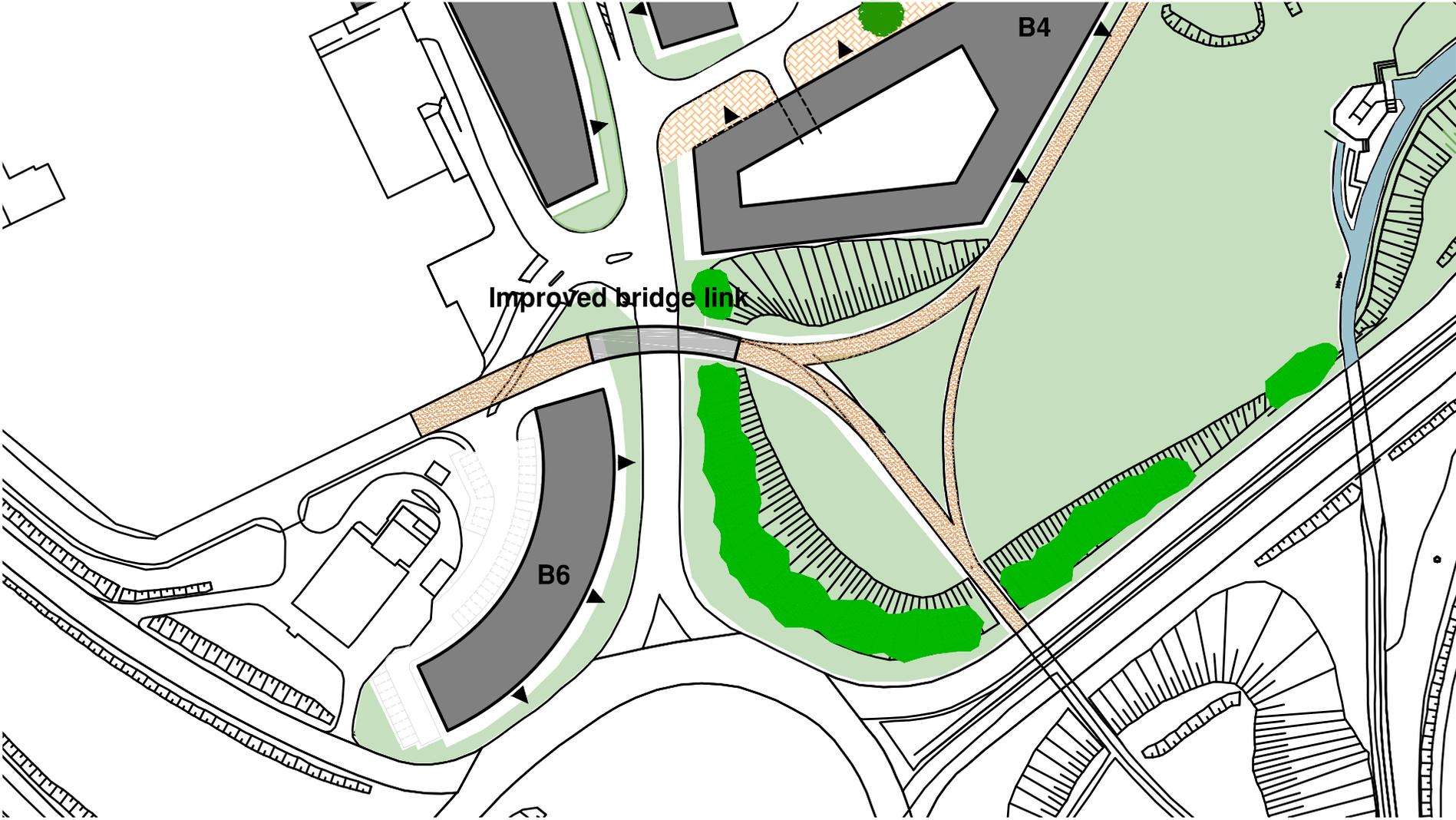
C3

Improved bridge link

Site at Lakeview Road (ref: B5) - Concept plan

Site **adjoining** the **Lake Rd. / Lakeview Rd. roundabout** (ref. B6)

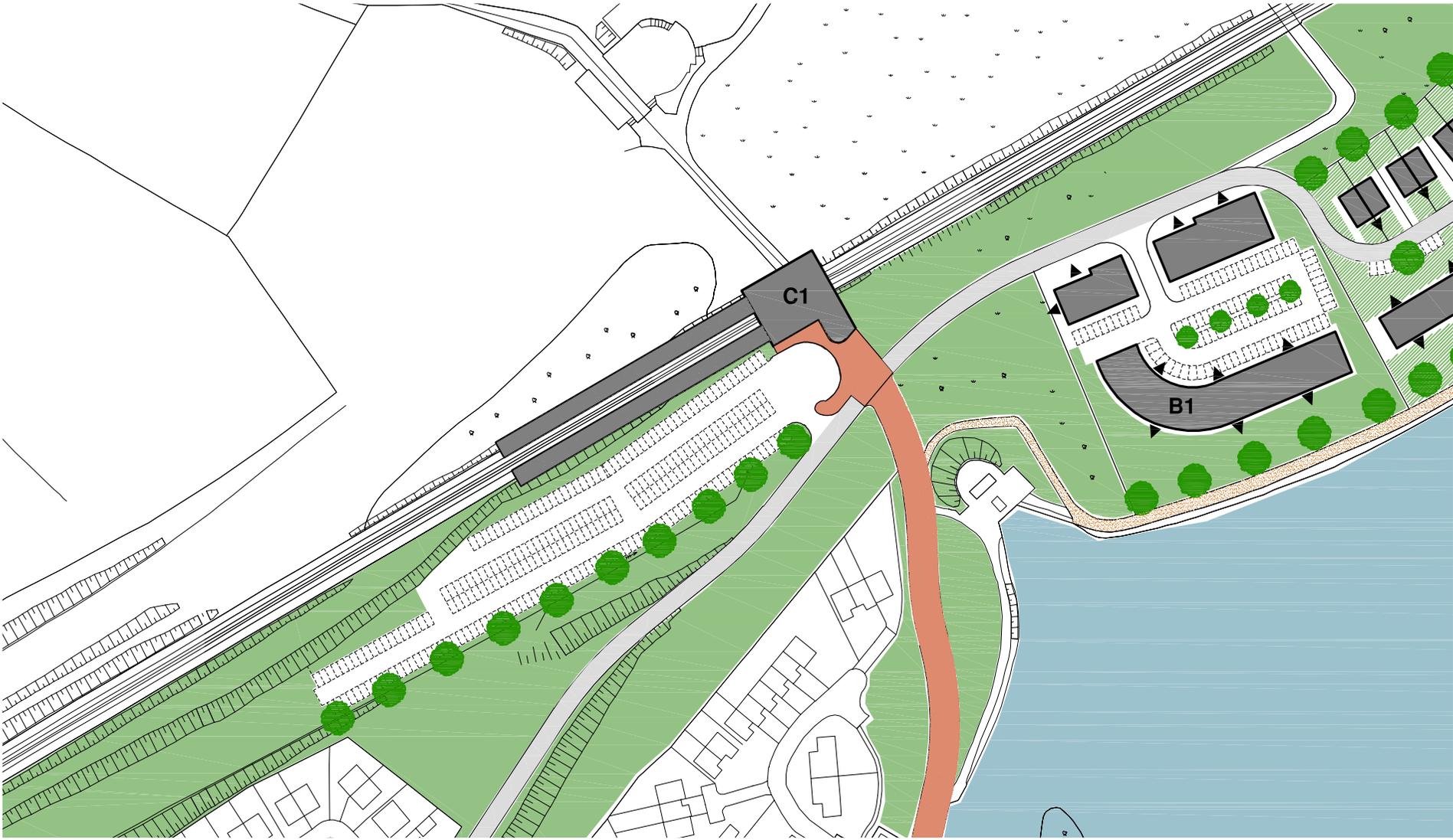
| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Appropriate uses: | Offices, Other Commercial, Mixed Use |
| Levels: | 2 or 3 storeys |
| Design: | This is a high profile site requiring an appropriate design quality. Any building should have significant 'presence', especially from Lakeview Road. |
| Orientation: | Any building on this site should front both Lakeview Road and Greenway pedestrian/cycle route, which abuts the northern boundary. |
| Access: | This should be from Lakeview Road, at the maximum achievable distance from the roundabout. |
| Landscaping: | The space between the adjoining roads and any building should be appropriately landscaped. |
| Car parking: | This should be to the normal planning standards but have minimum visual impact by locating away . |
| Servicing: | Any service space should be away from the road frontages and achieve minimal visual intrusiveness. |
| Potential floor square: | 9,000 sq.m. |



Site at Lakeview Road (ref: B6) - Concept plan

Proposed rail station (ref. C1)

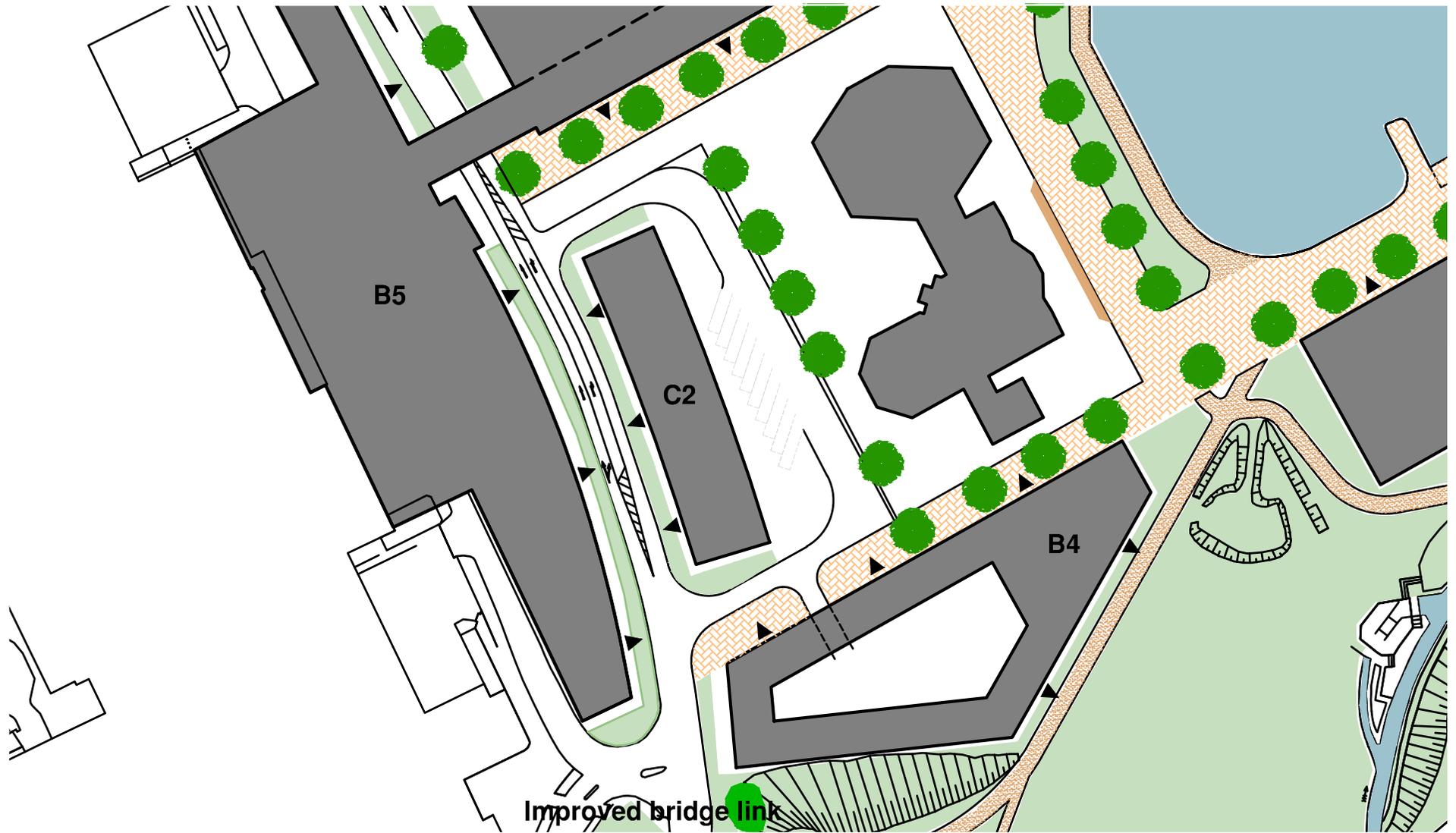
- Appropriate uses:** The scale and range of facilities will be determined by an economic appraisal and the business case, having regard to an expanding local community and the wider context of increasing passenger numbers generally on the rail network.
- Levels:** The proposed location for the rail station adjoins an existing underpass of generous proportions. This will facilitate access for passengers for both Portadown/Dublin and Belfast bound trains.
- Design:** The opportunity should be taken to design a rail station with all appropriate facilities, which presents a positive contemporary gateway to Central Craigavon.
- Orientation:** Development on this site should relate to the proposed access from the Lakeview Road/ Balteagh Road roundabout.
- Access:** This will require the construction of a 350 metre long spur road from the Lakeview Road/Balteagh Road roundabout. This proposed road will also provide access to neighbouring proposed developments.
- Car parking** There is the opportunity to provide extensive car parking on adjoining publically owned and long term vacant lands, adjoining both the north side and the south side of the railway. This will provide a park and ride facility for the large numbers of residents of North Armagh who commute to the Greater Belfast area..
- Servicing:** Any servicing is likely to be of modest scale and can be incorporated into any car parking facility.
- Landscaping:** It will be important to incorporate appropriate, easily maintainable landscaping, within and around any extensive car park facilities.



Proposed Railway Station (ref: C1) - Concept plan

Proposed **bus facility** east of Lakeview Road (ref. C2)

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Proposed uses: | The scale and range of facilities will be determined by an economic appraisal and the business case, having regard to an expanding local community. |
| Levels: | Consideration should be given to including with this facility ancillary commercial floor-space to create the equivalent of a 3 storey building, to enable the creation of a more urban form of development. |
| Design: | This site has a high profile to Lakeview Road. It will be a challenge to design an attractive facility that functions effectively. |
| Orientation: | Built development on this site should incorporate a lively frontage to Lakeview Road and also relate to the existing Civic Centre immediately to the east. |
| Access: | From Lakeview Road, which should be modified slightly to incorporate a right hand turning lane, for buses entering this proposed facility. |
| Car parking | Not required other than drop off and pick up spaces. The proposed site is very close to a large car park proposed immediately to the north of this site. |
| Servicing: | Any servicing is likely to be of modest scale and can be incorporated into any car parking facility. |
| Landscaping: | Particular attention will need to be given to the appropriate landscaping along the boundary with the Civic Centre. |
| Potential floor space | 3,500 sq.m. |



Proposed bus facility (ref: C2) - Concept plan

8.0 Conclusion

"The opportunities are now improving for realising the original vision for Craigavon as a large urban area with a high quality, contemporary and multi-functional centre."

8.1 Considerable progress has been made in the past decade in enhancing the quality of life, the economic performance and the environmental quality of Central Craigavon. In this favourable context new opportunities are emerging, particularly in the vicinity of the South Lake.

8.2 There is the potential to create a place of the highest quality over the next decade, but this will require fully addressing and resolving any remaining weaknesses and ensuring new development proceeds in a planned, co-ordinated and integrated manner, rather than as the product of a series of incremental, ad-hoc decisions.

8.3 The aim should be the creation of a place with a truly vibrant and urban character, rather than an assemblage of disjointed individual and poorly linked elements and activities.

8.4 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will have a key role in the implementation of this Masterplan, because it is both the major landowner in this area and also now has a very wide range of functions, responsibilities, powers and resources. In addition to those proposals, which the Council has a direct role in implementing, it also will have a major role in facilitating and assisting in the delivery of many other proposals. These include:-

- Progressing the design and implementation of the proposed Leisure Centre subject to continued Council support and funding.
- Progressing the detailed design and implementation of the proposed Promenade and other improvements to the existing foot/cycle-path networks subject to Council support and funding.
- Progressing the design and implementation of a range of complementary recreational facilities, enhancing the attractiveness of these lands to both local communities and visitors, including an events space, a high quality children's play area and a wild-flower area, subject to Council support and funding.
- Liaising closely with the Southern Regional College throughout the design and implementation of their proposed major facility, including ensuring its maximum integration into the wider functioning and linkages of this area.
- Establishing the feasibility of a hotel, identifying a preferred site and an appropriate size, having regard to commercial considerations.
- Marketing and selling housing development opportunities, when the market conditions are favourable.
- Enabling the creation of a large, attractive and viable commercial/mixed use development on the lands east of Rushmere.
- Liaising with Translink on the replacement of the existing bus stop facilities with an appropriately designed bus station with better facilities for passengers.
- Liaising with Translink on establishing the feasibility of an appropriate size rail station with high quality linkages including the potential for a particularly accessible park and ride facility on adjoining lands.
- Implementing in association with Transport NI and Sustrans a programme of physical improvements to the underpasses and bridges of the existing foot/cycle path network.

8.5 The opportunities are now improving for realising the original vision for Craigavon as a large urban area with a high quality, contemporary and multi-functional centre. The Council is now well placed to take this forward both by direct implementation as a major landowner and by facilitating, promoting and co-ordinating wider development activity of other statutory authorities and the private sector.

Mountain bike trails of the South Lake. A well used recreational asset that is of great benefit to the community in terms of health and enjoyment. Any proposals should protect and enhance existing trails and add to the network.



Appendix

Appendix 1 - Projected Craigavon Borough Housing Need 2011 to 2021

| | |
|---|---------|
| Average annual population change of Craigavon Borough from 1991 to 2011 | 1.05% |
| The total population of Craigavon Borough population in 2011 | 93,023 |
| Projected population of the Borough in 2021, if the 1991-2011 average continues | 103,265 |
| Household population in Craigavon Borough in 2011 | 92,512 |
| Households in Craigavon Borough in 2011 | 35,931 |
| Mean Household size in Craigavon Borough in 2011 | 2.574 |
| Projected mean household size in Craigavon Borough in 2021 | 2.527 |
| Projected households in Craigavon Borough in 2021 | 40,660 |
| Projected increase in households from 2011 to 2021 in Craigavon Borough | 4,729 |
| Estimated replacement dwellings required between 2011 and 2021 in the Borough | 500 |
| Total new dwellings required from 2011 to 2021 to meet projected demand | 5,229 |
| Average annual number of dwellings required from 2011 to 2021 | 523 |

Source of data - N.Ireland Census Reports for 1991, 2001 & 2011



An oasis for wildlife. The resident Swans are off for a paddle on the tranquil South Lake.

South Lakeshore Masterplan



In December 2014 GM Design Associates were appointed by Craigavon Borough Council (now Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council) to prepare a Master Plan for the area in and around the South Lake in the centre of Craigavon, responding to current circumstances and emerging opportunities, with the aim of widening to widen the role and functions of Craigavon Town Centre.

This Master Plan will facilitate achieving these opportunities, providing a framework for future orderly development, without detriment to the recreational value and amenity qualities of these lands, and enhancing their attractiveness to both.