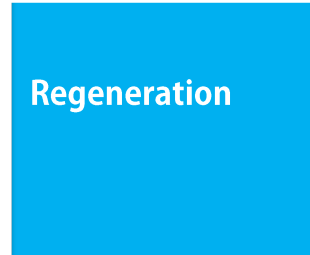


Draft Report (28th November – Version 2)



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Liam McStravick: Chairman of the Copius Group

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Copius Consulting and Consarc were commissioned by Belfast City Council (and jointly funded by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive) to undertake a feasibility study on the Gilpins Building on Sandy Row. There has been a strong lobby from local community organisations and elected members in the area to secure the asset and turn it into a focal point for community activity and use the redevelopment of the building as a catalyst for regeneration in the locality.

This feasibility study has been completed in two conjoined parts. The first part was a detailed technical appraisal of the site to establish land value, and whether or not the building could be redeveloped. The second part was a large community based consultation and research exercise to establish what local and city wide needs could be supported through the redevelopment of the building.

As with any large scale capital development project like this, the feasibility study is the 1st stage in the developmental process. The following section therefore outlines the purpose and context to the overall report including a background to the site and the associated problems, representing the backdrop against which the report is set.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE SITE

The Gilpins Building in Sandy Row was built in 1869 and since that time it has harboured many different companies, uses and trades. The store was recognised as a major retail unit for many years, trading in furniture and a range of household goods and services prior to closure. Despite having not been used since 2007, many people in Belfast know the location of 'Gilpins' and happily shopped in and visited the building over many decades. Once a thriving furniture store, the building formed an important part of a vibrant space of shop fronts and would have been used by many across the City and beyond, even at the height of the

Troubles in Northern Ireland. As Sandy Row tempers with its identity as a destination (Tourism, Trade and Retail, Culture, Community, All) and works towards the development and regeneration of this area, the restoration, redevelopment or modernisation of the Gilpin's site is a must if the area is to return to its former glory.

The Gilpins Building today is a shadow of its former self and epitomises the lack of investment and development in the Sandy Row area over the last number of decades.



The Building is currently owned by a private developer, and in the current market he would be keen to dispose of the asset at the earliest opportunity. This presents an opportunity for the community of Sandy Row (through support from local Community Organisations, Elected Members and Statutory Agencies) to pursue the ownership of the building and develop a building which meets the needs of the local community, but can become a 'destination point' for the city of Belfast.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE SITE (Continued)

The Gilpins site is vast, providing 45,000 sq ft of retail space and a substantial frontage onto Sandy Row, which could be put to a variety of uses. In 2008, the building was acquired by a private sector developer, but following significant objections from the local community and the economic downturn, plans for 100 apartments have been abandoned.

1.3 INTEREST AND SUPPORT FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Belfast City Council and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive have provided some financial support to carry out a study around the future potential use of the building and to establish what physical options the City may have if it were to acquire the building from the current owner.

The importance of the redevelopment of the Gilpins building for the community has been reflected in the formation of a steering group who have been tasked with the management of the proposal. The Steering Group is composed of local elected members and a range of statutory and community representatives;

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ➤ Christopher Stalford (DUP) | ➤ Shirley McKay (BCC) |
| ➤ Bob Stoker (UUP) | ➤ Gerry McAreavey (DSD) |
| ➤ Deirdre Hargey (Sinn Fein) | ➤ Garnet Busby (BSCR) |
| ➤ Frankie Smith (BCC) | ➤ Glenda Davies (SRCF) |
| ➤ Keith Sutherland (BCC) | ➤ Elma Newbury (NIHE) |
| ➤ Kate Mullan (SDLP) | ➤ Catherine Curran (Alliance) |
| ➤ Pat McCarthy (SDLP) | ➤ Martyn Smythson (SBPB) |

Given the size, scale and prominent position in Sandy Row, coupled with a Civic Strategy of ‘renewing the routes’, there appears to be an appetite within Belfast City Council (and other key statutory agencies) to help the local community take on the redevelopment and ownership of the site.

1.4 WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THIS STUDY

In commissioning this report, the Steering Group wanted to find out what scope the building had, what it could be used for, what the management and governance structure could potentially be, what it would cost to purchase and redevelop the site, etc. This report will provide information to the following;

1. What has been achieved elsewhere and might be possible in Sandy Row, as well as links to local frameworks
2. Maps, visuals and other aids which will help interpret the potential of the site
3. An audit of the facilities and services available within the locality
4. Identification of ideas which local residents, and stakeholders, themselves have put forward during the consultation process
5. Provision of a shortlist of options with a detailed description for each for the Gilpins site as well as a scoring matrix for each option
6. Identification of a preferred option and an rationale for this selection
7. Technical information relating to the preferred option such as costs, affordability, viability and forecasts that outline sustainability
8. Provide a number of key recommendations around the management and governance and the future steps to realise this development.

2.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following chapter provides an overview of the formal terms of reference that were distributed by Belfast City Council in relation to the Gilpins Feasibility Study. It also provides a detailed overview of the methodology deployed in addressing the key outputs identified in the terms of reference. The specific terms of reference were agreed prior to commencement of the study and requested the consultants to conduct the following:

- To extract, and articulate, the different aspirations for the use of Gilpins site through a consultation process;
- Review, within the context of the building / site condition, if these aspirations are of viable nature;
- To review the strategic arena and best practice (locally and nationally) and how lessons learnt can be incorporated into any potential development;
- To present a clear, agreed vision for the site;
- Provide outline costs for the development and explore potential for funding opportunities;
- Identify how the site can be used to address wider social issues based on need; and
- Provide a clear way forward in terms of developing the project including potential delivery mechanisms

In simple terms, the Gilpins project required a needs based assessment of the current community facilities within the Sandy Row area, extensive community based consultation and a number of feasible options for development on the site. The feasibility study was completed in two distinct parallel phases. The community based consultation and options appraisal and the technical options appraisal. Chapter 2.2 and 2.3 provides some clear insight into what activities were undertaken to meet the needs of the study and to fulfil the obligations of the contract.

Steering Group members were consulted and kept informed throughout the three month process, and this allowed them to make informed decisions about the future options, uses and development potential. The process was open, transparent and fully inclusive, this being a key ingredient for the local residents of Sandy Row, and will lead to a longer term buy in and engagement with the local residents as the project develops.

2.2 CONSULTATION AND METHODOLOGY (OPTIONS APPRAISAL)

In line with the requirements set forth in the terms of reference, Copius Consulting deployed an innovative and bespoke methodology framework based on best practice examples of feasibility studies that they have completed previously. The methodology and consultation process was agreed by all key partners and stakeholders prior to commencing the study. Presented in tabular form below is a description of the agreed methodology against the actual outputs (as with any project of this nature, the methodology framework was revised on occasions to suit the evolving requirements of the community and the needs of the study).

Agreed Outputs	Actual Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 20 Face to Face Interviews with Key Individuals / Identified Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 21 face to face interviews / consultations with the following organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belfast South Community Resources - Ex Combatants Group - Blythe Street Primary School - Donegal Road Primary School - Sandy Row Community Forum - Sandy Row Residents Association - Orange Lodge - Sandy Row Women’s Group - FASA - Greater Village Regeneration Trust - Sandy Row Band
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Host 2 public meetings about the facility to allow people to identify any specific aspirations for the site, and identify any key historical considerations from the former site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 1 public meeting hosted with a further meeting still to be delivered (30 people in attendance)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 2 Public Meetings with a small group of local stakeholders (1 at start and 1 at end of process) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 2 meetings with local stakeholders completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Design and develop an online survey and encourage local people to give their opinions online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Online survey and Resident’s survey implemented and developed (136 Households responded representing over 350 people)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Host meetings with 6 key government agencies / statutory agencies about the need for enhanced facilities in the locale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Statutory agencies engaged through the steering group with additional 4 meetings hosted by the consultant team.

2.3 TECHNICAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

Consarc Architecture led on the technical and land based feasibility study elements. In line with the terms of reference and response from the Copius led consortium, the following key steps were undertaken as part of the technical appraisal.

Agreed Outputs	Actual Outputs
❖ Review Previous Planning History and Heritage Aspects of Site	❖ Comprehensive record of the site completed covering its historical, social, architectural and cultural history in addition to the more recent planning history
❖ Identify and make recommendations for a series of early actions.	❖ An Access Health & Safety Review completed for the building detailing what actions that need to be undertaken immediately to make the building as safe as possible and to prevent further damage ❖ A Condition Review completed for the building detailing water damage, rot, etc
❖ Establish the physical parameters within which the feasibility of a range of usages for the Gilpins Site may be used	❖ Recording the physical parameters for the site, measuring footprint and floor plates ❖ Identifying potential for a number of options ranging from full restoration and re-use, partial restoration, partial demolition and re-build, to full demolition and re-build.
❖ Provide a Greater understanding of the ground / building condition on the Gilpins site	❖ Structural engineer reviewing ground conditions from historic records and visual evidence. Completed. ❖ A detailed building condition survey completed, recording all defects and identifying construction materials and methods.
❖ Provide an understanding of the building structure so that all options are considered	❖ Structural Review Completed – identified all floor loading or structural restrictions in the existing building or ground. ❖ Condition Review – identified a costed, prioritised list of repairs and upgrading works: <u>Priority 1</u> – urgent works which would need to be done to prevent further deterioration of the building (e.g. water ingress, security measures).

2.3 TECHNICAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY (Continued)

The table below presents additional activities undertaken by Consarc as part of the overall feasibility study process;

Agreed Outputs	Actual Outputs
❖ Provide an understanding of the building structure so that all options are considered (Continued)	<p><u>Priority 2</u> – Works that would need to be done to allow the building to be used for temporary or meanwhile uses (e.g. fire alarm systems, access ramps, temporary lighting etc.)</p> <p><u>Priority 3</u> – Full repair and restoration works detailed</p>
❖ Establish any issues relating to the title of the site	<p>❖ Legal title of the site completed to establish if there are any encumbrances (covenants, rights of way etc.) on the site.</p> <p>❖ The physical boundaries of site was checked both on maps and on the ground by a surveyor</p>
❖ Taking into account all of the above – assess current value of site?	❖ Site Appraisal and Valuation Completed

The technical appraisal was completed to an exacting standard, allowing the potential for future uses to be tested, verified and either ruled in or out based on their physical demands on the building.

2.4 SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The overall approach to the assignment was one of inclusivity and openness. The Statutory agencies were keen that the ideas and study was embodied through a ‘community development’ approach. Listening to the needs of local residents was of paramount importance and the widespread consultation, survey and public meeting enabled local people to feel that they were ‘heard’ and ‘listened to’ as part of the process. In establishing the future options for Gilpins, the consultant team had to consider the following; 1) Would it be acceptable to local stakeholders, 2) Could the footprint of the building meet the need, 3) Could we secure finance or funding to develop the preferred option and 4) Was the option sustainable in the longer term. During the consultation phase of the assignment, there many uses presented by local stakeholders, and each had to be examined alongside these four key questions. In summary, the consultation was meaningful, there were no preconceived options for the development, and the final list of options were fully representative of the consultation process.

3.1 CONTEXT AND FIT OF THE GILPINS PROJECT

The Gilpins project is strategic in nature and is likely to cut across a number of key policy areas. In establishing a number of viable options for the site, it is important to identify any existing or planned developments / investment to avoid duplication and ensure that a new use for Gilpins can offer additionality, maximising its offer and enhancing its sustainability. This section establishes a strategic fit for the Gilpins project in anticipation of significant regeneration in Belfast City Centre and South West Neighbourhood Renewal Area.



Sandy Rows location in the heart of Belfast City Centre presents an opportunity for Gilpins. The planning process has been delivered in anticipation of the following :

1. **Redevelopment of Glengall Street Bus Station** – Plans presented in appendix
2. **Belfast City Council City Investment Fund 2012 - 2015** - BCC's Physical investment programme will help to build community and city assets and support construction. This will impact on the wider economy, creating demand and opportunities at a time when they are needed most. BCC has identified modern infrastructure as critical to the future success of Belfast and the revitalisation of the local economy. BCC wish to create assets that will help communities and the city as a whole prosper, compete and create further opportunities now and for future generations. It has already helped fund Titanic Belfast, Connswater Community Greenway, the Lyric and The MAC.
3. **Belfast City Council Renewing the Routes Project** – Since 2004 Belfast City Council have been delivering regeneration projects, working side by side with local people to bring out the best in important neighbourhoods across the City. The Council works in collaboration with communities, businesses and agencies to improve shopping areas and green spaces, develop gateways, introduce art and celebrate diverse heritage. This results in visible transformations that conserve the unique character of each community and inspire further regeneration.

3.1 CONTEXT AND FIT OF THE GILPINS PROJECT (Continued)

4. **Belfast City Council Tourism Framework** – The key priorities for the framework include;

- a) *Visionary Drivers* - Supporting growth / Investment into key projects and themes which will attract visitors - Titanic / Maritime Belfast, Conference and Exhibition Space (extension to Waterfront Hall), Crumlin Road Gaol, Lagan Corridor, Belfast Hills and Belfast Story.
- b) *Destination Developing* - Supporting growth and development into areas across the city to spread visitors, spend and benefits of tourism – Titanic Quarter, Queen’s Quarter, Cathedral Quarter, Shankill, Gaeltacht Quarter, Belfast Hills, Connswater Community Greenway, North Belfast Cultural Corridor, and Lisburn Road.
- c) *Product and Infrastructure* – supporting gaps in experiences and services – food tourism, cultural tourism, community tourism, sports tourism, events, meeting accommodation gaps, transport gaps, and information services.

5. **A Strategic Regeneration Framework for South Belfast** - This framework forms a foundation for the development of an overarching strategy for the city. It highlights the vast disparity that exists in South Belfast. The report suggests that South Belfast is lacking in potential business development space, particularly for small micro enterprises. The report identifies that Sandy Row has a number of potential re-development sites that could be used to meet a range of business development needs.

6. **The Sustainable Development of Sandy Row Strategy 2015** – This document produced by CM Works aims to establish a physical and economic renewal strategy for Sandy Row, concentrating on the commercial frontage of the area. It notes a number of developmental challenges for Sandy Row, including:

- Long term lack of economic investment in the area
- Reduction of retail and commercial business operating
- Sandy Row has yet to feel the benefit of the surge of tourists coming to Belfast, with a lack of visitors to the area
- Sites of historical and cultural significance are often overlooked
- Challenge to positively promote the area as an opportunity for visitors, shoppers and economic investment

7. **Revitalise: A Neighbourhood Sustainability Plan for Sandy Row** - This document has identified some key opportunities for Sandy Row, particularly in relation to culture, heritage and tourism. There were a number of potentially ‘marketable’ points of interest in Sandy Row but the underpinning constraint is the lack of investment.

The new use for the Gilpins is inextricably linked to the strategies / initiatives identified above. A redeveloped site can become the catalyst for economic growth, combining culture / heritage and business opportunities to encourage visitors and footfall in Sandy Row. Additionally, any proposal will significantly enhance the physical facade of ‘the Row’, converting a derelict site to a vibrant, accessible hub for activity, giving people a reason to visit.

3.2 ADDITIONAL POLICY AREAS THE GILPINS PROJECT FITS WITH

The consultation findings are presented in full in section 4 of this document. Broadly, the findings identify a number of key issues and needs for the local community. In delivering a project that corresponds to the requests of the local community, it is anticipated that the new use for the Gilpins Building can contribute to a range of policy areas, local, regional and national strategies. These are presented in the table below.

Thematic Area	Contribution	Key Strategy
Culture/Heritage	The consultation identifies a need for the Gilpins to return an 'identity' for Sandy Row. It is proposed that culture and heritage will be embedded in any development and include public art/exhibitions that will attract people to Sandy Row and give people an opportunity to share its past and contribute to its future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast City Council Integrated Tourism Framework • Belfast Tourism Strategy 2010 – 2014 • NIT Tourism Strategy for NI 2020
Sport/Health	It is anticipated that any new use will include provision for sport, physical activity and health promotion. The area suffers from severe health inequalities, and Gilpins can be the mechanism to address these issues through enhanced access to opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHSSPS A healthier Future • Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2017 • Belfast City Council; Making Belfast more Active
Economic Development / Educational Underachievement	The new use for Gilpins will likely include a mix of business space/micro enterprise units as well as community provision for training and education. This will target young people, adults and older people and seek to address gaps in educational underachievement and high levels of unemployment locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OFMDFM a ten year strategy for Children and Young People 2006-2016 • Success through Skills – The Skills Strategy for NI • DETI Social Economy & Enterprise Strategy • Anti-Poverty Strategies Ireland and NI • Lifetime Opportunities – OFMDFM
Community Safety	Any development will transform what was already a derelict site and a venue for anti social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse. The current site has been described through consultation as a 'plague and eye sore for Sandy Row'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoJ - Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities • Belfast City Councils PCSP's • Neighbourhood Renewal 'People and Places' Strategy

The list of strategies is not exhaustive, but provides an indication as to the potential contribution of the Gilpins. Any facility would be established as a shared space and therefore would also contribute to key shared space agenda, cohesion and integration and good relations strategies.

3.3 LEARNING FROM BEST PRACTICE

There is a broad and growing research literature on regeneration which stresses the importance of:

- Community buy-in
- Need for comprehensive examination of problems and holistic solution
- Mixed solutions, with flexibility built in, organic rather than fully prescriptive
- In particular the inclusion of housing to make the area safe at night and discourage anti-social behaviour
- Respect for heritage
- Improving permeability – the ability to move through the area, particularly pedestrian connections, however with respect for traditional street patterns and movement
- Creation of new places for interaction
- Need to build within a well defined area and positively contribute to its identity.

All of these aspects have been brought to bear in the analysis of the Gilpins building. Additionally, within Northern Ireland there are many examples of best practice that illustrate key lessons. Relevant examples are summarised in the table below

Case Study	Analysis / Lesson
Skainos – multi-dimensional renewal	Very large scheme (£21m) including housing both for sale and social, training and employment functions and community services. Skainos illustrates the power of a vision and the surprisingly large potential of a site in a similar context to Gilpins, fronting the road in an edge city centre location in an area once known for shopping ,but now in decline within a disadvantaged area
LORAG – community leisure	Taking over the Shaftesbury Recreation Centre from Belfast City Council in 2000, LORAG have demonstrated alternative models of provision, those which are community led, can be effective not only in day to day management and securing community involvement, but in attracting major investment, LORAG achieving a £2m grant from Sport NI. Also broadening the leisure focus to include other community services notably Sure Start nursery / crèche provision
EBCDA – network centre	EBCDA, umbrella organisation for East Belfast community organisations, is completing the renewal of the former Rupert Stanley building, prior to that the Templemore Primary School as a network centre in a £4m scheme funded by DSD. EBCDA will act as a social landlord in letting out spaces to a range of community organisations, and others including statutory agencies, while providing common services such as reception and photocopying. This delivers cost savings to the groups while increasing their efficiency as they can more easily work together.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter presents an overview of ‘need’ in terms of finding a new use for the Gilpins building. The need has been broadly presented across three thematic areas;

- a) Perceived need based on consultation with stakeholders and residents
- b) Statistical Need and Government Information to support consultation
- c) An audit of provision in the locality

4.2 AREA OVERVIEW

The Gilpins building is located in the Shaftesbury Electoral Ward within the South West Neighbourhood Renewal Area. On Census day 29th April 2001 the resident population of Shaftesbury ward was 5785. Of this population:

- 19.4% were under 16 years old and 21.6% were aged 60 and over
- 47.7% of the population were male and 52.3% were female
- 36.9% were from a Catholic community background and 58.5% were from a ‘Protestant and Other Christian community’ background.
- 49.3% of persons aged 16 and over were single
- 38.0 years was the average age of the population

The population for Shaftesbury ward in 2010 was estimated at 6352, of which 15.3% were children, 42.9% were young working age adults (16-39 year olds), 24.9% were older working age adults (males 40-64 year olds, females 40-59 year olds) and 16.8% were older people. This represents an increase of 9.8% (566 individuals) from the mid-year ward population in 2001.

4.3 COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

One of the key strengths of this feasibility study was the validity of the community consultation, those consulted had a genuine opportunity to shape and influence the final preferred option for the development. Organisations and individuals were consulted via residents and online surveys as well as open ended stakeholder interviews. A total of 136 surveys were returned, representative of approximately 350 people. 1 public meeting was hosted and attended by 30 local stakeholders, whilst 21 stakeholder interviews were conducted, a list of the organisations consulted is noted below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| » Sandy Row Women’s Group | » South Belfast Alternatives |
| » Belfast South Community Resources | » Charter Youth Club |
| » FASA | » Windsor Women’s Group |
| » GVRT | » Forum for Alternative Belfast |
| » Sandy Row Resident’s Group | » Weaver’s Court Business Park |
| » Sandy Row Band | » Belfast City Council (Heritage / Tourism Officers) |
| » Sandy Row Community Forum | » Hilden Brewery |
| » Ex-combatants group | » Art Gallery’s |
| » Sandy Row Orange Lodge | » Blythe Street Primary School |
| » South Belfast Partnership Board | » Donegal Road Primary School |
| » Sandy Row Boxing Club | |

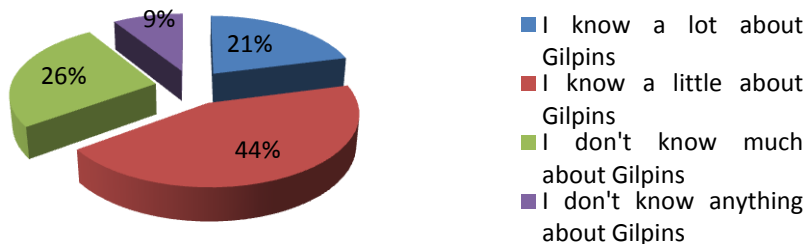
The resident’s survey was distributed to over 600 households. A total of 136 households responded which is representative of over 350 people. Of the 136 responses 53% were completed by females with the remaining 47% completed by their male counterparts. The completed surveys show that the average number of years that the respondents have lived within the Sandy Row area equates to just over 31 years (31.28 years).

4.4 CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK

The consultation framework was designed to enable each organisation and individual to identify the impact of the Gilpins building in its current state, the key issues affecting Sandy Row and options to be assessed as part of the new use for Gilpins. The key findings are presented in the following pages, supported by key statistics and research where necessary.

4.5 WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF GILPINS CURRENTLY

Those consulted were asked to identify what they know about the building and what they perceived to be the current impact of Gilpins on Sandy Row. As expected, feedback was inherently negative with Gilpins referenced as “an eye sore” or “a site for anti social behaviour” by many of those consulted.

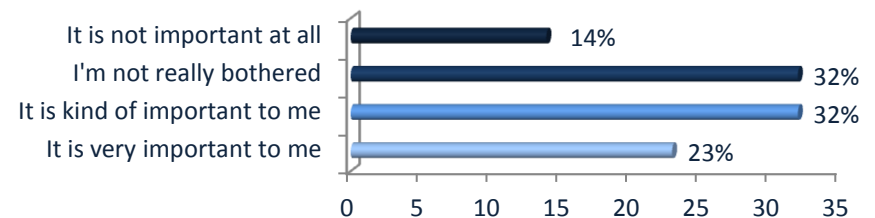


The figure above shows that a total of 65% residents either know a lot or a little about Gilpins, highlighting that the Gilpins building is a prominent landmark within the Sandy Row area. 9% of the respondents highlighted that they have no knowledge or experience of the Gilpins building. The following resident’s statement is reflective of the majority of comments, “Building was the hub of community and attracted visitors from across Belfast”.

Some of the additional comments include:

- ❖ *The premises has a rich history and used to be a brewery facility*
- ❖ *Memorial on the side of the building, which is now located in the hall within the building itself is significant*
- ❖ *Original UVF Parade Ground was in Gilpins (photo of men signing the covenant on 28th September 1912)*
- ❖ *Gilpins was iconic like Murray’s Tobacco site and Reid’s shoe shop.*
- ❖ *Gilpins is synonymous with the historical significance of Sandy Row, individuals from all over Belfast used to work and shop in Sandy Row*
- ❖ *Was a major attraction for Sandy Row and used to attract traders*
- ❖ *Part of the community has been lost and the opportunity to retain the significant landmark in Sandy Row is important for residents.*
- ❖ *Young people don’t care about it, or understand the significance of the building. Used for a lot of antisocial behaviour/ drug misuse.*

When informed about this process, those consulted were asked to identify the importance of the Gilpins building for them.



14% of respondents have replied that the Gilpins building isn’t important to them. The graph highlights that the majority of residents have a level of interest in the building. A resident responded that he “Grew up in Sandy Row and the Gilpins building has been part of the community as long as he can remember.”

4.6 KEY ISSUES/NEEDS IN SANDY ROW

In establishing a potential use for the Gilpins site, it was important to identify the key issues and needs of the local community. Those consulted were asked to identify and prioritise what they perceive to be the key needs of Sandy Row. The stakeholder interview and direct consultation identified a variety of needs, including:

- ❖ *Needs something that is going to represent times gone by in Sandy Row.*
- ❖ *There seems to be a strong sense of underachievement when it comes to Education in the Sandy Row area, creating a direct correlation between the employability prospect of local residents leaving School with a lack of qualifications.*
- ❖ *Young People need some facility to cater for extracurricular activity after 9pm, tackle antisocial behaviour in the area.*
- ❖ *There seems to be a lack of adequate housing in the area.*
- ❖ *It needs to be a unique redevelopment, not a commercially orientated development such as Boucher Road or City Centre (needs to reflect niche markets)*
- ❖ *We need people to come back to Sandy Row, increased numbers of visitors will reinvigorate the local economy, Gilpins can be the catalyst to realise this.*
- ❖ *We need to bring people back to Sandy Row, there needs to be more shops so that we can encourage businesses to set up here*
- ❖ *Health has to be a key issue, there is nothing for people to do to improve their health, people feel isolated and there is a big issue around drug and alcohol abuse in Sandy Row.*
- ❖ *We need a reason for people to come here, there is no where to go at the minute, people that do come in, leave straight away again because there is nothing keeping them here*

In terms of the residents survey, the table opposite provides an overview of perceived needs in Sandy Row.

Rank	Key needs in Sandy Row
1	Employability and Jobs
2	Health and Wellbeing
3	Youth Programmes
4	Sporting Provision
5	Support Services e.g. counselling
6	Housing and Accommodation
7	Older people services
8	Social areas for entertainment

Based on the information provided through the consultation process, this report has summarised the perceived needs of the area into the following thematic points:

- ❖ High levels of educational underachievement and unemployment
- ❖ Low levels of health
- ❖ Lack of provision for young people
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Lack of an 'identity' for Sandy Row
- ❖ Need to create 'somewhere to go'
- ❖ Need to re-invigorate
- ❖ Need for shops and retail space
- ❖ Need for new businesses and investment
- ❖ Need to bring to people to Sandy Row

What exists currently

In order to validate the consultation findings, each of the perceived needs identified above is supported by statistics and evidence in the following pages.

4.7 EDUCATION/TRAINING/EMPLOYMENT

Statistics for the Shaftesbury Electoral ward demonstrate a trend of low level educational attainment and underachievement. The number of school leavers who achieved at least 5 or more GDCE's at grade C and above (2009/2010) was substantially lower than the Belfast LGD area and Northern Ireland figures of 29.6% compared to 65.5% and 71.9% respectively. The percentage of post the Primary School population with Free School Meals entitlement (2010/11) is significantly greater in the Shaftesbury ward compared to the Belfast LGD and Northern Ireland averages. 48.8% of the Shaftesbury ward gain this entitlement compared to 27.8% within the Belfast LGD and 18.0% in Northern Ireland. In the Shaftesbury ward there were 160 students enrolled at a Higher Education college in 2009/10 whilst there were 766 students enrolled at a Further Education college during the same year.

Work Area	Shaftesbury	Belfast LGD area	Belfast South (AA)	Northern Ireland
School leavers who achieved at least 5 or more GCSEs at grade C and above (%) (2009/10)	29.6	65.5	74.4	71.9
Post Primary School population (pupil residence) with Free School Meals Entitlement (%) (2010/11)	48.8	27.8	12.1	18.0

Additionally, the Shaftesbury Electoral ward is located in the top 8% most deprived in terms of Income and Employment, whilst it falls within the top 2% most deprived for Education.

Coinciding with the low level of educational attainment / underachievement, the Shaftesbury Ward area also suffers high level disadvantage in terms of employment and economic activity. The table below demonstrates some of the key statistics in this regard.

Ward Area	Shaftesbury	Belfast LGD area	Belfast South (AA)	Northern Ireland
Claimant Count (%) (2010)	8.2	6.6	4.6	4.9
Claimant Count - Long Term Unemployed (%) (2010)	23.4	22.8	20.2	23.7
Housing Benefit Claimants 16 and Over (2011)	1778	39425	8615	156331
Income Support Claimants 16-59 (2011)	833	21107	3742	82783

The statistics above once again clearly show that there is a significant difference in terms of the percentage of Claimants (2010) within the Shaftesbury ward compared to Belfast LGD area and Northern Ireland averages. 8.2% of the Shaftesbury ward are classified as claimants compared to 6.6% (Belfast LGD) and 4.9% (NI) respectively. The Shaftesbury ward average for claimants that are long term unemployed (23.4%) is again above the Belfast LGD ward area average of 22.8%. Additionally, the table above shows that in 2011 there were a total of 1778 people aged 16 and over claiming housing benefits and 833 people aged 16-59 claiming income support. Such statistics clearly demonstrate the need for intervention in the area in terms of improved opportunities ,personal development, training and education and ultimately improved chances of gaining employment.

4.7 EDUCATION/TRAINING/EMPLOYMENT (Continued)

Sandy Row is located within the Shaftesbury 2 and Shaftesbury 3 Super Output Area's. Protestant working class communities, such as Sandy Row suffer from significant levels of underachievement, where many young people are unemployed and disaffected (46,000 NEETs in NI). Wider research (*sourced from 'Educational Disadvantage and the Protestant Working Class' Dawn Purvis MLA*) demonstrates that in NI;

- 24% of children live below the poverty line with 10% living in severe poverty
- Children in NI are twice as likely to be living in persistent poverty compared with the rest of the UK
- Ten-year suicide trends to 2007 show a 61% increase in NI
- 3 in 4 children living in persistent poverty lived in one parent families
- Over 41% of the workforce have no qualifications
- Protestant pupils in disadvantaged areas will only have a 1 in 10 chance of going to University (compared to 1 in 5 for Catholic pupils)

Sandy Row (located in SOA Shaftesbury 2) is ranked 22nd of 892 SOA's in terms of its education deprivation domain, whilst Shaftesbury 3 SOA is ranked 19th of 892, offering an indication as to the severe disadvantage and recurring educational underachievement in the target area. Consultation with the principle of Blythe Street Primary School has identified a range of challenges faced by young people with regards educational achievement. Of the 82 pupils currently attending the school, only 3 have achieved an IQ score of average or above based on the DE Intelligence Test. NISRA 2010 also highlights that unemployment and poor educational attainment remain a common concern within the Shaftesbury ward. In the Shaftesbury 2 SOA 65.3% of the population had no or low levels of qualifications. Similarly, 66.3% of the residents in the Shaftesbury 3 SOA had no or low levels of education.

4.8 HEALTH

In terms of health and well being, the key statistics for the Shaftesbury Ward suggest high level disadvantage and deprivation compared to Belfast and National averages. The table below for example provides some of the key Health and Care statistics taken from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service.

Ward Area	Shaftesbury	Belfast LGD area	Belfast South (AA)	Northern Ireland
Life expectancy males (2007-2009)	Less than 75	73.5	76.4	76.8
Life expectancy females (2007-2009)	Greater than 75 but less than NI average	79.6	82	81.4
Children aged 0-2 registered with a dentist (%) (2011)	12.8	25.3	23.1	30.3
Children aged 3-5 registered with a dentist (%) (2011)	43.0	61.8	62.1	70.0

Evidently in terms of health, the Shaftesbury Electoral Ward is significantly deprived with life expectancies for both males and females significantly less than the Northern Ireland averages. The life expectancies for males within the Shaftesbury ward is less than 75, while the National average is 76.8. Additionally, the female life expectancy is less than the Northern Ireland average of 81.4 years. Child Health Statistics 2010 indicate that Sandy Row has a significantly high % of births to lone parents (17.9%) compared to the Belfast average (10.9%), suggesting a lack of family support and often a lack of role models for young people. Sandy Row also has a high number of teenage mothers (10.5%) compared to the Belfast average (6.9%). The Shaftesbury ward is ranked 15th out of 582 in terms of Health and Disability Domain Score (top 3%) which further highlights the disadvantage faced.

4.9 LACK OF PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

One of the key needs of the area according to consultation, is adequate provision for young people, and particularly those aged 16+. *'Nothing to do'* has been blamed as one of the key contributing factors to high levels of anti social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse locally. The current offer for young people in Sandy Row includes:

Charter Youth Club – BELB club that operates during the week and primarily caters for young people aged 8 – 16. 'At risk' young people in the 16+ category won't attend because it is 'too young'. Additionally, the club is closed on a Friday and Saturday evening.

Sandy Row Boxing Club – Located within the Orange Hall, the boxing club provides an outlet for young people from across Sandy Row to engage in sport and physical activity.

Belfast South Community Resources – Provide an ESF funded REACH project which provides essential skills training and other specific training courses for young people.

Other youth provision include the Donegal Pass Youth club which is out of reach for young people from Sandy Row and 'play projects' which target children and don't meet the needs of the older youth population. According to consultation, the lack of appropriate youth provision leads to high levels of anti social behaviour and criminal activity in Sandy Row. According to Youth Justice Statistics 2011, the YJA approved 384 Youth Conferences in South & East Belfast between 2007-2011, this accounts for 27% of the total number of Youth Conferences approved in Northern Ireland during this period of time.

The community safety / confidence officer within Sandy Row is employed by BSCR to liaise with statutory agencies with regards to community safety concerns.

The community safety officer reported that key duties include:

"dealing with everyday problems reported in Sandy Row such as anti social behaviour, shoplifting, kids using substances openly, family disputes, court appearances, break-ins, noisy neighbours and other issues that arise in the community"

The Safety Officer also identified that a great deal of his time is spent *"dealing with anti social behaviour"* which *"mainly involves local youths"*.

One of the other major problems is drug paraphernalia that is discarded in the area. Lack of provision for young people seems to be a key issue for the local community, Gilpins can help address this and this should be noted within any potential redevelopment.

4.10 HOUSING

The consultation has identified housing as a key priority for the area. The Victoria Place development has been a cause of frustration for local people as they have not been able to access apartments and accommodation. Importantly, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive waiting list for the area does not reflect a huge need for additional houses, however the consultation process continued to identify housing as a priority, particularly for the 18-25 age group. A key consideration is the pending Welfare Reform bill and the move to universal credits, consultation with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive indicates that 1 and 2 bedroom apartments, within close proximity to the City Centre will be identified as a NIHE priority.

4.11 WHAT EXISTS CURRENTLY: AN IDENTITY FOR SANDY ROW

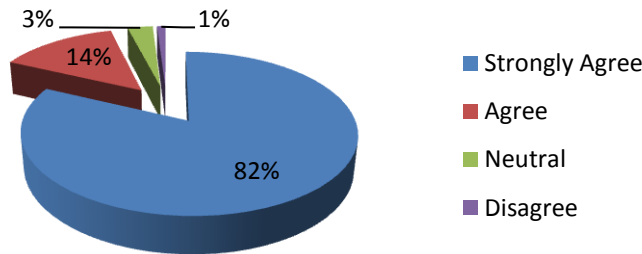
The consultation process has identified the need for Sandy Row to re-establish its identity. Currently, Sandy Row has been described as ‘a ghost town’ by those consulted. This is compounded by significant levels of dereliction. In order to provide a context, the following tables provide a list of community organisations, businesses and key ‘cultural’ sites within Sandy Row (www.sandyrow.org).

Facilities	Local Businesses	Local Businesses	Local Businesses	Points of Interest
Belfast South Community Resources Belfast South Community Transport Sandy Row Community Centre Sandy Row Boxing Club Sandy Row Orange Hall Sure start Blythefield Primary School Charter Youth Club Kids Into Training & Education After Schools Activity Programme 6 x Local Churches	<p><u>Cultural</u> Citi Cabs Allens Tours Drums Sounds Band Shop One Stop Ulster Shop Mini-Coach Executive Travel and Tours Jets Taxis Belfast International Youth Hostel</p> <p><u>Specialist</u> Singer Sewing Machines Southside Pet food & Accessories Asian Flavours Indian Spice Shop Belfast Memorials Fisher & Fisher Solicitors City Sewing Machines Reid's Shoes Belfast Alterations Tommy McCutcheon Fishing Tackle Cusack Ink: Tattoo & Piercing Studio Academy Digital Colour CM Works Wheels Are Us Belfast City Property Service Dr. McDowell Optometrist Apsley Homes</p>	<p><u>Cafes & Take Away</u> Ena's Best on The Row The Supreme Silver Boat Chinese Take Away Indian Jaipur Kebabs Kebab House</p> <p><u>Bakery</u> Truffles Kirks Home Bakery</p> <p><u>For the Home/Shop</u> T. A. Allens Furniture Ideal Furniture David Scott Tiles Vista Blinds Better Blinds Patterson's Electrical Pine Furniture & Mirrors Markey's Pharmacy Alliance Pharmacy McKnight's Newsagent</p>	<p><u>Pubs & Clubs</u> The Royal Sandy Row Rangers Supporters Club</p> <p><u>Hair & Beauty/Barber</u> The Hair Company Just Gents Just Gents 2 Unisex Beauty Salon</p> <p><u>Derelict Shop Fronts/Sites</u> 9 x derelict shops in Sandy Row</p>	The Orange Hall The Half Day School and the connection with factory life The Churches The brewery site and its connection with the Ulster Division (Gilpins) Local involvement in the World Wars More recent history of the impact of the “Troubles”

4.12 FINDING A NEW USE FOR GILPINS

Having established the key issues and needs within Sandy Row, those consulted were asked to comment on the potential of the Gilpins building to address issues and to identify potential development options.

The graph below shows that an overwhelming majority of those consulted in Sandy Row would like to see the Gilpins developed for the entire community. *“It is crucial and will be key in defining the future of Sandy Row as a place of cultural, historical and economic value, that will hopefully reflect the inclusivity of the area.”*



In establishing a long list of options for the building, we asked those consulted to think inwardly about how the building can potentially help to address local issues, and to think outwardly about how the Gilpins building could be used as a catalyst to bring people to Sandy Row. Some of the key suggestions include:

- ❖ Adequate social housing and apartment complexes
- ❖ Clinics / office units for hot desks (PSNI / Housing executive / Advice/Benefits)

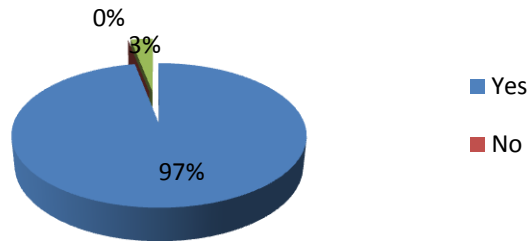
- ❖ Leisure facility that includes a boxing club / gym - reduces anti social behaviour.
- ❖ Renovating the Gilpins building will be a pivotal point in regenerating and improving the overall aesthetic appearance of the Sandy Row area, it needs to be iconic in design
- ❖ A club specifically geared at providing training, education, volunteering and employment opportunity for those aged 16-25.
- ❖ Create a Green Space / community area
- ❖ History of Sandy Row needs to be prevalent in a new facility
- ❖ Community Development Hub – Centre for Learning and Training
- ❖ A Village Square
- ❖ Retail space
- ❖ Cafe and social space
- ❖ Conference Centre

Local residents were invited to prioritise potential development themes,, the findings are presented below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Multi Purpose Community Building | 7. Business Units / Workshops |
| 2. Low Cost Affordable Housing | 8. Cultural / Heritage Space |
| 3. Shops / Retail Space | 9. Children’s Play Facility |
| 4. Youth Facility | 10. Café / Restaurant |
| 5. Art / Theatre / Creative Space | 11. Village Garden / Social areas |
| 6. Day Care / Child Care | 12. Offices and Conference Facilities |

4.13 CLARIFYING A NEED TO DEVELOP GILPINS

A full list of suggested options and an assessment of each is included in section 8 of this document. The consultation process asked respondents to formally clarify that there is a need to develop the Gilpins Building, the graph below summarises the response.



The chart above shows that local residents feel that there is an obvious need to develop the Gilpins building and would support this process. No respondents felt that the Gilpins building should remain in its current state.

4.14 CONCLUSIONS

This section has provided an overview of the consultation findings, supported by a range of statistics and research that evidence the need for the redevelopment of the Gilpins building. The consultation has found that the key issues and needs of the local community include a range of systemic issues linked to deprivation, such as: Low Levels of employment and high levels of educational underachievement, low levels of health, lack of provision for young people, lack of adequate housing for young people, lack of inward investment caused by dereliction and lack of identity.

These findings have been supported by a range of research and statistics about the local area. Key findings include:

- ❖ *Shaftesbury Electoral ward is located in the top 8% most deprived in terms of Income and Employment, whilst it falls within the top 2% most deprived for Education*
- ❖ *Shaftesbury Electoral Ward is significantly deprived in terms of health, located in the top 2% most deprived wards in NI*
- ❖ *Child Health Statistics 2010 indicate that Sandy Row has a significantly high % of births to lone parents (17.9%) compared to the Belfast average (10.9%), suggesting a lack of family support and often a lack of role models for young people.*
- ❖ *Sandy Row also has a high number of teenage mothers (10.5%) compared to the Belfast average (6.9%).*
- ❖ *The audit of local businesses indicates that there is nothing that can become a major attraction, nothing to reclaim footfall and identity for Sandy Row*
- ❖ *The Shaftesbury Ward is located in the top 3% most deprived in terms of Living Environment*
- ❖ *The NIHE waiting list for housing does not reflect the local need for 18-25 year olds*
- ❖ *There is a minimum of 9 derelict shops on the main Sandy Row which need an economic stimulus/catalyst to attract business*
- ❖ *Sandy Row is 'being left behind' in terms of the tourism agenda, it needs something to enable it to contribute to and become a part of major investment strategies and plans for Belfast*
- ❖ *The Gilpins site in its current state is 'an eyesore', 'a sight for anti social behaviour' and 'drug and alcohol misuse'*

5.1 TECHNICAL INTRODUCTION OF GILPINS

The Gilpin's Building in Sandy Row comprises a group of three main buildings arranged around an open courtyard on a site of approximately 2.3 acres. The historic buildings on the site are as follows: to the south side, a three storey brick warehouse with stepped gable fronting onto Sandy Row; to the west sits another three storey hipped roofed building with, on the courtyard elevation, seven polychrome arches and a central feature at second floor level which comprised a stone carving surrounded by a circular stone moulding with carved wreath below and crown over. The circular carved feature was removed in recent years for safe-keeping and now resides within the adjacent Community Centre.

To the front of the road, on the eastern side of the courtyard, is a modern two storey wide-span showroom building. Constructed in the 1970's as an extension to the successful Gilpin's furniture shop, this building sits on the site of the former Brewery Buildings – an impressive 9 bay brick-built warehouse with projecting central bay featuring carved stone detailing and archway through to the courtyard beyond.

Historical OS maps of the site indicate that the areas of the building referred to as W1 and S1 originate from before 1883 and formed part of the Ulster Brewery buildings constructed on the site in 1869.

Areas S2 and W2 appear to have been modified between 1883 and 1902 and W3, a single storey brick loading bay with a pitched roof was added between 1902 and 1958.

There is a large courtyard area in the middle of the Building which presents an opportunity for future use of creating a large community Courtyard.

The Building is also adjacent to the Sandy Row Community Centre, and the consultant team have reinforced the need to think about how both spaces / buildings will relate and complement one another when the redevelopment is completed.



5.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 19th Century

Sandy Row has previously been described as a ‘town within a town’. By the middle of the 19th Century the area was a thriving suburb with residents employed in the local mills and a wide range of local businesses. The 1858 OS maps show the Gilpin’s site being occupied by Tuckers’ Glue and Starch works but the following few decades were a period of great change on this site. The Belfast and Ulster Brewing Company was formed in the 1800’s and moved quickly towards the building of a new brewery in Belfast. Jack Magee, writing about the life of master baker Bernard ‘Barney’ Hughes describes the process of building the brewery as follows:

“Within a few months of forming the new company announced the purchase of ‘the most eligible site in Belfast, with water springs on the premises, on which it could build its brewery’. Clearing of the ground for the splendid new brewery began almost immediately on the large site of 3 acres in Sandy Row, a few yards from Tea Lane, or Rowland Street. Formerly the premises of Edward Tuckers’ Glue and Starch Works, the location contained ten wells sunk by Tucker, and appeared ideal for its new purpose. Advertisements were placed in ‘all the leading journals of the empire’ for competition designs, but the successful architect was found nearer home.

The designs of Alexander McAlister of Chichester Street in Belfast, were preferred by the Directors. Indeed, much of the project was accomplished by local companies. Coates Lagan foundry provided the

horizontal steam engine and Henry Gray and Company’s foundry in Townsend Street supplied the cast iron beams and columns for the building.

The building contractors were the Fitzpatrick Brothers of Great Victoria Street, Belfast. The foundation stone laying ceremony took place a year after the formation of the Company. By the end of 1868 the building was complete and the brewery was operational, producing a limited line of porter and ale, with an eye for adding additional products for exporting. Unfortunately, the brewery had a short life, closing down after about 10 years in existence, around 1878”

The 20th Century

From the closure of the brewery until the redevelopment of the site by Gilpin’s, the buildings were occupied by a variety of trades and small businesses. However, the Brewery Buildings achieved notoriety on Sandy Row as the headquarters of South Belfast Ulster Volunteer Force which was formed in 1908 to ‘fight’ against Home Rule. Recruits were trained within the building in rifle drill and musketry, with target practice and marching in the cobbled courtyard. Later, recruits trained for a different battle as it became a practice ground for the 36th Ulster Division during WW1.

The name of Gilpins has been synonymous with Sandy Row for many years. Gilpins was a family run furniture business trading since 1926 and originally occupied the originally occupied the three story building fronting Sandy Row (S1/S2) extending into the building at the rear of the site and, later, into the new purpose-built showroom on the street front. It was a thriving business

5.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT (Continued)

and traded throughout the troubles in Northern Ireland – providing a valuable service and acting as a draw to bring people into the Sandy Row area. Sadly, Gilpins Furniture shop closed its premises on Sandy Row in 2007 and the buildings have been vacant ever since.

The Gilpins buildings are currently in a relatively sound state. However, years of neglect and lack of maintenance have led to rapid deterioration of wooden and metal structural elements, especially at upper floor levels. Condition and Structural surveys were completed by the Architect, Surveyor and Structural Engineer with appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment), exercising appropriate caution and health and safety protocols. An overview of the structural arrangement and condition was prepared by Albert Fry Associates, Structural Engineers. (Appendix 1: Gilpins Site Structural Assessment).

5.3 ACCESS OPTIONS/EARLY ACCESS

1. Access to the building for community / group visits would require (as a minimum) the following actions:

- temporary lighting required throughout the ground and first floors of the building, which are currently in complete darkness.
- designated areas within the building at upper floor levels would require to be cordoned off due to concerns about floor strength.
- barrier installed at an open door at first floor level of W2 to prevent falls.

- broken glass at ground floor level (S2) to be cleared away.
- debris from both staircases cleared to allow safe passage to the upper floors.
- barriers to be provided at the open doors of the lift shaft (W2) at upper floor levels.
- all visitors to wear appropriate PPE – hard hat, high visibility vests and appropriate site footwear.

Even with all of the above actions in place, access to the building is still relatively high risk and should be limited to small group visits only. Access is also dependant on appropriate permissions from the building owner, with a view to compliance with relative conditions relating to insurances, etc.

2. Access to the building for temporary ‘meanwhile’ or ‘pop-up’ events or activities (Short-term proposal).

At the present time and without more extensive works being carried out, detailed later in this report as Priority 1 and 2 Works, access for temporary event should be limited to the ground floor only of the modern showroom building, facing onto Sandy Row.

Internally, this building is dry and in relatively good condition with access is directly off Sandy Row and, if external roller shutters are raised, has the potential for good natural lighting. This space provides approximately 300m² of usable floor space.

5.4 OUTLINE CONDITION REPORT (MAIN BUILDING S1/S2 ALONG BOYNE COURT: SOUTH)

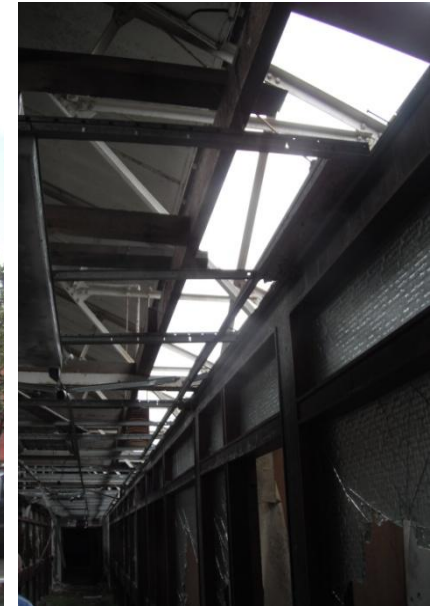
EXTERIOR

- Flemish bond red brick built, three storey building with stepped front tiled entrance gable.
- Soldier course arched heads support the majority of the structural openings, with the ground floor and first floor of the Boyne Court elevation being built up for security.
- The rear corner appears to be a later addition red brick built section tying in to the main Boyne Court building with larger window openings and exposed concrete heads, all of which have been fully or partially built up.
- Painted render now covers the lower Boyne Court elevations.
- From initial inspections the walls appear to be in a sound condition with only a diagonal crack visible high on Boyne Court elevation behind the front façade and some pockets of missing brick.
- Isolated areas of recessed pointing exist, most noticeably behind the downpipe locations where leaks have occurred and vegetation growth is sometimes evident which may be a result of blocked, silted up lead parapet gutters, however may be causing structural cracking considering the majority of the growth.
- The lower edge of the concrete window heads are spalling and some have had a concrete repair carried out, this may be due to rusting reinforcing bars.
- The original and majority of the roof is covered in a profiled asbestos sheet covering with glazed sections running the length of both pitches. These glazed sections are now completely missing leaving the interior totally exposed and causing accelerated deterioration to the internal fabric and structure.
- A portion of the roof towards the Sandy Row end has been covered in a new profiled metal sheeting which is in good condition however inappropriate for the building.
- A slate roof covering has been installed on the corner section of the building however large sections have been covered with corrugated sheet or a felt covering presumably due to missing or damaged slates. Glass is also missing from the in-line roof light allowing rain in.
- Rainwater goods are plastic and largely in place with only a couple of downpipe drops missing. Leaks are evident at most downpipe locations and gutters are blocked with silt and vegetation.

5.4 OUTLINE CONDITION REPORT (MAIN BUILDING S1/S2 ALONG BOYNE COURT: SOUTH) – Continued

INTERIOR

- Two rows of timber columns run the length of the building and support timber beams which heavy section floor boards span and are secured to.
- All timbers are intact, however, outbreaks of dry rot are evident in several locations on the lower levels. The top floor is saturated with moss and vegetation covering the majority of it. This is a result of the missing roof covering.
- In order to establish the condition of the second floor and structure, also the lower level dry rot outbreaks it would be advisable to remove all existing floor coverings and column / beam casings and commission a specialist timber survey.
- The roof structure is a series of metal trusses supporting angle purlins to which the roof covering is attached. Rust can be seen on several trusses and should be investigated closer when safe to do so.



5.5 OUTLINE CONDITION REPORT (DECORATIVE ARCHED BUILDING W1/W2)

- Three storey, Flemish bond red brick built building with seven arches framed with cream and black saw toothed detailing to the front façade.
- All windows have been built up with either red brick or concrete block.
- The rear façade again has been rendered over with arched heads protruding over the render line as evidence of original lower window openings which have now been built up.
- The brick facades are in reasonable condition with only minor cracking, areas of recessed pointing and delaminating brick faces evident. Larger cracks are evident internally on the second floor which are historic and are currently being monitored with a glass tell tale bridging the crack, this is currently not broken suggesting any settlement has halted (see engineer's report).
- Externally in this location areas of re-pointing have taken place, sealing any cracking which may have been once evident.
- The rendered end gable has cracking and missing render exposing brickwork in some areas.
- Rainwater goods are in place although several leaks are evident allowing concentrated saturation causing staining and encouraging vegetation growth.
- The guttering is blocked with silt and vegetation which can be seen from the ground.
- The majority of the roof covering is a modern profiled metal sheet supported off metal purlins and trusses which would not have been original however is at present keeping the majority of the building dry.

- A small slate section remains over a traditional timber sarked roof. However, many slates are missing allowing excessive water ingress through to the internal fabric and structure.

Interior

- The inside structure comprises of steel columns and cast decorative central columns, supporting concrete slabs or brick vaulted ceilings / floors above. Rust is evident on some of the end columns and vaulted ties, some of the end vault ties have been cut away completely (see engineer's report).
- Dry rot is again evident in several locations within the building and a full specialist timber report should be sought to establish the full extent of the rot and halt its growth as soon as possible.
- Remedial works should also be undertaken to remove ceilings and their structures which are currently loose and in danger of collapse.



5.6 FORMER LOADING BAY (W3)

Single storey brick structure attached to courtyard elevation of W1 with overhanging roof clad with profiled cement fibre sheeting. No access to interior.



It is assumed that if the project were to move to construction and development stage, this small area of the building would be demolished as it is of no physical use or of any architectural heritage.

This would make way for a new entrance to this part of the building and would also allow the Courtyard space to be fully maximised and developed. This loading bay was added as an extension to the main building.

5.7 NEW TWO STOREY SHOW ROOM (E1)

Wide-span modern warehouse in relatively good condition. Brickwork to side and rear elevations is sound and roof covering intact. Rainwater goods will require to be cleaned out and vegetation at high level removed.

3 No. roller shutters allowing access to accommodation from Sandy Row. Interior is dry and free from excessive debris.



This area of the building is a newer addition to the Gilpins complex and has no architectural or heritage value. .

5.8 OUTLINE CONDITION REPORTS: RECOMMENDATIONS

The buildings are structurally sound (refer to structural engineer's report in Appendices) though are currently deteriorating quite rapidly due to years of neglect and lack of maintenance.

In particular, the missing sections of roof over Building S1 are allowing substantial ingress of water which has the potential to cause potentially serious damage to the first and second floor structures in this location, with a knock-on effect on the structural stability of the outer walls of the building.

5.9 ADDITIONAL SURVEYS

We would recommend at this stage, and in order to appreciate the extent of remedial works required, that the following additional surveys are carried out:

- **Asbestos Survey** - A full survey should be undertaken to establish the presence and locations of asbestos on site. It may also be necessary to carry out removal of identified asbestos (e.g. ceiling cladding) if this would impact on other investigative surveys.
- **Specialist Timber Survey** - This would necessitate the need to remove columns and beam casings along with areas of ceiling and floor coverings.

If the stakeholders agree to take this project forward it would be advisable that these surveys should be completed before any purchase as they may have an impact of the overall value of the site

5.10 PRIORITY WORKS (SHORT TERM)

Urgent Works to be carried out in the short-term to prevent further deterioration of the building fabric include:

- Provision of new temporary roof covering over S1.
- Cleaning / temporary repair or renewal of all rainwater goods
- Removal of external vegetation
- Removal of vegetation to surface of second floor level.
- Removal of internal partitions, broken glass and redundant fittings at second floor level
- Removal of all debris from interior, including all old carpets at upper floor levels
- Removal of all suspended timber ceilings and framework
- Provision of new door to W2 external opening at First Floor level to prevent water ingress and improve security

5.11 PRIORITY 2 WORKS (MEDIUM TERM)

The following works should be completed in the medium term:

- Temporary lighting and power, including basic fire alarm system
- Installation of toilet accommodation and basic kitchen facilities
- Repair of any unsafe sections of floor identified through structural engineers report / timber survey
- Removal of broken glass from shop fronts at Ground floor level. Provide new glazing to shop front and new door
- Provide temporary access ramp to allow level access to building.



5.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF SITE

Although the buildings on the site are not currently listed they have architectural, historical and cultural value, from their beginnings as part of the short-lived Belfast and Ulster Brewing Company, their links to the early 20th Century political unrest in Northern Ireland and, subsequently, as a location where the 36th Ulster Division trained before going into battle in World War 1. The former Brewery Buildings to the front of the site have sadly been lost and replaced by the existing modern shop unit, but enough of the original brewery development remains to allow an appreciation of the history and development of the place. The NI Education Authority Criteria for Listing is currently under review, but existing policy states that a building can be listed if it is of ‘special’ architectural or historic interest, defined as follows:

- **C5 Architectural Interest** is understood to encompass a broad spectrum which ranges from style, character and ornamentation to internal plan form and functionality. Also important are examples of particular building types and techniques used in their construction. Where buildings have been changed over time (as many have) it is the consideration of its current architectural interest that is important, rather than what it may have been like in the past.
- **C6 Historic Interest** is understood to encompass a broad spectrum which ranges from age and rarity, through the amount of historic material left in a building, to its importance as a historic structure, and to the stories, historical events and people associated with the building. It is important that associations are linked in a clear and direct way to the fabric of the building if they are to be regarded as major grounds for listing. Aspects of social, economic and cultural history revealed by the building may also be considered important.
- **C7 The heritage** and culture of all parts of Northern Ireland’s society are relevant to the consideration of the historic interest associated with a structure. This includes structures associated with different religious beliefs, political opinions, racial or other groups etc.’

Recommendation

It would be our recommendation that the historic buildings to the south and west sides of the site are retained for repair and subsequent re-use (Buildings S1, S2, W1 and W2). Building W3, the early 20th Century loading bay, is of negligible historic and architectural value and should be removed to allow for a better appreciation of the external space created by the buildings and restoration of the facade of W1 and W2. The modern shop unit E1 is a basic structure whose scale, form and materials contribute little to either the sense of enclosure created by the current grouping or to the streetscape of Sandy Row. In addition, the form of construction of Building E1 makes it unsuitable for extension or extensive re-modelling and we would propose demolition of this building also, providing a potential development site for a new building or buildings which will have a positive impact on Sandy Row and as a whole.

5.13 VALUE OF THE SITE

A series of developer calculations were produced by Consarc Quantity Surveying for each of the four options being considered. (Refer to Appendix: Developer Calculations). The purpose of these calculations was to identify a range of residual values which give an indication of site worth.

All of the 'do-something' options around retaining the building for community relevant purposes show, not entirely unexpectedly, a negative land value, ie the physical development costs alone exceed the end value of the development. It is likely that this is also the case for options not considered, such as the use of the building solely for offices or apartments. A cleared site would however, even in this market, have some value.

Finally there is what is termed 'option' value, while current values are insufficient to generate development it may be that these change, potentially producing a substantial return. Given the above it does not appear likely, despite the negative residual values returned, that the owner would be minded to gift the building. Ultimately, value is for the LPS to advise on, if the building is to be taken into public ownership and this study should not constrain the valuing and negotiating power of that body.

For guidance purposes only it is considered that an offer below £500,000 would be unlikely to secure a sale, but it may be difficult, in the current market, to generate a value in excess of £1m.

This then provides a range which can be added to the development costs to give an indication of the total costs of the project to funders.



6.1 INTRODUCTION

The project as a whole is based around effective engagement with the community and addressing their needs. Consequently an emphasis was placed on attracting suggested uses through the public meetings, the focused consultation meetings and the circulated questionnaire.

As a result of the above some 26 distinct uses were identified. These are listed below:

1. Community Development Hub – Centre for Learning and Training
2. Social Housing / Social Apartments for 18-25 year olds
3. Bungalows for the elderly
4. Children’s Play Facility (such as Funky Monkeys, Indiana land)
5. Sports Facilities (indoor hall for boxing / netball etc)
6. Museum (charting the history of Sandy Row)
7. A Market (similar to St George’s Market)
8. A Village Square (outdoor with access to café, social space, ‘somewhere to go’ reference made to the Craft Village in Derry / Londonderry)
9. Pub/Bar
10. Supermarket (such as Lidl or Iceland)
11. Clothes Shops
12. Small unique specialty shops such as crafts etc
13. Hot Desk Unit (Could host clinics from statutory agencies and change daily)
14. Car Parking
15. Additional Space for social enterprise and community organisations that provide other services
16. Fast food outlets
17. Tea / Café area

19. Drop in Centre for Young People aged 16-25
20. Units for educational services (such as Belfast Met/Queens/Stranmillis)
21. Restaurant / café
22. Conference Centre
23. Training Suite
24. Creative Studio Apartments
25. ‘Man Shed’ and Horticultural Therapy Garden (aimed at alleviating mental illness)
26. Event Space
27. Community Cinema/Film Club.

While the Gilpins building is readily capable of holding more than one use, all of the above are clearly too numerous to accommodate. Consequently there is a need for a filtering process that can identify:

1. Uses that are clearly needed or of high value to the community but difficult to provide elsewhere and with a strong synergy, these to be developed as the core provision in the new Gilpins building
2. Uses that are complementary to these core uses, and thus can be added to maximise the impact of the scheme
3. Uses which are already well provided for in the area, incompatible with aspects of the site or the above core uses, or for other reasons should not be proceeded with at Gilpins
4. Uses which are attractive, consistent with the building and other core uses, but which might be best advanced elsewhere in Sandy Row, and thus while consistent with the development ethos underpinning the new Gilpins are excluded on the grounds that their inclusion would weaken the overall impact on the area. These uses are identified and ways in which they might be encouraged at other locations are suggested.

6.2 CONTEXT

Three strategic concerns – closely interrelated – are present in Sandy Row:

1. **Widespread and enduring disadvantage** – both economic and social
2. **Weaknesses in the physical fabric of the area** – a failing ‘main street’ with 16 vacant shop units, poor permeability / legibility within housing core and poor links to nearby activity and areas, including apartment blocks that are not engaged with the surrounding community and significant swathes of undeveloped land between the area and the city centre
3. **Attitudinal / Community identification** – there is a sense that glories are past rather than present and an overly insular and inward focus. This creates a falling relevance to outsiders, with few having a reason to visit the area. This has left room for a negative view of the area to be generated by outsiders with an accompanying implication for locals accessing employment. Gilpins was central to the old Sandy Row ‘brand’ and can be again.

Strategic Imperatives

These concerns require any renewal of Gilpins to contribute to one or more of the following wide ranging needs:

Disadvantage addressing

- i. Work / jobs / enterprise / business growth
- ii. Services / particularly social firms where residents are involved in leading and delivering, not passive recipients
- iii. Living – raising quality of life, promoting informed choices
- iv. Lifestyle changes – positive activities available for youth, fitness and health

Promoting physical renewal of area

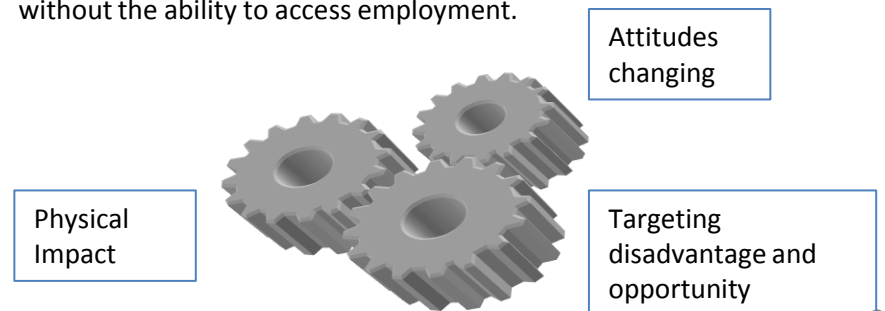
- i. Reworking area through substantial investment, and additional to existing
- ii. Creating a clear ‘Heart’ to area
- iii. Providing ‘Somewhere to go’
- iv. Heritage enhancing
- v. Making connections – to the University area, city centre and within Sandy Row

Reshaping Attitudes, both within and without the Row

- i. Creating a focal point of pride / community bonds / image promotion
- ii. Giving area a new Visitor ‘face’ – signalling the community is ‘open for business’

Gilpins a driver of Sandy Row Renewal

All of these three drivers need to be present and work together as simply ‘dropping in’ say a significant visitor attraction will not transform local lives, but similarly developing skills will be of limited effectiveness without the ability to access employment.



6.3 SPATIAL ISSUES

The Gilpin's building has a number of important spatial aspects:

- i. Located in the very centre of Sandy Row
- ii. Substantial frontage to that shopping street
- iii. Adjoining the community centre
- iv. Considerable depth, taking the rear of the building deep into the residential heart of Sandy Row.

6.4 THE BUILDING

The physical and architectural details of the building are discussed in section 5. From an options development standpoint the implications of these aspects are:

- i. Most of the building has a heritage importance, conversely the addition to the frontage that dates from the 1980s is, like the loading bay, of no architectural merit, suggesting that the shape of the building may alter
- ii. The majority of the older parts of the building have good ceiling heights and well spaced columns, making the areas flexible and capable of accommodating most uses
- iii. Those older parts are generally potentially attractive with some, notably the rear section with its barrel vaulted roofs and polychromatic brickwork, being very attractive, suggesting a cultural or other high quality visitor use
- iv. There is a large yard, with an historic background as a parade ground for drilling volunteers in the WWI UVF highlighting the relevance of the site to the social history of the area, making a heritage use appropriate
- v. The building has an existing entrance/exit to the rear which opens up the potential to create a route through the site, adding to the courtyard's relevance.

6.5 KEY PRIORITIES AND CORE PROVISION: "THE SPINE"

The scale of the building and wide-ranging nature of need imply a multi-stranded provision, a multi-use solution for the building as the area needs a holistic approach. Discussion can then be around adding further elements, changing relative scale, eliminating some and seeing others better achieved elsewhere. The core elements include:

'Village Square'

The current yard has the potential to be much more than just a car-park or service yard to a new use. Indeed this space may be as important as the building as it can directly address some of the needs identified in the consultation and summarised above.

This reflects the expressed community desires for:

1. A 'place to go'
2. A focal point for the community
3. Open 'green' space
4. Recognition of the heritage – notably as a drill square for the UVF at partition and before World War I

There is the potential for a flexible space which can, through the day and through the seasons, play a number of different roles:

1. A 'village square' – an informal meeting space at the heart of the community
2. An open space for gatherings, quiet repose and events
3. Scope for heritage and art installation – e.g. major sculpture
4. A pocket park / community garden
5. A Green Gym role

6.5 CORE PROVISION: "THE SPINE" (Continued)

This new space would open through to the existing restricted outside space associated with the crèche in adjoining community centre, which is currently high walled. This would improve that play area, allowing trees to be introduced, and providing a better entrance and place to pick up children, with benches and away from traffic.

There is also the potential for the courtyard to work well with the community centre in other ways, for example if the current hall in the community centre was reworked to have an opening to that space.

The element is summarised as:

Attractive, paved and landscaped area, well lit and serviced, secure at night, that can encourage movement through the site, be an attractive backdrop to a café and other visitor uses, and flexibly accommodate events and activities

'Community Hub – extension through new build'

Demolition of the 1980s frontage to the side of the main Gilpins entrance would allow new build fronting the street. This could however be through extension of the existing community centre (a Belfast City Council building) to house additional services, particularly if it permitted the existing small hall in the centre, which is oversubscribed, to be replaced with a large flexible hall, that offered then a suite of halls of differing sizes, permitting larger needs, such as band use, larger community meetings and so on, to be met and to co-exist with the current demands. Building on this end of the frontage not only permits a rationalisation and renewal of the community centre, it also has the benefit of moving the yard entrance to the centre of the frontage, making it a more attractive opening and through route.

This would ensure that improved community provision, made possible by the acquisition of the Gilpins site, meant an addition to, and strengthening of, the existing community infrastructure rather than a rival to it or the creation of a disjointed offering, where some services were separated off into the main Gilpins building. Finally it should be noted that this could be moved forward independently of works to the main Gilpins building. This might enable it to be progressed quickly, and Social Investment Fund (SIF) monies are coming available for projects of this nature. It is probably simplest to keep any extension to the community centre within BCC ownership. The simplest way to achieve this, after acquisition of the entire site by BCC, would be simply to remove this part of the site prior to any onward disposal or lease to a Gilpins Trust or other community relevant body.

The requirement is thus for:

Extension to existing community centre, within the footprint of the Gilpins site but effectively making a larger, greener, enhanced, and rationalised, community centre (all within BCC ownership and management), one which benefits from a new 'face' unto the redeveloped courtyard.

'A 'retail' and 'activity' edge – fronting Sandy Row and courtyard

There is no need for more small shops in the area as there are already a number (16) of empty units and supporting development at the Gilpins site would impact on the ability of others to compete and invest.

What is needed instead is 'another reason to visit Sandy Row'. This requires a 'destination' shop – like nearby Reids (shoes) - attracting in shoppers from a wide catchment, creating a footfall on the Row that benefits all other shops. The obvious location for this shop is under the famous Gilpins sign.

6.5 CORE PROVISION: "THE SPINE" (Continued)

There is also a need to add to the vibrancy and vitality of the street with additional active street frontage, the best example of which is a café. That café should also 'tempt in' passersby and thus be an attractive gateway to the courtyard space.

Finally there is a need to indicate that the development, and by extension the wider area, is full of life even after the shops have closed. A good way of achieving this is to have visible activity at first floor level. As the greater the level of 'activity' the better it follows that the appropriate use here would be a fitness or sport related one.

This then adds the following elements to the spine:

1. A large 'destination' shop, that pulls in shoppers from a considerable catchment
2. Café / event catering, dual aspect to sell both to the street and to the courtyard and rest of the development
3. A first floor fitness based activity – such as a boxing club – creating movement across large windows.

'Heritage and Culture'

The prominence of the building, coupled with its history which is entwined with that of Sandy Row calls for uses which are supportive of local and wider culture and heritage, uses such as:

- i. Event space (internal space also opening out to Drill Square)
- ii. Exhibition spaces, large and flexible, also permanent 'barrel' space
- iii. Heritage displays – so that entire site is a living museum, where all visitors encounter heritage without requiring a 'dusty room', tied in with sculpture garden
- iv. Art studios and craft workshops

In terms of shaping the development this calls for:

- Integration of spaces, so that the courtyard can host events in tandem with, for example, the halls in the community centre, the café, and reception space
- An approach to the landscaping that takes account of local history
- Creation of 'business units' that can become studios and craft workshops, or galleries, particularly the attractive spaces under the barrel vaulted ceilings in the rear block
- An 'art led' approach to renewal, with for example the front of the halls extension providing an opportunity for exceptional public art, right on sandy row
- A relocation (again) of the war memorial to a more appropriate setting, within the courtyard

'Employment'

Earlier sections have noted the need for employment in the area, as the best means of combating disadvantage. The area is of course close to the city centre and surrounded by offices, shops, hospitality premises and so forth which provide for a range of employment opportunities. The Gilpins site then needs to complement these opportunities with others, those not readily available to residents:

1. Skills development and training
2. Apprenticeship programmes and employer linkages
3. Personal skills including interview capability
4. Business start, incubation and growth
5. Business workshops / units, for local firms to grow and develop social enterprises
6. Research links, including potential digital hubs and so forth, with Queens University Belfast and University of Ulster

6.5 CORE PROVISION: "THE SPINE" (Continued)

The requirement here is:

1. A set of training rooms,
2. ICT suite
3. Interview rooms and small meeting rooms
4. Supporting offices
5. Business units (as with art and craft outlined over)

'Housing'

Housing was identified within the consultation process as one of the leading objectives to be addressed.

Retaining the building precludes bungalows for the elderly and cutting up the building vertically to create three storey townhouses would sit awkwardly with surrounding housing, not well address the key housing needs and be expensive. This leaves apartments on an upper floor, or within the roof, as the only options for delivering living accommodation. Renting these out is likely to be superior to sale as retaining ownership provides both an income flow, underwriting the viability of the project, and control over occupation. This ensures that the benefit is well targeted.

One area of need is for housing for those that do not qualify for social housing but, perhaps because they come from the area, wish to live in it. Sandy Row will not benefit as a community if those that gain employment are forced to move away.

Another argument for apartments at an upper level is the natural surveillance over the courtyard that this will provide, reducing or eliminating anti-social behaviour. This ensures that the public investment in the project is protected.

Thus the housing element that can be incorporated into the 'spine' is:

1. Apartments for rent

'Wellness'

There are a number of ways in which Gilpins can contribute to local health needs:

1. Potential clinic suite for visiting practitioners
2. Green Gym
3. Community cycle store
4. Café offering an alternative to fast food outlets
5. Fitness and sport offering, such as a boxing club

The provision here is already included under the above components, demonstrating that 'wellness' is brought into the heart of the concept of the building.



6.6 THE SPINE SUMMARISED

The total provision seen as ‘core’ to any ‘do something’ option is then the aggregation of all the information outlined previously:

Community Hub – (extension through new build)

Extension to existing community centre, within the footprint of the Gilpins site but effectively making a larger, greener, enhanced, and rationalised, community centre (all within BCC ownership and management), one which benefits from a new ‘face’ unto the redeveloped courtyard.

A ‘retail’ and ‘activity’ edge – fronting Sandy Row and courtyard

A large ‘destination’ shop, that pulls in shoppers from a considerable catchment. A café / event catering, dual aspect to sell both to the street and to the courtyard and rest of the development and a first floor fitness based activity – such as a boxing club – creating movement across large windows.

Employment

This aspect of the building shall include the following key elements:

1. A set of training rooms,
2. ICT suite
3. Interview rooms and small meeting rooms
4. Supporting offices
5. Business units (as with art and craft above)

Heritage and culture

Integration of spaces, so that the courtyard can host events in tandem with, for example, the halls in the community centre, the café, and reception space. An approach to the landscaping that takes account of local history and the creation of ‘business units’ that can become studios and craft workshops, or galleries, particularly the attractive spaces under

the barrel vaulted ceilings in the rear block. A key aspect will be an ‘art led’ approach to renewal, with for example the front of the halls extension providing an opportunity for exceptional public art, right on Sandy Row as well as a relocation (again) of the war memorial to a more appropriate setting, within the courtyard.

Housing

Apartments for rent.

These elements are combined into the ‘spine’ that underpins all of the options

6.7 REALISING THE SPINE

Bringing together the elements identified in the preceding sub-section, noting that some uses must be sited in particular places, e.g. shop to frontage, café to frontage and courtyard, apartments to upper floor, allows the creation of a scheme that satisfies the core requirements of the consultation, the building and the area.

This core provision is named the ‘spine’ as it shapes and determines the building, but does not necessarily represent all that might be provided.

The spine is therefore consistent through the three options that have been shortlisted, with the only significant change being that on floor two, which will then provide either of the following;

1. An open plan 2nd Floor for a large user (suitable for a Gallery)
2. A 2nd floor that is spilt up into smaller units (Micro Business)
3. An additional floor of ‘community owned’ for rent apartments

6.8 THE SPINE CONCLUSION

In the previous sub-section the desired floor of apartments were created within otherwise unusable space in the roof, increasing the existing building by a storey to four storey. The core elements included in the spine can be provided within three storeys. Consequently creating the apartments in the roof can yield an extra floor of space within the existing building that can be used to extend its offering. The additional space can be filled in many ways but, as the space is flexible, this boils down to:

1. A large open space, suitable for a gallery, but possibly also a call centre
2. A well divided space, creating numerous 'business' units, able to house businesses, start-up, social and others, but also artists and clinics
3. An additional floor of apartments

Of course the floor in the roof could be dispensed with and thus no 'additional' space be generated, with the single floor of apartments now on the top floor of the existing building. This gives rise then to a total of four options, all of which include the spine elements. These are shown over the next few pages.

6.9 OPTION 1 – LARGE USER GROUND & 1ST FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 1 – the Large User (such as a Large Gallery). The Ground Floor and 1st Floor Layouts are presented.



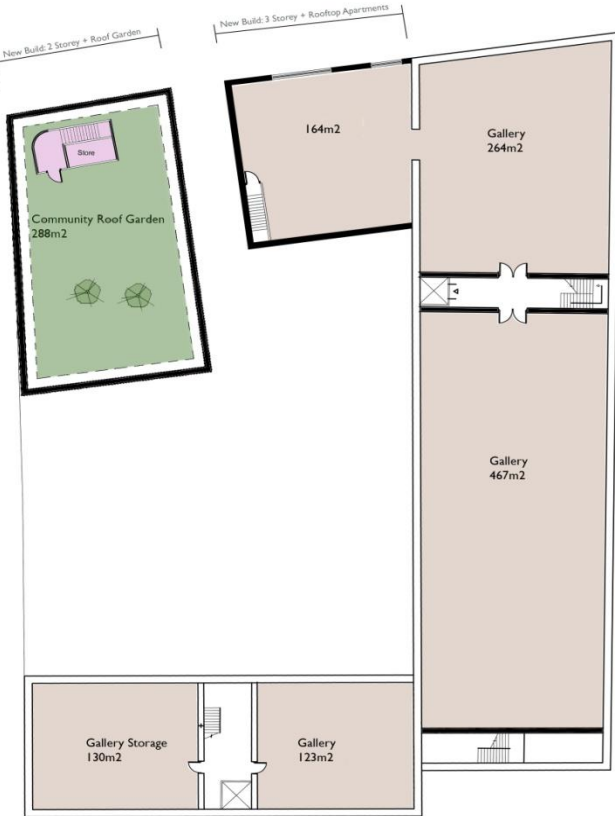
GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 1
 "Spine" and Gallery/Large User (4 Storey)



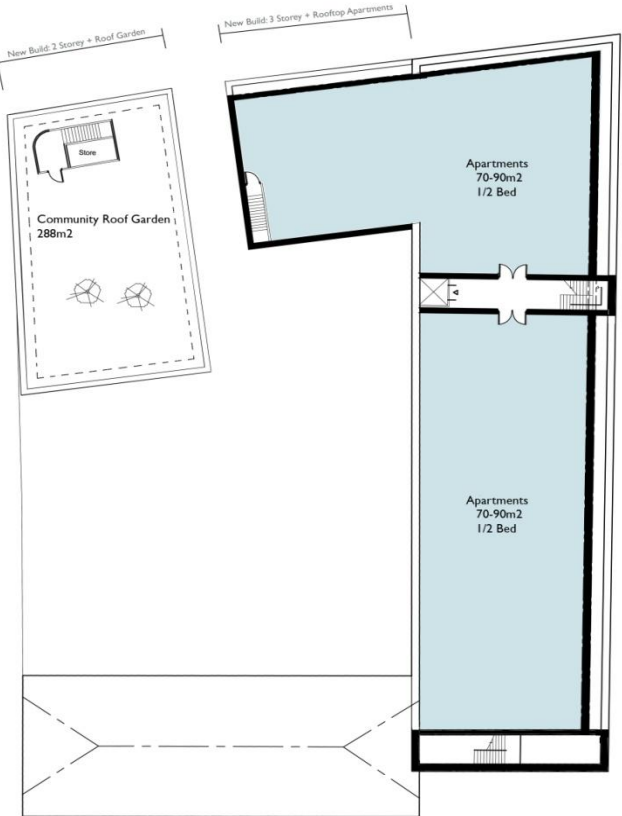
6.9 OPTION 1 – LARGE USER 2nd & 3rd FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 1 – the Large User (such as a Large Gallery). The 2nd and 3rd Floor Layouts are presented.

GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 1 "Spine" and Gallery/Large User (4 Storey)



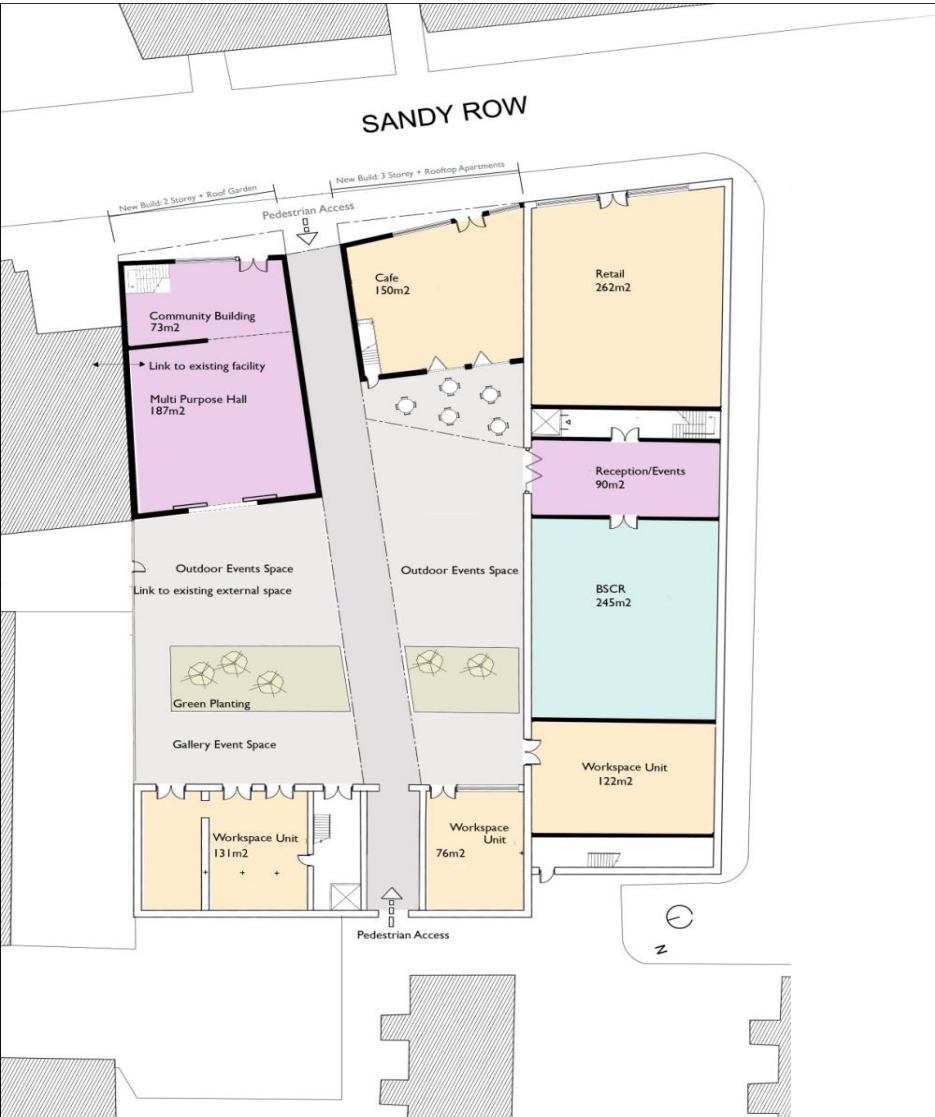
Second Floor



Third Floor

6.9 OPTION 2 – MICRO BUSINESS UNITS OPTION GROUND & 1st FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 2 – the Micro Business Units. The Ground Floor and 1st Floor Layouts are presented.

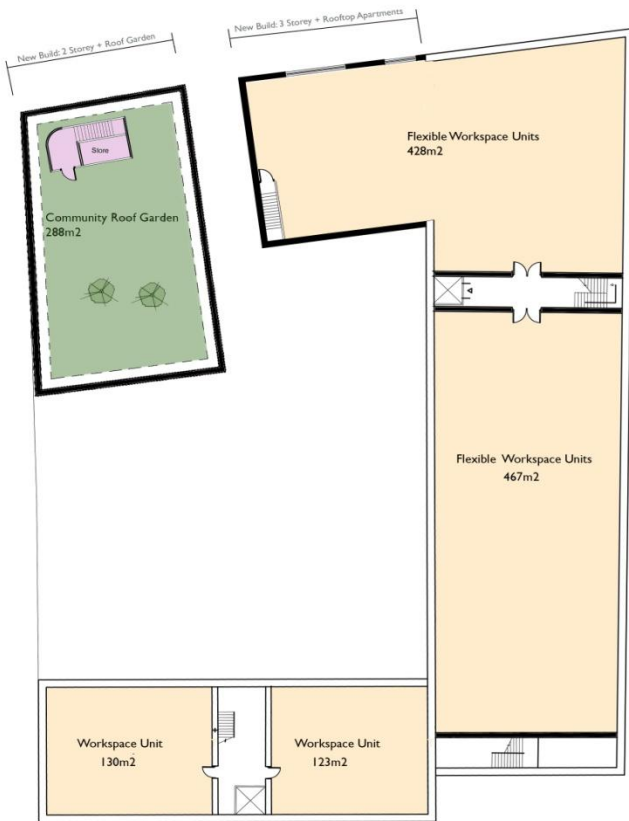


GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 2
"Spine" + Workspace/Flexible Units (4 Storey)



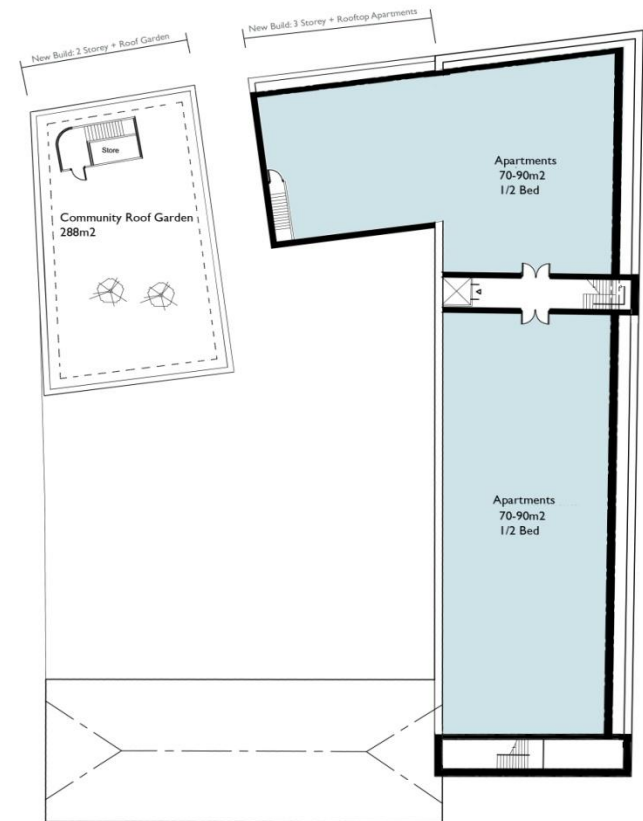
6.9 OPTION 2 – MICRO BUSINESS UNITS OPTION 2nd & 3rd FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 2 – the Micro Business Units. The 2nd and 3rd Floor Layouts are presented.



Second Floor

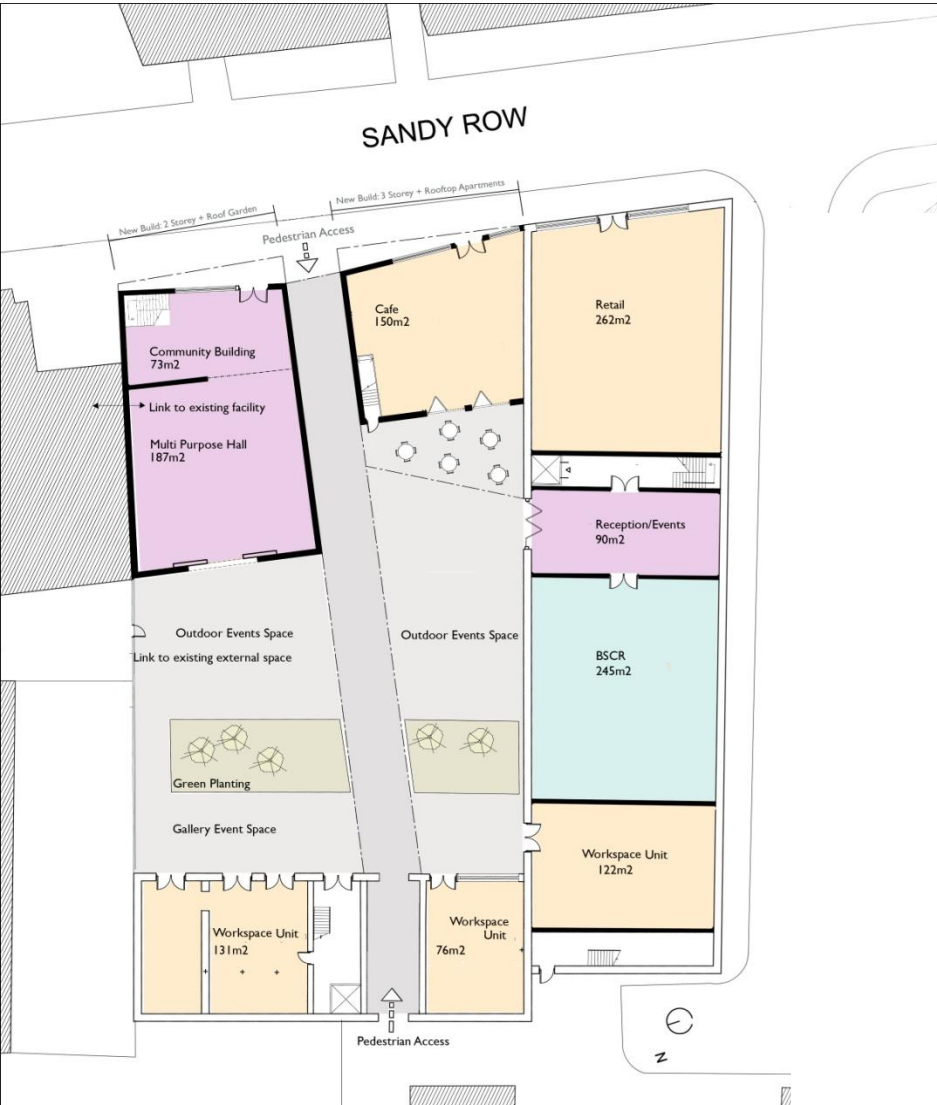
GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 2 "Spine" + Workspace/Flexible Units (4 Storey)



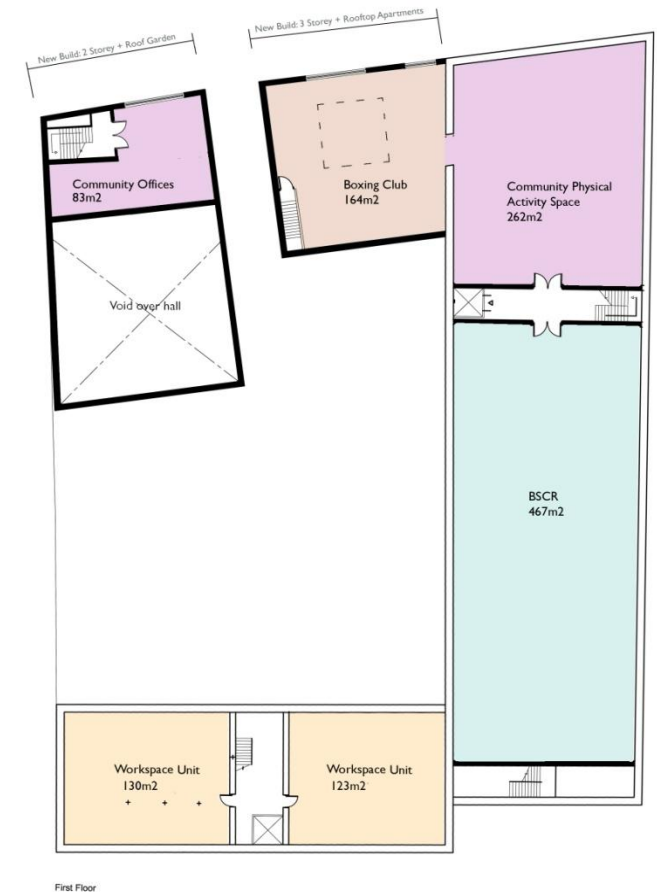
Third Floor

6.9 OPTION 3 – ADDITIONAL FLOOR OF COMMUNITY APARTMENTS OPTION GROUND & 1st FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 3 – the Additional Floor of Apartments Option. The Ground Floor and 1st Floor Layouts are presented.

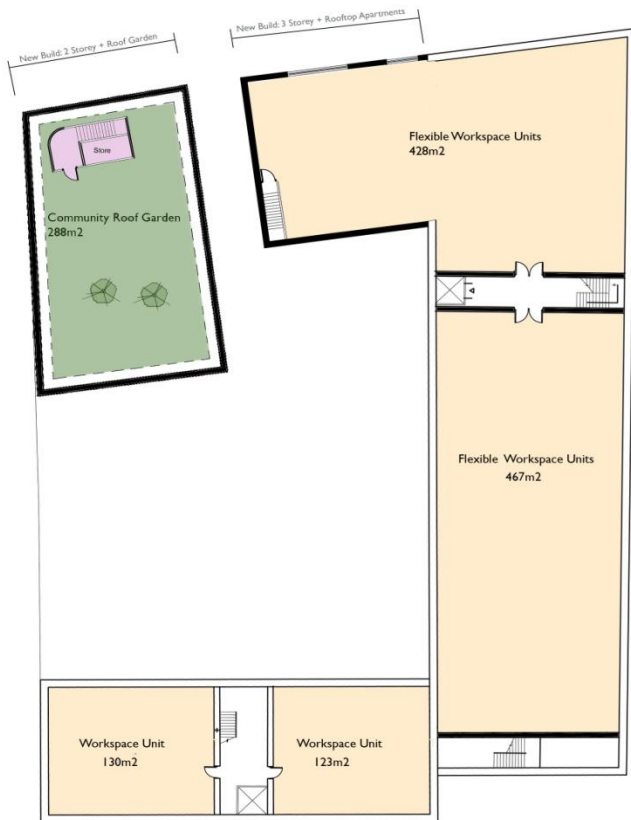


GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 3
"Spine" + Apartments over 2 floors (4 Storey)



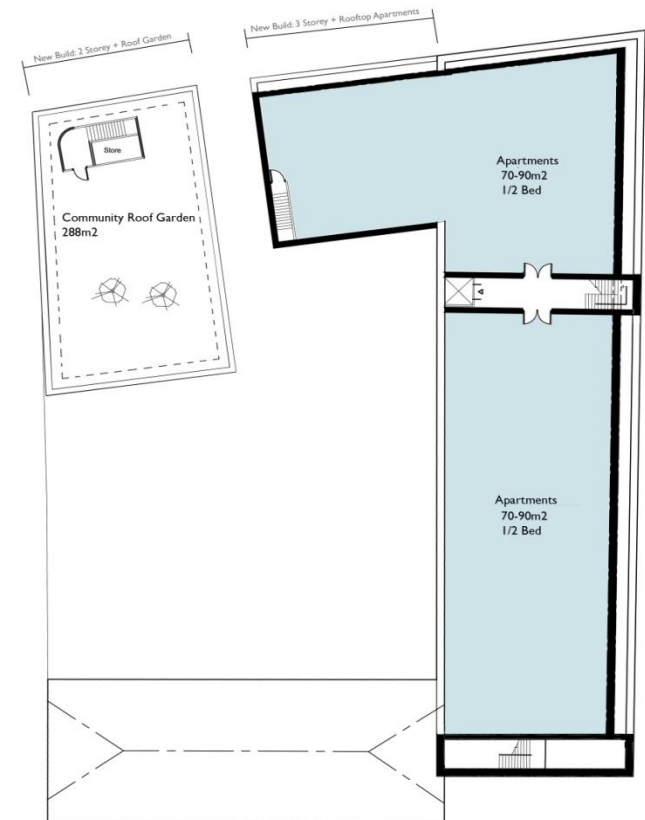
6.9 OPTION 3 – ADDITIONAL FLOOR OF COMMUNITY APARTMENTS OPTION 2nd & 3rd FLOOR LAYOUTS

The following plans present details of Option 3 – the Additional Floor of Apartments Option. The 2nd and 3rd Floor Layouts are presented.



Second Floor

GILPINS SANDY ROW FEASIBILITY STUDY - OPTION 2 "Spine" + Workspace/Flexible Units (4 Storey)



Third Floor

6.10 ASSESSMENT AGAINST CONSULTATION OPTIONS

The following table assesses the contribution of the above options against the wish list set out by the community.

Component / Provision Sought	Provided?
Community Development Hub – Centre for Learning and Training	Yes
Social Housing / Social Apartments for 18-25	Yes
Bungalows for the elderly	No (insufficient space)
Children’s Play Facility (i.e. Funky Monkeys, Indiana land)	No (parking issue and limitations of building)
Sports Facilities (indoor hall for boxing/netball etc)	Yes
Museum (charting the history of Sandy Row)	Yes developed throughout building
A Market (Similar to St George’s Market)	Yes potential to host this in the square
A Village Square (outdoor with access to café, social space, ‘somewhere to go’ reference made to the Craft Village in Derry/Londonderry)	Yes
Pub/Bar	No
Supermarkets (Iceland)	No
Clothes Shops	Yes potential within units
Small unique specialty shops such as crafts etc	Yes potential within units
Hot Desk Unit (Could host clinics from statutory agencies and change daily)	Yes potential within units / BSCR space
Car Park space	No
Additional Space for social enterprise and community organisations that provide other services	Yes potential within units
Fast food outlets	No
Tea/Café area	Yes
Drop in Centre for Young People aged 16-25	No
Units for services for such as (Belfast Met/Queens/Stranmillis)	Yes potential within units / BSCR
Restaurant	Yes – café
Conference Centre	Yes – community centre extension
Training Suite	Yes
Creative Studio Apartments	No (although apartments and potential room for creative through units)
‘Man Shed’ and Horticultural Therapy Garden	Possible still
Event Space	Yes
Community Cinema/Film Club	Possible through events

6.11 AGE AND GENDER RELEVANCE

The previous information notes that while bungalows for the elderly and a youth drop-in centre did not make the 'final cut' for Gilpins this is not to suggest that either group is disadvantaged or neglected within the proposals. Indeed the opposite is the case. While the building was developed on an inclusive basis – little age or gender specific, hence youth provision is within the wider offering, i.e. accessing employability measures, jobs, cultural events etc, while elderly see relevant services plus quiet garden.

Further, the provision of apartments for rent though creating additional space within the roof of Gilpins reduces the pressure on housing elsewhere, increasing the potential for dedicated housing for the elderly to be progressed. The drop-in centre for youth is seen as attractive but which is most effective when it is visible and readily accessible, and thus more suited to a street front location than gathered in the courtyard. There is also an obvious tension between a youth drop-in centre and other uses, including apartments and visitor based, such as a gallery.

6.12 BEST ADVANCED ELSEWHERE IN SANDY ROW

The assessment as to how best to utilise the building did not include some suggestions from the community despite their being highly desirable.

A youth 'drop in' centre was suggested. This would be best progressed by taking over an empty shop, thereby reducing the vacant units (16) and restoring life to the street. A street frontage is most appropriate for engaging with disaffected or alienated youth, who, by definition, will not find their way into community provision.

A supermarket was also sought by some. While the building did not lend itself to the requirements of the major chains, who place a priority on car-parking, there is some potential for a scheme in surrounding areas, close to Sandy Row, as part of a mixed development, with apartments over. Such a development could be dual aspect, serving Sandy Row residents but also fronting to Great Victoria Street for example.

6.13 SUSTAINABILITY IN DESIGN

Some of the following measures, practical and demonstration, can be included in the finalised design;

1. CHP for entire site, and possibly surrounding buildings
2. Rainwater harvesting – SUDS via garden
3. Herbs grown for café
4. Roof garden / and green roof

This specific detail will be explored further as the project moves through its life cycle of business plan, detailed designs, fit out, clearly defined costs, economic appraisal and so on. At this stage, these 4 points above are just to show that 'Sustainability in Design' has been considered.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section will provide details on all aspects of the finance for the Gilpins Project. Section 6.2 will provide detailed information on the capital construction costs of completing the project, before moving into the summary revenue forecasts of annual income, proposed annual expenditure, details on the service charge (and the associated levy on Tenants), and the annual profit and loss for each of the 3 shortlisted options.

7.2 CAPITAL AND DESIGN COSTS

The table overleaf presents clear details on the construction costs, including specific fit out costs to meet the desired need of the proposed Tenant and the specific technical and professional fees to make this project a reality.

For the avoidance of any doubt the following terms mean;

Capital Construction Cost:

The cost of all construction, civil, and mechanical and engineering works associated with the project including services, glazed frontages, etc.

Professional and Statutory Fees:

The cost of all technical fees including architect, engineer, quantity surveyor, specialist consultants, and all fees including planning application, site contamination surveys, traffic and road surveys, flood risk analysis, etc.

Please note that the next batch of tables exclude VAT, fit out cost and land acquisition.

Option 1 – the Large User is presented across the page;

Existing Buildings:	Floor	Area(m²)	Rate	Commerical	Housing	Total
S1 and S2	Ground	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	First	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	Second	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	Extra for BSCR	712	140.00	99,680.00		99,680.00
	Sub-Total	2,409		1,966,655.00		1,966,655.00
	(Rooftop Extension)	760	1076.00		817,760.00	817,760.00
	TOTAL	3,169	-	1,966,655.00	817,760.00	2,784,415.00
W1 and W2	Ground	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	First	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	Second	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	TOTAL	882	-	683,550.00	-	683,550.00
New Build:						
Cafe Building	Ground	150	915.00	137,250.00		137,250.00
	First	166	915.00	151,890.00		151,890.00
	Second	166	915.00	151,890.00		151,890.00
	Sub-Total	482		441,030.00		441,030.00
	Third	150	1076.00		161,400.00	161,400.00
	TOTAL	632	-	441,030.00	161,400.00	602,430.00
Community Building	Ground	270	915.00	247,050.00		247,050.00
	First	100	N/A	-		-
	Second	20	915.00	18,300.00		18,300.00
	Second Roof Garden	250	161.00	40,250.00		40,250.00
	TOTAL	390	-	305,600.00	-	305,600.00
External Works	TOTAL	982	54.00	53,028.00		53,028.00
	TOTAL	5073		3,449,863.00	979,160.00	4,429,023.00
Statutory Fees				3,449,863.00	979,160.00	4,429,023.00
				38,946.09	11,053.91	50,000.00
				3,488,809.09	990,213.91	4,479,023.00
Professional Fees				344,986.30	97,916.00	442,902.30
				3,833,795.39	1,088,129.91	4,921,925.30
£/M2 Construction excluding Professional fees				838.05	82,517.83	
				£/M2	£/Unit	
ALL WORKS						
Costs exclude:						
· Land						
· Fit-out						
· VAT						

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF PREFERRED OPTION(S)

SECTION 7

Option 2 – The Micro Business Units – Below:

Existing Buildings:	Floor	Area(m ²)	Rate	Commerical	Housing	Total
S1 and S2	Ground	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	First	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	Second	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	Extra for BSCR	712	140.00	99,680.00		99,680.00
	Sub-Total	2,409		1,966,655.00		1,966,655.00
	(Rooftop Extension)	760	1076.00		817,760.00	817,760.00
TOTAL	3,169	-	1,966,655.00	817,760.00	2,784,415.00	
W1 and W2	Ground	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	First	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	Second	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
TOTAL	882	-	683,550.00	-	683,550.00	
New Build:						
Cafe Building	Ground	150	915.00	137,250.00		137,250.00
	First	166	915.00	151,890.00		151,890.00
	Second	166	915.00	151,890.00		151,890.00
	Sub-Total	482		441,030.00		441,030.00
	Third	150	1076.00		161,400.00	161,400.00
TOTAL	632	-	441,030.00	161,400.00	602,430.00	
Community Building	Ground	270	915.00	247,050.00		247,050.00
	First	100	N/A	-		-
	Second	20	915.00	18,300.00		18,300.00
	Second Roof Garden	250	161.00	40,250.00		40,250.00
TOTAL	390	-	305,600.00	-	305,600.00	
External Works	TOTAL	982	54.00	53,028.00		53,028.00
TOTAL	5073		3,449,863.00	979,160.00	4,429,023.00	
Statutory Fees			3,449,863.00	979,160.00	4,429,023.00	
			38,946.09	11,053.91	50,000.00	
Professional Fees			3,488,809.09	990,213.91	4,479,023.00	
			344,986.30	97,916.00	442,902.30	
			3,833,795.39	1,088,129.91	4,921,925.30	
	£/M2 Construction excluding Professional fees		838.05	£/Unit	82,517.83	
ALL WORKS			£/M2	£/Unit		
Costs exclude:						
- Land acquisition						
- Fit-out costs						
- VAT						

Option 3– The Additional Floor of Apartments – Below:

Existing Buildings:	Floor	Area(m ²)	Rate	Commerical	Housing	Total
S1 and S2	Ground	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	First	803	775.00	622,325.00		622,325.00
	Second	803	775.00	622,325.00	622,325.00	622,325.00
	Extra for BSCR	712	140.00	99,680.00		99,680.00
	Sub-Total	2,409		1,344,330.00	622,325.00	1,966,655.00
	(Rooftop Extension)	760	1076.00		817,760.00	817,760.00
TOTAL	3,169	-	1,344,330.00	1,440,085.00	2,784,415.00	
W1 and W2	Ground	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	First	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
	Second	294	775.00	227,850.00		227,850.00
TOTAL	882	-	683,550.00	-	683,550.00	
New Build:						
Cafe Building	Ground	150	915.00	137,250.00		137,250.00
	First	166	915.00	151,890.00		151,890.00
	Second	166	915.00	151,890.00	151,890.00	151,890.00
	Sub-Total	482		289,140.00	151,890.00	441,030.00
	Third	150	1076.00		161,400.00	161,400.00
TOTAL	632	-	289,140.00	313,290.00	602,430.00	
Community Building	Ground	270	915.00	247,050.00		247,050.00
	First	100	N/A	-		-
	Second	20	915.00	18,300.00		18,300.00
	Second Roof Garden	250	161.00	40,250.00		40,250.00
TOTAL	390	-	305,600.00	-	305,600.00	
External Works	TOTAL	982	54.00	53,028.00		53,028.00
TOTAL	5073		2,675,648.00	1,753,375.00	4,429,023.00	
Statutory Fees			2,675,648.00	1,753,375.00	4,429,023.00	
			33,226.43	21,773.57	55,000.00	
Professional Fees			2,708,874.43	1,775,148.57	4,484,023.00	
			267,564.80	175,337.50	442,902.30	
			2,976,439.23	1,950,486.07	4,926,925.30	
	£/M2 Construction excluding Professional fees		803.58	£/Unit	73,964.52	
ALL WORKS			£/M2	£/Unit		
Costs exclude:						
- Land acquisition						
- Fit-out costs						
- VAT						

7.3 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 1

Income:

The Gilpins Project will generate income in the main from the renting out of its commercial spaces (retail and office) and that of its community owned for rent apartments. Additional income will be derived from a service charge levied on the tenants for the upkeep and management of communal areas

A table below provides some further detail on this income;

Income Heading	Annual Income
Retail Space Income (Approx 2800 sq ft x £8.00)	22,440
Cafe Rental Income (Approx 1600 sq ft x £8.00)	12,840
Workshop Unit 1 (Approx 1300 sq ft x £7.00)	9,120
Workshop Unit 2 (Approx 800 sq ft x £7.00)	5,640
Large User Gallery (Approx 16,500 sq ft x £4.00)	66,000
Belfast South Community Resources (approx 7600 sqft x £4.00)	30,000
Physical Activity Space (Approx 4500 sq ft x £5.00)	22,500
Total Service Charge	40,680
Income from hire of Courtyard	3,600
Income from Apartments (12)	43,200
TOTALS	256,020

Please note that the rental income for BSCR and the Large User will be heavily reduced given the sheer volume of space and long term tenancy arrangements that they will commit to.

Expenditure:

Expenditure will take the form of 3 core areas;

- Directs Costs and Staffing
- Management Costs
- Premises Costs
- Costs to be Covered by the Service Charge.

Direct Costs and Staffing Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Business Cards and Letter Heads	1,500
Official Launch of the Building	2,000
Development of Web-Site	2,000
Centre / Business Dev Manager (£27,500 + 20% on Costs)	33,000
Administrator - 20 hrs p/w (£15,000 pro rata + 20% On Costs)	10,284
Recruitment Cost	1,200
Receptionist x 1.5 (£15,000 + 20% on costs)	27,000
TOTALS	76,984

To manage and develop a building of this size and scale it will require these key staff detailed above.

It may be advisable to appoint the Centre / Business Development Manager at least 6 months prior to opening to ensure leases are signed, there is appropriate liaison with future tenants of the commercial spaces and the apartments and to ensure a smooth start to commercial trading once the building has been completed.

7.3 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 1 (Continued)

Management Costs

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Accountancy Fees	1,800
Web Site and ICT Maintenance	900
Miscellaneous Costs	2,400
CPD Costs	600
Internet fees	600
Ongoing Marketing Activity	1,800
Stationary + Postage	2,400
Telephone Costs	1,800
Mobile Phone Costs	1,200
TOTALS	13,500

Premises Costs:

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Insurance	6,000
LifeCycle Costs	12,000
TOTALS	18,000

Costs Covered by Service Charge :

Service Charge Related Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping	4,800
Repairs	0
Cleaning and Maintenance	4,800
Electric in Communal Areas	3,600
Alarm and Security Contract	7,200
Waste Removal	3,600
Window Cleaning	3,000
Heat in the Communal Areas	3,600
TOTALS	30,600

The following financial summary is therefore relevant to the Option 1 – A Large User, at the Gilpins Building in Sandy Row

Cost Area	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
All Associated Income	256,020	256,020	256,020	256,020	256,020
All Associated Expenditure	139,084	134,784	134,784	134,784	134,784
Retained Income	116,936	121,236	121,236	121,236	121,236
Cumulative Retained Income	116,936	238,172	359,408	480,644	601,880

Option 1 is a feasible and sustainable option.

7.4 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 2

Income:

The Gilpins Project will generate income in the main from the renting out of its commercial spaces (retail and office) and that of its community owned for rent apartments. Additional income will be derived from a service charge levied on the tenants for the upkeep and management of communal areas

A table below provides some further detail on this income;

Income Heading	Annual Income
Retail Space Income (Approx 2800 sq ft x £8.00)	22,440
Cafe Rental Income (Approx 1600 sq ft x £8.00)	12,840
Workshop Unit 1 (Approx 1300 sq ft x £7.00)	9,120
Workshop Unit 2 (Approx 800 sq ft x £7.00)	5,640
Micro – Business Users (Approx 15,000 sq ft x £6.00)	90,000
Belfast South Community Resources (approx 7600 sqft x £4.00)	30,000
Physical Activity Space (Approx 4500 sq ft x £5.00)	22,500
Total Service Charge	46,680
Income from hire of Courtyard	3,600
Income for Apartments (12)	43,200
TOTALS	286,020

Please note that the rental income of the micro business user will be more than that charged to the Large User (in option 1). This is due to the fact that it will be small business renting small areas.

Expenditure:

Expenditure will take the form of 3 core areas;

- Directs Costs and Staffing
- Management Costs
- Premises Costs
- Costs to be Covered by the Service Charge.

Direct Costs and Staffing Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Business Cards and Letter Heads	1,500
Official Launch of the Building	2,000
Development of Web-Site	2,000
Centre / Business Dev Manager (£27,500 + 20% on Costs)	33,000
Administrator - 20 hrs p/w (£15,000 pro rata + 20% On Costs)	10,284
Recruitment Cost	1,200
Receptionist x 1.5 (£15,000 + 20% on costs)	27,000
TOTALS	76,984

To manage and develop a building of this size and scale it will require these key staff detailed above.

The role of the Business Development Manager in this option will be a requirement to be able to market the facility to potential small businesses. There is good models of practice in Buildings such as City East where they have managed to get the resourcing structure correct after 4 years of operation.

7.4 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 2 (Continued)

Management Costs

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Accountancy Fees	1,800
Web Site and ICT Maintenance	900
Miscellaneous Costs	2,400
CPD Costs	600
Internet fees	600
Ongoing Marketing Activity	1,800
Stationary + Postage	2,400
Telephone Costs	1,800
Mobile Phone Costs	1,200
TOTALS	13,500

Premises Costs:

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Insurance	6,000
LifeCycle Costs	12,000
TOTALS	18,000

Costs Covered by Service Charge :

Service Charge Related Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping	4,800
Repairs	0
Cleaning and Maintenance	4,800
Electric in Communal Areas	3,600
Alarm and Security Contract	7,200
Waste Removal	3,600
Window Cleaning	3,000
Heat in the Communal Areas	3,600
TOTALS	30,600

The following financial summary is therefore relevant to the Option 2 – Micro Business Users, at the Gilpins Building in Sandy Row

Cost Area	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
All Associated Income	286,020	286,020	286,020	286,020	286,020
All Associated Expenditure	139,084	134,784	134,784	134,784	134,784
Retained Income	146,936	151,236	151,236	151,236	151,236
Cumulative Retained Income	146,936	298,172	449,408	600,644	751,880

Option 2 is a feasible & sustainable option and generates the most income.

7.5 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 3

Income:

The Gilpins Project will generate income in the main from the renting out of its commercial spaces (retail and office) and that of its community owned for rent apartments. Additional income will be derived from a service charge levied on the tenants for the upkeep and management of communal areas

A table below provides some further detail on this income;

Income Heading	Annual Income
Retail Space Income (Approx 2800 sq ft x £8.00)	22,440
Cafe Rental Income (Approx 1600 sq ft x £8.00)	12,840
Workshop Unit 1 (Approx 1300 sq ft x £7.00)	9,120
Workshop Unit 2 (Approx 800 sq ft x £7.00)	5,640
Belfast South Community Resources (approx 7600 sqft x £4.00)	30,000
Physical Activity Space (Approx 4500 sq ft x £5.00)	22,500
Total Service Charge	24,180
Income from hire of Courtyard	3,600
Income from Apartments (24)	86,400
TOTALS	216,720

Please note that income from this option is much less than that of the other 2 options, as 2 entire floors will be utilised as 'community owned for rental' properties. Its still a sustainable and feasible option, but the ability to use the income to pay back any commercial bank loan may be limited under this option.

Expenditure:

Expenditure will take the form of 3 core areas;

- Directs Costs and Staffing
- Management Costs
- Premises Costs
- Costs to be Covered by the Service Charge.

Direct Costs and Staffing Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Business Cards and Letter Heads	1,500
Official Launch of the Building	2,000
Development of Web-Site	2,000
Centre / Business Dev Manager (£27,500 + 20% on Costs)	33,000
Administrator - 20 hrs p/w (£15,000 pro rata + 20% On Costs)	10,284
Recruitment Cost	1,200
Receptionist x 1.5 (£15,000 + 20% on costs)	27,000
TOTALS	76,984

To manage and develop a building of this size and scale it will require these key staff detailed above.

The role of the Business Development Manager in this option may need some experience and a background in housing management, as they will be tasked with managing 24 residential tenants under this option. They will still also require a skill set that will allow them to market the building and manage some large commercial tenants also.

7.5 REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR OPTION 3 (Continued)

Management Costs

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Accountancy Fees	1,800
Web Site and ICT Maintenance	900
Miscellaneous Costs	2,400
CPD Costs	600
Internet fees	600
Ongoing Marketing Activity	1,800
Stationary + Postage	2,400
Telephone Costs	1,800
Mobile Phone Costs	1,200
TOTALS	13,500

Premises Costs:

Management Cost Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Insurance	6,000
LifeCycle Costs	12,000
TOTALS	18,000

Costs Covered by Service Charge :

Service Charge Related Expenditure	Annual Expenditure
Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping	4,800
Repairs	0
Cleaning and Maintenance	4,800
Electric in Communal Areas	3,600
Alarm and Security Contract	7,200
Waste Removal	3,600
Window Cleaning	3,000
Heat in the Communal Areas	3,600
TOTALS	30,600

The following financial summary is therefore relevant to the Option 3 – Additional Floor of Apartments, at the Gilpins Building in Sandy Row

Cost Area	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
All Associated Income	216,720	216,720	216,720	216,720	216,720
All Associated Expenditure	139,084	134,784	134,784	134,784	134,784
Retained Income	77,636	81,936	81,936	81,936	81,936
Cumulative Retained Income	77,636	159,572	241,508	323,444	405,380

Option 3 is a feasible & sustainable option and generates the most income. 56

7.6 EARLY FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

At this early stage it would be difficult to pinpoint exactly how the funding mix would be concocted, but given the strategic nature of the project, its regeneration qualities and the potential impact that it can have across the city, it would certainly be attractive to a number of key funding organisations.

The following organisations and funding programmes would certainly accept proposals from a the Gilpins project. They are;

- Belfast City Council
 - Belfast City Council
 - DSD
 - DSD
 - NIEA
 - Big Lottery
 - OFMDFM
 - Sport NI
 - Strategic Investment Board
 - Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
 - Arts Council NI
 - Heritage Lottery Fund
 - Belfast Building Preservation Trust
 - Northern Ireland Housing Executive
 - Ulster Garden Villages
 - Ulster Community Investment Trust
 - A range of smaller grants and trusts
- Belfast Investment Fund
 - Local Investment Fund
 - Neighbourhood Renewal
 - Urban Development Grant
 - Historical Buildings Fund
 - Space and Place Programme
 - Social Investment Fund

Many of the funding programmes will change from month to month, and once agreement has been reached to proceed with the purchase and the funding process, a full review of funding programmes will be carried out and a robust fundraising strategy will be implemented.

7.7 ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Its important that when reading through the simplified financial forecasts that may be subject to change based on a number of potential issues. These include the following;

- Bank loans – The future Trust / Owner of the site may need to secure bank finance or loans in order to realise the potential of the building. If this is the case, it is likely that there will be a monthly loan repayment amount that will need to be integrated into the financial forecasts
- If option 1 is pursued, and a large Art Gallery moves in, and they bring a large amount of capital funding with them, then the ability to charge them rent is not likely. These issues will need to be further explored, identified and agreed as the project pushes forward.
- The capital cost of refurbishment may increase depending on the actual fit out, and this my have a positive bearing on the rental values and financial forecasts.

There are many other issues like this that may arise as the project is developed. That is why it is extremely important that agreements on the future governance structured are put in place, a fundraising strategy agreed and completed business case completed. At this stage, a range of more detailed revenue forecasts will be created and supported with 10 – 15 sensitivity analyses to accompany it.

At this early stage though, each of the 3 options are sustainable, viable and feasible.

8.1 STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

The governing requirements that must be met are that the entity taking the building forward ensure that it:

1. Is economically self sustaining – while capital support will be required no scheme relying on ongoing subsidy can be considered viable given current budgetary pressures
2. Has appropriate / relevant governance – where provision, such as extension to existing community centre provision, needs to be aligned with current operations it makes sense to align the governance, so that a single greater impact is achieved rather than dissipating impact through competition and both chasing the more attractive provision while neglecting other provision that is also needed
3. Is ‘grant friendly’ – there will be a need for substantial support at the capital stage, consequently the entity that takes the building forward should be capable of receiving funds from a wide range of potential funders, for example, the Social Investment Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, and others detailed in the later ‘funding’ section. This imposes constraints and conditions on the nature of the entity. For example to qualify for support (grant, loans etc) from the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) a Buildings Preservation Trust (BPT) should be established, and this should conform to the standard governance model sought by the AHF (*Model Memorandum and Articles of Association for a Building Preservation Trust* (available by post or email or download from www.ahfund.org.uk)).

NB*Note that to qualify for AHF support the building must be listed, scheduled or in a conservation area and of acknowledged merit. The Trust would need to have a very long lease on the building.

8.2 EXTENSION TO THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The management of this aspect would be the same as for the current community centre. After acquiring the site this portion would be retained and the remainder passed to the Trust or other entity undertaking governance responsibility on the Gilpins building and the courtyard.

The extension, and the suite of function halls, will thus remain a BCC asset and operated as an integral part of the current community centre.

8.3 MAIN GILPINS BUILDING

Ownership - The initial step is for Belfast City Council to acquire the building. As noted above it is then suggested that the area where the extension to the community centre is envisaged, and for practical reasons an additional area to allow construction and maintenance, be identified and retained by BCC. A ‘trust’ should be formed that takes on a long lease (necessary for funding support) of the remaining lands and building.

Representation - Community involvement is central to achieving the greatest possible impact, but this must be tempered with a structure that can take accountable decisions in a timely way. A way in which this can be achieved is suggested in 8.4.

8.4 MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE NEXT STEPS

On seeking acquisition of the building, a shadow Gilpins Board should be formed. The current steering group is a good model for the composition of this group. This shadow Board should then:

1. Set out an indicative aim (e.g. *'restore the Gilpins building to good order and uses that benefit all of the community, in a way that is inclusive, sustainable and supportive of wider social and economic progress in the area'*) and establish a broad strategy for implementing this.
2. Make recommendations as to the composition of the eventual board, including identifying any areas (such as age group or type of provision) where additional participation would have value.
3. Draw up arrangements for appointing a chairperson and secretary who would then be responsible for overseeing the remaining appointments.

While a matter for the Shadow Board, the ultimate envisaged structure may contain three tiers, ensuring governance, professionalism and community engagement. The structure would be set out in a Memorandum and Articles of Association, submitted to and approved by the Charity Commission.

For illustration the structure may be:

- **Board** - Chair, 12 directors (all unpaid), giving necessary focus
- **Executive Committee** - meeting monthly, and consisting off the Board plus co-opted members as appropriate, ensuring professionalism in execution
- **Trust** – with as many as 200 or more paid up members, primarily Sandy Row residents, landlords, businesses owners and retailers, ensuring that community consensus is maintained.

8.5 MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

It is difficult at this stage to provide any clear or definitive guidance on management and governance because of a number of influencing factors. Depending on the outcome of some of the following considerations, the management and governance structure will likely change or be amended;

1. The organisation that provides the money to acquire the asset in the first instance is likely to have a key influencing role in the development and make up of the future management and governance (this may be Belfast City Council, the Department for Social Development or Belfast South Community Resources – through the Social Investment Fund)
2. The organisations that contribute large elements of capital funding to realise the project will want to have a potential controlling interest in the future management and governance structure
3. Depending on the option pursued, this will also have an impact on the future management and governance, for example, If a large Gallery User decides to invest some capital funds to the project, they will seek some representation on the Management and Governance Structure of the building.

In the first instance however, it is advised that the current Steering Group become more formalised and begin the process of actively leading on this development. There are a number of key steps that can be taken in advance of agreeing the final management and governance structure including;

1. The acquisition of the land / asset.
2. The development and completion of the Economic Appraisal / Business Plan for the development.
3. The development of completed drawings and submission of a large planning application.

9.1 CRITICAL PATH AND NEXT STEPS

This report has identified that:

1. There is a clear and robust evidence of need for investment in Sandy Row
2. The redevelopment of Gilpins would be widely supported by the community
3. In financial and practical terms, the redevelopment of Gilpins is feasible and sustainable.

This report therefore recommends that the project steering group should progress this project to the next stage in its development. The following section clearly articulates the critical pathways required to enable the site to be developed. For ease of reference, the critical pathways have been categorised under 3 key themes: *Land Acquisition, Management and Governance* and *Technical Assistance*. Additionally, this section provides an indicative timeframe for the capital build process. The critical pathways are described below:

Land Acquisition

1. The starting point for acquisition cost will be the LPS valuation
2. Option 1: DSD/Belfast City Council should enter into negotiations with the landowner to purchase the site
3. Option 2: Belfast South Community Resources can purchase the site through the Social Investment Fund (** The fund has developed strict guidelines on land acquisition this will require firm commitment from partners that money will be invested to complete the capital build.*)

Management and Governance

1. The steering group should remain operational and should continue to meet to retain urgency and motivation to secure the asset and fund the capital development
2. Once land ownership and funding mix is established, an appropriate management and governance arrangement for the new building should be established, advised by the steering group and additional technical support.

Technical Assistance

1. Carry out short term works to the site as recommended in section 5.11 of this report
2. Ensure that a planning application is developed in tandem with the land acquisition. For a facility of this size, a planning application may take up to one year to be approved, and project promoters should seek to achieve a state of readiness as soon as possible.
3. DSD/BCC should fund an economic appraisal and business case to test the options and provide detailed financial forecasts for the preferred option (**required for funding*).

The critical steps have been identified above, in order to ensure clarity and manage expectation, these steps have been applied to a timeline on the following page. The timeline indicates a likely period of 5 years before any facility is operational.

9.2 TIMELINE FOR DEVELOPMENT – 5 YEARS

The Gantt Chart below describes in broad terms, the critical pathway for this process and an indicative timeframe against each stage. Each of the activities identified below will contain individual actions (i.e. Procurement processes), many of which will be determined by the identity of the lead partner/primary funder.

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1			YEAR 2			YEAR 3			YEAR 4			YEAR 5		
Feasibility study, secure land, economic appraisal and business case	█														
Planning application submitted, secure funding, engage contractors				█											
Contractors onsite/construction commences							█								
Secure users and tenants/oversee construction and contingency										█					
Building operational													█		

The Gantt Chart also establishes that the process is at stage 1 in its evolution, with the feasibility study now complete (this document) and initial technical appraisal conducted, it is important that the project steering group continue to show the same urgency and commitment to the process to retain momentum. To ensure that this process continues to evolve at an appropriate speed, the steering group should proceed the following immediate actions:

1. Conduct immediate capital works on the building as per section 5.11
2. Enter into negotiations re: purchase of land **OR** agree that BSCR will attempt to purchase the site via SIF (however this will require firm commitment of financial support from partners)
3. Commission an Economic Appraisal & Business Case on preferred option

9.3 FEASIBILITY STUDY MILESTONES

The feasibility study (from a community engagement point of view and a technical appraisal of the building has found the following;

- **Practicality** - that the Gilpins building can be bought, as the owner is prepared to consider a sale and accepts that price will be driven by a valuation process that would be carried out by LPS
- **Physical capability** - that the building is capable of re-use, and indeed is highly flexible, offering good ceiling heights and attractive spaces
- **Restoration need** - that part of the building is of significant heritage importance and that UAHS are understood to be considering seeking listing
- **Community support** - that renewal on the site would command unanimous community support, as the site is seen as central to the area and its identity
- **Demand** - that mixed uses have been identified that would fill the site, including its currently inaccessible courtyard that has its own heritage importance as a drill square for opponents to Home Rule and ultimately the Somme
- **Policy alignment** - Those uses are fully aligned with the aspirations set out in an extensive community consultation process, including household questionnaires and public and focused meetings, discussions with Statutory Agencies and other key informants
- **Sustainability** - those uses would be capable of generating a rental that would be sufficient to make the building self sustaining, once renewed. The potential to create a green exemplar through energy efficiency, green roof and other measures is noted, broadening the sustainability offer
- **Effectiveness** - the proposals not only fit with Sandy Row, they create a positive synergy that can revitalise the street and attract footfall that helps existing traders, aid existing community work, and restore the confidence in the area that has been damaged through decades of neglect.

Accordingly it is concluded that the feasibility study finds that a project can be developed at Gilpins that offers considerable community and wider benefit and is sustainable into the future.

9.4 CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS

The positive result of the Feasibility Study argues for further work to be undertaken. Justification of the resources – considered in the Feasibility Study to be in the region of £6m – would require a Business Plan encompassing an Economic Appraisal.

The Feasibility Study having concluded that it could work, the Business Plan would address;

- ‘how’ it would work,
- who would own the building,
- who would occupy it
- at what cost
- what services would it offer
- how would surpluses be used
- how would public investment be maximised and safeguarded?

Following completion of business plan the, a full Green Book Economic Appraisal will be required. The Economic Appraisal would then test if the preferred approach represented good value for money.

The project is complex. As an initial step the building needs to be transferred from the private sector to an appropriate entity, possibly the Council, and appropriate grant funding secured. Given the mix of uses it is likely that this entity will act as a landlord, providing space to a range of occupiers who will then be responsible for delivery. Individual agreements, linked to the underlying business model of each use, will be needed. The potential to incorporate the current community centre in the overall vision is noted, expanding both the area and scope of intervention. This approach would need to be dealt with in a parallel process because the community centre is currently a BCC asset. The internal capital process of extending and developing the community centre is different to the proposed acquisition and development of the Gilpins building even though they are inextricably linked. ***It should be noted as a challenge at this stage.***

The development and implementation of an agreed fundraising strategy will be key to realising the potential of the building for the local community and for Belfast. Key agencies and programme including Belfast City Council, the Department of Social Development, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Social Investment Fund, the Big Lottery Space and Place Programme and a range of other funding agencies will make up a cocktail of proposed financial support for the project.