



The Windmill Field, Saintfield

Feasibility Study March 2020
Consultation

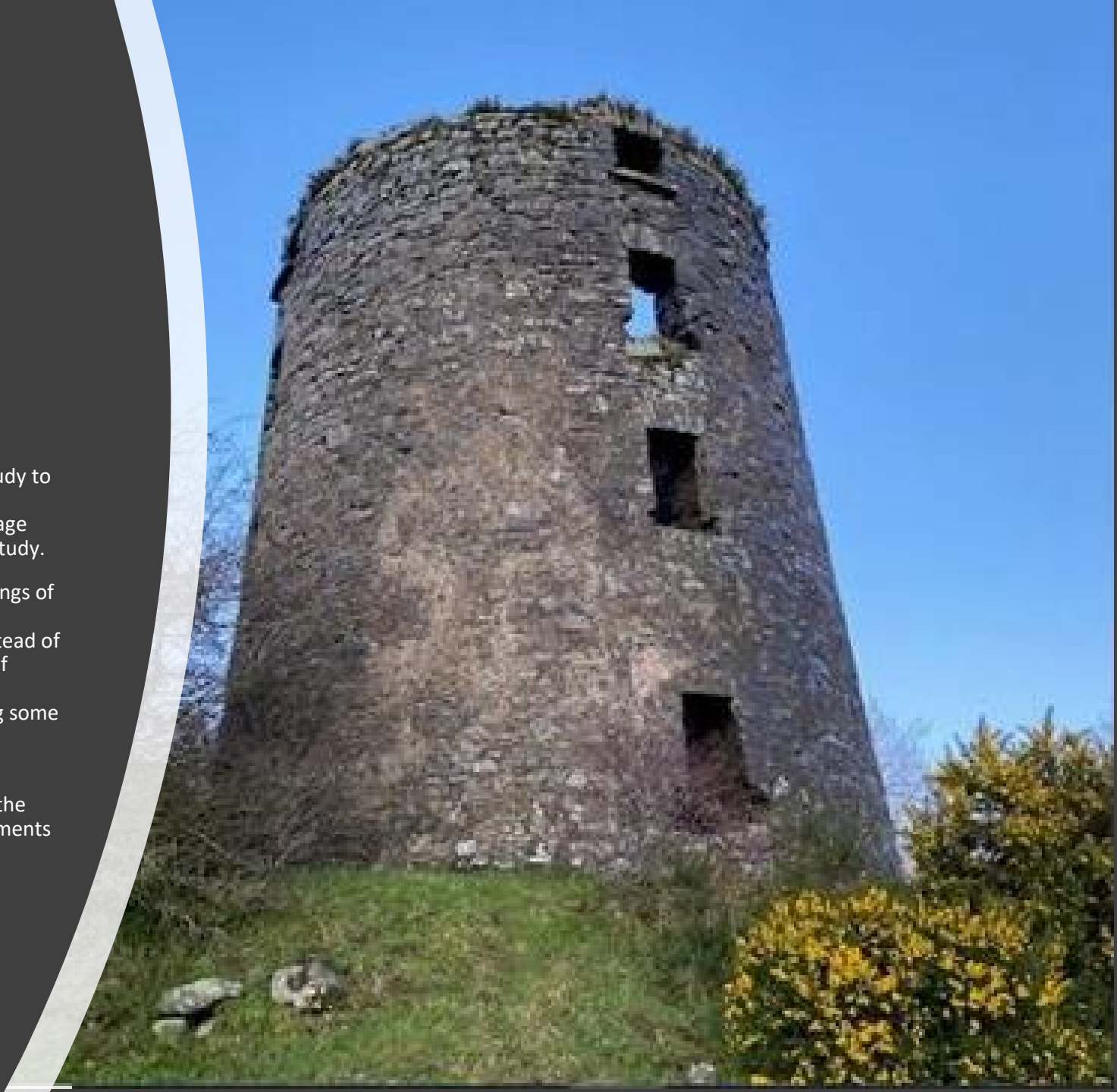
Saintfield Development
Association

We need your thoughts

Saintfield Development Association has secured funding for a feasibility study to examine the idea of developing a park in the Windmill Field behind the community centre. The SDA have been given grant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to commission a heritage consultancy team to carry out the study.

It was our intention to convene a public workshop to review the draft findings of the study team with you in March but this has been prevented by the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the coronavirus outbreak. So instead of meeting together we have had to resort to a digital or electronic method of consulting with you. To facilitate this we have prepared this powerpoint presentation as a means of sharing the findings of the work and presenting some of the emerging ideas for the project

We hope you will find it interesting and engaging and we welcome your feedback. To help this along we will ask you to address a few questions at the end of the presentation but we are happy to receive all thoughts and comments on the content of the study.



Firstly what is this all about?

- This is a high level physical and operational appraisal of the Windmill Field and its planning, heritage and environmental assets
 - It involves an assessment of its suitability to be developed as a community parkland resource for public use as a heritage and leisure destination.
 - The idea is to develop the park to be run and managed as an extension of the Saintfield Community Centre
 - The land will be acquired and assembled by the Saintfield Development Association (SDA) who will work in partnership with the Council and funding partners such as the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver it.
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How does this fit and align with the key plans and strategies we already have for Saintfield

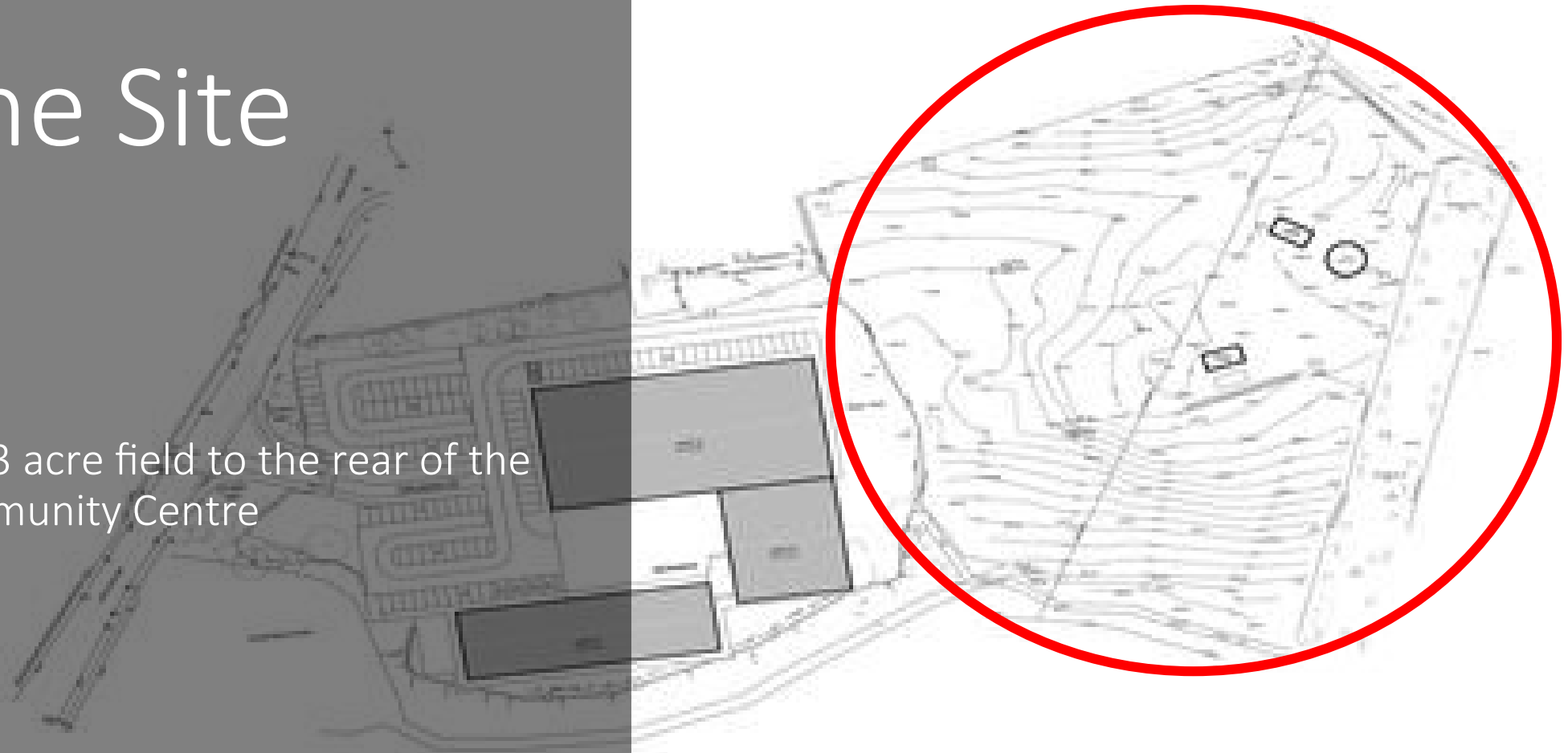
This idea has been around for a while. The Saintfield Heritage Development Plan 2014 (SDA)– identified the acquisition and development of the Windmill Field as an open space for community use.

The idea was carried forward in The Saintfield Integrated Development Plan 2017 led by the Council (NMDDC)- This plan lists provision of a community park on the Windmill Field as priority No 2 in its list of community and youth facilities for Saintfield



The Site

The 3 acre field to the rear of the community Centre





The vision

The vision is to develop the Windmill Field as a community parkland -an accessible public resource for passive recreation and leisure with a heritage theme that celebrates and interprets a critical collection of modest heritage buildings and structures that tell the story of Saintfield's 18th and 19th century industrial past and social history.

The vision is that of a small parkland that is fully integrated with the adjacent community centre helping to develop a critical mass of co-located community facilities that mutually support each other helping to build their sustainability and viability by increasing footfall and providing a new destination and event space for the town. The aim is to bring an important natural and built heritage asset into play that will contribute to Saintfield's heritage led regeneration strategy.





Built Heritage Review

The Windmill Field contains the remains of a four storey, 18th century windmill stump, with ancillary stone buildings, the mill pond and mill race that powered the McBurney flour mill on the site and part of the track bed of the Belfast & County Down Railway (BCDR) including two cut stone bridges. Along the southern boundary is the Glasswater river that provided the water power for the original historic mill complex on this site in the 17th Century.

This cluster of industrial buildings and structures within the Windmill Field represents a significant heritage asset base for Saintfield, covering various aspects of the **community's social history spanning several centuries**. It has the potential to be developed as a heritage attraction, learning resource and leisure and recreation **facility that would help build Saintfield's appeal as a heritage destination as well as delivering a much need parkland space within the town**. In this context its juxtaposition adjacent to the Saintfield Community Centre is considered a considerable advantage in terms of developing a sustainable hub of community services and infrastructure at this location.



Findings of the building condition Survey

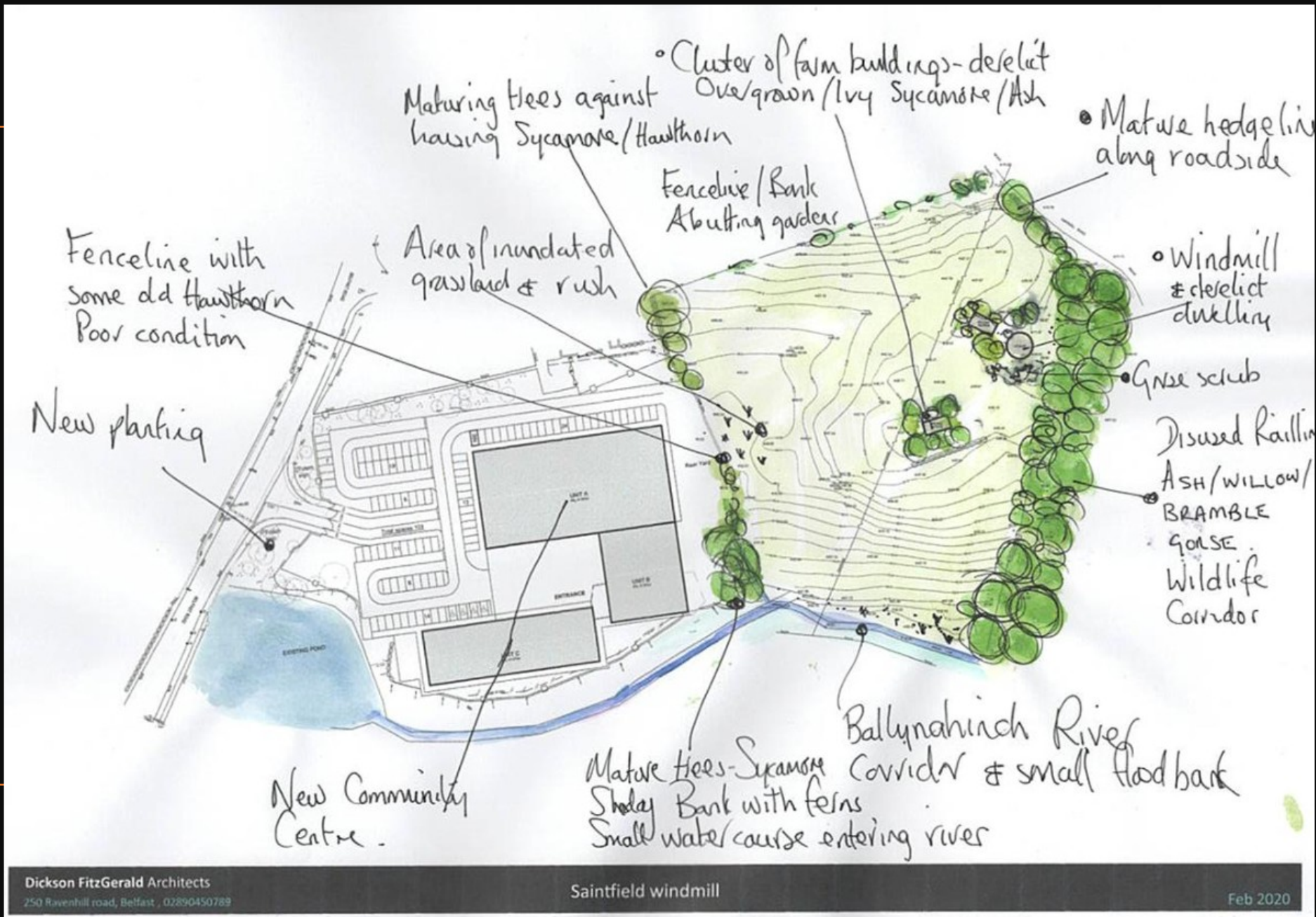
The three derelict stone buildings remain structurally strong and capable of being stabilized and retained. (Detailed structural guidance is provided)

The boundary wall with the community centre is unsound (out of plumb) and considered unsafe. It must be taken down and rebuilt.

Repairs are required to all structures to ensure public safety



Natural Heritage Review



Natural Heritage Review

Key Findings:

There's a rich grassland and hedgerow trees species list. Good range of bird habitats with potential for swift boxes and bat boxes to be introduced. There is potential bat roost activity in the buildings but this is not significant (not maternity). Some evidence of badger foraging was found but no main or outlier setts on the site. There is potential for smooth newt and common frogs by the riverside but water quality in the river was poor when tested due to agricultural nitrates- unsuitable for bathing/immersion.



Overall a good ecological profile from which to build a rich natural habitat.

Ideas:Outdoor Classroom

A space for skills development -
heritage & learning, food
projects, allotments, habitat
management....



Ideas: Micro Hydro

A new micro hydro project on the Mill Race has been suggested...supplementing the solar panels on the roof of the community centre and helping to provide battery charging for energy storage- bringing a heritage asset (the mill race) alive...and helping to make the community centre carbon neutral





Ideas: events & performance space



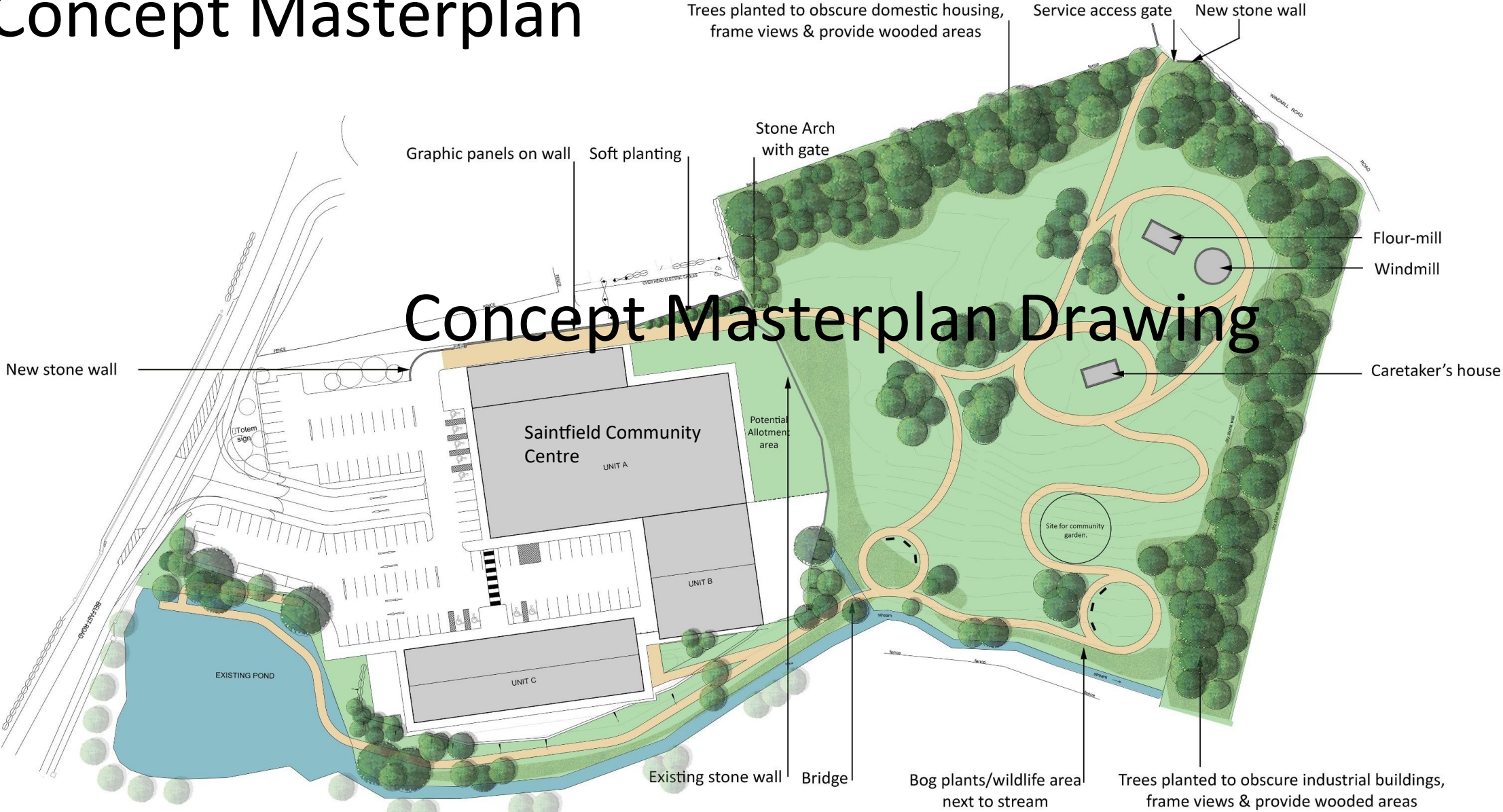


Key components



- A heritage trail providing access to the former Windmill buildings and providing interpretation of the social and industrial history of the mill complex and the Belfast and County Down Railway
- A low maintenance walkway network set within a natural meadowland with natural habitat and ecology interpretation
- Sensitively planted boundaries to ensure privacy to the park's immediate neighbours.
- A new pedestrian riverside walkway following the line of the original mill race and mill pond linking to the Belfast Road
- A new micro hydro project on the mill race to provide renewable energy support to the Community Centre.
- Design integration with the community centre to provide for an outdoor serving space for a café and for the use of the park for community projects.
- A project conceived by the community, developed by the community and delivered and managed by the community

Draft Concept Masterplan



Concept Masterplan Drawing

Mood Board



Your thoughts...and feedback

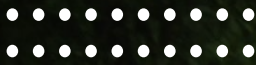
- What do you think of the draft masterplan and the project ideas? Are there elements we have missed or things you would like to see more or less of?
- How do think the park could be best used and linked to the Community Centre and the town?
- Do you have any specific concerns that we would need to address if the project is to be taken forward to detailed design and planning?

Comments should be returned by email only to Saintfield Development Association :

Email: windmillfield@discoversaintfield.co.uk

To be received by 5pm Tuesday 30th June 2020.





What happens next..

SDA will review the findings of the Feasibility Study and the consultation feedback in June and decide how to progress matters. Presuming we are minded to proceed with the project, SDA will engage in discussions with its lead partners Newry Mourne & Down District Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. A detailed design stage will be required with planning permission and historic monuments consent issues to be addressed potentially in the summer and autumn of 2020. The SDA will also require to gather its own funding resources to complete the site acquisition.

The SDA will keep everyone informed of the key milestones that lie ahead.

