

Sectarian Division and Area Planning:
a commentary on
"The Derry Area Plan 2011:
Preliminary Proposals."

Submission to
The Divisional Planning Officer
Town and Country Planning Service
Department of The Environment for Northern Ireland

by

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Derry Area Plan 2011: Preliminary Proposals: a commentary

Introduction

Templegrove Action Research (see Appendix 1) have examined the published Derry Area Plan 2011 and would like to offer the following preliminary comments. We are in the process of conducting an action research project on aspects of segregation (see Appendix 2) in the city. Whilst work on this project is at an early stage, (5 months into a 2 year project period) we wish to indicate to the Area Planning team that we may have findings which are of relevance to strategic planning in the city. We would welcome the opportunity, at the end of the project period, of presenting our findings in full to the Area Planning Team.

Templegrove's Central Point

There is one general aspect of the changing nature of the city which deserves attention in the Area Plan: that of the changing sectarian balance in the population. The central core of this submission is that factors relating to sectarian division, including trends in segregated living, should be addressed specifically in area planning. To address such issues allows planners to recognise and address aspects of policy which may contribute to trends towards increased segregation, and to recognise and address the special needs of enclave communities, and develop policy appropriate to those needs.

The problems that the Fountain and Gobnascale confront, relate directly to the core concerns of hardline planning. These include

- the movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- the siting and location of community services and facilities
- the image created by sectarian division in a city that is re-creating a progressive image to take into the next century
- population change and housing in the inner/city

We argue that it is these points that need to be addressed comprehensively in the area plan and we outline here some of the demographic shifts that underpin many of these changes.

POPULATION MIGRATION + SEGREGATION

In order to quantify the population trends in the city area, we extracted small area statistics on a grid square basis from the 1971, 1981, and 1991 Census of Population for Northern Ireland. Our preliminary work on the census data for the city area shows:

1. a change in the ratio of Protestants to Catholics in the city, due to substantial decline in the overall total Protestant population in the city as a whole;
2. an internal shift of Protestants from the west to the east banks;
3. an increase in internal segregation in two communities, which we

suggest may be indicative of a wider trend towards increased segregation.

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1. We first examined the population figures by religion for the entire city area, using a grid square which is approximately bounded by Termon House on the Letterkenny Road in the South West, Drumahoe Bridge in the South East, Thornhill College in the North East and the Sewage Works at Elagh Road in the North West. We extracted total population figures from the 1971, 1981 and 1991 census of population, and a breakdown by religion for each year. (As is widely known, the figures for 1981 are not entirely reliable due to difficulties with the return rate in that census.)

TABLE 1: POPULATION OF DERRY/LONDONDERRY BY RELIGION FROM THE 1971,1981& 1991 CENSUS OF POPULATION FOR NI USING GRID REFERENCES C410150 - C464212

	1971	1981	1991	% change
Total Roman Catholics	40188	37855	54658	+36%
Total Protestants	15907	12125	10924	-31%
Total Presbyterian	8134	5828	5463	-
Total Church of Ireland	6800	5705	4873	
Total Methodists	973	592	588	
Total "other"&"not stated"	9119	13492	4921	-
Total population	65214	63472	70503	+8%

An examination of the figures for the urban area of the city shows a change in the ratio of Protestants to Catholics in the city, a substantial decline in the overall total Protestant population in the city as a whole. (See Table 1)

This trend is mirrored in similar trends in the city of Belfast, where a similar exodus of the Protestant population to the North Down and Ards area has been documented. It is likely that the causes of such shifts are complex and composed of a number of interacting factors. Nonetheless, the trend is one which gives concern to social scientists, politicians and policy makers in a range of fields. It raises questions about the desirability of increased segregation and the kinds of balance we wish to achieve, particularly in urban environments where the greatest amounts of violence has been experienced. This raises the wider issue of the role of planners in social engineering, which is beyond the remit of this submission. The activities of planners and policy makers has impacted, whether intentionally or unintentionally, on factors such as the sectarian balance. Further, we know that policy in certain fields such as housing, play a significant role in shaping the sectarian geography of our cities and towns. We submit that the Area Plan is an opportunity to begin to disentangle some of these factors and explore the role planners can and should play.

2. The second examination of the statistics was aimed at establishing internal migration within the urban area. For this purpose, an examination of the small area statistics using grid squares was conducted. A patchwork of grid squares which approximated the Waterside and Cityside areas was constructed, and the total population figures, again broken down by religion, were examined. Table 3 shows the Waterside figures, and Table 4 shows the figures for the Cityside.

TABLE 2: WATERSIDE (1): TOTAL POPULATION BY RELIGION

	1971	1981	1991	% change 1971-1991
Total Roman Catholic	7708	5930	8032	+4%
Total Protestant	7849	9244	9935	+27%
Total Presbyterian	4167	4434	5053	
Total Church of Ireland	3063	4305	4336	
Total Methodist	619	505	546	
Total Other, none & not stated	2709	3854	3093	
Total other	976	826	1343	
Total not stated	1733	3028	1263	
Total none			487	
Total population present on census night	18812	19521	21389	+12%
Total population usually resident	-	19028	21060	

The Waterside Catholic population figures for 1981 as with other figures for that year, (particularly for the Catholic population) are not reliable. Nonetheless, there has been a small increase in the Catholic population in the Waterside, from 7708 in 1971 to 8032 in 1991: an increase of 324. The increase in the Waterside Protestant population is somewhat larger: from 7849 in 1971 to 9935 in 1991: an increase of 1903.

An examination of the figures for the Cityside (Table 3) shows that there has also been an increase in the Catholic population in the Cityside, from 33951 in 1971 to 48233 in 1991, an increase of 14282. The Protestant population, on the other hand, has decreased from 8459 in 1971 to 1407 in 1991, a decrease of 7052. This decrease of 7052 is not offset by the increase of 1903 in the Waterside Protestant population. The overall trend in population movement is of Protestant movement out of the city area completely.

TABLE 3: CITYSIDE(2): TOTAL POPULATION BY RELIGION

	1971	1981	1991	% change 1971-1991
Total Roman Catholics	33951	32683	48233	+42.1%
Total Protestants	8459	2874	1407	-83.4%
Total Presbyterian	4227	1444	656	
Total Church of Ireland	3861	1327	690	
Total Methodist	371	103	61	
Total other, none & not stated	6706	9987	3810	-43.2%
Other denominations total	825	574	532	
Not stated total	5881	9413	2755	
Total none	-	-	523	

Total persons present on census night	49623	45238	53088	+7%
Total persons	-	45544	534	

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Table 1 suggests that the decline in the Protestant population for the city as a whole is **4983** over the twenty year period. Tables 2 and 3, which use different land boundaries, suggest that the overall decline in Protestant population in the Cityside of **7052** is somewhat offset by an increase in the Waterside Protestant population of **1903**, giving an overall decline of **5149** for the city as a whole. It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the city population of Protestants has declined by at least **5000** people.

However, this figure may be an underestimation. It has been argued that the majority of those who respond "none" to the religion question on the census are, in fact, Protestant. Bearing this in mind, we should note-, according to Table 1 - an overall decline in this category in the overall city population of **4198**. There has been an equivalent increase of **384** in the Waterside "none, other and not stated" population in the twenty year period, giving some credence to the view that these people are, in fact, Protestant. A corresponding decline in the same population in the Cityside (see Table 3) of **2896** would tend to confirm this view. This means that the overall decrease citywide in this category is **2512** people. Potentially, therefore, the population loss of Protestants to the city is **5149** plus some of this number: a maximum potential loss of **7661**, although it is unlikely that all of the 2512 "none other and not stated" category are Protestants.

What is evident from an examination of the Cityside and Waterside figures is **an internal shift of Protestants from the west to the east banks of the city**, in the context of an overall decline in the Protestant population of the city of **between five to six and a half thousand people**.

Some of these changes in **population balance** are not due to migration, but to natural increases in the population. Migration occurs for a variety of reasons, and sometimes a combination of several reasons: upward mobility; acquisition of better housing; employment; decline of the area due to vandalism, redevelopment, as well as fear, intimidation and sectarian issues.

3. We looked at the **Fountain** and **Gobnascale** as examples of enclave communities. We examined small area statistics for two communities within the city.

3a. The geographic definition of the **Fountain** community proved problematic, in that the community boundaries have contracted with the decline in population. We used contemporary boundaries as defined by current residents, and the figures here are the nearest grid square data within those boundaries

	1971	1981	1991	% change 1971-1991
TABLE 4: TOTAL POPULATION OF THE FOUNTAIN (3)				
as a % age of the total	1282	668	467	-63.6%
1971 population	100	52.11	36.43	
Total Roman Catholic	203	75	64	-68.5%

Total Presbyterians	492	183	130	-73.6%
Total Church of Ireland	562	294	144	-74.4%
Total Methodist	71	30	16	-77.5%
Total Other	108	96	83	-23.1%

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What emerges from the examination of the Fountain small area statistics is the severity of the population decline whilst the religious balance of the population - predominantly Protestant - remains virtually unaltered. Our preliminary inquiries indicate that a variety of factors appear to be involved in this depopulation: redevelopment; the housing market; a particular form of housing blight; and sectarian issues including violence and intimidation. What is clear is that the Fountain is a community which requires urgent and special support, if it is to survive culturally and socially. This means that special arrangement may need to be made to recognise the plight of this community, which has been uniquely affected by a combination of factors. To fail to recognise the special situation of the Fountain and to fail to take the steps required to support the community is to contribute by default to the processes of increased segregation and neglect which are endangering the viability of the Fountain as a community. The Fountain, as an enclave community, has special needs. The needs of enclave communities deserve special recognition within the Area Plan, on a par with the attention paid to rural village communities.

3b The population figures and religious breakdown for Gobnascale were examined using the same definition and method of extracting the data. Whilst the total Catholic population in the area has fluctuated slightly, there has been a dramatic decline in all other denominations, including a decline in the category "Other, None and Not Stated." The marked trend towards increased segregation is evident. This trend is symptomatic of a wider trend towards an increase in internal segregation in two communities, which we suggest may be indicative of a wider trend towards increased segregation.

Table 5: TOTAL POPULATION OF GOBNASCALE (4)

	1781	1741	1312	%
Total Roman Catholic	1098	1246	1190	+8.4
Total Presbyterians	200	21	5	-97.5
Total Church of Ireland	156	13	0	-100
Total Methodist	41	0	0	-100
Total Other, None & Not Stated	268	461	117	-56.3

All of these trends towards increased segregation have implications for planning and housing policy. Murtagh (1994)(5) suggests that segregation is not necessarily a bad thing, and segregation performs certain functions for the enclave (and indeed the integrated) community. From the preliminary work on the project, it is clear that segregated communities have strong views about segregation and about the quality of their lives within such communities. At this stage, it is not possible to be more definitive about these views or their possible policy implications. Templegrove would welcome the opportunity to provide further information on this aspect of our work when we have collected and analysed more data.

Specific concerns of the two communities

We are also aware, from the preliminary work in each of the two communities, that each community has specific concerns in relation to the Area Plan.

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Specific Gobnascale issues

The proposal to construct a new connection to Victoria Road known as the Gobnascale Link (17.5 Derry Area Plan) is causing particular concern to some residents in Gobnascale. We note that this proposal will require planning approval. However, we would emphasise the need for close consultation with local residents and the development of a dialogue with them, perhaps through the medium of the 2010 group. Templegrove is willing to assist the establishment of this dialogue, if local residents feel we have a useful role to play.

Specific Fountain issues

At a public meeting which took place in September 1994, in The Fountain, residents expressed concerns about two main issues which are relevant to the Area Plan: car parking in the Fountain, and traffic access and egress to and from the area. Again, the need for close consultation with local residents about these issues, bearing in mind the points made elsewhere about enclave areas.

Derry Area Plan 2011

In the introduction to the Preliminary Proposals of the Area Plan, it is stated:

The aim of the Plan is to give guidance on the amount and nature of development which can be expected and where it can best be located so as to create an overall environment that will enhance the quality of life for the people of the Derry District...

The objectives of the plan include:

(i) identifying sufficient land for development in appropriate locations to meet all anticipated needs enabling the City and District to achieve their full potential

and

(ix) including sufficient land within the development limits of villages and small settlements to satisfy local housing and community needs taking account of their size and environmental constraints.

At 4.3 it is noted that "Londonderry has expanded in a generally northerly direction on either side of the River Foyle. The Plan proposes a continuation of this long established trend..." At 4.6 it states "Although most of the City's growth will be accommodated in these peripheral areas, the Department has identified a number of smaller development areas in the City. These will assist in meeting housing need and contribute to the creation of a vibrant

city."

The Area Plan covers a number of topics, some of which are of more concern to us than others. We recognise that sectarian segregation has specific implications for the following aspects of the Area Plan:

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Industry and Employment: (location of industry in relation to differential unemployment rates in the "two" communities;)

Recreation and Open Space; (allocation and use of open space, and its relationship to "ethnic " space, and defensible space)

Education; (location and characteristic of educational facilities: facilitation of integrated/segregated facilities; nature and level of provision)- see also **Community Facilities** below

and **Public Utilities** (neutrality of venues, accessibility to "both" communities).

At this stage, due to preliminary stage of our work, we wish to limit our comments to the following aspects of the Plan:

Built Heritage;
Housing;
Education & Community Facilities;
Commerce,
Transportation
Central Area

The Built Heritage

Within the city boundary in particular, much of the built heritage of the city carries very different meanings for the Catholic and Protestant populations of the town. The history and heritage of the city is one marked by division and violence. Many of the valuable and historic sites in the area remind us of events such as the siege which have different meanings for each of the two sides of the sectarian divide.

The city walls carry a high degree of significance for communities such as The Fountain, part of whose history is embedded in the walls, but also whose daily lives are also bounded (in part) by the walls. The "historic street pattern" referred to in the Area Plan is also a pattern which provided Fountain residents with a shape for their community in the present day. The cultural and practical needs of the present generation include the need for all citizens' in the city to have their history respected, represented and protected by government agencies. The work of the City's Museum Services has done much to bring this history into common ownership, but there is much work to be done.

Templegrove would welcome discussion on policy relating to other landmarks in the city which commemorate more recent history, and which also are similarly imbued with significance for the communities in which they are located. Our built heritage mirrors our heritage of past conflicts, some of them painfully recent. If strategic planning is to play a

role in building a vibrant city, then it is important that these issues are openly addressed.

As a policy principle, the views of the communities whose history is being represented, or in whose community such landmarks are located must be actively canvassed on a regular basis. Such canvassing, however, sometimes reveals division within as well as between communities. This should not deter public servants from such canvassing, nor should it deter them from seeking creative ways of absorbing conflicting views, facilitating compromises and fostering respectful co-existence in our community life.

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Housing

At 8.2, the Area Plan states:

In considering the density appropriate to each housing area, the Department will take account of the topography of the site, its prominence in the landscape and the character of surrounding development.

Part of the "character" of development in such communities is the political/religious composition of the area. This is significant information and influences, for example the range of choices people feel they have in choosing housing.

Again, at 8.3, it is stated:

On larger sites the Department will encourage the provision of a range of house types to meet the needs of the community and provide variety and choice.

As stated above, given the influence of sectarian factors on housing choice, the factors need to be explicitly addressed in planning strategies in relation to housing.

At 8.5, the Plan states:

Planning permission for housing development on redundant or derelict sites, and the development of infill or opportunity sites in general, will be dependant on a satisfactory residential environment being provided and subject to no overriding need for other uses for that land. The Department will seek to ensure the cumulative effect of infill does not damage the character and amenity of existing areas.

We note that public housing in Northern Ireland in general tends to be segregated, with a few notable exceptions. Residents of public housing often have strong views about issues of segregation and integration, and about changes in the composition of public housing areas. Where segregated public housing is located next to private housing, the perceived safety or desirability of certain sections of the community living in the private housing can be affected. These factors should, in our view be explicitly addressed in planning any housing strategy.

We recommend that where housing developments are planned, an impact statement on the effect of any such development on the religious balance of the surrounding area, in the same way as an environmental impact survey would be routinely conducted.

Similarly, when redevelopment or rehabilitation of an area becomes necessary, the impact of such processes on the population religious balance should be taken account of. On

occasions, residents in enclave areas have been temporarily rehoused outside of the area whilst rehabilitation or redevelopment is in process. Residents have been accommodated in housing of a superior quality to that which they left, and arguably to the new redeveloped housing in the area. The result has been that a proportion of residents were unwilling to move back into the enclave, leading to a depopulation in the enclave, which in turn affected morale, and the viability of the area.

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We would argue for redevelopment strategies which operate on a smaller, incremental scale, and which are sensitive to the need to protect the stability of areas undergoing redevelopment.

We submit that planning policy in relation to housing should:

- (a) establish residents' rights to choice of living in either segregated or integrated areas.
- (b) take into account residents wishes to preserve the existing religious character and nature of certain residential areas whether public or private, and facilitate these wishes where possible.

It is of paramount importance that the planning of housing creates and maintains safe and respectful living conditions for all citizens in the city, and allows them to live in either segregated or, integrated areas.

Where an area, such as the Fountain, is losing population, we argue that it should be regarded as part of the "character" of such an area that it is a Protestant enclave. To provide housing for substantial numbers of people who were not from the Protestant community would compound the decline of the character and integrity of the area. Furthermore, to use vacant housing in the Fountain to house students, for example may not be in the best interests of Fountain residents. It is of paramount importance that the views of Fountain residents are carefully considered on this subject.

Education & Community Facilities

We wish to make two main points in relation to the provision of community facilities: the first point relates to

The general provision of community facilities, including health education, recreation.

The second point relates to

The provision of support for voluntary community activity, general provision of community facilities, including health, education, recreation.

Allocation of resources and provision of facilities on a simple per capita basis, particularly in larger urban areas, ignores the issues of access to such resources created by segregation and sectarian division. There is a need for a recognition at a policy level of the special needs

of minority communities, and an undertaking to allocate resources to such communities on a basis other than per capita. Catering for smaller numbers of, for example children or older people) within their community of origin, and respecting their traditions and beliefs is an important part of maintaining and improving the quality of life for minority and enclave communities. This may mean that apparent duplication of education, social service or community facilities provision is necessary in community facilities, in order to cater sensitively for different traditions in the area. Youth provision in Gobnascale is our example of this. Young people wishing to use the Waterside Youth Club must travel through an adjoining Protestant estate, making it difficult for them to use the youth facilities in the Waterside. In such instances, these difficulties must be recognised, and special provisions

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made to meet the needs and circumstances in the area. We advocate the adoption of a policy within the area plan which recognises the need for this flexibility in resource allocation and siting of community facilities in minority and enclave communities.

the provision of support for voluntary community activity

13.4 of the Area Plan notes that

The community Services Division of Derry City Council is responsible for the development and maintenance of community centres in the District.

Over the period of the new Plan the City Council will endeavour to provide community centres at Eglinton, Newbuildings, Lettershendowney and Tullyally as soon as resources permit.

The provision of community facilities can positively affect community cohesion, help arrest community decline and act as a counterbalance to some of the factors which contribute to population migration and the depletion of population in vulnerable communities such as the Fountain. We would argue that taking account of the sectarian divisions within the city and district, permits planners and local government departments to respond more flexibly to the needs of such communities. This is something which is not possible if community need is assessed without taking sectarian issues into account.

Commerce

At 16.4 - 16.6 the area plan considers the issues of commercial development, including the development of retailing, shop and office premises and the attendant facilities required such as car parking. We note that these issues impact particularly on the Fountain community, it being a city centre-based community. The interests of commercial development are not always in harmony with the needs of the community. Therefore, it may be necessary to find new and creative ways of protecting city centre communities from incursions of commercial life into residential space.

Transportation

At 17.2, the area plan discusses traffic management, and this is an issue that impacts on the Fountain community particularly. The area is used extensively for car parking by those visiting or working in the city centre. Similarly the traffic flow in the area is built around the commercial needs of the city centre, rather than those of the residents. Given the points

made earlier about the specific challenges faced by this community, we would advocate that the current situation is reviewed. Reference is made at 17.2 to "conflict between vehicles and pedestrians". We would simply note that some of the pedestrians in question are walking around their own neighbourhoods, which happen to be in the city centre.

At 17.5, reference is made to the proposal to construct the Gobnascale Link. As is stated elsewhere in this submission and acknowledged in the plan, an environmental impact study and for extensive canvassing of the views of local residents is of paramount importance before this proposal could be further considered.

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Central Area

At 18.3, the plan states:

The Department will retain and protect existing residential areas as indicated on Map 3. New residential development will be encouraged within the Central Area and suitable sites have been identified...

It is important that any residential development which occurs in or around the Fountain is in keeping with the wishes of the existing residents, and in keeping with the culture and characteristics of the area.

The Beginnings of Policy Development

The existence of a government sub-committee in Stormont, which has produced an internal report on dealing with peaceline communities (see Belfast Telegraph January 6, 1995) in Belfast marks an important and courageous departure from earlier planning strategies. Previously, planning, like many other areas of public policy and administration, relied on implicit rather than explicit policy in relation to issues such as segregation. The concepts of neutrality and non-sectarianism were the guiding principles which professional policy makers in a variety of fields operated by. With the advent of cease-fire, and with increased understanding about the obvious and more subtle effects of twenty five years of political violence, it is important that the delicate and crucial issues which have divided the communities are addressed openly, and new policy is generated. In the past, issues such as sectarian division were not openly addressed, not only because the official ethos was that of non-sectarianism, but also because it was feared that by raising such issues divisions and conflicts would be perpetuated and exacerbated.

We fully recognise that to argue for this approach raises issues which are highly contentious. Public bodies and public servants in Northern Ireland faced allegations of discrimination in the 1960's and 70's, and continue to do so. The policy response to this has frequently been to adopt a non-sectarian approach. In practice, this can mean that policy on many aspects of sectarian division does not exist within public bodies (beyond staff recruitment). This may leave public servants, and others operating within the area of public service, ill-advised and unsupported by official guidance when faced with situations in which sectarian division is a factor. Yet, over the past twenty five years, civil unrest has affected virtually all aspects of life here, and planning has been one area where the existence of violence, the erection of peacelines and the movement of population into increasingly segregated settlement patterns have shaped and influenced on the planning brief.

Murtagh (1994)(7) concludes, in his investigation of Ethnic Space and the Challenge to Land Use Management:

At the strategic level of the Belfast Urban Area Plan, it is surprising that the issue of ethnic division was scarcely mentioned. There is a broader research agenda on the relationship between community relations and land use planning at all levels in the policy system.

Writing about Derry Londonderry, Dougherty (1994) (8) concludes:

The 1968 -81 Area Plan was formulated before the outbreak of civil unrest in the city. The bombing campaigns had an enormously detrimental effect on the built environment particularly in the first half of the seventies. NIHE

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policy had to concentrate [...] on repairing damage to homes. In addition the [...] population movements by Protestants to the Waterside placed a strain on resources. The 1981-96 Plan had to allow for the continued growth of Protestant estates on the Waterside. In the case of the Fountain estate, the movement had become so great that in the eighties planners had to devise a plan that would regenerate the area.

Riots in the early eighties in mainly nationalist areas again caused further damage and a movement of the Catholic population. This resulted in a strain on housing land availability to the north-west of the city and required planners to re-zone further sites.

The devastation caused in the early seventies meant that by the eighties planners had to formulate a regeneration strategy for the area... The existence of the security forces have had an impact on certain parts of the city. For example, the erection of security barriers hindered trade in Spencer Road until they were removed, and are likewise doing the same in Strand Road...

What we propose is that, in principle, the Area Planning Team move from that position to one where they begin to develop planning policy which explicitly recognises factors of community division, and the position of minority and enclave communities. We suggest that to develop and publish such a policy would make explicit the principles on which planning decision are made, and would prove a valuable contribution to the building of trusting and open relationships between government and all sections of the public.

There is a danger that, in pointing out the other side of the issue in relation to segregation, we sound as if we are promoting segregation as a principle. We would like to differentiate between strategies, such as segregation, which people have developed in order to live in a violently conflicted society, and segregation as a principle.

We recognise that strategically people have adopted segregation as a method of coping with violence and conflict. We do not argue for segregation in principle. The principle we argue is that of making choices available to people in order to respect their fears and lifestyles. There is nothing to be gained by enforced solutions, whether integration or segregation. Ultimately, if we succeed in establishing a permanent peace, we anticipate that many of the reasons for segregated living will disappear. Until that occurs, segregated living as a choice for people must be made available and the reasons for it understood & respected.

We also recognise that the development of good policy in this sensitive area is not a task

which can be achieved quickly, or easily. Nor indeed can it be achieved in isolation from the population for whom the policy is developed. Nevertheless, we argue that a declaration of intent to develop such policy would be welcome at this stage, and would stimulate useful exchanges about the aims and nature of the current implicit policy and any future explicit policy developments.

Given the recent evidence of the beginnings of a departure from this approach at government level, the Derry Area Plan 2011 is an opportunity to begin to explicitly address these issues in the North West.

THE NATURE OF CONSULTATION

Consultation on the Preliminary Proposals of the Derry Area Plan 2011 is welcome and we are pleased to participate in the consultation process. We are concerned, however, about the

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accessibility of the consultation process in its present form to groups and individuals in the community who do not have easy access to planning expertise, or who feel empowered by contact with community organisations.

We would welcome discussion with the Area Planning Team on improving accessibility of the planning process to various disempowered groups and individuals in the community. During the preparation of this submission we became aware of a certain reluctance on the part of some sections of the community to participate fully in the consultation process. Ultimately it is the task of public bodies to improve accessibility to all citizens and to develop more effective strategies for consultation and involvement. This is a particular challenge in Northern Ireland, where the so-called democratic deficit has increased the distance between citizens and the public bodies which serve them.

Conclusions

It is argued here that it is necessary to pay specific attention to issues of sectarian segregation and population shifts in planning for the city and district. Locations in the city vary in sectarian composition, and the shifting balance of population is a factor which affects the nature of and quality of life. Changing balances in populations have affected the safety and comfort with which certain people can remain living in particular areas. There is a strong argument for making a special case of the needs of enclave areas. It may be, for example, that such areas should be regarded as villages or small settlements, even when they occur in urban settings. This would allow planners to formally recognise the integrity of such areas, their fears, special needs and their internal cohesion.

The issues identify three significant priorities in the Derry Area Plan consultation process.

- The need to effectively engage local communities and their concerns and priorities in the planning process and in particular to recognise the legitimacy of the problems of small enclave communities for development planning.
- There is a need for the area plan to embrace the concept of choice in the protection and maintenance of communities who want to live in safety and as sustainable areas

- The need to invest in social or community "infrastructure" that would help to sustain the Fountain need to be recognised in creating a vision for the city into the new century.

Until planning and other areas of public policy begin to develop clear aims in relation to such issues, the prospect of achieving progress on such issues is left to chance. Opening up such topics is often difficult, and many people have strong emotional reactions to such issues. Furthermore, there is not easy package of policy solutions to the issues of community division, the legacy of violence, or segregation, therefore the prospect of opening up such issues can be overwhelming and can appear hopeless. At this point, we in Templegrove can only submit our view, that specific policy requires to be generated in relation to issues of segregation and sectarian division. We are not yet in a position to make specific policy recommendations, due to the stage at which our work stands. However, we would welcome the opportunity to provide detailed and comprehensive recommendations to the Area Planning Team and to other relevant government departments at the end of the project period.

Marie Smyth
February 1995

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Footnotes

1. Grid references for the Waterside small area statistics are as follows: C455180 - C470200 + C420150 - C430160 + C435150 - C470160 + C430150 - C435155 + C455160 - C464180 + C440160 - C455185
2. Grid references for the Cityside small area statistics are as follows: C430160 - C440220 + C420160 - C430220 + C440182 - C450220 + C410155 - C420212 + C450182 - C455212 + C430150 - C435160
3. Grid references for The Fountain: C432163 - C436156
4. Grid references for Gobnascale: C437153 - C443158
5. Murtagh, B.(1994) Ethnic Space and the Challenge to Land Use Planning: a Study of Belfast's Peace Lines. Centre for Policy Research, Research Paper 7, May 1994.
6. Belfast Telegraph, Jan 6, 1995
7. Murtagh, Op. Cit.
8. Dougherty, B. (1994) The Effect of the Troubles on the Planing System in Londonderry. Masters Thesis, University of Manchester, Department of Town Planning and Landscape.

Appendix 1

TEMPLEGROVE ACTION RESEARCH LTD

A group of people from the Catholic and Protestant communities in the North West and elsewhere in Northern Ireland came together during 1993 to examine ways of advancing the dialogue between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the North West and beyond. After a number of meetings the group clarified their intention to undertake the specific piece of work outlined here. A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital was formed under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. The company was formed in order to provide a structure which would ensure democratic management of the project. Several of the company directors are drawn from the communities in the study, in order to ensure close contact with the communities involved in the project. The aims of Templegrove include:

- to undertake action research in the North West of Ireland
- to record and publish the experiences of people in the North West who are living with sectarian residential division
- to explore ways in which sectarian residential division affects the population structure and mix, and the welfare of the communities
- to examine ways in which minorities can be sustained, and the drift towards sectarian homogeneity be arrested
- to endeavour at all times to promote improved relationships and open dialogue between Catholic and Protestants in the local communities
- to ensure that a fair and balanced representation is given to views emanating from both

the Catholic and Protestant community in the work of the company.

- to facilitate community education which addresses the issues of segregation and sectarianism.

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Appendix 2

THE SEGREGATION PROJECT

BACKGROUND

Residential segregation has been an increasing feature of the "troubles" in Northern Ireland, and there is recent evidence that the residential divisions in urban areas between Catholics and Protestants have been deepening (see McKitterick 1992 - check date and reference). The City of Derry or Londonderry is an example of such residential segregation, divided by the river Foyle, with a Catholic majority on the cityside and a Protestant majority in the Waterside. In both the Waterside and the cityside there are minority populations - in the cityside the minority Protestant population is concentrated in the Fountain area, and in the Waterside the minority Catholic population is concentrated in Gobnascale. There have been recent shifts in this, notably a move of Protestants out of the cityside, which has led to concern amongst local people about the deepening of existing divisions.

Few accounts exist about the process of this deepening, and the factors involved in the process remain unexamined. It is part of Templegrove's brief to examine two particular factors in its current research project: intimidation and segregation.

Intimidation

Little is understood about the experience of intimidation that underlies such shifts, nor has much work at a community level to address or reverse these trends been documented. The experience of intimidation is independent of intentionality - intimidation can be experienced without someone intending to intimidate or setting out to do so. This is not to deny that intentional and deliberate intimidation takes place in, for example housing or in the

workplace. Rather, it is merely to point out that the experience of intimidation is derived from interpretation of the meaning of situations, and this interpretation is done according to acquired codes. The threshold of tolerance for "threat" and what is experienced is contextual. What is perceived to be threatening may vary according to the history, previous experiences, identity and other aspects of the individuals or communities involved. These issues call for a qualitative investigation, depending, as they do, on subjective experiences rather than on objective "facts".

Segregation

Segregation in Northern Ireland has been the subject of a number of previous studies, notably those of Murtagh (1992 and 1994), to Andrew Hamilton and Clem McCartney's work on Violence in Communities, and to recent work by Coopers and Lybrand in Strathfoyle. It also relates to work to Frank Wright and Derrick Wilson's work on intimidation, to Roseanne Cecil's work on Sectarianism, Kinship and Gender, and to Fred Boal's work on segregation and encapsulation. This body of work has examined various aspects of the effects of segregation on interaction within and between the two communities. It has been largely quantitative in nature, relying for the most part on social surveys methods and statistical analysis.

Templegrove's current research aims to build on this work. Interaction on certain issues between the two communities can take place in spite of physical boundaries and conversely

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interaction can be restricted or absent in areas where there is a geographical mix. Mixed workplaces provide an example of how issues of sectarian difference can be managed by customs such as not talking about issues which touch on "unsafe" ground. There the "segregation" occurs through a set of social practices and norms, not through the arrangement of the built environment. The project wishes to build on existing work on segregation and explore both the positive and negative effects of segregation. For example, in segregated communities, we would expect to find that discourse about such "unsafe" subjects can take place relatively freely within the homogenous segregated group, given the absence of the "other sort". Therefore segregation can enlarge the possibility of discourse and dialogue within one's own community. Conversely, in matters of discourse about sectarian division itself, it reduces the flow of information from the "other side", leaving the fertile ground for the reinforcement of stereotypes about "them".

The project is concerned to establish the extent to which segregation creates an environment in which safety is defined in terms of the complete absence of contact with the "other sort". It aims to examine strategies used by the segregated community to manage fear and the extent to which the presence of the other community is likely to be perceived as threatening, even in situations where "they" have no threatening intention.

As a result, the project aims to understand more about:

- the experiences of the minority Protestant community in Derry, and the Catholic minority in the Waterside
- the factors leading to the changing demography in the city
- the ideas and perspectives which local people might have on how to build a

city in which mutual respect and cooperation could be established and

- how to begin to facilitate strategies aimed at arresting the current trend towards increased segregation.

The project aims to explore with people in specific communities in Derry their experiences of living in a minority. We will collect evidence from these people on how they as minorities are treated, and explore with majority communities ways in which they can avoid domination and triumphalism, and become more sensitized to the impact of such behaviour and structures on minorities. Ultimately the project aims to identify and create the conditions under which specific minorities can articulate their concerns and have them seriously and routinely addressed in ways that make for a mutually respectful community life.

The general aim of the research is to discover and address the experiences of people living in a city experiencing the polarisation of sectarian residential divisions and explore strategies which arrest and/or redress the process of polarisation. Specifically, one of the project aims is to:

4. (a) To identify measures which could be taken to combat the alienation of the communities
- (b) To investigate the feasibility of the implementation of such measures

It is anticipated that the project will have three phases:

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In phase one, we will chart, through the use of census data, the demographic shifts in Derry city and Waterside over the last twenty five years. We will look in detail at two communities, how, if at all they have changed their composition and tracking the process of the change, how and when it came about, the speed, circumstances and nature of the shifts. This will be done through examination of such documentary sources as exist, and through interviewing members of the community.

In phase two, we are concerned with finding out how this changing situation has affected people's lives. The views and experiences of four separate groups of people will be gathered:

1. Members of the City Side Protestant minority
2. the Waterside Catholic minority
3. the City side Catholic majority
4. the Waterside Protestant majority

The material gathered will concentrate on four connected substantive issues:

1. The causes of the demographic changes
2. The experience of these changes, and of the pressures that promote them
3. The experience of being in a local minority or majority
4. Desirable and essential conditions to maintain quality of life for minorities

Questions which will be addressed will include:

- What is the experience of people of living in an area in which they were/are a minority?

- What was/ is it like to live there/ remain there?
- What experiences do people have of moving out of their homes/areas?
- Why did they move?
- What would have needed to be different in order to make it possible for them to stay?
- What would need to happen to make it possible for them to move back?
- How could a comfortable life be established for them in a mixed community?
- What requirements/ needs would they have in such a context?
- How could those needs/requirements be met?

In phase three of the work we will collate and present the accounts in a manner that makes them accessible to the public. This can be done through the use of local exhibitions, local broadcasting of sound recordings or the making of videotapes. The usual written records will be maintained and a final project report will also be presented.

Presentation of the findings of the fieldwork in places where people feel safest and most free to engage in dialogue; this will emerge more clearly in the course of the work. At present we anticipate, for example:

- A- in local venues (eg. the Guildhall/touring exhibition/ video). The responses of the Catholic majority in the cityside (to the presentation of the Protestant minority on the city side) and the Protestant majority on the Waterside (to the presentation of the Catholic minority on the Waterside) can be documented and fed back.
 - B- in one central location for the consumption and comment of local government, politicians, media etc.
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- C- with specific target agencies, for example the Housing Executive, or indeed the Planning Service, who emerge as key agencies during the course of the project. The project team, members of the Guildhall Group, and local community members may wish to explore with such agencies the policy implications of the findings for the agency and the community.

ADVISORY GROUP

In establishing the project, representatives of the group have met with a number of key people who have experience and expertise in the area, or who have undertaken similar work in the past. We would draw your attention to the presence of Mr John Torney from the Londonderry Initiative, on the project's advisory group.

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