Socially Integrated Housing and Sustainable Urban Communities: Case Studies from Dublin

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Abbreviations

AHBs
Approved Housing Bodies

CHDDA
Custom House Docks Development Authority

DDDA
Dublin Docklands Development Authority

HAP
Housing Assurance Scheme

PPP
Public Private Partnership

SDZ
Strategic Development Zone

Executive Summary

Purpose of the Research

This research report examines the relationship between housing and the development of sustainable urban communities. In the context of recent NESC reports on housing, 2014 and 2015, it seeks to unpack some of the blockages in achieving socially and spatially inclusive approaches to housing that meets the needs of the population.

Insights from Urban Studies

Urban studies literature is guided by the central notion that urban neighbourhoods should be places of harmonious interaction centred around high-density living arrangements and alternative forms of transportation to the car, including walking and cycling. A central focus is policies that promote a mix of different groups along lines of social class, ethnicities and familial structures; in doing so it avoids the negative consequences of segregation. It seeks to understand more fully the potential positive effects—questioning the way in which 'neighbourhood effects' actually work; the degree of mixing; and the role of networks in communities. The literature also focuses on everyday life and the role of management and the 'third sector' or housing providers in the promotion of sustainable urban communities.

Sustainable Urban Communities: Irish Experience

The ideals of sustainable urban development are and have been recognised in Irish policy since the late 1990s/early 2000s. However, there are significant challenges as to how the development of sustainable urban neighbourhoods is actually achieved.

In Ireland, the promotion of social mix became a key factor within the regeneration of deprived areas within each of the larger urban centres. The various approaches have entailed the densification of social housing complexes, whether it is a shift from the modernist-influenced slab-block to higher-density apartments set within the urban block, or the shift from low-density, semi-detached houses to terraced housing. There have been significant improvements in terms of quality of life within social housing neighbourhoods, as regards social mix, evidence and debates are less than convincing in terms of success stories. The economic crisis has placed considerable strains on various approaches to urban regeneration. It, and the period since, has also resulted in an increased role for housing associations, particularly in terms of retrospectively taking over the management of what were originally to be either market rental or owner-occupied housing units.

Sustainable Urban Communities: Findings from Three Dublin Case Studies

This research focused on Adamstown, Dublin Docklands and Fatima Mansions/Herberton. It found that the experiences in Adamstown are particularly germane to the current context and the challenge of delivery. The Adamstown SDZ, like other strategic 'sustainable development' locations, faces a number of challenges in terms of its delivery, in particular the need for strong commitment by Government. Without this piecemeal development of areas at the urban fringe seems more likely.

The research also found that, concerning social mix, six key factors need to be taken into consideration: the underlying rationale for social mix; proximity of tenures, different approaches—pepper-potting or clustering—and visual representation; the proportion of social housing and shifting social mix; management issues, and the role of approved housing bodies and attracting investment; stigma, perception of an area and anti-social behaviour; and tenant involvement in design.

The case studies also show the value of detailed urban studies research. The research suggests that exploration of the everyday experiences of sustainably developing and living in urban spaces provide insights that can enrich policy development and support implementation, and as such could be extended to help address other policy challenges.

Three Key Lessons

The research identifies three lessons that should be taken into consideration by policy makers as they now seek to reinvigorate the supply of new housing.

First, it reinforces the importance of taking into consideration the wider housing policy and land supply context. The case studies bring into sharp relief the degree to which sustainable urban communities are dependent on settled and coherent housing policy and active land management and supply.

Second, it highlights housing management as a critical factor both in terms of the basic processes required to support social mix but also as a determining factor in the optimal social mix.

Third, it reinforces the importance of wider economic and social policy context. The Fatima/Herberton case study, in particular, shows starkly that urban development will not be sustainable without supporting economic and social policy. It also confirms that the focus on design and related factors such as density is important, but a focus on these alone is unlikely to be sufficient.

An Active Public Approach to Develop Sustainable Urban Communities is Required

The report highlights that without significant efforts to promote the development of sustainable urban communities, they are unlikely to emerge. It argues that there is a need for central government to focus urgently on the policy and organisational requirements to drive the delivery of housing and associated amenities related to the development of sustainable urban communities. The case studies strongly confirm the need for an active public approach of the kind recently outlined by NESC in its work on housing supply and land management.

1.   Introduction

The relationship between the economic crisis and property development has had significant consequences for policy and practices related to the built environment in Ireland. The fallout from the economic crisis in terms of factors such as half-built housing estates, negative equity, mortgage arrears, etc., continues to be a major pressure impacting on people's daily lives. More recently, the last year has demonstrated the acute need for housing, particularly in larger urban centres such as Dublin, Limerick, Galway and Cork.

In response, policy ambitions—contained in *Construction 2020* and the *Social Housing Strategy* (2015–2020)—are focused on increasing housing supply. However, a key issue is the degree to which any new supply will be aligned with the ideals of delivering sustainable communities. These ideals have been outlined within policy documents (DEHLG, 2007a) and continue to be reflected in new policy, such as the *Social Housing Strategy* (DECLG, 2014).

However, while the ideals of delivering sustainable communities are incorporated in policy, significant challenges remain in producing them. These challenges can be identified throughout the spectrum of housing delivery, ranging from the types of delivery, including market-led housing and social housing, to everyday management and integration issues. It therefore becomes of key importance to identify the relationship between ideals of sustainable urban communities, modes of delivery and future possibilities of developing housing as part of sustainable communities.

In the context of the economic boom and subsequent bust, and with the current housing crisis in mind, this research report sets out to examine the relationship between housing and the development of sustainable urban communities. A number of NESC reports on housing— social housing (NESC, 2014a), the balance of homeownership and rental (NESC, 2014b), the rental sector (NESC, 2015a) and housing supply (NESC, 2015b)—it seeks to unpack some of the blockages in achieving socially and spatially inclusive approaches to housing that meets the needs of the population.

The promotion of sustainable urban communities entails working through a myriad of issues, all of which are needed to ensure a socially equitable outcome is achieved. While ideals of sustainable urban communities espouse notions of harmony, diversity and good-quality housing, the achievement of these is dependent upon a set of processes and wider socio-economic factors that are deeply embedded within the neighbourhood but that often remain hidden. Indeed, challenging this entails looking at a wide set of factors, which often go far beyond the scale of the neighbourhood, city or even national level. The neighbourhood can thus be seen as the nexus of a wide set of forces, operating at a regional, national or even global scale.

The research draws upon in-depth interviews with core individuals involved in various roles, including architecture, planning and housing management. It focuses on three locations within the Greater Dublin Area: Adamstown, Fatima/Herberton and the Dublin Docklands. While the focus is Dublin, these examples, drawn from a range of different social and physical contexts, are demonstrative of some of the challenges facing the development of sustainable approaches to housing in Ireland more generally.

As a means of supplementing these findings, the research also draws on interviews with a number of key stakeholders. The stakeholders are drawn from similar professional backgrounds as the respondents in each of the case studies, but are used as a means of giving more general context to the overall picture being presented.

The research is focused on housing as a core element in the delivery of sustainable urban communities. Notwithstanding the importance of sustainable construction techniques and new advances in ensuring the delivery of sustainable communities, the approach focuses on situating housing within the broader remit of governance and sustainable ideals. In particular, in the context of the promotion of inclusion and harmony—which forms a central tenet of sustainable urban communities—a key focus is that of promoting neighbourhoods as socially balanced areas with a mix of different income groups, brought together under the policy mantra of 'social mix'.

The paper is structured as follows.

Chapter 2 considers what is meant by sustainable urban communities in policy terms, in urban studies literature and in an Irish context.

Chapter 3 summarises the methodology used in this study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research. First, it describes some of the more macro-challenges, particularly around infrastructure provision and funding, for delivery of sustainable urban communities. Second, it looks in more detail at the specific influences on social mix, including the rationale, proximity issues, management, stigmatisation and tenant involvement. It also presents some findings about further work and the value of urban studies in this area.

Chapter 5 considers the key lessons for policy. It reinforces the importance of taking into consideration the wider housing policy and land supply context; the role of housing management as a critical factor; and the importance of wider economic and social policy. It also notes that without significant efforts to promote the development of sustainable urban communities, it is unlikely that they will emerge. It posits that there is a need for central government to develop a set of structures tasked with the delivery of housing and associated amenities related to the development of sustainable urban communities. In doing so the case studies confirm the need for an active public approach of the kind recently outlined by NESC in its work on housing supply and land management.

2. Sustainable Urban Communities in International and National Context

2.1 Introduction

Socially integrated housing is considered in this report as a core element of the promotion of sustainable urban development and, more particularly, sustainable communities. The pursuit of sustainable urban development has been well documented, both in terms of policy formation and academic enquiry. This section begins with a brief outline of how it is discussed at a policy level. This is followed by a summary of its treatment within urban studies literature, including the importance of social mix and the role of management; and the questions and challenges to the concept of social mix. The final section considers the approach to sustainable urban communities in Ireland.

2.2 Policy Formation and Sustainable Urban Development Communities

At a policy level, the promotion of sustainable urban development ranges from non-binding supra-national agreements such as the *Bristol Accord* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005) or the *Leipzig Charter* (German Presidency, 2007) to its incorporation into national policies focused on promoting ideals of sustainability within urban communities (DEHLG, 2007a).

Within wider planning, sustainability and social science literature and policy, the ideal of sustainable communities espouses a set of principles that are outlined through the explanation of spatial features and patterns. For example, previous work by NESC (2004) contrasted unsustainable urban sprawl with sustainable patterns of urban development. The former is dominated by the car and lack of walkability to core facilities, while the latter is defined by walkable streets, more efficient land-use through higher densities and high-quality public transport. In the Irish example, these principles are, perhaps, best summarized by the following official statement:

> Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well-planned, built and run, offer equality of opportunity and good services for all (DEHLG, 2007a: 7).

That this draws so explicitly on the *Bristol Accord* (2005) demonstrates the links between the national and supra-national level in terms of sustainable urban ideals.

In a policy context, it is posited that much contained within the ideals of sustainable urban development are worth aspiring to. However, there is also a danger that the means by which this is achieved becomes somewhat lost within the wider social, economic and political contexts in which the provision of the core elements of urban sustainability are caged. While various policies and strategic plans set out to convey the tenets of well-planned and designed communities, there remain significant challenges as to how the development of sustainable urban neighbourhoods is actually achieved. This might relate to particular governance challenges or key factors that may have a reach beyond the scale of the neighbourhood, city or even national level.

2.3   Sustainable Urban Communities and Urban Studies

In the urban studies literature, the connection between sustainability and urban development is well documented. There are a number of dimensions to this body of literature.

In overall terms, the literature is guided by the central notion that urban neighbourhoods should be places of harmonious interaction centred around high-density living arrangements and alternative forms of transportation to the car, including walking and cycling. The wider aspirations of sustainability are summarised by Winston (2014: 1386), following from Wheeler (2004) as follows:

> … sustainable land-use planning is required which entails a shift towards more housing being constructed within mixed-use developments, resisting scattered settlements and a preference for brown-field rather than green-field sites.

This, Winston continues, also incorporates a high standard of urban design and close proximity to public transport modes. In as much as the explicit focus of such policies and debates is centred upon the residential neighbourhood, albeit one that contains a mixture of functions, housing is an integral building block of urban sustainability. As commented by Ivan Tosics (2004: 67):

> One sectoral policy of great importance to sustainable development is housing. Without suitable suggestions for housing policies, no concept of sustainable development can be successful (and vice versa).

The circular logic is thus an important element within wider debates about sustainable urban development, with housing being both reliant on sustainability policies and a core element in achieving such.

2.3.1   Importance of Social Mix

In the context of the desire to promote socially balanced and harmonious urban communities, a significant focus has been placed on policies that promote a mix of different groups along lines of social class, ethnicities and familial structures (Bauder, 2002; Musterd & Andersson, 2005). Social mix policies are based on the premise that the segregation of groups, has negative consequences, both at the neighbourhood level and in terms of wider society. While the ideals of social mix have a long history (Bond *et al*., 2011), its recent shift to the centre of urban policy can be seen in the context of a reaction to the often very stark levels of deprivation found at the neighbourhood level.

The development of socially mixed neighbourhoods has thus become a central focus of policy making and academic writing (van Kempen & Wissink, 2014). Such an approach assumes that the forms of social ties at the neighbourhood level have a significant impact on a person's life-chances (Blokland & Savage, 2008; Pinkster, 2014). At the centre of such an ideal is the belief that the concentration and isolation of poorer members of society can have a negative influence on their life chances. Thus, it is argued that the presence of the better-off in society can have a positive impact on the life chances of those of lower income or social class standing (Rose *et al*., 2013).

There are a number of overlapping scales at which such policies have been introduced. First, there has been a desire to promote cities as socially balanced, diverse (Fainstein, 2005) and open to a wide range of lifestyles. This includes policy support for the attraction of middle-class residents into formerly working-class neighbourhoods, already evolving through market-led housing processes. Second, there has been a desire to ensure the development of new neighbourhoods as being socially balanced with a mix of tenures and social groups. Finally, one of the main focuses of recent urban

policy has been the redevelopment of marginalised or deprived post-war social housing developments as socially mixed housing.

There are a number of different dynamics evident in the drive to promote social mix and balance. The primary aim is focused on enhancing the life chances of those from deprived social backgrounds and marginalised ethnic groups. While this is largely dependent on the particular context of the location, a significant amount of focus has been placed upon the correlation between extreme deprivation and minority ethnic groups (Musterd, 2003). Furthermore, with a desire to incorporate mixed-tenure into such locations, there is a significant focus on the inclusion of the private sector within such transformation. There is thus an assumption embedded within social mix policies that a mixture of different tenures will help achieve social balance (Rose *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, the desire to transform such neighbourhoods has often been led by large-scale urban renewal projects that are informed by planning and design practices focused on promoting social balance in a neighbourhood. Broadly speaking, such ideals are led by a desire to 'get back' to what is perceived as a form of the lost art of city making, with the focus shifting from the 'tower in the park' to the street, with the square and urban block as guiding principles of urban design. In so doing, such approaches also incorporate a desire to promote the lessening of social stigma often associated with social housing. Thus, in design terms, there is a desire to make new developments 'tenure blind' (Jupp, 1999; Lawton, 2013), or to promote a certain amount of mix through what is referred to as 'pepper-potting' of social housing within and between owner-occupied and market-rental housing (Roberts, 2007). Such factors also relate directly to questions of scale, with an implied desire to ensure that social housing is mixed with a higher proportion of owner-occupied and market rental housing.

In this context, it is important to note that while the high-density urban environments can be viewed as desirable, the manner in which density is currently framed might also be viewed as problematic, in relation to the realities of urban regions. This challenge was recently summarised by Roger Keil (2014) as follows:

> Density as a site specific quality is almost meaningless if one doesn't look at the broader societal context and patterns of use as well. A person can live in a compact, dense, walkable neighbourhood but work a long drive or transit ride away from it.

Such a viewpoint challenges the notion that the high-density urban settlement can be viewed as standing in isolation from its surrounding region. Furthermore, while it is often posited that exclusion can be directly related to urban sprawl, care must be taken to not assume that the opposite will automatically result in an inclusive and socially sustainable city.

2.3.2   The Management of Social Mix

The literature highlights the importance of the relationship between wider policy formation and the dynamics of everyday life within a particular neighbourhood. One specific element is that of everyday management in the promotion of sustainable urban communities. For some of those critically engaged in the discussion of social mix policies, the promotion of social mix is primarily a question of management.

Drawing on the example of the Netherlands, Uitermark (2003) argues that the introduction of social mix policies into deprived urban areas was primarily based on management concerns. This, it is argued, demonstrates that the need to retrospectively promote socially mixed communities is an outcome of previous governance failures to promote inclusion between different social and ethnic

groups. However, while there is a significant amount of merit to this argument, the promotion of social mix and tenure mix also places a significant burden on management.

In examining this field, the body of research that seeks to demonstrate the potential for the role of 'the third sector' becomes of key importance. Here the role of housing providers, such as housing cooperatives and corporations, in acting as a mediator or form of 'buffer' between residents and other hierarchies of power can be seen to be of increased importance. In the example of Vienna, Lang and Novy (2014) comment on the increased role of landlords of cooperative housing in fostering networks and promoting social sustainability within communities. Given the dominant role of housing cooperatives and corporations in Vienna, this entails a significant role for housing managers. To bring the argument further, at the level of the neighbourhood, there is a significant benefit for investment in policies that promote social cohesion above short-term investment strategies (*ibid.*). There are clearly needs in terms of physical infrastructure, but significant gains are made through the implementation of processes that ensure the long-term viability of this infrastructure, which is so essential to everyday life within a neighbourhood.

2.3.3   Questions Facing Social Mix

While social mix continues to be central to urban policy formation throughout Europe and North America, there are questions as to its effectiveness in promoting interaction between different social groups and breaking cycles of poverty. This form of policy has been engaged with in a number of ways.

On the one hand, there is a significant amount of literature critiquing social mix policies as being a form of 'gentrification by stealth' (Lees *et al*., 2008). Here the focus is on the extent to which social mix policies result in the transformation of neighbourhoods in favour of newer middle- and upper-class residents, rather than the working-class communities or deprived communities at which regeneration is targeted. There is also the challenge within social mix that it may end up pitching the 'mix' as being the solution, when in reality all it does is hide ongoing challenges that have their roots in wider socio-economic factors (Slater, 2013).

This approach also speaks to a more pointed critique of the notion of 'neighbourhood effects', that of whether it is of any benefit for promoting social mixing of the established community. For all the research carried out on neighbourhood effects, and as is argued by van Kempen and Wissink (2014), the evidence suggests some form of effect, but these is small in comparison to other factors such as household characteristics. This factor has been further developed through the work of Gibbons *et al*. (2013). Similarly to van Kempen and Wissink, Gibbons *et al*. question the role of neighbourhood effects on people's educational attainment levels. They highlight the extent to which neighbourhood segregation is an outcome rather than a cause of low educational attainment amongst poorer groups, which itself is directly connected to inequalities in income (*ibid.*). Thus signs of 'neighbourhood effects' might emerge, but are largely the outcome of the extent to which people will make residential choices based on levels of income and the costs of housing. Thus, as argued by Gibbons *et al.*:

> Any correlation between children's outcomes and neighbours' characteristics comes about mainly because children from richer families live next to other children from rich families, while children from poor families live next to other children from poor families. (*ibid.*: 25)

Recent literature has also questioned the expectations around social mix policies. For example, one body of research has queried the extent to which social classes interact and actually mix at the neighbourhood level. Butler and Robson (2001) refer to different groups as living a form of 'tectonic

co-existence', with little interaction taking place between them (see also Rose *et al*., 2013). Thus, while living in close proximity, the forms of interaction that are implied through social mix policy do not inevitably occur. There are significant challenges in terms of the actual degree to which different social groups interact (Uitermark, 2003). In emphasizing such challenges, van Kempen and Wissink argue:

> Not only are new (higher-income) residents unenthusiastic about new contacts; often the older (low-income) residents are also not interested. They often have an extensive and longstanding social network within the neighbourhood and there seems to be no room for new contacts. (van Kempen & Wissink, 2014: 100)

Indeed, as van Kempen and Wissink continue, there is a need to begin examining networks at a scale that goes beyond the level of the neighbourhood. Such a call takes into account recent literature on 'networked urbanism' (Blokland, 2008) and the role of 'mobilities' in shaping urban social space. Van Kempen and Wissink conclude by seeking a form of engagement between those analysts (policy makers, academics, etc.) that dismiss neighbourhood effects and those that support and promote it. Thus, there is increasing significance being given to connections beyond the neighbourhood level. Such an approach takes into account the ability of different social groups to draw upon a range of social capital. As commented by Bridge *et al.* (2014: 1140): 'The social networks beyond the neighbourhood are key to understanding the nature of social interaction and mix within them.'

While the forms of social engagement taking place within and outside the neighbourhood go beyond the remit of this report, the literature does point to the need to understand the relationship between different factors. Embedded in such questions are wider issues such as the economic standing of social groups, the role of national housing and urban policies, and the role of regional and urban governance structures in influencing the scale of the neighbourhood. There is a significant amount of scope for the development of sustainable urban policies that incorporate a wide range of factors, each of which goes beyond the neighbourhood scale. For example, Tosics (2004: 73) comments: 'Proper *housing construction* and *land-use* policies may play a prime role in combating sprawl and dispersal in urban areas. The keywords for such policies might include public land-banking, affordable new construction, social mixture, etc. A kind of regional cooperation is unavoidable if the polices are to cover not only the city but also the agglomeration areas.' The current research underlines the significance of this point and provides concrete illustration of its significance. This will be returned to at a later point in this report.

Significantly, the engagement beyond the neighbourhood still raises questions about the role of neighbourhood dynamics, albeit informed by a range of different elements, including the overlap between national policy and management-related activities. As is recognised by van Kempen and Wissink (2014), the neighbourhood still remains a nexus of different social worlds, and the extent to which different social groups overlap and interact is still of considerable importance for understanding the social structures of cities. For example, recent work by Blokland and Nast (2014) demonstrated the potential of even the co-presence of different social groups in forming what they refer to as a 'comfort zone'. Drawing on the example of shopping streets as spaces of encounter, they comment:

> Public familiarity, we argue—the recognizing and being recognized in locals spaces, where one meets some people whom one knows and many whom one does not, but with whom one develops some level of acquaintance, however superficial and fluid— creates a comfort zone that allows people to feel they belong, even though they may have no local friends or family, never talk to their direct neighbours, and not even like the place where they live. (Blokland & Nast, 2014: 1155).

Perhaps such an appraisal summarises the reality of socially mixed areas and demonstrates the extent to which interaction actually takes place. Critically, it could be argued that the authors are too accepting of existing social structures. However, in light of the continued debates over evidence of success in terms of social mix (Bond *et al.*, 2011); this could represent a more realistic means of understanding the actual impacts of social mix policies. The authors argue that such a scenario helps to resist against boundary drawing and promotes a greater level of understanding between different social groups and sharing of social space. In a time of increasingly socially fragmented urban space, it would seem a positive step to ensure some form of mixing can take place.

2.4 Approaches to Sustainable Urban Development in the Irish Context

In Ireland, urban sustainability has been on the official government agenda for over a decade (DEHLG, 2007a). The desire for sustainable development is set against the backdrop of car-based urban sprawl, which, as outlined by NESC (2004: 124), is defined as follows:

> Houses are at unwalkable distances from almost all amenities, so people have no alternative but to drive to schools, churches, shops and clubs.

This description captures the quintessential landscape of boom-time Ireland, which was dominated by an unsustainable model of delivery and image. It is this very reality that government policy sets out to counter.

In keeping with wider international practice, sustainable development in the Irish context is outlined as a form of development where housing is in close proximity to various necessary amenities, including schools, shops and public transport (DEHLG, 2007a). Despite the existence of such policies during the so-called boom years, the aftermath of the economic crisis in Ireland had profound impacts for the urban environment. While new ideals of sustainable urban development and the promotion of sustainable urban communities had permeated policy, the reality of economic boom and subsequent downturn became marked by half-finished housing estates, office blocks and empty apartment buildings.

2.4.1 Sustainable Urban Development Projects in Ireland

Despite the significant challenges surrounding the approach taken to urban development throughout the period of economic boom, a number of approaches to urban transformation were carried out under a remit that was promoted as representing a more sustainable approach to urban development. Loosely speaking, these entailed the desire for higher densities in close proximity to public transport, the development of social and tenure mix, and the desire, at least in principle, to curb urban sprawl. To greater or lesser extents, each of these existed in different forms of delivery.

The promotion of social mix in an Irish context became a key factor of the regeneration of deprived areas within each of the larger urban centres. Here, the most common form of delivery was through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), which entailed the designated area being handed over to a private developer in return for the provision of housing for the established community (Hearne & Redmond, 2014). Moreover, social mix also formed an element of various bodies established to develop key urban areas. These include, for example, the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) and Special Purpose Vehicles, such as Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. With particular reference to the various established PPPs and the regeneration of Ballymun and, later, different regeneration projects in Limerick, the promotion of social mix, or, more accurately, tenure mix, was, from a policy perspective, aimed at achieving a more balanced social structure.

From a design perspective, the various approaches have entailed the densification of former social housing complexes, whether it is a shift from the modernist-influenced slab-block to higher-density apartments set within the urban block, or the shift from low-density semi-detached houses to terraced housing. Much of this has been through the influence of international ideals of urban design, planning and architectural ideals taking root throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s (Lawton & Punch, 2014).

Overall, recent research has reported significant improvements in quality of life within social housing neighbourhoods (Norris, 2014). Significant progress in the relative condition of social housing in certain contexts has been noted (see Norris 2014). However, when it comes to discussions of social mix programmes in Ireland, evidence and debates are not convincing.

On a more positive note, there is a significant improvement in the management and upkeep of social housing in recent years. As is detailed by Norris and O'Connell (2014), between the late 1990s and the late 2000s, there was a dramatic transformation in the day-to-day management of social housing. While, in the late 1990s, tenants reported significant concerns in relation to the effectiveness of management and a poor relationship to the local authority, by the late 2000s, the situation had altered significantly with improvements noted in estate upkeep and relations between tenants and local authorities. As is further outlined by Norris and O'Connell (*op. cit*), much of this is attributable to an increased focus on neighbourhood supports, such as liaison officers, which replaced a more bureaucratic relationship.

There has also been much critique of the models pursued. While a significant element of social regeneration is aimed at the integration of social, economic and physical factors, in writing about the example of Ballymun regeneration, Kintrea and Muir (2009) argued that economic development was too focused on the physical output of property development at the expense of the integration of the local population.

Norris and O'Connell (2014) commented on the difficulties in promoting multi-faceted approaches to regeneration in Ireland. While the provision of key services is often provided by the local authority, service provision in Ireland is carried out by a range of bodies, often under the remit of central government. This point is also reiterated by Kintrea and Muir in their example of Ballymun:

> While there were clearly ambitions to join together the work of various agencies and there is communication between them, the governance arrangements for the delivery of an integrated package of regeneration are less than convincingly effective as the agencies are accountable to different ministers, and have distinctive funding arrangements and priorities. (2009: 91)

Another feature of sustainable housing provision is the extent to which the State has divested its interests in social housing through a number of measures. These include the emergence of alternative modes of delivery, such as housing associations, and the delivery of social housing through rent subsidies to tenants living in private rental accommodation.

The economic crisis has placed considerable strain on various approaches to urban regeneration. The starkest example of this is the impact on the Public Private Partnership model of urban regeneration. As documented by Hearne and Redmond (2014), by late 2008, the majority of PPPs had either stalled or been placed on indefinite hold. As such, Fatima Mansions became the only example to be completed under the PPP model of urban regeneration (see Chapter 4).

However, one of the key legacies of the downturn, to be examined in detail below, is the increased role of housing associations of retrospectively taking over the management of what were originally

to be either market rental or owner-occupied housing units. The role of housing associations has gradually expanded since the early 1990s, and as of 2006 represented just over 18 per cent of the entire social housing stock (Norris & O'Connell, 2014). The role of housing associations in providing management has been well documented in previous research. This has been particularly focused on their role in social housing estates (see Redmond & Hearne, 2013; Norris, 2014). Here, the existing research has documented their ability to perform management tasks to a high level.   As is summarized by Redmond and Hearne:

> Housing associations have been able, in some cases, to access the necessary capital funds to regenerate estates and have a track record in effective and efficient housing and estate management. (2013: 6).

The period since the economic crisis has seen this role expand further, with a significant amount of properties taken on by housing associations being accessed via already-existing stock, rather than newly built buildings.   This is of significant importance to the approach taken to everyday management.

2.5   Conclusion

While the promotion of the tenets of urban sustainability, including the promotion of sustainable urban communities, are central to a significant amount of policy formation, the reality as it has been experienced within different urban settings tells a more challenging story.

Throughout Ireland, it is possible to point to positive outcomes reached through urban regeneration projects, yet there are few areas that have not suffered difficulties, either through challenges of governance and implementation, or through the economic downturn. The challenge is to bring together the learning from both the deep challenges as experienced in urban transformation and those outcomes deemed a success. The promotion of sustainable urban communities holds huge potentials, but there is greater need to question the connection between these and the wider forces of urban development. This entails examining questions of land ownership and power of decision making, as well as questions of social equity, income and notions of 'choice' of places to live. Thus, understanding the processes that contribute to various aspects of urban transformation is the necessary next step in achieving sustainable urban communities.

Questions arise as to how the promotion of sustainable urban communities is made possible, and the potential social challenges that it might entail. There is a need to focus on the processes that lead to certain urban outcomes and to understand the complex nature that produces them. This means treating urban space not just as the physical form or container of local social actors, but as something that is constituted and produced by a myriad of forces. Seeking to understand how alterations to such forces can produce a result that can be deemed 'sustainable' becomes a key challenge. We look at the influences on this. First, the wider set of processes involved in the promotion of sustainable communities, including the relationship between policies of planning, design and investment. Second, intermediaries and management at the neighbourhood scale. In the next section, each of these will be examined in detail.

3.   Methodology and Overview of Cases

3.1   Introduction

The research is focused on examining the role of housing as a central feature of the promotion of sustainable urban communities. This requires bringing together wider ideals of sustainable urban development, such as land-use planning, governance, density and layout, with the promotion of socially balanced neighbourhoods as promoted through the tenets of social mix. To examine the recent evolution of approaches to the promotion of sustainable urban communities, the research undertook an analysis of three key case studies in the Greater Dublin Area. These were supplemented by interviews with a number of key stakeholders. In a number of cases, the stakeholders had a certain amount of experience, or in-depth knowledge of the case studies. However, their selection was based primarily on their involvement in the delivery of housing or elements related to housing from a broader perspective.

The selection of the case studies was based on a multi-sited approach. More specifically, it was based on the premise that the particularities of different approaches to urban transformation would emerge within different socio-spatial contexts. The following factors were of key significance in selecting different locations:

- **Spatial Context**: The difference between urban and suburban settings, whether or not the area was a regeneration project or new-build;

- **Social Context**: Extent to which each area was already an established population centre, and significance of social structure within such thinking; and

- **Mode of Delivery**: The specific means by which the project was delivered. This included models such as Public Private Partnership, Strategic Development Zone (SDZ), and Large-Scale Quasi-Private Development.

By taking these as starting points for the development of the approach, the research settled upon three headings and selected one case study for each, as follows:

- '**Green-fields' Development**: Adamstown, South Dublin County Council;

- **Post-Industrial Urban Regeneration Area:** Dublin Docklands; and

- **Large-Scale Renewal**: Fatima Mansions/Herberton.

3.2   Introduction to the Cases

The following briefly introduces each of the case-study sites. A greater level of detail is given for each case study at a later stage in the chapter.

3.2.1   'Green-fields' Development: Adamstown, Co. Dublin

Adamstown, located to the south of Lucan in West Dublin, was developed from the early 2000s onwards as a 'new town', which was based around the principles of sustainable urban development. In total, Adamstown consists of 214 hectares (500 acres), which were rezoned in the 1998 South Dublin County Council Development Plan. The site was comprised through three separate land holdings.   This is broken down by Castlethorn Construction (approximately 125 hectares), Maplewood Homes (approximately 52 hectares) and Tierra Construction (20 hectares).   It is important to note that Adamstown formed the first example of a Special Development Zone, as introduced through the Planning and Development Act (2000) and was designated as such in July 2001. Special Development Zones were introduced as a means of designating areas that can fast-track the provision of facilities deemed to have either economic or social importance. Importantly, the legislation stipulates against any forms of appeal to An Bord Pleanála. In principle, this is believed to speed up the process of developing a sustainable urban community.

There were a number of dimensions to the promotion of Adamstown as a sustainable 'new town'. A dominant element of this was the desire to get away from the car-dependent approach that had been the hallmark of development from the mid-to-late twentieth century in Ireland. The core principles of Adamstown, which, as will be discussed throughout the findings, drew upon ideals imported from European countries such as Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands.   Focus was placed upon the promotion of a higher-density settlement with good rail-based transport connections.   Moreover, emphasis was also placed on promoting a higher density settlement pattern, which mixed terraced housing with apartments. This would be focused around a mixture of uses and permeability of streets to ensure the promotion of a walkable neighbourhood. Finally, and in combining Part IX and Part V of the 2000 Planning Act (on SDZ's), the provision of social and affordable housing also formed a central feature of the development of Adamstown. In the case of Adamstown, the design of social and affordable housing was carried out to be 'tenure blind', with the social and affordable being designed as part of the wider master plan and integrated with other tenures.   The relative merits and demerits of the overall approach to Adamstown will form a significant discussion in the findings section of this report.

3.2.2   Post-Industrial Urban Regeneration Area: Dublin Docklands

The transformation of the Dublin Docklands needs to be understood in the context of the shifting economic and social context in Ireland of the 1970s and 1980s (Malone, 1996). Its transformation can be seen as directly reflective of the shifting dynamics of port facilities, de-industrialization, and the subsequent emergence of the services-based economy.   As a de-industrialized space, the Docklands can be seen as encapsulating these shifts, both in terms of function and urban form. Moreover, the Docklands can also be seen as heralding new approaches to urban transformation, with the development of special delivery bodies to oversee development. Early examples of this include the development of the International Financial Services Centre through the establishment of the Custom House Docks Development Authority in 1987. While the IFSC was expanded from 1994 onwards into Phase II, the major expansion of the Docklands regeneration was from 1997, with the establishment of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA). The remit of the DDDA was the regeneration of 520 hectares of land within the former docks. This incorporated the physical as well as the economic and social regeneration of the area.

Each phase of the Docklands programme has engendered a different approach to urban development. For example, the approach associated with earlier incarnations of the Docklands, through, the Custom House Docks Development Authority (CHDDA) is marked by a mix of office functions and a highly segregated residential landscape of private apartment blocks surrounding St George's Dock. Following from this, and through a combination of shifting trends in urban design and planning approaches (see Lawton & Punch, 2014) and a considerable amount of criticism of the segregationist approach of the original IFSC development, later incarnations of the Docklands have aimed to promote a more integrated urban environment. With particular relevance to the period after 1997, the Docklands became increasingly focused on incorporating ideals of urban transformation, that, at least at face value, incorporated notions of sustainable urban development. Initially, through IFSC Phase II, this became apparent through the development of Clarion Quay Apartments, where the desire was for a more socially integrated approach that had a direct relationship to open and accessible public spaces, such as Mayor Square. However, it was through later master planning that these elements become most apparent. For example, the development of Grand Canal Dock, through the Grand Canal Docks Planning Scheme (DDDA, 2000) and its subsequent amendments of 2006 (DDDA, 2006), involved the development of a high-density mixed-use and socially mixed area with a coherent urban structure. Thus, later approaches to the Dublin Docklands incorporated a desire for 20 per cent social and affordable housing in developments such as Hanover Quay and Gallery Quay. These developments became a focal point that will be discussed throughout the findings.

Image 1: Grand Canal Dock Under Development in 2008
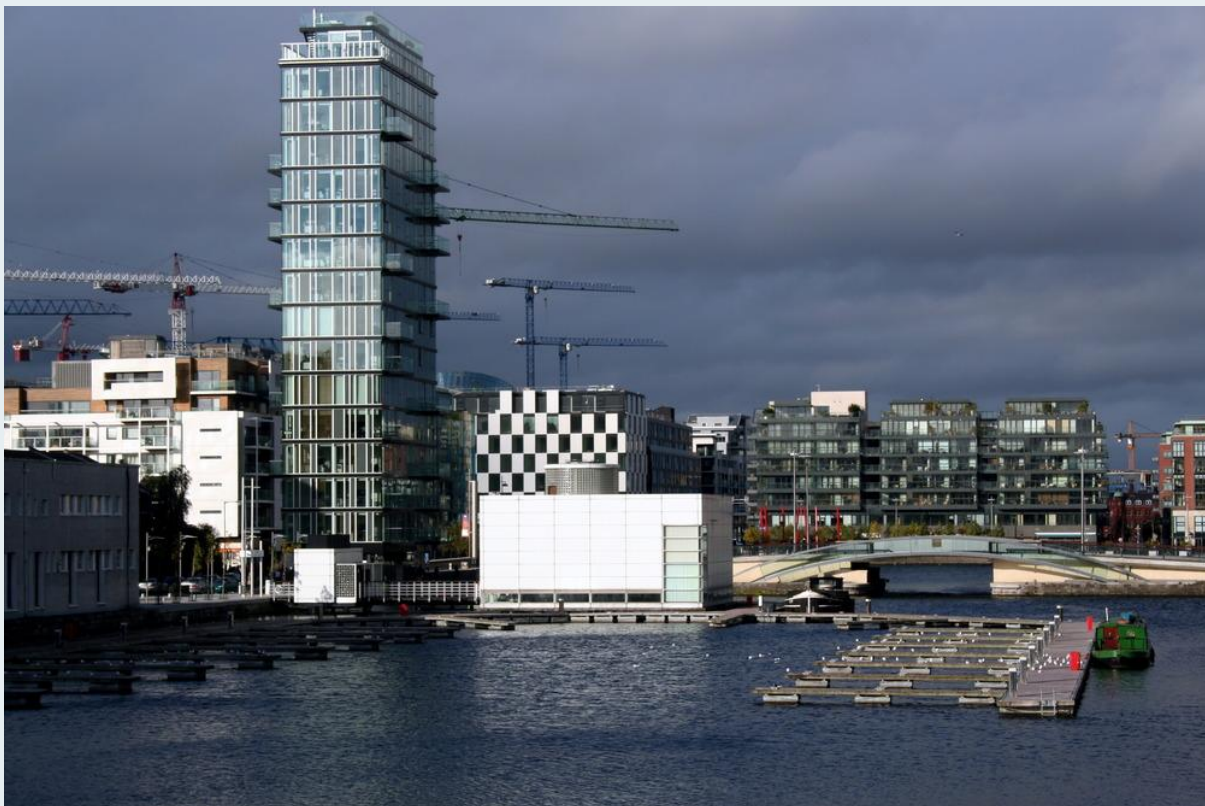
3.2.3 Large-Scale Renewal: Fatima Mansions/Herberton

The former Fatima Mansions, in Rialto, Dublin, now renamed Herberton, is the outcome of a large-scale redevelopment project which was begun in 2004. The redevelopment of Fatima/Herberton was undertaken through that began a Public Private Partnership approach (see Norris, 2014; Hearne & Redmond, 2014). The original Fatima Mansions was developed in 1951. However, in the context of the demise of Dublin's traditional industry base combined with poor management policies, the estate had gone into significant decline by the 1980s. While Dublin Corporation invested £5m in refurbishment during the mid-1980s, by the late 1990s, Fatima Mansions was suffering from significant social challenges including high unemployment levels and a severe heroin problem (Fatima Community Regeneration Team, 2000).

Image 2: The Redeveloped Fatima/Herberton Development

The transformation of Fatima Mansions engages with core premises of the promotion of sustainable urban communities. A 2000 document entitled 'Eleven Acres, Ten Steps' (*ibid.*) outlined a number of core elements deemed necessary for the holistic regeneration of the area such as the inclusion of the community in the regeneration programme and management of the estate, the promotion of a choice of good-quality homes for Fatima residents of, the maximisation of employment opportunities through the development of the local economy, the combating of educational disadvantage, and the promotion of a safe and secure neighbourhood.

From a macro-perspective, the redevelopment of Fatima Mansions was within the context of the prevalent ideals of social mix policies. More particularly, and in keeping with Ireland's recent trajectory, the approach entailed the development of the estate as a public-private partnership whereby the land would be given over for development purposes, in return for social housing provision for those already housed on the estate. Included within this arrangement was the development of the F2 Community Centre. This included an indoor sports hall, an outdoor all-weather pitch, an art studio, conference facilities and an education and training room.

It is important to view the evolution of the redevelopment of Fatima as Herberton in the context of the economic boom and subsequent bust. In particular, the key factor is the extent to which the original breakdown between different tenures within the PPP framework was altered. Originally, it was envisaged that the newly developed Herberton area would comprise the following: 150 Social Housing, 70 Affordable, and 394 Private Residential (Hearne & Redmond, 2014). However, in the context of the economic crisis, the reality of tenure breakdown was significantly transformed. Table 1 outlines the actual breakdown of tenure within the redeveloped Fatima/Herberton.

Table 1: Actual Breakdown of Tenure, Fatima/Herberton, 2014

Tenure	Units
Public (includes super-affordable)	150
Private (market owner) 150	150
Affordable	50
Rent to Buy	23
Market Rental	110
Cluid Housing	65
F2 Apartments, F2 Trust	13
DIT Students	40

Source: O'Donohue, (2014).

As illustrated in Table 1, the breakdown of tenures has altered significantly in the wake of the economic crisis. Of particular note is the increased role of housing associations. Overall, the area has evolved in a manner that varies considerably from what was originally envisaged. The implications, for everyday management and for the long-term evolution of sustainable approaches to urban development, will be discussed throughout this report.

3.3   Interviews with Key Stakeholders

To supplement the case- tudies, interviews were carried out with a number of key stakeholders in the wider area of sustainable urban development. These are listed in Table 1. These were selected based on their broad experience within urban transformation. In some cases, the individuals had in-depth knowledge of one or more of the case studies being examined. As such, these interviews helped to contextualise the findings from the case studies within a wider framework.

3.3.1   Structure of the Interviews

The aim of the semi-structured interviews was to engage respondents in discussion that was both reflexive and projective in nature. Depending on the role of the individual and their relevant organisation, the focus would be on understanding past experiences and potential changes in approach. Here, the first part of the interviews would seek to understand past experiences of the relevant organisation within the provision of sustainable housing. This would include an in-depth understanding of the various relevant factors involved in the planning, development and everyday management of each location. The interviews then sought to understand the manner in which each respondent foresaw future possibilities. This aimed to understand the future potential housing provision from the perspective of potentials and pitfalls/blockages. Interviews sought to engage in a number of levels. This ranged from the everyday interventions of management to the more 'macro' factors related to economic, political and social structures (available funds, planning and development scenarios, etc.).

Table 2: Indicative Interview Outline

Adamstown Role	Organisation	Interview Code
Architect	Private practice	A1
Planner	Local government	A2
Planner	Local government	A3
Architect	Local government	A4
Housing manager	Housing association	A5
Architect	Private practice	A6
Docklands Role	**Organization**	
Planner	Local government	D1
Planner	Quasi-government body	D2
Architect	Quasi-government body	D3
Housing manager	Housing association	D4
Housing manager, gallery quay	Property management company	D5
Community representative	Community group	D6
Architect	Private practice	D7
Fatima Mansions Role	**Organization**	
Community worker	Community group	F1
Community worker	Community group	F2
Manager	Housing association	F3
Architect	Private practice	F4
Key Stakeholders		
Architect	Private practice	SH1
Director	Housing association	SH21
Housing manager	Housing association	SH22
Policy advisor	Housing association	SH23
Policy advisor	Housing association	SH24
Housing Expert	Local government	SH3
Planner	Semi-state body	SH4
Planner	Central government	SH51
Architect	Central government	SH52
Specialist in social housing	Central government	SH53
Architect	Central government	SH54

4. Sustainable Urban Communities: Findings

4.1 Introduction

The findings in this chapter are divided into two sub-sections and deal with the key issues in a thematic manner. The first of these presents some of the more macro challenges in the delivery of sustainable urban communities. This first section has a particular focus on Adamstown. There are a number of reasons for this. Adamstown and the experience of its development provide insights into the core challenges of promoting sustainable urban communities in the context of the economic boom and the subsequent economic crisis. In addition, Adamstown emerges as providing key insights into some of the future challenges of housing provision.

The second section focuses on the more detailed elements of the development of socially mixed neighbourhoods throughout the last number of years. While each of the case studies has particular challenges, the impact of the economic crisis on Fatima/Herberton and the Docklands will be discussed more particularly in relation to factors directly related to social mix.

The chapter closes with conclusions about further work and the role of urban studies.

Image 3: Housing in Adamstown

Image 4: Land Suitable for Future Provision of Housing and Town Centre Facilities

4.2   Broad Challenges of Delivering Sustainable Urban Communities

Throughout the interviews, a significant proportion of respondents reflected on the means by which the different projects were delivered. Much of this discussion revolved around the original ideals of a particular development, and then moved on to discuss the impact of the economic boom and subsequent bust. Given its scale, and the ideals it aspired to, much of this discussion emerged about Adamstown. The approach taken in the development of Adamstown can be seen as encapsulating the broader ideals of sustainable urban development as it emerged in the late 1990s/early 2000s. Seeking to move away from the recent history of sprawl-oriented development, Adamstown was instead focused on the promotion of higher-density housing, walkability and proximity to the railway. This was directly influenced by ideals taken from countries with a strong track record in sustainable urban planning and housing provision such as Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands. Throughout the interviews about Adamstown, these influences were discussed in detail. As commented by one respondent:

> The Danes have done a couple of beautiful suburban new towns which are really, really attractive and so on—but they're quite suburban, they feel low-density. Skarpnäck [Stockholm, Sweden] is more like a village street and it is a suburb but it's more on that sort of higher density feel to it, and they got the idea of creating housing right up to the edges of streets, street scales that tier down, but a high street feel, side street feels, laneways and mews' and then back into a slightly lower density. … And sitting in the middle of the main street is an underground station, there're churches and so on, there's green spaces and parks and whatever. So, we kind of felt that that was a very

> nice model, and it's one that we tried to replicate … (Respondent A4, architect, local government, involved in Adamstown)

Thus the approach taken to Adamstown can be seen as a form of 'design-led' approach, with planning taking seriously the extent to which urban design can alter the perception of a newly developed housing area. Pointedly, this was merged with the delivery of key infrastructure. This was summarised by a former planner with South Dublin County Council, who contrasted the approach taken with Adamstown to the more generic approach to suburban development:

> [T]he emphasis was, yeah, it was on design, it was on an infrastructure but it was a physical approach in the sense that we were looking at this as a physical job, we had to build this particular entity which ultimately was going to be bricks and mortar. (Interview A2, planner, local government, involved in Adamstown).

The core focus in terms of delivery of Adamstown was on ensuring the key elements of infrastructure were delivered. The precise means by which the project would be rolled out was based on the logic that the private sector would deliver the various required services on a phased basis, with necessary services then being delivered through development levies. In most cases, reflections focused on the extent to which the approach taken was dependent upon the trajectory of the market. In the case of Adamstown, this was summarised as follows:

> And the logic of Adamstown would be that they would all travel together and that the model would be much closer to that of a traditional town and the idea of a series of these towns coming along the railway line, rather than the endless circular expansion around the city at low density, so it had a kind of proposition about that, and then the mechanism for the release of it was that land and property were beginning to go up, and up, and up, famously dangerously as we now know, but at the time, we owned no land up there but the model for how we were leveraging the facilities and the things as they came along was the release of equity through increasing land values, so they bought this thing at one level and they could sell it at another and the difference between the two would be their profit plus whatever we could manage to get for social facilities and community facilities and parks and all the things that would normally … schools, all the things that would normally come with them. (Respondent A4, architect, local government, involved in Adamstown).

Thus, while the desire was to ensure a more traditional type of urban community and housing development, core features perceived to act as the focal point in development were to be driven by the assumption that land values would continue to rise. The response to the impact of the economic crisis is significant in terms of the efforts made in the transition towards ideals of sustainability. For example, one respondent highlights how while Adamstown was seen as a response to a sprawl-based approach to urban development, other challenges emerged:

> So what we thought, we'd have to beat that pattern [of sprawl], an economic and procurement development pattern and we thought we'd have to beat the argument about the semi-detached house and we thought we'd have to beat the economic argument and all of the three of them were one, and we were out with the traps when the big arc of Irish life, the twenty year boom and bust cycle hit us like a tsunami and we suddenly realised what we thought was hard in terms of the effort we'd all have to put into it over, like effectively fifteen years of development, is pretty much impossible. (Respondent A4, architect, local government, involved in Adamstown).

The relationship between Adamstown and the economic boom and subsequent bust are of significant importance. While the Adamstown SDZ was heralded for its plan-led approach, its ultimate frailty was the wider context in which it was being developed. Ultimately, the delivery of Adamstown was dependent on a fully functional housing and land market, which it was thought would enable the leveraging of key service provision. This scenario has continued to create challenges to the delivery of housing. This will be examined below.

The long-term impact of the economic crisis continues to have a profound impact on Ireland's built environment. While the ideals of sustainable communities have been clearly outlined in various documents over the last decade or so, the legacy of the last number of years places a significant burden on future pathways of delivery. Throughout the interviews about each of the case studies and during the discussions with stakeholders, it became clear that, once set in motion, the delivery of housing, in terms of its social and physical characteristics, produces a reality that, if not dealt with through strong policies, becomes reproduced over time. For many of the interviewees, and particularly those involved in Adamstown, there was a sense that the delivery of key services was essential to ensure that the future was not dominated by an unsustainable model of development. While Adamstown sets out to challenge the normalisation of sprawl-based urban development, there are a number of challenges to its delivery. Much of this revolves around perceptions of the various blockages to beginning development again. Moreover, interviewees also commented that without a strong commitment by Government to Adamstown and other strategic 'sustainable development' locations, there was a fear that the various actors—and particularly house builders—would simply choose where it was easier to build, with the ability to promote sustainable urban development further hampered. This would entail the piecemeal development of areas at the urban fringe, where it was deemed easier and cheaper to build. Throughout the interviews, various metaphors were used to describe this. These ranged from the notion of 'forest fire' spreading along the edge of the suburban fringe (Interview A4, architect, South Dublin County Council), to the description of water flowing to fill the voids. The perspective was that measures were needed to promote key strategic locations such as Adamstown:

> If you're not proactive, you know, the market will go round you. It's like water; it'll find its own course. If there's demand there it'll find its own course and it'll end up being in the wrong damn place. So, you either dig in and find a way to unravel those STZ problems or you can kiss your plan goodbye, sustainable communities, all that lovely stuff. (Respondent SH51, planner, central government)

There was therefore a fear that without a focus on processes that result in the delivery of sustainable urban communities, they are unlikely to become a reality. Much of the commentary revolved around perceptions of extra costs in promoting strategic sustainable areas, such as Adamstown. This was evident both in discussions at local and national level. It is therefore evident that the downturn in the economy and its long-term consequences has significant implications for the future of sustainable urban development in Ireland. The significance in relation to Adamstown will be returned to at a later point in this report.

While the challenges in terms of infrastructure delivery can be seen as dominant factors for Adamstown, the impact of the economic crisis and its aftermath also had an impact in terms of how the reality of social-mix policies have evolved in recent years. This will also be examined in detail below.

4.3   Focusing on Socially Mixed Communities: Six Key Issues

As is discussed in Chapter 2, one of the key elements of sustainable urban development is the promotion of socially mixed communities. In policy terms, this has been promoted through a mix of different tenure forms within developments. Each of the case studies assumed a different rate in terms of the original desired mix. In the case of Adamstown, the desired rate of social and affordable housing was 15 per cent (split roughly 7 per cent between social and affordable). In the case of the Docklands, the rate of mix was set at 20 per cent (split 10 per cent each between social and affordable), while, in the transformation of Fatima Mansions, the mix was determined by the number of pre-existing tenants prior to the redevelopment of the scheme. The original agreement in 2004 was for 150 social housing units, 70 affordable units and 395 private units. However, in the context of the economic crisis, and with particular reference to Adamstown and Fatima/Herberton, the scale of social housing has expanded. Moreover, respondents and stake holders commented on how social mix policies had evolved in other contexts outside the case studies examined in this research. It can be posited that what is reflected in the case studies points to a more general picture of the evolution of tenure mix in different contexts throughout the country.

There are a number of factors of direct relevance to the following discussion. The first, which emerged throughout the interviews, was the increased role of Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) in the management of social housing. Pointedly, AHBs are key actors within all three case-study locations and, in the context of taking on additional housing stock, their role has become intensified since the economic down turn. This has demonstrated the degree to which voluntary housing bodies have had to deal with the fall out of the economic crisis and have had to fill a void left by collapsed market-oriented projects. It also illustrates the degree to which they are growing in importance and stature, and can be seen as playing a positive part in the delivery of sustainable urban development ambitions in the coming years. While the role of AHBs remains relatively small (see NESC, 2014a; NESC, 2014b), government policy (DECLG, 2011) has been explicit about their future role in social housing provision.

This part of the report examines the evolution of social mix in recent years. It considers six themes:

- Rationale for social mix;

- Proximity of different tenure groups and visual representation;

- Proportions of social housing in terms of tenure mix;

- Management and role of AHBs;

- Fear and stigmatisation; and

- Tenant involvement in decision making.

4.3.1   Rationale for Social Mix

While the desire for social mix, in the Irish context largely driven through tenure mix, continues to be promoted, it became evident throughout this research that the reasons for pursuing it are not straight forward for those involved in its promotion. Indeed, it became clear that its promotion was based on a desire to avoid segregation—due to the negative impacts it has on society—rather than explicit knowledge or ideals of the positive factors that may emerge from social mix policies. It

avoids the perceived negative implications of isolation of different groups rather than a strong idea of positive implications of mixing social groups. This was summarised by a number of respondents. As commented by a representative of a housing association:

> But as well what I think was it seems to me what's crucial is that the first thing is that everybody agrees that ghettos don't work, so there's a universe residualisation against the large clusters of low income households basically that's a bad thing, so what you can say without any contradiction is if we are not if we are going to get rid of ghettos then that has to be mixed tenure communities and nothing else, you know that's the only way you can get rid of them and that has to be a good thing, so in one sense it's a bit of a false you don't have to worry too much about whether you can do research which shows that mixed tenure communities are better, so long as you got less ghettos, ghettos is the wrong word sorry but you know what I mean. (Respondent SH23, representative housing association)

In summarising the pursuit of social mix, another respondent commented:

> So it's not really too smart at any one point to produce a ghetto, whether it's a gilded ghetto of the rich or a very poor ghettoised degenerated space of the very poor. (SH3, housing expert, local government)

Another respondent suggested that while they had no strong evidence to support it, it was something that should be pursued.

> for a number of reasons one is that we have quite a… I suppose we would have a quite strong view about tenure mix and social mix as being something which is desirable. (SH21, representative of housing association)

There was therefore universal agreement, albeit sometimes implicit, that social mixing should be pursued. Discussion emerged around a number of key sub-themes, including particularities of proximity of different tenures, scale of social mix and day-to-day management.

3.3.2   Proximity of Tenures and Visual Representation

When discussing questions with regard to proximity of different tenures, respondents discussed the importance of context, both in the social and physical sense. As briefly outlined in the literature review, the role of different approaches to social mixing ranges between the distribution of social housing, amongst other tenures—'pepper-potting'—and the clustering of social housing as a core element of a development. However, the findings of this research show that there was no clear preference over whether the mix should be 'pepper-potted' or 'clustered'. Some involved in the delivery of social housing within the context of a socially mixed development found themselves torn between the pragmatics of everyday management and the ideals of mixing. While on one level the everyday maintenance within clustered social housing was deemed a positive outcome, they also perceived a desire for social tenants to mix with others as being a favourable outcome of the pepper-potting approach. Yet even these factors over-simplify the deliberations over such issues. In particular, two key factors emerged. The first is related to promoting social mix in already-established areas, while the second relates directly to the influence of the economic crisis in terms of social mix.

In the evolution of social mix in already-established communities, such as the Docklands and Fatima/Herberton, a number of key factors emerged. One of these can be summarised as the relationship between social mix and community representation. With particular reference to the

Docklands, the respondents commented on the importance of the established community having a voice in how the development would proceed. Of key importance was the notion of visibility in the location of housing. This was voiced by a number of respondents. A planner involved in the DDDA commented:

> For example, it was the ideas of the local representatives, [who] wanted to have the social housing at street level with own door access. You might notice in Docklands, there are apartment buildings, conventional apartment buildings with their own door access units and their duplex units and they wanted the people to be able to communicate with one another at street level as they had communicated maybe when they were younger in their neighbourhoods. (Respondent D2, planner, quasi-government body)

This explanation was expanded on by a community representative with the Docklands:

> [W]e are spreading out, because we always were a densely populated family community, even with the industry which is the norm for a port city, you have the people working side by side with where they worked. So when we looked at the block I said that looks very much like office blocks and the chief exec said well yeah well the office blocks will be coming up and then the people will be living inside looking at the water, I said no way, we want life on the street. (Respondent D6, community representative, Docklands)

The respondent continued by explaining the importance of the social units of Gallery Quay, facing Pearse Street:

> We want an expansion of our community and they asked us: 'but why would you want your people living on the street[?]' Because we all live on the street, we don't want a closed off complex that's isolated from us, we want it to be [there] which is what happened. (Respondent D6, community representative, Docklands)

Visual representation was of key importance in the relative location of social housing within the development of a mixed tenure block.

A similar viewpoint was found in relation to Fatima/Herberton. One respondent described the fears of the community as follows:

> I remember someone saying, 'There you go, them f#@$ing poshies, they're getting all the … they're putting all the best housing at the front and they're fucking us at the back.' And I remember people feeling really strong about that, and sure it wasn't, sure we had our own planners in who were very clear, no. From density in terms of the gradual heights, light, traffic, play area for children, that was the best location for the site, not at the front where the Luas was, and where the traffic would was. (Respondent F1, community representative, Fatima/Herberton)

In this example, the location of social housing was based on the advice of professionals with whom the established community had engaged. Of key significance, however, is the engagement of an established community in articulating the relative location of their housing.

Another factor in selecting a location within a socially mixed area is being close to established networks. For example, in discussing an earlier piece of research about Fatima Mansions, one respondent commented:

> Mary Corcoran's analysis was that people in social housing prefer to be beside people in social housing in terms of this indigenous community. Like people want to be beside their neighbours. (Interview F1, community representative, Fatima/Herberton)

Others described the need to ensure tenants were happy to continue living near former neighbours or family members. It could be posited that the social stigma can be reduced through the ability of social housing tenants to feel pride in their home rather than being 'hidden' out of sight. For those responsible for day-to-day management issues, a key factor in relative location was based on the desire to avoid tensions between different people and groups. This was summarised by one respondent:

> Again if you had families of different cultural backgrounds or from different nationalities I would also try and introduce them in there. Sometimes you would have people in their interview and they would say, 'Oh yeah my sister actually lives in Block A already' and you would immediately say, 'And how do you get on?' you know, and I would openly say, 'Would it be a problem if I put you next door to her?' Sometimes they would say, 'Oh no I really want to live next door' or 'Sometimes they would say, 'Yes put me as far away as possible' so you know that from the start so you can't, it's great, it's great yeah you are avoiding problems in the future. There is no way I'm going to put two rowing sisters beside each other! (Respondent F3, representative of housing association, Fatima/Herberton)

Management emerged as a dominant theme throughout the interviews. From a broader perspective, another dominant factor was the question of management and the perception of the suitability of mix within the context of different developments. This will be explored further below.

4.3.3 Proportion of Social Housing

The economic crisis had significant implications for the scale at which social mixing takes place. The tendency within official practice of social mix within the past decade was to aim for a target of 20 per cent social and affordable housing. Broadly speaking, this could be broken down to approximately 10 per cent social and 10 per cent affordable provision. This was to be achieved either through Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act, or, as was the case in the Docklands, which preceded the act, through more locally based deliberations. The period since the economic downturn has witnessed a significant shift in the reality of such percentages, with a significant amount of vacant units being rented by a developer or taken over by AHBs. This was summarized by one of the key stakeholders:

> Say Government legislation had it down as 20 for social and affordable, now it depended on the local authority area as to what we got, some would kind of say 5 per cent, some 10 per cent, some as much as 15 per cent but it was never more than 20 per cent and most likely a lot less than that as part of an overall development. Recently with the downturn in economy we are seeing that because they couldn't sell the unsold affordables… [T]here's other developers out there who wanted to sell units and they couldn't sell them and there was an opportunity you kind of say yeah as much as 50 per cent. (Specialist in Social Housing, Central Government)

It can therefore be seen that the scale at which social mixing has taken place in recent years has been dependent upon a set of largely unpredictable factors. One upshots of this is that many involved in the provision of social housing commented on the changes in relative numbers of social housing units. This differed depending upon the particular context. In another example, in certain scenarios the arrival of new tenants through housing associations was met with relief due to the

high levels of vacancy within a development or a block. Other respondents described a more critical response from private owners. Such responses picked up on particular fears of owner-occupiers or market renters in terms of the impact social housing tenants might have on a location. This will be returned to at a later point in this report. Importantly, what also emerged was a lack of guiding principles about the scale of mix. In general, it was something that had to be allowed to evolve depending on the particular circumstances:

> Well I suppose if you think about things in terms of how we provide housing or how we have provided housing over that period; it's been largely through the private rental sectors through leasing and through renting. There's very little build. So you tend to get a natural mixing and a better tenure mix but you still have to watch it and you still have to manage it. For example, like through the NAMA process where NAMA would have provided units that belong to their debtors or receivers for social housing. Either they were purchased or they were leased for social housing. You could be getting like a block, an entire block of, you know, say if there were four blocks in an apartment complex you might be getting one whole block for social housing so you'd have to manage that and we have kind of, you know, retained those sustainable communities principles in how we manage the… the way we access those kinds of units. (Respondent, SH53, specialist in social housing, central government)

The economic crisis of 2007/2008 has thus led to considerable challenges to the reality of such developments. With predominant relevance to Adamstown and Fatima/Herberton, the impact has been a significant shift in the type of tenure mix that has become the reality. While there are certain ideals as to scales of mix—20 per cent seems to be norm in Ireland—the reality is very different in a sizable amount of developments. This is not without its significance in terms of the management and delivery of housing. This was succinctly captured by a social housing policy maker with DECLG:

> As long as it is properly considered actually, I suppose is the only line there—that it has to be properly considered and that the body involved are happy that they can manage it in a sustainable way, but that comes down to the proportion of social housing again. (Respondent SH53, specialist in social housing, central government)

There was a feeling that the proportion of a development that was social housing was becoming less important, with questions of management taking on an increased role. The following section examines this topic in greater detail.

4.3.4   Management and Role of Approved Housing Bodies

The role of management emerged as a key element of the interviews. This section discusses the structures of management and the impact of the economic downturn. It also focuses on housing associations, which emerged as becoming increasingly important.

The financial crisis has had significant implications for day-to-day management of socially mixed developments. Some of these are more macro in focus, and point to the difficulties in achieving investment from large-scale market players to ensure a balanced delivery across a development. While each of the developments were originally to be managed by private management companies via management fees, the economic crisis meant a significant reduction in the amount of funds now available. This was of considerable frustration for those involved in management of the different locations. For example, a community representative involved in the regeneration of Fatima/Herberton commented on how the private management had come under pressure

> because some people are paying, some are not and that's at the detriment of the estate. And I think that's where it's very vulnerable. Because as you can imagine, all the retail space, that was all factored in the costings, so he was going to let a big unit to Tesco, so he was banking on … probably from that big unit seventy to a hundred grand a year, service charges, to service the whole building, the fix the place, to fix repairs, damage … (Interview F1, community representative, Fatima/Herberton)

However, as is evident from the current context, the vast majority of the larger retail units are vacant, thus management fees have come under significant pressure in recent years.

As the same respondent goes on to outline, with the lack of funds materialising in this manner, combined with a reduction in management fees due to the down turn in apartment sales had significant impacts. For example, there is a continued disagreement over the rent payable from the F2 Centre to the management company. The issue of management structures was also highlighted by representatives of housing associations. In this case, there was a general concern, beyond the case studies. Much of this concerned the perception of the implications for housing associations in a scenario where landlords don't pay services charges:

> if we don't pay the management charges and the standards go down, we won't be able to let [the properties], we won't get the rent income, whereas a private individual owner they might be if you like in an apartment waiting to move on, so that they haven't got the same long term commitment to the building and sustaining the apartment block … . Often a lot of managing agents will tell you that often you know that only service charge debts are only settled on sale because the sale can't complete unless people pay all their arrears or service charge, so you know and that needs to change you know management companies need to be resourced. (Interview SH1, director, housing association)

This perspective was supported by a representative of a private management company who discussed how far housing associations could ensure high standards. The same respondent noted how housing associations could play a strong role in pressuring developers to repair problems with a housing development. This reflected more general comments on the strong role of housing associations in the general upkeep of a development.

The role of the housing associations in management was thus seen as having growing significance. Norris and O'Connell (2014) have outlined what they refer to as indifference or hostility from social housing tenants towards the local authority. However, from the interviews with representatives from different housing associations, it became clear that their role was a form of 'buffer' between the local authority and tenants. As well as the core features of routine management, the experiences of those working for particular housing associations became of key importance for understanding future challenges of sustainable urban development. In this regard, another key factor to emerge was the degree to which long-term tenants can engage with the management of their block or estate. This was particularly marked in the case of apartments. The role of owners on management boards of apartment blocks leaves both market renters and social housing tenants uncertain of their ability to engage in discussions about management. While, in the example of Gallery Quay Apartments, the responsible management company was enthusiastic to engage all residents, they also commented on how they were restricted by the existing structures of management boards. In this case, a compromise of allowing housing associations (as the representative owner) to sit on this board was suggested. However, as a representative of one housing association commented:

> They're on an open ended tenancy agreement, that's their life, they live there, they want to make roots there and it's them that live there. We don't live there, they pay service charges. (Interview D4, representative of housing association, Docklands)

The extent to which social housing tenants can engage with management structures was therefore seen as of key importance for the future viability of socially mixed developments.

4.3.5   Fears, Stigmatisation and Social Order

Stigma, perception of an area and anti-social behaviour emerged as of significant importance in the research.

A key element of social mixing is the perception that it leads to a reduction in anti-social behaviour. For example, discussions revolving around Fatima/Herberton pointed to questions of anti-social behaviour.   As has been detailed in previous research (Norris & O'Connell, 2014; Hearne & Redmond, 2014), there have been questions around the success or otherwise of the social mix policies in the redeveloped Herberton. In the example of Fatima/Herberton, respondents discussed the continued challenges of drugs and associated activities. Here the impact of the economic downturn emerges in stark reality. Respondents demonstrated the social implications of empty apartments and under occupied apartment blocks. The physical evidence was demonstrated through the retrofitting of 'prison doors' and the blocking off of empty spaces such as areas under stair cases. However, those involved in running Fatima/Herberton emphasised the impact of the economic downturn on these social challenges.   One respondent involved directly in Fatima/Herberton commented:

> The minute the recession hit, it was like overnight people lost jobs, the building sites finished up, but the problem was then that that young lads couldn't get jobs on any other building site anywhere else in the city, so you literally went from one day to the next to again open dealings in front of you on the street, to back in to the kind of, over a short space of time, a complete regression back to what it was like before. Because the economic part wasn't sustainable, and that's something that the whole country hasn't gotten right. (Interview F2, community representative, Fatima/Herberton)

The consequences of the economic downturn for the regeneration of Fatima can be seen as two-pronged challenge. The regeneration programme slowed down, leaving a high degree of vacancy. Meanwhile, the social consequences were becoming manifest in a resurgent drugs problem in the area. This became visible in how various spaces left over from the economic crisis were used. These could include empty apartments, hallways, areas under staircases, and other even more hidden areas.

Another related challenge was the stigmatisation of social housing. As discussed earlier, a primary aim of social mix is to reduce stigmatisation. In the context of housing associations taking up empty units, many respondents commented on the fears expressed by owner-occupiers and market renters about increased numbers of social housing tenants.   As well as causing problems in attitudes, housing associations commented on how there were often assumptions that different problems, such as damage to communal areas, were automatically perceived to be the responsibility of social housing tenants.   While this was a dominant feature of the interviews, there was also a certain amount of discussion about the extent to which the mix of social groups should not be seen purely as correlating with the difference between market and social housing. For example, one respondent involved in the management of Gallery Quay Apartments commented in reference to a socially mixed block:

We have seen worse things happen in private housing tenants than we have in social housing tenants and that's a fact. If you look at the amount of complaint letters in relation to noise, parties, anyone causing a nuisance or a breach of rules onsite more have gone to the non, to the private housing sector than to the social housing sector and that is a fact. That wouldn't even be because there is less social housing units than there is, the ratio for example is 70:30. I haven't actually had to write a letter I don't think to [social housing] tenants this year. (Interview D5, housing manager, Docklands)

Such a perspective demonstrates the need for nuance when discussing issues of anti-social behavior in socially mixed areas. While this was not explored in detail during this research, it is still of significance in the overall framing of social issues in promoting sustainable urban communities.

Image 5: Vacant Units, Fatima/Herberton

Image 6: Reinforced Doors, Fatima/Herberton

4.3.6   Tenant Involvement in Decision Making

In terms of the future evolution of socially mixed areas, another element to emerge, particularly from those involved in management, was the importance of their involvement from the outset in contributing to the design and layout of socially mixed developments. Moreover, some of the discussion of these aspects of the delivery of housing touched upon conflicts over the use of space. As highlighted by one respondent:

> if we are involved at a design stage so we can have input into the how space is used, play facilities for children, that kind of thing, then that can have a huge impact on the quality of the life of people of the social tenants because they are going to have more children and it's also things like amenities which are more difficult to plan for, but I would say that if we are able to have a really working relationship with the developer at a pre-planning stage, at a design stage then the chance of success are massively increased … (Interview SH24, policy advisor, housing association)

This perspective indicates the need for interaction on a number of elements in the pre-development phase that are deemed to impact on the experience of a particular development when it is occupied. One of the mitigating factors in recent years relates to management agencies' inability to involve themselves at the design phase. From the interviews, it became clear that another significant factor was the manner of delivery of social housing in recent years. Given the degree to which housing associations were retrospectively taking on buildings originally designated for either owner-occupancy or market-rental, there were a limitations to which the design suited the use by social housing tenants, predominantly related to family living. This points to a number of elements. First, the difficulty of design in terms of the end user. While architects are to some extent aware of the end use of a location, there were limits to this. However, there was some potential to understand further potentials from this perspective. For example, one respondent involved in the Gallery Quay development commented on how the playground was of key importance for integration between the different groups. The promotion of good-quality social spaces within such developments is important for promoting social interaction.

4.4   Further Work

Detailed urban studies research suggests that exploration of the everyday experiences of sustainably developing and inhabiting urban spaces can provide insights that enrich policy development and support implementation, and could be extended to help address other policy challenges that go beyond the research presented here.

This research has examined key ideals of sustainable urban communities but there remains scope for future work. The case studies point to the diversity of engagement with approaches labelled as 'sustainable'. As was touched upon throughout the interviews, questions remain about different locations not considered in this report. For example, while the three areas discussed have gained a significant amount of attention in the media and through wider policy attention, the discussion of sustainable urban development must incorporate a vast array of approaches and modes of delivery. These might include the examination of sites developed in recent years that have not employed the same official notions of sustainable urban development, but which have been met with social and economic challenges. Moreover, this research has not engaged with residents of the different locations under analysis. This is a significant short coming that future research should address.

One key factor is education, in particular, the role of schools and related educational. In the case of Fatima/Herberton, the discussion centred predominantly on giving key educational supports to

young people who experience high of high levels of deprivation. This included, for example, enhancing connections between community homework clubs and schools. While the key focus was on the promotion of literacy levels, it also enabled stronger links to be established between community workers and teachers. .

With Adamstown, the focus on education was primarily based around ensuring that schools were delivered as part of the regeneration project. However, albeit tentatively, there were also questions about how schools were used by residents of Adamstown. This highlighted the need for future work to be done on the relationship between sustainable communities and school selection, raising questions about social selectivity and the development of inclusive urban communities. Overall, there is significant potential to include the role of education within analysis of sustainable urban communities.

Finally, further research could examine additional dimensions to the promotion of sustainable urban communities. This could include an analysis of the relationship between social mix policies and different approaches to the future supply of social housing, including the Housing Assistance Scheme (HAP), tenant purchase and cost rental. There is also a need to examine the more challenging elements of housing and neighbourhood experience, such as anti-social behaviour.

5. Key Lessons for Policy

5.1 Introduction

This report discusses the challenges of promoting sustainable urban communities during period of economic boom and subsequent bust. While the wider ideals of sustainable urban development could be identified in each of the case studies, the economic downturn has significant implications for their evolution.

The research supports three lessons that should be taken into consideration by policy makers as they seek to reinvigorates the supply of new housing.

First, the research reinforces the importance of the wider housing policy and land supply context. The cases studies carried out at Adamstown and Dublin Docklands bring into sharp relief the degree to which sustainable urban communities are dependent on settled and coherent housing policy, and on active land management and supply. This is discussed in greater detail in NESC's report on active housing supply and land management (NESC 2015b).

Second, it highlights housing management as a critical factor in terms of the basic processes required to support social mix and as a determining factor in the optimal social mix.

Third, it reinforces the importance of wider economic and social policy and conditions. The Fatima/Herberton case study shows that urban development is not sustainable without supporting economic and social policy addressing employment and the wider life chances of families and individuals. Directly related, the research confirms that the focus on design and related factors such as density is important. However, it also demonstrates that a focus on physical layout and design alone is insufficient. These factors must be embedded in the wider context of social inclusion and more pragmatic factors such as housing delivery, management and wider social policy.

Before considering these three lessons, it is important to reiterate that without significant efforts to promote the development of sustainable urban communities, it is unlikely that they will emerge. To put it more strongly, a similarly fragmented reality is likely to emerge within the development of urban and suburban areas as has pervaded throughout the last two decades.

The case studies strongly confirm the need for an active public approach of the kind recently outlined by NESC in its work on housing supply and land management (*ibid.*). This includes use of public capabilities and assets, such as strategic NAMA land, to lead the resumption of housing development with a focus on affordability and quality mixed-income urban development; sustained in-depth exploration of why the costs of housing provision and construction in Ireland make it so difficult to provide affordable and quality housing of the right kind in the right locations, supported by social infrastructure; and drawing on the learning from these actions to address any remaining institutional fracture or organisational gaps in the areas of housing, planning and infrastructure, and urban development.

5.1.1 Sustainable Urban Communities and Wider Housing Policy and Land Management

The research confirms that promoting sustainable urban communities is a distinct issue requires attention in its own right. For example, experience shows that this promotion depends on appropriate approaches to housing management as well as design.

However, the development of sustainable urban communities is closely related to the overall challenge of healthy housing supply and, through that, to the factors that shape housing supply, including land and land management. It is not a coincidence that several of the serious efforts to achieve sustainable approaches to urban development occurred where there were distinctive approaches to land management and planning, such as the Docklands and Adamstown.

There are good reasons to believe that encouraging the emergence of sustainable urban communities will require active land management. In other words, the challenge of promoting sustainable urban communities is closely tied up with that of achieving a healthy supply of housing available to a spectrum of households at different income levels (*ibid*.). Consequently, effective policies are needed on several fronts:

     i.   Sustainability and social mix as a strong overall focus;

     ii.   Housing policies capable of ensuring affordable cost rental and homeownership;

     iii.   Active land management that not only ensures overall supply, but reflects (i) and (ii).

Indeed, as Chapter 4 showed, without all three in place, the sustainable and social mix goals tend to be side lined and policy becomes incoherent. It can be argued that current policy illustrates this. On the one hand, Part V has been revised downwards from 20 to 10 per cent, reflecting the anxiety of central government about housing supply. The context is one that generates an apparent trade-off between the goals of housing supply and social mix. On the other hand, key actors at another level, the local authorities, bring strong views on social mix and neighbourhood effects to bear in their decision making. Only when a coherent housing and land management policy is in place will it be possible to get beyond these trade-offs. Indeed, as will be discussed in this chapter, the promotion of sustainable urban communities—and particularly the promotion of social mix—is also directly connected to a number of current elements of government policy, including the *Social Housing Strategy 2020* (DECLG, 2014) and Housing Assistance Scheme (HAP).

Challenge of Delivering Sustainable Urban Communities

The research shows a contradictory scenario in terms of achieving sustainable urban communities. There appears to be a strong sense within official discourse of the importance of joined-up thinking and of incorporating the various dimensions of sustainability; in reality, as discussed with particular reference to Adamstown, macro-considerations, such as the costs of the overall development, can over ride such considerations and make the tenets of sustainability difficult to achieve. This was a point made by an interviewee with direct involvement in urban planning, who felt it was important to look at the overall cost of developing sustainable urban communities. It would appear that the fragmented nature of urban development of the last number of decades—particularly that related to urban sprawl—has set in motion a model whereby societal norms of separation become embedded and reproduced through that very fragmentation. The challenges facing strategic locations such as Adamstown can be related to a lack of upfront delivery of key infrastructure and services around which communities can evolve. This presents challenges to the delivery of sustainable approaches to urban development. From a more fundamental perspective, the impact of the economic boom and bust brings into question the degree to which key ideals of sustainable communities can actually be delivered through the imbedded approaches to urban development in Ireland. Future approaches might therefore seek to question the extent to which these ideals can be achieved as private forms of delivery and control. The severe challenges of the current period highlight the need for state involvement, with a focus on ensuring an appropriate supply of serviced land, delivery of key services and a balanced approach to development (*ibid*.).

Nevertheless, the private sector will continue to play a significant role in urban development, and seeking to promote sustainable outcomes involves direct engagement with this set of actors. With particular reference to Adamstown, questions arise as to how essential infrastructures and related services are delivered. While in the case of Adamstown there is an expectation that services will be delivered through development levies, there remains scope for some form of state involvement. This idea was promoted by a number of respondents in the interviews. Yet questions arise about the feasibility of this, in the context of current frameworks of delivery. In practical terms, it would entail the State investing in services on privately owned land, which may, in reality, pose significant challenges. However, if government policy is committed to the delivery of sustainable communities in strategic locations, it must ensure that it supports the factors that ensure their delivery. The development of sustainable urban communities can often incorporate elements that seem taken for granted. These might include public spaces that are openly public and managed by public bodies, and other services such as libraries. While sustainable urban development is also reliant on private sector investment, for example, shops, restaurants and other services, a strong public identity must be created at the centre of new urban communities.

5.2   Housing Management

The research highlights key issues in day-to-day management of socially mixed areas. It emerged from the interviews that the present scenario in Ireland is strongly biased towards owner-occupation. While that is likely to remain the dominant tenure, recent research on housing provision by NESC (2014a, 2015a) points to a need for a more rounded discussion on the realities of housing in Ireland. When combined with the associated increase in the role of housing associations, there is even greater scope for debates about social mix to shift to a more tenure-inclusive management approach, particularly within multi-unit developments. Of key importance here is the promotion of measures that foster social engagement and inclusion in decision making within socially mixed housing. While current structures mitigate against this, it appeared throughout the research that the remit of housing associations could perhaps be expanded to ensure that social housing residents engage in decision making about where they live. The promotion of social inclusion is a key element in developing sustainable urban communities, yet there are severe short-comings in the current reality. It is evident from the research that this scenario needs to be questioned and altered significantly. The means by which this can be achieved, however, is still open to debate and is already being discussed (NESC, 2014c).

Optimal Mix

The question of the relative proportion of different tenures is raised throughout this report. Predominantly, the findings demonstrate that there is a focus on the proportion of a particular development that should be social housing. In the context of the Planning Number 1 Bill, 2014, discussions have focused on a rate of 10 per cent social housing to be included within developments. However, given the rate of social housing to be developed in the coming years, it would appear that the percentage of social housing has the potential to be higher. This follows directly from the Government's emphasis that the housing needs of between a quarter and one-third of the population will not be met by market provision (DECLG, 2014: 14). It would appear, from previous work and this research, that there is need for a greater amount of discussion as to the optimal mix of different tenures.

Furthermore, attention needs to be given to the relationship between tenure and social mix. While it is implied within policy that social mix is achieved through tenure mix, the dynamics of mixing between different social groups goes beyond this division. Indeed, social mixing at the

neighbourhood scale is also dependent on the presence of different social groups within social housing, owner-occupied housing, and market-rental housing. Deliberations over the promotion of social mix thus need to ensure that such factors are clear, with emphasis being shifted from tenure to factors such as income mix, with an inclusion of different ethnic groups as a priority.

5.3   Sustainable Urban Development and Economic and Social Context

There is a tendency to look at issues as neighbourhood problems rather than problems that become manifest in a neighbourhood, but that have far-flung causes. A good example is the strong influence of labour market opportunities, and their disappearance, on the social mix situation in Fatima/Herberton. Similarly, there is a need to expand the scale of policy formulation to include a multitude of policy levers and scales. Promoting sustainable housing as part of wider sustainable urban communities entails an approach that is multi-scalar in approach, where there is an awareness of how different elements come together to form part of a cohesive policy. This was continually highlighted throughout this research and entail, for example, ensuring that wider policy measures are in place for schooling and employment opportunities (see Tosics, 2004).

Notwithstanding the importance of the normal tenets of sustainability, such as walkable higher-density neighbourhoods, there is a need to open up the examination of sustainable neighbourhoods to engage more thoroughly with a wide set of processes that shape urban and suburban neighbourhoods. This would include an analysis of the relationship between the neighbourhood scale and factors such as employment, wider economic dimensions and education. In short, policy needs to examine the means by which all of the factors essential to everyday life can be promoted. To expand the scale of engagement beyond the focus of this research, policy must be mindful of the wider dimensions of sustainable urban communities.

As has been documented within this report, there is complexity in promoting sustainable urban communities. Outside the case studies discussed, with some exceptions, the last number of decades have produced a fragmented urban landscape, both in physical and spatial terms. Urban discourse often focuses on two particular tropes. One is that of housing estates lacking in key facilities. These locations are now, however, home to a substantial population and are places where people have made connections and live their lives. At levels that often go beyond official ideals, there are elements within them that contain other important dimensions of sustainability, such as social cohesion and community engagement. The principles of sustainable communities must incorporate a variety of urban and suburban areas into its capacity. The promotion of sustainable urban communities in already existing urban and suburban locations is therefore not just a matter of retro-fitting infrastructural elements, but ensuring that a cohesive framework is developed for incorporation into various aspects of daily life. The relative prosperity of these areas is important in framing such discussions, and while not discussed here, the economic and tenure factors are key indicators of relative sustainability. Emphasis on sustainable communities should not only seek to focus on the development of new areas, but also seek to deliberate on how those established areas are incorporated into a wider framework. It is crucial that areas of relative prosperity and those that suffer from social and economic challenges are incorporated.

A second trope of sustainable urban communities is that of the 'urban village'. While it is understandable to look to ideals inherited from Victorian and Edwardian 'urban villages' as containing the virtues associated with sustainable communities, there is a danger that important indicators, such as relative wealth, a mix of tenures, and affordability, are ignored. The socio-economic structure of urban areas is thus important in dictating the reality of lived experiences within the city. When viewed in a more holistic manner, it is essential that urban neighbourhoods

be understood in the context of their wider surroundings, ranging from more localised relations to their relationship to the wider urban region. While a higher-density urban or suburban location may give indications of sustainability, it may also be dominated by one particular social group at the expense of others.

As has been evident in each case study, the tenets of sustainable urban communities are influenced by a set of urban principles that have design as a central feature (NESC, 2004; DEHLG, 2007a, 2007b). This includes the desire for factors such as permeability, higher densities, and mixed use. Notwithstanding the importance of these design-related principles, the research has also pointed to the importance of a set of processes that reach beyond such principles. As discussed in this chapter, this ranges from macro factors related to delivery of housing to everyday management of mixed tenure developments. The incorporation of principles of good design and planning must also ensure that the promotion of sustainable urban communities does not become dominated by a set of principles that are deemed adequately provided for through the delivery of particular urban layouts or urban forms. Instead, the promotion of sustainable urban communities must prioritise factors such as strong mixed-income supply, social inclusion and equity in housing. There is a need for such fundamental elements to be prioritised with the aforementioned principals of sustainable urban communities, and for the various elements to be promoted in a manner that becomes self-reinforcing.

In shifting the lens of enquiry beyond the scope of the research presented here, ensuring that the ideals of sustainable urban communities are promoted in a more socially balanced and equitable manner remains a key challenge of future engagement with the built environment. The current regeneration of city-centre areas offers hope for a better urban future. Yet while reinvestment in dilapidated parts of cities should be welcomed, the degree to which such cycles of reinvestment are inclusive of existing populations must be questioned. That the dominant means of urban regeneration is reliant on a model of large-scale disinvestment followed by wholesale reinvestment is questionable from a sustainability perspective. It becomes necessary to look for an alternative means of urban transformation that is less extreme in its impact on people's lives in urban areas. This requires focusing on the processes and modes of delivery of urban change as well as on the spatial and visual dynamics of planning and design.

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