



Improving the quality of life in Large Urban Distressed Areas

Craigmillar, Edinburgh, UK

E-Compendium: Good Practice Case Studies



Introduction

The purpose of the e-compendium case studies is to provide information about the experiences of large urban distressed areas in Europe. All of the case studies are linked to the LUDA project, either as partner cities or as reference cities. This case study focuses on Craigmillar in Edinburgh. Edinburgh is one of the six partner cities in the LUDA project, and Craigmillar is a large area which is undergoing regeneration and renewal.

This case study gives a brief outline of the area's history; the challenges it faces and the potential it has for redevelopment. The case study then discusses the current approach to regeneration in Craigmillar, and gives a detailed account of one part of the process. In this case, this focuses on the preparation of the area's community development framework.

The e-compendium is designed to be used online. The text includes interactive links which allow you to move around the document, to link to other handbooks, or to open websites. Links are shown as **coloured text**. You can also find the links by looking for icons in the page margins, as shown here.



If you prefer to read this handbook like a normal book, then you can print it out. Please note that all of the handbooks are designed for double-sided printing.

Acknowledgements

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Overview	5
2. History & Background	5
3. Challenge	6
4. Potential	6
5. Approach	7
6. Tools & Methods	7
7. Innovation	10
8. Results	10
9. Further Information & Links	11



Traditional tenement housing, partially demolished. Photo: Adrian Welch
www.edinburgharchitecture.co.uk

I. Overview

Craigmillar is a large housing estate located on the south-eastern periphery of Edinburgh, approximately 5km from the city centre. It covers 6.9 km² and is home to around 7100 people. The area was first developed in the 1920s, and was developed further in the 1960s when high rise, mono-block style social housing was constructed. Today the area is one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. A community-led regeneration process is currently developing 'a new heart' for Craigmillar.

2. History and background

Craigmillar is a deprived community within Edinburgh. The area was first built in 1929 and grew because it was close to jobs in local coal mines and breweries. With the loss of the mines and the closure of the breweries during the late 1960s and the 1970s, the area soon had growing rates of unemployment. Other problems soon followed—for example: drugs misuse; rising crime rates and poor education. The environment also suffered and houses were not properly cared for or maintained. In addition, problem families from other parts of the city were re-located to Craigmillar, and the area's reputation declined. Recent government statistics show that Craigmillar is the fourth most deprived area in Scotland (fourth out of 1,222 areas).

Craigmillar is geographically disconnected from the rest of the city, separated not only by distance, but also by topography. Arthur's Seat—a large hill, and one of the most famous landmarks in Edinburgh - separates Craigmillar from the city centre, forming a visual and psychological barrier. Economically, the area is not doing well. In Craigmillar, the average annual income per household is £10,500, well below the Scottish average (£20,000 per year) and the Edinburgh average (£30,000 per year). The economic problems of the area have a significant

social impact and can be linked to: poor educational aspiration and attainment; indifference to work; and, the general social malaise that comes from not having paid work.

3. The Challenge

The challenges faced by Craigmillar are significant. The area is large, most of the homes there are owned by the public sector (social housing), and there are relatively few employment opportunities within the Craigmillar itself. The scale of the problem has acted as a catalyst for community-led urban regeneration. The result is that stakeholders are collaborating with one another in a variety of ways. This includes: tackling urban distress; consensus building; and, taking development proposals forward. This process has been supported by the following:

- A major consultation process about the regeneration of Craigmillar.
- An extensive public participation exercise, involving community meetings, workshops, definitional studies, scoping exercises and agreements on how to regenerate and to consider the development options available.
- The development of a community forum to represent community views and opinions about the development options available.

These exercises took place between 1998 and 2001. The process culminated in the publication of the Craigmillar Development Framework (CDF) in 2001. The framework states:

'Whilst it is now accepted that physical regeneration is insufficient in itself to achieve sustainability, the linked social ingredients needed to revitalise communities are often difficult to pinpoint. Putting new heart into the community is often used in this context to describe measures which are capable of delivering sustainable regeneration' (CDF, 2001: 29)

The CDF says that there is currently no heart to Craigmillar, the area is disconnected from other places, it is excluded from other developments and under-represented in terms of employment opportunities, health, education and housing. Despite these weaknesses the framework states that there are opportunities to develop a new heart for Craigmillar. In order to do this, the CDF sets out what the stakeholders need to do to tackle urban distress and secure the regeneration of their area. This provides a platform upon which to build a programme of actions. The programme sets out what needs to be done, by whom and when. The programme also provides an opportunity to monitor the impact of the development and evaluate the effects of the regeneration on the community.

4. Potential

The Craigmillar area has considerable potential. Edinburgh is a buoyant city, and there is continued demand for new housing in the capital, although there is little available development land. Craigmillar has the space to deliver new housing to meet this need. New developments near to Craigmillar have also changed the employment context by creating many thousands of new jobs. The relocation of the main city hospital close to Craigmillar will bring around 12000 new jobs to the area once the associated medi-park is completed. The area is also benefiting

from new retail developments, again bringing new job opportunities to this part of Edinburgh. Taking advantage of these opportunities will help Craigmillar to grow and diversify, attracting new residents, increasing the social mix, and linking the community to local employment.



A fine Art Deco school building in Craigmillar. The building is now used as a business centre, occupied by a range of small firms. The architectural value of the building means that it cannot be demolished, although it is costly to maintain and its future is in doubt.

Photo: Adrian Welch, www.edinburgharchitecture.co.uk

5. Approach

Following a SWOT analysis to describe the distress in Craigmillar, the next stage was to develop a vision of the 'new heart'. Stakeholders with a long term commitment to the area participated in a process of generating future scenarios for Craigmillar. Each scenario describes a slightly different future and involves different development options. In order to achieve sustainability in the regeneration programme, a sustainability assessment was carried out for each scenario. This meant that sustainability was taken into account when choosing the preferred development scenario.

6. Tools & Methods

The vision

The vision for Craigmillar is of a place with a new heart. The heart is intended to create a strong focus for community life and contribute to a sense of place. Here, life long learning is seen as the basis for a strong local economy—training people and helping people develop skills throughout their lives. Young people are also supported through services that promote wider access and mobility, and which offer a mixture of housing opportunities.

The scenarios, development options and evaluation

The scenarios for the new heart for Craigmillar are as follows;

- To allow market forces to drive the vision;
- To decentralise service provision from the city to the community and adopt a neighbourhood strategy to distribute them;
- To concentrate development on a given area, link neighbourhood together and connect them together as a district of Edinburgh; or
- To develop Craigmillar as a satellite town.

These scenarios were developed into a series of development options. Once they had been finalised, these options were evaluated using the following criteria:

- the links made with the community;
- the proximity of the services developed/proposed;
- the impact on the profile of the community and Craigmillar's external image;
- cost;
- contribution to long-term regeneration of the community.

The results of the evaluation are set out in Table 1 [below]. The evaluation uses a nominal scoring system which awards 1 point for a negative impact, 5 points for a neutral impact and 10 for a positive impact. All of the criteria are equally weighted. Once the scores were agreed, a matrix was used to compare the results.

The 'market forces' scenario had the lowest score with 20 (equal to 40%), while the 'concentration' scenario received the highest score of 35 (70%). The concentration scenario was thus the preferred development option for Craigmillar. The benefit of this option comes from the emphasis on maximising links, raising Craigmillar's profile, and adding value to the regeneration process. For these three criteria, the concentration scenario was awarded the maximum score.

Table 1: Development Option Evaluation Scores

The preferred development option

	LINKS	PROXIMITY	PROFILE	COST	CONTRIBUTION	Total Score (max = 50)
MARKET	5	3	1	10	1	20
DISPERSAL	4	8	5	7	3	27
CONCENTRA-TION	10	3	10	2	10	35
SATELLITE	7	7	6	2	7	29
Total Score (max = 40)	26	21	22	21	21	

The 'concentration scenario' was adopted as the preferred development option for Craigmillar. The reason is not only because this has the highest score in the evaluation exercise, but because it provides an opportunity to re-connect Craigmillar to the city.

The Urban Design Framework

An urban design framework for Craigmillar was completed in 2004. It tries to advance the theme of social inclusion set out in the development framework, transforming it from a two dimensional vision into a three dimensional one. The Urban Design Framework (2004:14) states:

‘the vision for Craigmillar’s future puts good design – urban, landscape, architecture and its sustainability – at its core. Furthermore, what also emerges is what lies at the heart of the vision and what represents its core value is ‘liveability’. Or, ‘the creation of an ordinary decent place to live – well planned – requiring good design practice, able to adapt to social change’.

These design principles are set out under five main headings:

- *Distinctiveness*: creating Craigmillar as a place in its own right
- *Sociability*; making Craigmillar a place where interaction is easy and natural
- *People-oriented*: designing a place which is of a human-scale and gives people priority
- *Sustainable*: a development that minimises land-take, resource consumption and impact on the environment.
- *Quality*: high quality urban design, landscape, architecture, layout and settlement pattern.

Although these principles are listed individually, the framework makes it clear that they are inter-linked and connected in every way. Holistic thinking means that each element is considered alongside the others as part of an internal whole.

The design concept for the regeneration of Craimillar is set out in Figure 1. As can be seen, the new heart for Craigmillar is represented as the ‘community core’, with a town centre and 3 neighbourhoods supported by local centres.

A distinctive, sociable and people-orientated development

The design concept generates what is referred to as: ‘a *distinctive, sociable and people-orientated development*’. It will be achieved through a 15 year investment programme which is expected to create:

- a community of approximately 15,000 people
- 3,600 houses,
- 4 new schools,
- 300,000 square feet of office, retail and leisure space,
- new informal public park and formal open spaces
- new library
- new complementary leisure and sports provisions
- new transport provision including a tram line, bus and rail links
- proper facilities for young people
- 1500 new job opportunities, 100 apprenticeships

- new housing management and environmental management structure.

Work has already begun on the regeneration of Craigmillar, and some of these outcomes have already been achieved. Over the past few years, the first new homes, schools and other services have been constructed in the area.



A new medical centre in Craigmillar. Photo: Charlie Shanlin, City of Edinburgh Council

7. Innovation

The development and urban design framework of this community-led urban rehabilitation are clearly innovative and raise many challenges. The strong commitment to stakeholder involvement, collaboration and consensus building are evident in the socially inclusive partnerships promoted to develop a new heart for Craigmillar. This in turn has provided the community with a vision of the new Craigmillar through the scenarios and development options presented. It is also innovative in terms of the way in which the preferred development option was selected, and the way this option became the basis for the urban design framework.

8. Results

The main achievement so far is the success of the visioning and scenario building exercise. This has engaged citizens and encouraged the public to participate in the planning and development of the Craigmillar area. The result is a consensus about the future of Craigmillar—the vision and the preferred development option.

9. Further Information and Links

If you are interested in the strategies produced as part of the Craigmillar regeneration process, here are the three main references to help. Unfortunately none of these is available via the web.

Development Framework Team (2001) Craigmillar Development Framework, Edinburgh Development and Investment, Edinburgh.

Edinburgh City Council (EDC) (2003) Interim Planning Framework for Craigmillar, EDC, Edinburgh.

Llewelyn Davies (2004) Craigmillar Urban Design Framework (Final Report), Llewelyn Davies, London.

If you are interested in finding out more about Craigmillar, you can contact the City of Edinburgh Council (www.edinburgh.gov.uk) or browse Craigmillar net <http://www.craignet.org.uk>

web link



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