



Subject:	Department for Infrastructure – York Street Interchange Review
Date:	8 February 2023
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration and Development

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for Members to outline any issues which they would like forwarded to the Department for Infrastructure in advance of their presentation to the Special meeting of the Committee on 22 February 2023 on the findings of the York Street Interchange Place-Making Review.
2.0	Recommendations

2.1	<p>The Members of Committee are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the content of this report and, II. Consider any issues they would like forwarded to the Department for Infrastructure in advance of their presentation to the Special meeting of the Committee on 22 February 2023 on the findings of the York Street Interchange Place-Making Review.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>At the December 2022 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Members agreed to receive a presentation from the Department for Infrastructure on the findings of the York Street Interchange Place-Making Review.</p>
3.2	<p>The York Street Interchange (YSI) represents the last remaining at-grade junction on the Belfast Motorway Network and forms the junction of the M2, M3 and A12 Westlink strategic corridors. This signalised junction forms the busiest junction in Northern Ireland and caters for approx. 100,000 vehicles per day. The YSI project proposes to create a grade separated (free-flowing without signals) junction to free up the congestion experienced within the existing scenario and to improve air quality in the area.</p>
3.3	<p>Following a legal challenge in 2018 the procurement competition to appoint a preferred Design and Build Contractor to develop the scheme designs and costs was set aside bringing uncertainty to the delivery timeframes for the project. The Minister for Infrastructure ordered a short-sharp external review of the YSI project in July 2020 focusing on the schemes ability to deliver on sustainable and active travel, creating thriving places for communities and creating liveable places and responding to the Climate Emergency. In March 2021 the Minister announced the outcomes of the review, accepting in full the six recommendations as outlined below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The YSI project brief should be reviewed and revised to ensure it aligns with the concept of “place making” and new best practice in terms of urban transport design, and with the Minister’s agenda. 2. The wider area impact and benefits of the Project should be evaluated using appropriate quantitative and qualitative assessment mechanisms. 3. The current Project costs should be updated to act as a benchmark to inform any decision on future alternative development.

4. There needs to be a system of ongoing communications with all interested parties. This should include updating the 2017 Communications Strategy and employing a robust Communications Structure now as well as during any construction phase. Communications should be ongoing and not just point in time.
5. There needs be much closer co-ordination both within the DfI and between DfI and other relevant departments and interested parties at both policy and delivery levels with regard to YSI development and delivery.
6. There needs to be a co-ordinated decision made in the context of emerging policies, which then needs to be applied to ensure that the YSI project aligns to this context.

3.4 In November 2021 the CG&R Committee agreed that the Members of the Committee withdraw Belfast City Council's corporate support for the York Street Interchange scheme and will only reinstate corporate support for the scheme, if the review, and any new scheme arising from it, meets the Council's climate, air quality, place making and housing ambitions as a city and complements the aims of "A Bolder Vision". This decision was ratified at the December 2021 meeting of the Full Council.

3.5 Main Report
 In October 2022 the Minister for Infrastructure published the Placemaking and Active Travel Review report for the YSI project. The full report and its associated appendices can be found on the York Street Interchange home page;
<http://www.yorkstreetinterchange.com>)

3.6 In the press statement announcing the publication of the report the Minister for Infrastructure stated "*I see the publication of this report as the crucial next step in the York Street Interchange project. It will allow public debate and engagement. Not everyone will agree with the three shortlisted options in the report. However, I would encourage people, elected representatives and community organisations, particularly in the areas most affected, to engage with my officials as they work to refine those options and explore any implementation issues. This stakeholder engagement will help to deliver for communities, connectivity and the wider living places agenda.*"

3.7 In line with this statement the Department and the YSI design team are undertaking engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders, and as a part of this engagement the YSI team will present the findings of the YSI Placemaking and Active

	<p>Travel Review at the Special meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 22 February 2023. Members are asked to consider if there are any specific issues at this juncture which they would like to raise in advance with the Department to be addressed at the Special meeting of the Committee later this month. A copy of the presentation is attached as Appendix A of this report for information.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix A – YSI Placemaking & Active Travel Review