

# Belfast Streets Ahead

## Phase 3 Public Realm

*Continuing the regeneration of Belfast City Centre*

*(please think of the environment if printing this document and do so double sided)*

Share with us your views and aspirations for the north  
of Belfast City Centre...



...from Royal Avenue...



...to the Central  
Library...



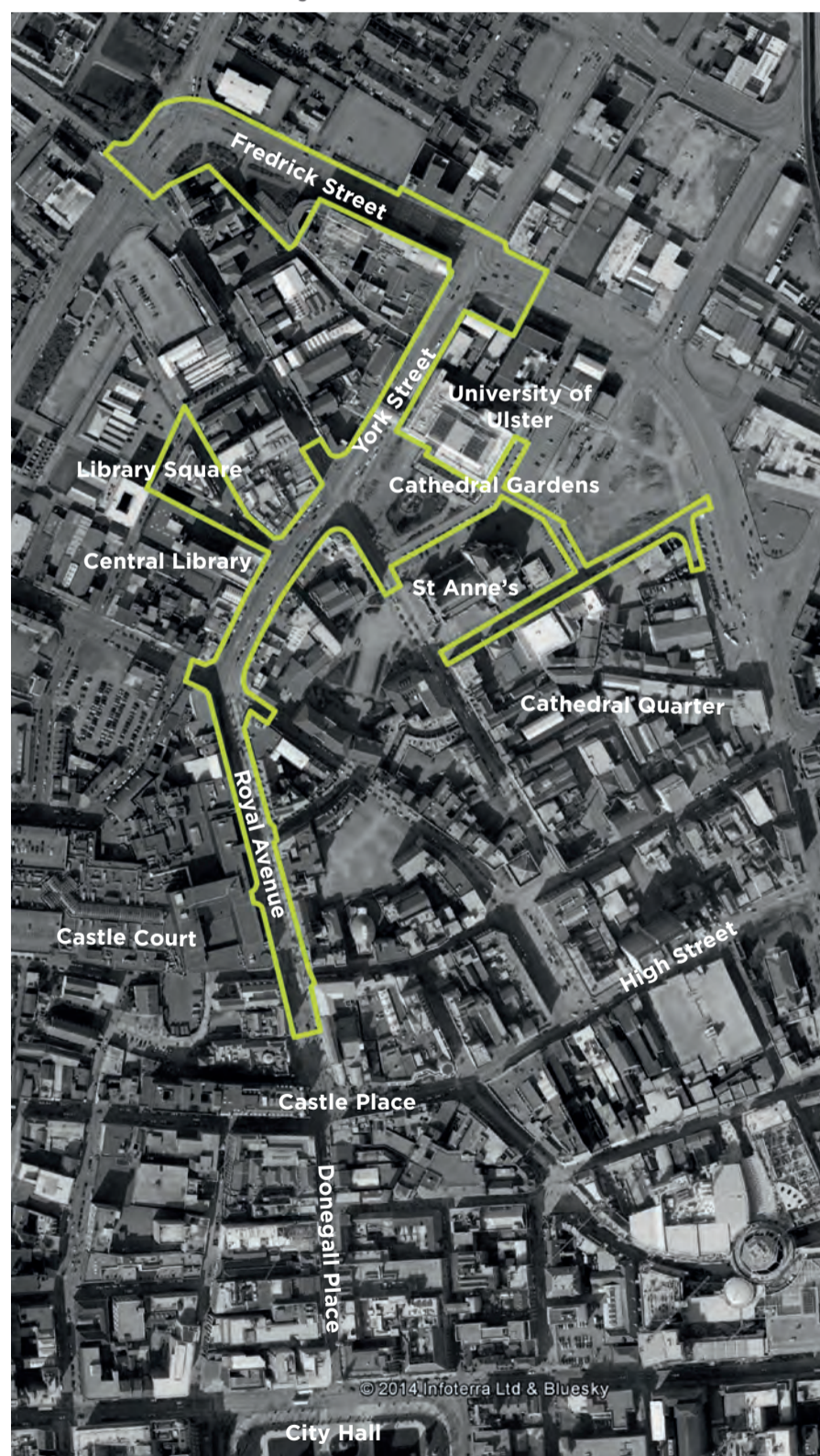
... Cathedral Gardens  
and beyond.

# introduction

The North of Belfast City Centre has a number of significant developments both planned and that have been delivered in recent years. The Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 (BSA Phase 3) project aims to push the regeneration of the streetscape towards the north, extending the perceived retail core and engaging with an area of the city that is seeing great change. This will be achieved by delivering a world class public realm improvement scheme that will include improvements to:

- Surfacing
- Lighting
- Landscaping
- Street furniture
- Public art

BSA Phase 3 - study area



## ***Vision for the project area***

*DSD's vision for the Project area is to design and implement public realm improvements that will deliver high quality streetscapes and open spaces that will contribute positively to the economic and social vitality of the city.*

## ***Design Process***

*DSD appointed a design team, led by McAdam Design and comprising public realm and landscape architects experts from OPEN to design, prepare and develop plans for the project area.*

## ***Programme***

*The Public consultation will close on Friday 09th January 2015. Following this comments/views received will be considered, and an equality screening exercise will be carried out. DSD intends to take the project to detailed design stage and to the preparation of a planning application by March/April 2015.*

*The construction stage of this project is due to take place after the Reform of Local Government (when Belfast City Council becomes responsible for urban regeneration). DSD is currently working closely with Belfast City Council on how this stage may be delivered.*

# the initial headlines

- **BSA Phase 3 should extend the public realm characters established through Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 1 (BSA Phase 1) and the regeneration of Cathedral Quarter providing a unified and legible public realm within an area that is changing significantly.**
- **Royal Avenue, up to the junction with North Street, should extend the ‘retail core’ and public realm character established during BSA Phase 1.**
- **Cathedral Gardens provides a key opportunity to realise a significant public space within the north of the City Centre that is unique in character and materiality, but links into the adjacent streets and spaces. It should become a space that provides a focus for a number of cultural and institutional uses, and provides a genuine public attraction.**
- **The new University of Ulster campus is presently the major catalyst for change within the north of the City Centre. The public realm that sets the various buildings forming the campus should provide a distinctive, legible series of streets and spaces. Opportunities for ‘branding’ the university area should be explored beyond the base materiality of the streets for example: artwork, signage, street furniture etc...**
- **The public realm associated with the University of Ulster campus should be balanced with other adjacent cultural uses, reinforcing a unified ‘Cultural Quarter’ within the north of the City Centre.**
- **Where possible, and through careful studies and dialogue with Transport NI, footways should be widened, maximising pedestrian space within the City Centre, promoting an enhanced pedestrian environment, greater legibility and setting for significant buildings.**
- **Public art should be implemented throughout the study area in identified locations, punctuating the public realm and adding to the rich layer of public art already established within Belfast’s City Centre. Public Art has the opportunity to reflect and enhance the cultural and institutional uses within the study area.**
- **Reinforce a traffic regime within the Inner Ring Road which discourages non-essential traffic and supports quieter streets to be shared between pedestrian, cyclists and public transport.**
- **Manage kerbside space to cater for appropriate levels of on-street car parking (including disabled), servicing, pick up/drop off, taxi activity, buses and coaches.**

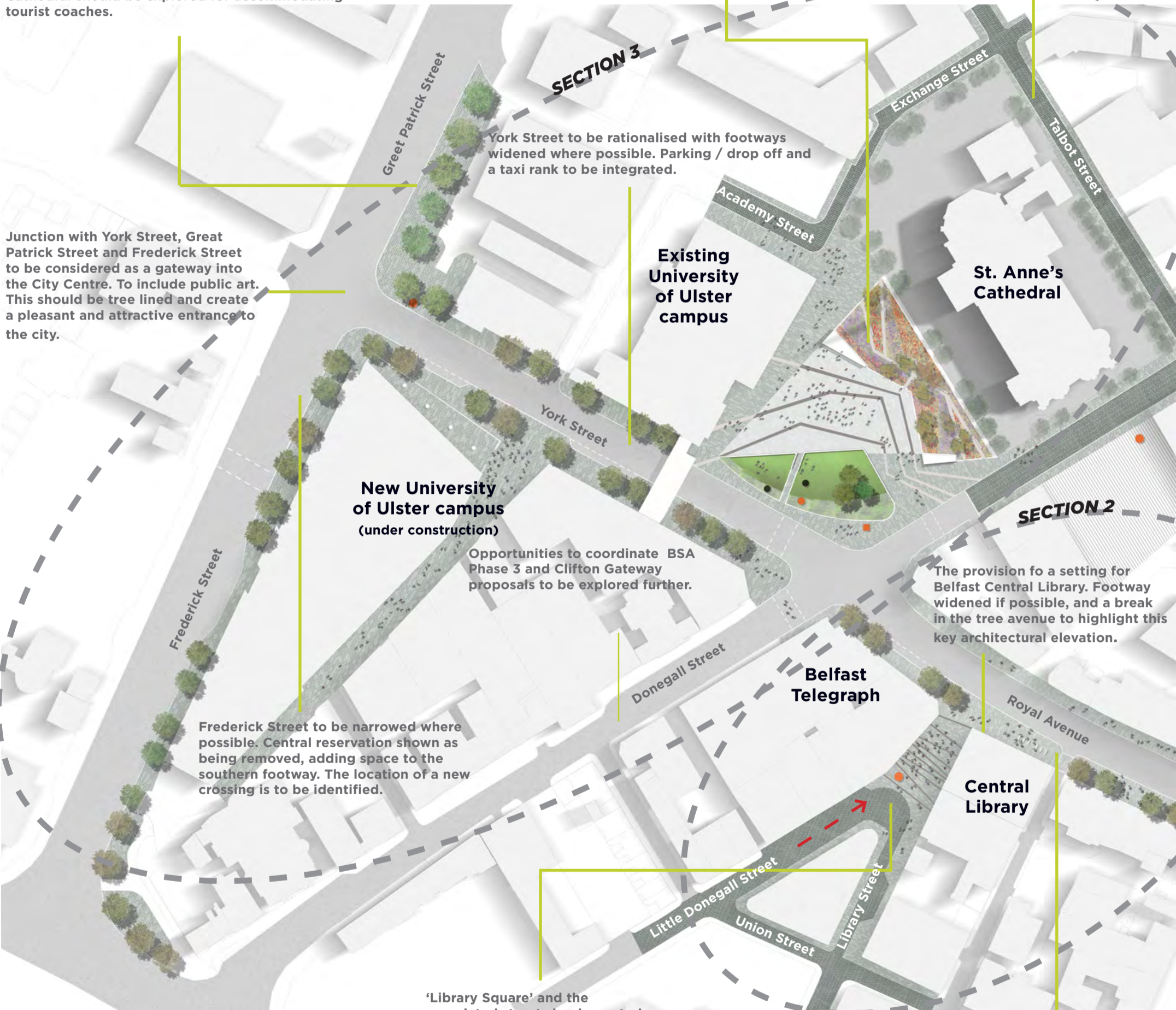


# key design concept plan

While not within the BSA Phase 3 study area, this portion of Great Patrick Street should be considered with the possibility of coach parking / waiting to be explored further along the narrowing of the carriageway where possible. Links with the Cathedral should be explored for accommodating tourist coaches.

Cathedral Gardens - A significant City Centre space that reflects the culture of adjacent institutions, allowing opportunities for events and performance as well as providing a safe and enticing environment for people to use on a day to day basis. The size of the Gardens can be positively increased by the closure of part of Academy Street, while giving an improved setting to the Cathedral and connectivity to the MAC and Cathedral Quarter.

Talbot Street and Exchange Street West treatment to reflect the approach taken within Cathedral Quarter, extending the established character to include St Anne's Cathedral and Cathedral Gardens.



Junction with York Street, Great Patrick Street and Frederick Street to be considered as a gateway into the City Centre. To include public art. This should be tree lined and create a pleasant and attractive entrance to the city.

York Street to be rationalised with footways widened where possible. Parking / drop off and a taxi rank to be integrated.

**Existing University of Ulster campus**

**St. Anne's Cathedral**

**New University of Ulster campus (under construction)**

Opportunities to coordinate BSA Phase 3 and Clifton Gateway proposals to be explored further.

**SECTION 2**

The provision for a setting for Belfast Central Library. Footway widened if possible, and a break in the tree avenue to highlight this key architectural elevation.

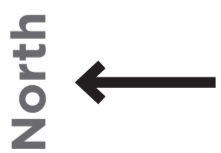
Frederick Street to be narrowed where possible. Central reservation shown as being removed, adding space to the southern footway. The location of a new crossing is to be identified.

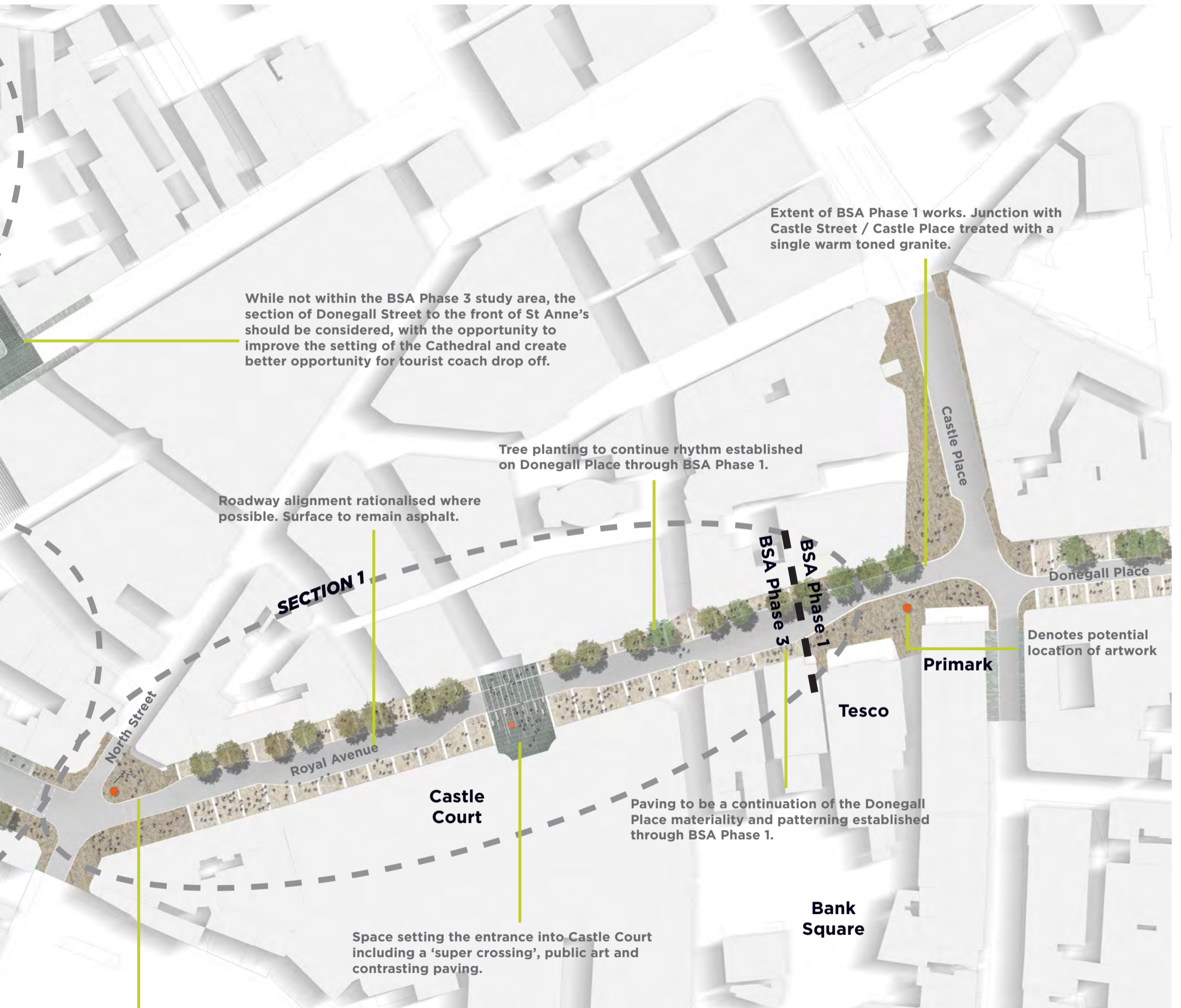
**Belfast Telegraph**

**Central Library**

'Library Square' and the associated streets implemented using the approach taken within the Cathedral Quarter, with setted streets and flush Caithness footways. 'Library Square' to provide spill out opportunity and a new access for the library, footway continuity along Royal Avenue and a location for public art.

Paving material change to Caithness highlighting a change in city character. Footways widened on the west side of the street where possible. Setting for Central Library needs to be carefully considered accommodating the potential for a meeting space on the street.





Extent of BSA Phase 1 works. Junction with Castle Street / Castle Place treated with a single warm toned granite.

While not within the BSA Phase 3 study area, the section of Donegall Street to the front of St Anne's should be considered, with the opportunity to improve the setting of the Cathedral and create better opportunity for tourist coach drop off.

Tree planting to continue rhythm established on Donegall Place through BSA Phase 1.

Roadway alignment rationalised where possible. Surface to remain asphalt.

**SECTION 1**

BSA Phase 3  
BSA Phase 1

Denotes potential location of artwork

Primark

Tesco

Castle Court

Paving to be a continuation of the Donegall Place materiality and patterning established through BSA Phase 1.

Bank Square

Space setting the entrance into Castle Court including a 'super crossing', public art and contrasting paving.

Materiality and design approach of junction to match the Donegall Place / Castle Street / Castle Place junction setting the architecture and marking a change in city character. Art work and feature lighting of key corner buildings will make this an important identifiable node in the city centre.

# Section 1 Royal Avenue, from Castle Place to North Street Junction.

Main entrance into Castle Court from Royal Avenue.

Street furniture and lighting elements not coordinated.

Cluttered streetscape detracts from key visual connections towards the quality architecture at North Street.

Existing paving is of poor quality and has been repaired in an ad-hoc manner creating a blurring of footway and roadway.

Existing trees are generally small in size and have not established well.



Royal Avenue - existing

A space along Royal Avenue that engages with the entrance into Castle Court.

Potential location for a piece of public art.

Visual connections from Castle Court to the quality architecture at North Street junction.

Seating elements to be included within this section of Royal Avenue.

Inclusion of a new 'super crossing' continuing the paving across the roadway, with new tree planting matching size and form of Donegall Place.



Royal Avenue - the potential

## The Headlines:

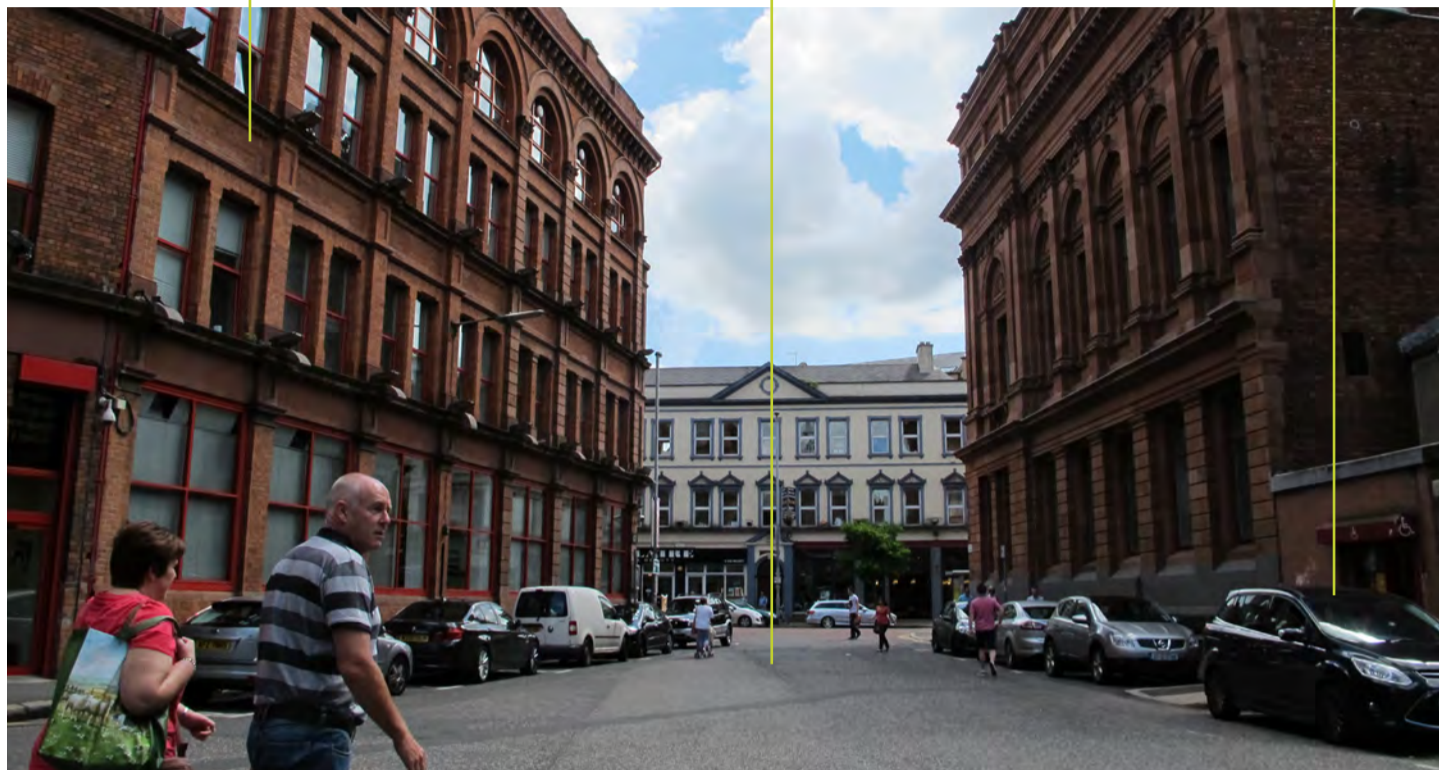
- High quality natural stone materials matching that used in Donegall Place;
- Public Transport - buses will continue to operate on the street;
- High quality street furniture;
- Semi mature specimen trees down one side of street;
- Opportunities of significant pieces of public art;
- Feature lighting to highlight key architectural features; and
- Pedestrian crossing at north and south of street with 'super' wide crossing outside Castle Court.

# Section 2 Library Square and Royal Avenue, including Library Street, Little Donegall Street and Union Street (part).

Impressive surrounding architecture poorly set within wide and inappropriate vehicle dominated streets.

A wide vehicle dominated street space through Library Street and on to Royal Avenue.

On street parking dominates and leaves little for the pedestrian. Location of potential new Library extension.



Library Square - existing

Potential for public artwork.

Shared surface to allow vehicle access one way around Little Donegall Street.

A variety of stone seating benches for informal and formal seating. Robust to control vehicle movements.

The space adjacent to the new library entrance could provide a location for public art, feature lighting and seating.



Image showing the potential character and materiality of Library Square.



Potential for feature lighting.

## The Headlines:

- 'Library Square' should be simple but bold space, setting the scene for the fine architecture that surrounds it;
- A new public space should be formed by continuing Royal Avenue's pavement across Library Street;
- The setting of Central Library on to Royal Avenue should be recognised by distinctive public realm and framing with street trees;
- Feature lighting should be a key part of Library Square, making it inviting and safe at night;
- The space should be one level from building to building unifying the space from the edge of Royal Avenue in to the main Library Square and the new entrance to the Central Library on Library Street; and
- High quality natural stone should be used to compliment the surrounding architecture.

# Section 3 Cathedral Gardens (Buoys Park) including Talbot Street, Exchange Street West and Academy Street (part), York Street and interface with University of Ulster.

**'The Square?'**



Reference image

**'The Park?'**



Reference image

**'The Garden?'**



Reference image



Academy Street (remaining) treated as a flush carriageway that connects in to Exchange Street West.

Section of Academy Street to be closed to allow Cathedral Gardens to extend toward St Anne's, providing an improved setting and connectivity to the MAC and Cathedral Quarter.

**'The Square'**. Performance / event space and setting for the University. Sub spaces will exist within and adjacent to it allowing a number of 'events' to occur at the same time.

Cathedral Quarter streetscape materials to link into Cathedral Gardens.

**'The Garden'**. A setting for St Anne's Cathedral and a unique space for Belfast's City Centre.

Raised plinths or stages for informal seating or performance.

Materials within central area of Cathedral Gardens to be distinct from adjacent streetscape materials. Potential for use of patterning.

**'The Park'**. A lawn defining the edge of the space and softening the interface with York Street while allowing views across.

Tree species with light canopies to enable better visual connectivity between Cathedral Gardens and the adjacent streets.

Potential public art locations.

**Illustrative plan showing the possibilities for Cathedral Gardens.**



# Section 3 continued

Materials in Cathedral Garden connecting through to Cathedral Quarter.

**'The Garden'** - A setting for St. Anne's Cathedral and a unique space for Belfast City Centre.

**'The Square'** - An event/performance space with distinctive paving material from adjacent streetscape.

Tree species with lighter canopies to enable better visual connectivity between square and adjacent streets.

**'The Park'** - A lawn defining the edge of the space and softening the interface with York Street.



Montage image showing the potential character and materiality of Cathedral Gardens.

Planting is structured and formed to frame views across the square, as well as creating an enclosed and intimate environment for the public to engage with nature.

The Garden creates a transitional and relaxing space between Cathedral Quarter and Donegall Street whilst providing a setting for the unique Celtic cross elevation.

The Square becomes a setting and performance/event space for the University, with sub-spaces created to allow for simultaneous events.

The seasonal variation in ornamental planting offers year round interest in the space.



Montage image showing the potential for a 'garden' space within Cathedral Gardens as a visual setting for St Anne's.

## The Headlines:

- What should Cathedral Gardens be - A Garden, A Square, A Park? Or can it be all three?;
- Traffic removed from Academy Street to allow link between space and Cathedral;
- What should happen to the Buoys?; and
- York Street to Frederick Street should be a high quality link to the University and entrance avenue for the City Centre.

# Belfast Streets Ahead

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### How to Respond

BSA Phase 3 design proposals and a survey where users can leave their comments can be viewed on the DSD website by accessing the consultation zone at: [www.dsdni.gov.uk/consultations.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/consultations.htm)

Alternative formats of the proposals and survey are also available at:

Department for Social Development  
Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate  
4th Floor, Oxford House  
49-55 Chichester Street  
Belfast, BT1 4HH

Email: [belfaststreetsahead@dsdni.gov.uk](mailto:belfaststreetsahead@dsdni.gov.uk)  
Tel: 02890277640

The design proposals will be on display in Castlecourt Shopping Centre (20/10/2014 – 24/10/2014), Central Library (27/10/2014 – 31/10/2014), and University of Ulster, Belfast (03/11/2014 – 07/11/2014)

The consultation will run from 6th October 2014 until noon on 9th January 2015. Any comments made during this time will be considered by the Department when finalising its plans for the area.

