



Subject:	Applications for dual language street signs with the second language in Irish for Oldpark Road, Donegall Park Avenue and Skegoneill Avenue
Date:	4 th March 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision After Council Decision Sometime in the future Never	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <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/Summary of Main Issues
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1.1	To consider if a street survey of occupiers will be carried out for three applications for the erection of dual language street signs in Irish within the city for which potential adverse impacts have been identified by the initial assessments. These applications are being considered as “long streets” as contained in clause 3 (X) of the Dual Language Street Signs policy.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>1. Members are asked to consider the Dual Language Street Sign applications for Oldpark Road, Donegall Park Avenue and Skegoneill Avenue which have been identified as “long streets” and for which the potential for adverse impacts has been identified and either:</p> <p>a) Agree that surveys of occupiers of these streets be carried out using the proposed approach;</p> <p>or</p> <p>b) Agree that no surveys will be carried out on the grounds of the potential adverse impacts identified and these applications are closed.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u> The power for the Council to consider applications to erect a second street nameplate in a language other than English is contained in Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.</p> <p>3.2 The Dual Language Street Sign policy states that “each application will be subject to an initial assessment for any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs and where any adverse impacts are identified that information will be brought to Committee.”</p> <p>3.3 The policy also states that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>‘Consideration will to be given to “long streets” where opinion on whether to have a second language street sign may differ between readily identifiable, substantial lengths of the street. In these circumstances, the decision as to the erection of dual language nameplates in certain portions of the street will be made by Committee, exercising its residual discretion and taking into account advice from officers.’</i></p> <p>3.4 Having carried out initial assessments, officers consider that Oldpark Road, Donegall Park Avenue and Skegoneill Avenue fall within this definition.</p> <p>3.5 Draft equality screenings were therefore carried out and have identified that the carrying out of surveys and the erection of Irish language street signs in these areas has the potential to give rise to community tension. Conversely, the screenings identified that the process could assist in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity. The findings are outlined in the equality and good relation section below.</p> <p>3.6 Members are therefore asked to confirm if surveys are to be carried out for these three streets. If members determine these streets should be surveyed, it is proposed that additional analysis of the results of the survey will be carried out by officers to confirm any difference of opinion in the readily identifiable sections, which may influence if and where signs would be erected. The findings will be presented to members for consideration at a future committee meeting, including the location of existing street signage.</p>

	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.7	<p>If it is decided to carry out surveys, the resulting tasks are included within the normal resources for the process.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.8	<p>An EQIA was carried out on the main Dual Language Street Signs policy in 2021-22. This confirmed the initial assessment process to be carried out, which may indicate the requirement for equality screening.</p>
3.9	<p>The applications for dual language street signs (with the second language in Irish) for Oldpark Road, Donegall Park Avenue and Skegoneill Avenue were assessed for equality of opportunity and good relations issues through the initial assessment process. This process identified that the potential for adverse impact existed and recommended further screening prior to referral to committee for authority to proceed to survey. It also determined that the three streets met the definition of “long street” contained in clause 3 (X) of the policy, in that opinion on whether to have a second language street sign may differ between readily identifiable, substantial lengths of the street”.</p>
3.10	<p>The draft screenings have identified that the carrying out of a survey in itself in these areas has the potential to give rise to community tension, as could the erection of the street signs and therefore has the potential to give rise to adverse impact on the grounds of good relations. It is acknowledged; however, the process could alternatively assist in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity.</p>
3.11	<p>The council retains ‘residual discretion’ in relation to these applications. In effect this gives Elected Members the option to not proceed to survey and/ or halt the erection of an Irish language street sign in this street where, in the view of Elected Members taking into account the agreed criteria, that this action would be considered inappropriate.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	None