



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	York Street Interchange – Presentation by Roads Service
Date:	27 June 2011
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The existing York Street Interchange is a key junction on the Strategic Road Network which links three of the busiest roads in Northern Ireland, the Westlink and the M2 and M3 motorways. It is the main gateway to Belfast from the North, provides access to the port of Belfast and well as facilitates local traffic movement.
1.2	It is considered that the existing traffic signal control at the York Street junction causes delays and congestion particularly at peak times, therefore DRD Roads Service have identified a number of options to remove the bottleneck. They are currently carrying out consultation on four options in order to identify a preferred option for the scheme.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Road Service has developed four options (A, B, C and D) aimed to improve traffic flow on the strategic road network. The options will provide direct links between the Westlink and the M2 and M3 motorways by creating new flyovers over and underpasses below the existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges. Details on the four options are outlined below.
2.2	The key features of Option A are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Movement between M2 and Westlink via underpasses below ground level underneath new York Street bridge and existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges• Westlink to M3 movement via underpass below existing ground level and new York Street bridge• M3 to Westlink movement controlled by traffic signals similar to existing

2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All slip roads at Clifton Street remain open • Cost approximately £72m. <p>The key features of Option B are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement between M2 and Westlink (southbound) via new bridge over existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges, approximately 18 metres above existing ground level • Movement between Westlink and M2 (northbound) via underpass below existing ground level under new York Street bridge and existing Dargan Rail bridge • Westlink to M3 (eastbound) movement via underpass below existing ground level and under new York Street bridge • M3 to Westlink (westbound) movement via new bridge over York Street • All slip roads at Clifton Street remain open • Cost approximately £100m
2.4	<p>The key features of Option C are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements between M2 and Westlink via underpasses below existing ground level underneath new York Street bridge and existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail Bridges • Westlink to M3 movement via underpass below existing ground level and new York Street bridge • All slip roads at Clifton Street remain open • Cost approximately £98m
2.5	<p>The key features of Option D are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements between M2 and Westlink via new bridges over existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges, approximately 18metres above existing ground level • Westlink to M3 movement via traffic signal controlled junctions at York Street and Nelson Street • M3 to Westlink movement via new bridge over York Street • M2/M3 bound on-slip from Clifton Street closed • All other slip roads at Clifton Street remain open • Cost approximately £95m
2.6	<p>Roads Service are currently carrying out a public consultation exercise on the options for strategic road improvements at York Street and have requested the opportunity to present details of the options to a Special Development Committee. Members may wish to consider the following issues in the context of the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to consider potential air quality impacts on existing residents in the surrounding area. The Council would request that the impact on all relevant receptors are considered in the decision making process to identify the preferred final option. Also consideration should be given to all proposed future development in the surrounding area in relation to exposing receptors to poor air quality. The impact of the noise from the traffic should also be assessed. • North Belfast is already regarded as being dominated by major road infrastructure which severs it from the city centre. There is a concern that proposed new road infrastructure could have the potential to exacerbate the problem of community severance. In previous Council responses to proposed new road infrastructure or changes to local road configurations, the Council has requested that consideration is given to a more traditional urban street design to maximise connectivity and ensure minimisation of potential adverse impacts on

	<p>the surroundings communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads Service may wish to consider the new interchange options as part of a broader area that allows assessment of the opportunities for the reallocation of existing potential surplus road space within the surrounding network. Any increase in the efficiency of the proposed junction arrangements should deliver direct positive impacts for the northern city centre and surrounding communities. The redesign of Dunbar Link and the reduction in road space could contribute to enhanced connectivity within the city centre and the integration of the areas to the north of the Frederick Street Dunbar link axis. • Consideration should be given to potential regeneration opportunities linked to the development of new road infrastructure in the area.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	None

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	None

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and the key issues as the context for the presentation by Roads Service on the York Street Interchange options.

7	Key to Abbreviations
DRD - Department for Regional Development	