

Cathedral Quarter Consultation Report

November 2011

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Public Consultation on the Cathedral Quarter Plan

Over the past two years, the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group (CQSG) has engaged local stakeholders both within and beyond the Cathedral Quarter at key points in the development of the Cathedral Quarter Development Plan. Consultation has included workshops, presentations, debates, surveys and one-on-one meetings to help determine priorities for the area. The members of CQSG represented sectoral interests as well as the interests of their individual organisations.

Since its inception, CQSG has included representatives from:

Barnabas Ventures
Belfast Cathedral
Belfast Circus School / Festival of Fools
Belfast City Council, Development Department
Community Arts Forum
Department for Social Development
Kabosh Theatre Productions
The MAC
MCE Public Relations/Royal Exchange Ltd.
The Merchant Hotel
New Belfast Community Arts Initiative
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
University of Ulster
Belfast City Centre Management

Consultation sessions were held in Cathedral Quarter throughout the process of drafting the Cathedral Quarter Plan. In addition to the extensive contribution made by CQSG members, feedback was received from the following stakeholders:

ASM Horwath	Hoffman Patterson Solicitors
Artery NI / RBG Arts Group	JK Pubs Ltd
Arts & Disability Equality Charter	Libraries NI
Arts Ekta	Macaulay & Ritchie
Bbeyond	Malmaison Hotel
Belfast Cathedral	NI War Memorial
Belfast Exposed	NITB
Black Box	No 27 Restaurant
Botanic Inns, Ltd	Northern Visions
Catalyst Arts	Oh Yeah Music Centre
Cathedral Eye Clinic	Paperjam Design
Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	Premier Inns
Craft NI	Ps2 Gallery
Dance Resource Base	SHAC Housing Association / Residence
Duke of York	State of Search - Artist
Edwards & Co Solicitors	St. George's Church
FAB (Forum for Alternative Belfast)	The John Hewitt
Golden Thread Gallery	The Northern Whig
Helm Housing	Todd Architects
Hill Street Brasserie	WWF

The initial consultation sessions covered a broad range of issues in response to general questions about Cathedral Quarter, what needed to be improved, and what changes respondents hoped to see in the future. Issues that needed to be addressed included:

- Cleanliness
- Communication / Coordinating creative activity
- Level of consultation
- Security
- Accessibility - physical, access to information, clear language
- Public art
- Public toilets and other amenities
- Branding – visibility
- Signage – Legibility
- Need for more public performances
- Sunday activity level
- Lighting
- Need more residential

As the Development Plan started to take shape, further consultation sessions were held to ask stakeholders to comment on its direction. Feedback was overwhelmingly supportive of the Plan, and included a strong call for a body to take the Plan forward and specific actions with a timeline for implementation.

The first full draft of the Plan was submitted to BCC Development Committee and BCCM in September 2010. CQSG received extensive feedback from the BCC Development committee with a strong recommendation to put the Plan out for wider public consultation. Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) was consulted over several sessions and responded with a call for greater emphasis in the document on partnership working.

In the draft Plan, CQSG calls for the establishment of a Cathedral Quarter Trust to drive further development of the area as a *‘welcoming cultural quarter in the city centre based on equity, diversity and interdependence for all cultural traditions’*. The proposed Trust’s four strategic priorities will be:

- To support the Cathedral Quarter as a centre for the arts and creative industries
- To support the growth of the mixed-use economy in Cathedral Quarter
- To generate high levels of public participation
- To build and maintain a supportive infrastructure

Membership of the Cathedral Quarter Trust (CQT) will be open to organisations, businesses and residents located within the geographic boundary of Cathedral Quarter as outlined in the CQ Development Plan. Member and non-member Trustees will include representation from the following:

- CQ Stakeholders to include Arts (6), Business (4) Heritage (1) Cathedral (1), University of Ulster (1) Local Resident (1)
- DSD (1)
- BCC – Development. Committee Chair & Deputy Chair or designees (2)
- ACNI/DCAL (1)
- DETI (1)
- BCCM (1)
- BVCB (1)

The Steering Group felt it was important to publish the draft Plan complete with illustrations, maps and images in order to give a more complete picture of the initiative. The comments from the Development Committee and BCCM were incorporated prior to publication. The draft Plan was launched by DSD Minister Alex Attwood in March 2011 and distributed to a range of statutory and community organisations across the city.

From March to September 2011, CQSG met with the following representative bodies and experts:

Belfast City Centre Management
Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI)
DoE – Planning Service
East Belfast Partnership
North Belfast Partnership
South Belfast Partnership
West Belfast Partnership

Ballynafeigh Community Association
Belfast Civic Trust
Belfast Interface Project
Gaeltacht Quarter
Titanic Quarter
Arthur Acheson, architect

Responses were largely supportive of the Cathedral Quarter Plan and the formation of the Cathedral Quarter Trust. Further amendments were made to the Plan's objectives and key targets to reflect the Cathedral Quarter's commitment to the important issues raised.

- Substantive comments were received emphasising the importance of strong links and working relationships between the Trust and other communities and Quarters in the City to promote social inclusion and information sharing:
 - Objective 1.3 now includes a target of *'Formal links with other city quarters and creative industries clusters through the establishment of a city quarters forum'*.
 - Objective 3.2 now includes key targets of *'Regular consultation with local communities through establishment of a communities forum'* and *'Increased community awareness of opportunities for sharing knowledge and information'*.
 - Objective 4.3 now includes a key target of *'Strong pedestrian linkages between Cathedral Quarter and neighbouring communities'*.
 - Objective 4.4 now includes a key target of *'A variety of public transport options including night buses and shuttle buses to encourage access'*.
- In response to calls for greater emphasis on cultural tourism:
 - Objective 3.1 was amended to include a key target of *'Promotion of the cultural tourism opportunities offered by Cathedral Quarter in partnership with existing tourism bodies'*.
- In response to calls for more information in general and use of Irish language signage in particular:
 - Objective 3.1 was amended to include a key target of *'Creative use of inclusive media for signposting and information'*.
- In response to calls for greater emphasis on the significance of and need to influence the University of Ulster's plans for the Belfast Campus:
 - Objective 2.3 has been added – *'Full support for the objectives of the North East Quarter Masterplan and for the University of Ulster's intention to relocate to the city centre'* and includes the following key targets:
 - *Raise public awareness of the long-term significance of these developments for Belfast*
 - *Engage with government, developers and all relevant stakeholders*
 - *Explore opportunities and risks with stakeholders and contribute a Cathedral Quarter perspective to the planning process*
 - *Assist in developing long-range plans to ensure integration*

Cathedral Quarter Belfast Five-Year Strategic Vision and Development Plan 2012 – 2016

January 2012

Foreword - tbc

Preface

The Cathedral Quarter Steering Group (CQSG) is a stakeholder-led initiative, which brings together key local participants to take stock of the Cathedral Quarter's development, analyse successes and failures, and propose solutions to achieve the best outcomes. CQSG includes representation from a mix of sectors and interests, including business, leisure, the public sector, and the arts. The group puts into practice the principles of place-shaping by engaging local people and harnessing their expertise to develop this important resource for the city.

Since its inception, CQSG has included representatives from:

Barnabas Ventures, Mark Finlay,
Belfast Cathedral, Ken Patterson,
Belfast Circus School / Festival of Fools, Will Chamberlain
Belfast City Council, Carolyn Mathers, Shirley McCay
Community Arts Forum, Heather Floyd
Department for Social Development, Carol Ramsey (advisory)
Kabosh Theatre Productions, Paula McFetridge
The MAC, Anne McReynolds
MCE Public Relations/Royal Exchange Ltd., Paul McErlean, CQSG Chair
The Merchant Hotel, Sorcha Wolsey,
New Belfast Community Arts Initiative, Conor Shields
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, Rita Harkin,
University of Ulster, Kerstin Mey, Peter Walker, Alastair Adair
Belfast City Centre Management, Andrew Irvine, (advisory)
Cathedral Quarter Development Manager, Belfast City Centre Management, Patricia
Freedman, (staffing)

Executive Summary

The Cathedral Quarter Steering Group (CQSG) was formed in 2008 to analyse issues and opportunities and create a plan for the development of the Cathedral Quarter. CQSG includes a unique mix of local and government stakeholders. The group's mission is to develop the Cathedral Quarter as the thriving hub of Belfast's cultural life.

Vision for the Future

Belfast's historic Cathedral Quarter is a focal point and leading destination for culture, enterprise and learning

CQSG has examined the Cathedral Quarter's enormous potential add to the cultural and economic vitality of the city. Public spaces and venues host performances and visitors from near and far. Creativity, innovation, learning, enterprise and hospitality combine with an historic setting and exciting new developments to form the building blocks for a world class cultural quarter

Throughout the development of this plan CQSG has asked the question: "What needs to happen next?" Each strand of activity presents unique challenges and opportunities. As Belfast's city centre cultural hub, the Cathedral Quarter is ideally placed to embrace and celebrate Northern Ireland's cultural diversity. **CQSG aspires to develop the area as a welcoming quarter that is committed to a "shared and better future" based on equity, diversity and interdependence for all cultural traditions.** Strong partnerships across sectors are needed to balance interests and realise our aspirations for a shared future.

CQSG calls for the establishment of a Cathedral Quarter Trust (CQT) to work with and on behalf of the Cathedral Quarter community, statutory stakeholders and the public to focus on strategic opportunities and implement the Development Plan.

We propose that membership of CQT will follow the model of the steering group, which has worked well. CQT will include a maximum of 21 members:

- CQ Stakeholders – to include Arts (6), Business (4) Heritage (1) Cathedral (1), University of Ulster (1) Local Resident (1)
- DSD (1)
- BCC – Dev. Cmte Chair & Deputy Chair invited (2)
- ACNI/DCAL (1)
- NITB/DETI (1)
- BCCM (1)
- BVCB (1)

CQT will:

- Be the forum for all stakeholders to work in partnership on an on-going basis
- Work in conjunction with the Department for Social Development (DSD), Department of the Environment (DoE), Belfast City Council (BCC), Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau

(BVCB) and other agencies and departments to address the particular needs of the area

- Leverage funding, including external resources not available to government
- Manage the Cathedral Quarter's event funding and dedicated workspaces
- Facilitate the efficient delivery of services in partnership with existing providers
- Implement the Cathedral Quarter development strategy

The Cathedral Quarter Development Plan

In guiding the future development of the Cathedral Quarter the four key priorities of CQT will be:

- To support the Cathedral Quarter as a centre for the arts and creative industries
- To support the growth of the mixed-use economy in Cathedral Quarter
- To generate high levels of public participation
- To build and maintain a supportive infrastructure

The Cultural Heartbeat

Priority 1: To support the Cathedral Quarter as a centre for the arts and creative industries

The Cathedral Quarter can become a major driver of economic, social and cultural change in the city and the region. From the creation of new artistic work to the running of a successful creative business, these activities are crucial to the knowledge economy which will foster growth in the future.

A renewed and focused commitment to creativity and excellence is needed to enable our community of artists and creative practitioners to produce outstanding work. Developing the Cathedral Quarter as Belfast's cultural hub will require public and private investment to support a full calendar of events, appropriate venues, the development of creative industries and adequate managed workspace provision. CQT will support the development of the arts and creative industries in Cathedral Quarter and explore ways to connect to initiatives in communities beyond the Quarter.

Objective 1.1:

Secure long-term strategic commitment from policy-makers, funders and investors for the development of a full calendar of events and activities
(p.25)

Key Targets to include:

- DSD funding for the Laganside Events Fund in the short term
- A larger Cathedral Quarter events fund with support from multiple funders at increased levels
- Increased use of public space for cultural activities
- The development of additional high-profile events such as Culture Night and a Craft Market
- Distribution of funding by the Cathedral Quarter Trust to meet the strategic priorities of the area

Objective 1.2:

Stimulate public and private investment for

Key Targets include:

- Sustained operation of the Black Box as a crucial cultural venue

venues (p25)

- Support for The MAC commensurate with the shared aspiration for a world-class home for the arts in the Cathedral Quarter.
- Civic and cultural use of the Assembly Buildings (Northern Bank)
- On-going development of the Oh Yeah Music Centre

*Objective 1.3:
Promote the
clustering of creative
and cultural
industries (p.26)*

Key Targets include:

- CQT as a consultee to relevant strategies
- Formal links with other city quarters and creative industries clusters through the establishment of a city quarters forum
- Funding for creative industries development to include a programme of business incubation, mentoring and support
- Government recognition of the importance of creative industries in the Cathedral Quarter
- A 15% increase in the number of creative and cultural organisations and businesses located in Cathedral Quarter

*Objective 1.4:
Expand and renew the
Managed Workspace
provision (p.26)*

Key Targets include:

- New selection criteria and tenancy agreements for a sustainable balance of non-profit organisations and creative business incubation
- Full occupancy of existing buildings
- Ownership in trust of the existing Cathedral Quarter managed workspace buildings
- Purchase of additional managed workspace to meet the needs of the cultural quarter
- Long-term, effective management of the workspaces

A Quarter for all Reasons

Priority 2: To support the growth of the mixed-use economy in Cathedral Quarter

The dynamic mix of uses with cultural activity at the core sets the Cathedral Quarter apart as one of Belfast's most exciting places to work, visit and live. The interaction of diverse and competing interests creates opportunities and challenges. Finding the balance that will enable the mix while enhancing its distinctive character will take strong management and collaborative partnerships. The key challenge will be to ensure that arts, business, education and community interests maintain a presence and have opportunities to add value.

Objective 2.1:

Attract investment (31)

Key Targets include:

- Capital investment for expansion of the managed workspace provision
- Establishment of a Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District (BID)
- Incentives for independent retail and active ground-floor use
- A presence in local and regional economic deliberations
- Showcase Cathedral Quarter in local and international conferences and events

Objective 2.2:

Balance public and private land use to meet the needs of the cultural quarter (p.33)

Key Targets include:

- Zoning for the Cathedral Quarter to include requirements for active ground floor use, servicing hours, agreed ratio of public to private and arts to non-arts use
- Town Centre Living Initiative Area designation to be eligible for Living Over The Shop (LOTS*) grants and raised awareness of existing tax incentives (*a Housing Executive town centre living initiative which assists landlords to adapt upper floors for residential use)

Objective 2.3:

Full support for the objectives of the North East Quarter Masterplan and for the University of Ulster's intention to relocate to the city centre (p. 64)

Key Targets include:

- Raise public awareness of the long-term significance of these developments for Belfast
- Engage with government, developers and all relevant stakeholders
- Explore opportunities and risks with stakeholders and contribute a Cathedral Quarter perspective to the planning process
- Assist in developing long-range plans to ensure integration

Going Public

Priority 3: To generate high levels of public participation

The Cathedral Quarter offers a variety of opportunities to develop a greater sense of shared culture and shared space in the heart of Belfast. Our aim is to exceed the expectations of both residents and visitors for pleasant and welcoming experiences through effective management of information, appropriate marketing and pro-active engagement with local communities.

Objective 3.1:

Provide local residents and visitors with news and information about the Cathedral Quarter
(p.38)

Key Targets include:

- Promotion of the cultural tourism opportunities offered by Cathedral Quarter in partnership with existing tourism bodies
- A high profile in tourism marketing
- An interactive Cathedral Quarter website
- Strong media presence featuring Cathedral Quarter organisations, events and activities
- Creative use of inclusive media for signposting and information

Objective 3.2:

Involve local community groups in Cathedral Quarter activities
(p.40)

Key Targets include:

- Regular consultation with local communities through establishment of a communities forum
- Increased awareness of the work of Cathedral Quarter organisations in local communities
- Increased community showcasing in Cathedral Quarter events
- Shared celebration of cultural diversity
- Greater community access to activities and events
- Increased community awareness of opportunities for sharing knowledge and information

Objective 3.3:

Improve people's experience of working, visiting and living in the Cathedral Quarter
(p.41)

Key Targets include:

- Active forums for discussing and resolving issues of shared concern
- Adoption of visitor servicing goals by Cathedral Quarter stakeholders
- Visitor information point(s) in the Cathedral Quarter

Objective 3.4:

Promote best practice to ensure maximum accessibility to Cathedral Quarter premises, public spaces, services and activities

Key Targets include:

- Accessibility as a priority in all development initiatives
- Readily available accessibility information
- Raised awareness of accessibility issues specific to the Cathedral Quarter

(p.41)

Shaping the Space

Priority 4: To build and maintain a supportive Infrastructure

A re-purposed, modernised and well-maintained infrastructure will firmly establish the Cathedral Quarter as an inviting, sustainable and productive environment. Traffic and parking must be managed to meet the city's strategic objectives and to ensure access for everyone.

The Cathedral Quarter's built environment, including its historic buildings, squares and public spaces, narrow streets and laneways, not only add character and authenticity to many public activities, but also function as part of the working cultural quarter. The public realm must be designed and maintained to a standard consistent with its role as meeting place, venue and historic cultural space.

Objective 4.1:

Ensure a well-functioning public realm through effective local management (p46)

Key Targets include:

- Reduced crime and vandalism and greater safety
- Improved procedures for:
 - policing, security and dealing with anti-social behaviour
 - street cleansing and rubbish collection
 - maintenance of lighting, signage, street furniture and underground services
- The inclusion of waste storage facilities with adequate access in any new development
- Servicing policy for goods delivery vehicles
- Traffic regulation order to manage vehicular access

Objective 4.2:

Develop and enhance public space and streetscapes (p.47)

Key Targets include:

- More arcades and canopies for public spaces and shopping areas
- Distinctive signage, street lighting and street furniture to reinforce the identity of the area
- Information points and other public amenities
- Recognisable gateways to the Cathedral Quarter
- A streetscape plan for Donegall Street
- Appropriate public space to enhance the Cathedral setting and the new Belfast Campus of the University of Ulster (UU), and the Four Corners at the intersection of Waring, Donegall, Bridge and North Streets
- A programme of seasonal enhancements

Objective 4.3:

Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists and calm the traffic (p.50)

Key Targets include:

- Strong pedestrian linkages between Cathedral Quarter and neighbouring communities
- The introduction of controlled junctions at major pedestrian and cycle access points

- Installation of cycling lanes and bike racks
- The introduction of a right turn from Talbot Street to Dunbar Link
- Designation of adequate taxi stands and tour bus parking
- The re-routing of long-range commuter buses and through traffic from Donegall Street to Dunbar Link
- The redevelopment of Dunbar Link as a 'boulevard' in line with the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP)

*Objective 4.4:
Improve access by
public transport (p.52)*

Key Targets include:

- Cathedral Quarter / University of Ulster train station at Gamble Street
- A variety of public transport options including night buses and shuttle buses to encourage access

*Objective 4.5:
Implement best practice
in heritage-led
regeneration (p.54)*

Key Targets include:

- Increased public awareness and celebration of the area's historic buildings and streetscapes
- Creative re-use of historic buildings
- "Living Over the Shops" in the empty upper floors of historic buildings
- High quality new developments where the opportunity exists, which respect the existing form and scale

Conclusion

Political will and joint efforts in the face of intense economic and political pressure will be required to deliver the strategic benefits that the Cathedral Quarter can bring to the city. These efforts need to be underpinned by a strong belief in the importance of culture to our quality of life and the contribution of creative and cultural activity to our economy.

Dedicated local management, in partnership with existing service providers, will sustain the momentum of Cathedral Quarter development over the next five years and into the future. CQT will bring a focused approach to development and will have access to opportunities and resources not available to government. Private/public sector financial models to support the development of the Cathedral Quarter will be fully explored.

And as a presence in Cathedral Quarter CQT will have particular opportunities to strengthen relationships and promote new ways of working. CQSG is mindful of the complexity of establishing the Trust. Potential structures are under review and will be developed and agreed in partnership with key stakeholders.

Our aspirations will be strengthened in the coming months by the development of a short, medium and long-term implementation plan where the key targets will be SMART – specific, measurable achievable and time bound.

This plan has been developed in consultation with the Cathedral Quarter community, stakeholders with a direct interest in the area, representatives from surrounding communities and the general public.

Summary and Selected Comments from the Public Consultation March-Aug 2011

Copies of original responses available on request

1. Do you agree that a vibrant cultural quarter in the city centre can bring economic and social benefit to Belfast?

ACNI: welcomes the Plan and the focus it brings; contribution to cultural infrastructure of city; bringing together public and private sectors to build on physical, social and cultural achievements of the past.

Ballynafeigh Community Association: Absolutely - if developed in partnership with all stakeholders and if supported and sustained by political leadership.

Belfast Civic Trust: Yes, agrees with comments and principles; Library area and Royal Ave area should be encouraged to have UU accommodation above shops.

Belfast Interface Project: Yes. It is especially needed in Belfast. The Cathedral Quarter has increasingly become a space where all sections of the community feel welcome and able to participate. The 'shared space' has evolved here in a natural and dynamic way. There is great potential to build on this with the opening of new resources like The MAC, and the further development of events like the Festival of Fools, Culture Night, and City Council-sponsored celebrations in Custom House Square. These are seen as non-elitist events and have proved very successful in bringing people into the CQ from parts of Belfast where there is not a big uptake of city-based cultural events.

DoE Planning Service: Yes

East Belfast Partnership: Yes we agree and initiatives such as the proposed Cathedral Quarter Strategic Development Plan are vital for the rejuvenation of the riverside area and enhance the wider Belfast cultural and tourism offering. Critical for success will be its ability to link effectively with the adjacent communities and ensure that it is a welcoming and accessible place for people living in all parts of the city. It should be developed carefully to ensure it adds value to the existing cultural offer in the city and doesn't displace this. The UU plans could have a significant impact on this so early consultation with them we would suggest is vital. EBP would be keen to see the final strategy include specific reference to ways to support existing creative industries based in, and supporting, local communities by connecting them in where possible to the offer in Cathedral Quarter.

Gaeltacht Quarter: Yes. We are keen to work with Cathedral Quarter and to encourage linkages between Gaeltacht Quarter and Cathedral Quarter.

North Belfast Partnership: CQ offers opportunities for a strong focal point for social and economic growth for the city and surrounding communities. Additionally, CQ provides wider connections and cultural corridors to other parts of the city.

South Belfast Partnership: We believe that a strong Cathedral Quarter will make a significant contribution to the regeneration of Belfast's City Centre and consequently for the rest of the City. We therefore welcome the proposals in broad terms and look forward to seeing the plans begin to come to fruition during the next few years.

Titanic Quarter: We support the regeneration of CQ and recognise the fully the importance of the Arts and Cultural Sector in driving forward commercial and sustainable projects.

West Belfast Partnership: Yes. The West Belfast Partnership supports the development of the Cathedral Quarter and encourages the establishment of more formal links between the emerging quarters of the city, such as the Gaeltacht Quarter.

Arthur Acheson, architect: There is no doubt about this and the interesting fact that people have heard of Cathedral Quarter but can leave the city without being able to 'find' events is distressing.

2. Do you agree with the four strategic priorities of the Cathedral Quarter Plan?

ACNI: The Plan will assist CQ being utilised to full potential; will contribute to wider cultural and tourism objectives; stimulating creativity and innovation within NI's creative industries and promoting collaborative activities will encourage knowledge exchange and create new market opportunities.

Ballynafeigh Community Association: Yes

Belfast Civic Trust: Yes

Belfast Interface Project: Yes. The 3rd and 4th aims will be essential for making this plan viable and sustainable.

DoE Planning Service: Yes

East Belfast Partnership: The strategic priorities are quite comprehensive and recognise the needs of the location. We would suggest that the word 'centre' could be replaced by 'central focus' – this would reflect that arts and creative industries are also located elsewhere such as, Forbairt Feirste, the University area and Titanic Quarter (the Science Park and Paint Hall). We welcome your emphasis on encouraging accessibility of space and supporting local communities and particularly supported your reference to community showcasing opportunities. The issue of access to the city centre is being addressed by a number of organisations and local groups; these include Belfast City Council, DSD, the Area Partnerships, the Forum for Alternative Belfast and various local community groups. It would be important to be aware of other plans, particularly where there are proposals to improve access i.e. additional pedestrian links across the Lagan and support these where it is of mutual benefit. It is our experience that people are happy to travel to the city centre for events if they are well publicised in local areas, use inclusive language and do not appear to be elitist and are affordable and value for money. Securing involvement from outlying communities will be easier if Cathedral Quarter Belfast can form strong links with local groups and are perceived to be complementing the local offer and not displacing it. Cathedral Quarter Belfast could offer occasional support for other event providers locally at little cost – things like marketing advice, masterclasses on organising events for community groups.

Gaeltacht Quarter: Yes

North Belfast Partnership: Fully agree with the strategic priorities - More emphasis needed on space for culture/arts - creative and social industries. Must maintain balance between what's on offer - entertainment and culture - need to free up street level space for cultural draws.

South Belfast Partnership: We would highlight the importance of ensuring the Cathedral Quarter remains a Quarter for all of the City. To this end, we would urge the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group to give consideration to the connectivity to each area of the City,

including South Belfast, particularly in terms of access to leisure facilities and festivals / events, etc.

West Belfast Partnership: The West Belfast Partnership has identified creative industries as a key growth area and is involved in driving this forward both locally as well as with our partners in the other Belfast Area Partnerships. The Cathedral Quarter has a range of arts and creative businesses and is certainly an important cluster within the city. We acknowledge and support the development of the creative industries across the city and would like to see a focus on promoting collaboration among creatives across the city as well supporting business development and access to wider markets.

3. Do you think CQSG should consider any other strategic priorities?

ACNI: ACNI suggests highlighting the role of Cultural Tourism under Priority 3, Objective 3.1

Belfast Civic Trust: *Objective 1.1* Culture Night more than one night; Craft market augmented by St Georges market Traders; Market in Writers Square or Donegall St. *Objective 1.2* Reuse of Custom House for Arts or Gallery; Encourage UU accommodation in CQ; *Objective 2.2* - Encourage UU housing and arts facilities in area inc. Library Quarter and Gresham street area. *Objective 4.2* - Initiate a policy against tall buildings in CQ and adjacent thereto (n.b. present planning application for development adjacent to McHughs); Identify key sites for development eg along Dunbar link and Waring street and Talbot/Hill (possible residential); Initiate shutters policy ;Initiate shop front competition; More attractive events barriers on CHS; Belfast Civic Trust to participate in design forum. *Objective 4.3* Support priority development of Dunbar Link as a boulevard. *Objective 4.5* - Redevelopment of River house with a lower building in line with High Street street scape; New traditional architecture recognised as a valid contribution to streetscape; Reuse of Custom House as arts or Gallery.

Ballynafeigh Community Association: Inclusivity of mixed economy model; architectural heritage and regeneration; peacebuilding priorities

Belfast Interface Project: No

DoE Planning Service: No

East Belfast Partnership: The BCC Tourism Framework prioritises events and festival activity and the need to push emphasis from the city centre to the surrounding communities and we would be keen to see this approach mirrored where possible in the strategy. The Culture Strategy 2012 – 2015 and the Festivals Charter are also important documents to reflect in your plans as they also have been widely consulted on. We would suggest that you could ‘beef up’ your objective on ‘building and maintaining a supportive infrastructure’ to include your contribution to the broader regeneration of the area. The relevance of supporting the North East Quarter Masterplan is mentioned in Priority 2. It could be helpful and important to influence ideas around the UU plan to relocate and introduce new physical and social infrastructure into the area and the York Street Interchange plan.

Gaeltacht Quarter: Develop links with other areas. We would like to see Irish used in signage etc in the Cathedral Quarter not only in relation to linking to Gaeltacht Quarter but in other aspects of your work as well.

North Belfast Partnership: Develop concept of Quarter for City / Quarter for Community - connections need built and maintained with communities and schools to promote shared quarter / culture and education.

South Belfast Partnership: There are significant synergies between the Cathedral Quarter and South Belfast, particularly in relation to the arts and culture, and the creative industries.

West Belfast Partnership: No

Arthur Acheson: To work in a collegiate and neighbourly manner with nearby “urban villages” in the city centre and beyond

4. Would you support the establishment of a Cathedral Quarter Trust to implement the development plan?

ACNI: ACNI concurs with need to establish CQT. Unclear who the stakeholders of CQT will be. ACNI recommends they be identified in the document. Suggests inclusion of DETI.

Ballynafeigh Community Association: Yes, but would have some concerns regarding the management and governance of this body- ie: ensuring adequate representation, models of good practice, etc.

Belfast Interface Project: Yes. An accountable body based in and made up of the Cathedral Quarter ‘community’ will be best placed to develop the potential of the CQ.

DoE Planning Service: Yes

East Belfast Partnership: This appears to be a good idea but as suggested can be complex.

Gaeltacht Quarter: Yes

North Belfast Partnership: For sure a Trust is a valuable vehicle as long as its aims and objectives are clear!

West Belfast Partnership: The West Belfast Partnership would support the development of a trust to implement the development plan and suggests that the emerging Trust considers community representation. In addition, there has been a great deal of publicity as well as debate as to the impact (both positive and negative) of the Temple Bar Cultural Trust as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to engage with Temple Bar for advice, lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid.

Arthur Acheson: I believe we need proper and permanent governance in all our villages, including the urban villages. These places should be recognised for their individuality and should have modest continuous funding allocated to them. If the number of council officials in Belfast were to be allocated to the places of the city there would be about 50 people working in each electoral ward area. Even half of these resources would be amazing if they became focussed on each place rather than on subject areas which often overlap and underlap in each place. So, let’s have a Ward Mayor in Cathedral Quarter.

5. Do you agree with the initial aims of the Cathedral Quarter Trust as stated above?

ACNI: Yes in consideration of comments to question 4

Ballynafeigh Community Association: Yes

Belfast Interface Project: Yes. Belfast Interface Project has a particular interest in the issue of the management of the workspaces, as a tenant in the Cathedral Qtr Managed Workspace on Royal Ave. We’d like to see them fully occupied, by non-profit organisations and arts organisations and businesses, and managed in their interests. As an organisation whose

membership is made up of community groups from across Belfast, BIP welcomes the Strategic Plan's objective of involving community groups in CQ activities.

DoE Planning Service: Yes

East Belfast Partnership: Yes

Gaeltacht Quarter: Yes

North Belfast Partnership: Yes! However, CQT would need to prioritise role Trust will undertake to promote Strategy - Hardware / Software issues - Physical space / Leisure and residential vs shared space - /cultural/social/business.

West Belfast Partnership: Should the Trust consider the support of arts and culture as part of its aims? Or is it enough that this is part of the implementation of the Cathedral Quarter strategy?

Arthur Acheson: Maybe Cathedral Quarter should be supporting a bid for a BID (business improvement district) where I understand new legislation is needed in Northern Ireland to allow the majority of rate payers in a defined area to agree to a higher rate and to then be able to spend the rate increase on specific improvements to the area.

6. Who do you think should be represented on the Trust?

ACNI: BCC, NITB, representatives of small cultural organisations working in the area e.g. The MAC, representatives of the private sector.

Belfast Civic Trust: Belfast Civic trust to participate in design forum.

Belfast Interface Project: The work to date has clearly been based on a model of inclusion, cooperation and relationship building, over many years, and the same approach will be needed when establishing the Trust. The Trust will need to be representative of the CQ and also responsive to the CQ community, while focussed on the four priorities of this Strategic Plan.

East Belfast Partnership: In our experience these decisions are best taken as the project progresses – to reflect the skills and influence required at each stage. That said, we believe that while all the key interests are required to be well connected to the Trust this does not necessarily mean that have to be members.

Gaeltacht Quarter: Whoever will drive it.

North Belfast Partnership: Key Public Agencies / Funders / Policy groups. Promote Sector and Belfast Area Partnerships (BAPs) should be on the Trust due to complementarity of strategic priorities.

South Belfast Partnership: We would welcome the opportunity to work with you, where appropriate, to ensure these two vibrant areas of Belfast continue to complement each other and avail of any joint opportunities"

West Belfast Partnership: In addition to the suggested stakeholders the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure should probably be involved since they have policy responsibility for the creative industries. The Trust will need representation from local communities—perhaps through the local residents and those surrounding communities that are impacted by developments in the Quarter.

Arthur Acheson: I think that if there is to be a Trust, it should be a pilot project for integrated (urban) village governance in Northern Ireland. The Trust should therefore be elected. The closest models to my suggestion are the Scottish Community Councils which are independent but recognised by statute. English Community Councils (sometimes called Parish Councils) would be the equivalent. There are over 10,000 of these. I understand that people are elected to them at the same time and by the same process as Council elections. Although it seems a long time away, it would be timely to have this organised for the 2015 elections.

7. Would you like to make any other comments?

Belfast Interface Project: The Cathedral Quarter Development Plan is making a contribution to this vision by creating a shared space that is welcoming to and reaches out to all. We very much welcome that contribution. Our hope is that, in its implementation of the Development Plan, the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group will show that it shares our vision for the City through promoting positive creativity and outreach work in exploring and addressing issues relating to the legacies of conflict and division within the City and our common humanity. Thank you for your great work!

East Belfast Partnership: We look forward to seeing the plans develop and wish to offer our support for future ventures.

Gaeltacht Quarter: We wish you well with the next stage of your work.

North Belfast Partnership: North Belfast Partnership welcomes the opportunity to work with CQ and improve connection with North Belfast and surrounding communities - to create cultural links / educational and social economy benefits. Jointly work to engage on UU connections and benefits.

West Belfast Partnership: The following points were raised at the West Belfast Partnership Board meeting on the 10th of May 2011:

- It is important to repopulate the city centre. Housing/social housing and student accommodation are important to repopulating the city centre. Therefore, it is important that there is ongoing engagement in relation to housing with the University of Ulster as they move to the Quarter.
- It was noted that the Cathedral Quarter has aspirations to provide training opportunities and are presently trying to pull together information about the many opportunities already available in the area. The West Belfast Partnership has a Education and Training Forum and fruitful links could be made between the two organisations in relation to training.
- The Board noted that there would be opportunities to work together on developing the creative industries, which has been identified as a growth area for the city.

Arthur Acheson: Free buses and trains instead of underground parking.....

There are many reasons why public transport should be free at the point of use:

1. There is a pressing urgency for severely disadvantaged people to gain access to employment opportunities through training schemes; at present these unemployed people simply cannot afford the bus / train fares to go for training. This is a public disgrace.

2. The resulting additional use of buses and trains by current car users, increasing overall efficiency of the road network, resulting in lower levels of congestion and lower carbon dioxide emissions, will help to meet a significant target in the programme for government;

3. The wider benefits include changing habits and thereby reducing the medium and long term need for expensive road schemes;
4. Vast amounts of land in our urban centres are taken up with major road schemes, land reserved for major road schemes and surface parking to facilitate users of private cars. Significant areas of valuable land could be released to allow us to create better places, making our towns and cities more pleasant places to live and work in – and to visit.
5. Overall efficiency in public transport improves through eliminating resource costs of ticketing, fare collection, etc.
6. The proposal would invoke delight among tourists who would enjoy their visits to Northern Ireland to a greater degree, resulting in additional repeat visits, overnight stays and tourist spend, particularly as word spreads in tourists' home countries of the extra attraction of coming to this part of the world.
7. Consideration of the figures presented in the DRD's 2010-2011 Review of the Regional Development Strategy indicates that in Northern Ireland we spend over 97% on private transport costs and under 3% on public transport fares.