



Subject:	Consideration of Relocation of Navigation Buoys at Cathedral Gardens
Date:	10 May 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officers:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Michelle Bagnall, Project Sponsor

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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	<p>The purpose of the report is to seek agreement from Members to explore the relocation of the three navigation buoys at Cathedral Gardens to the Titanic Quarter area of the city.</p> <p>This report outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The rationale for the relocation of the buoys, linked to the redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens as part of DSD Belfast Streets Ahead public realm scheme;▪ The relocation options that have emerged, site observations and land/asset considerations.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Note the redevelopment plans for Cathedral Gardens, as part of wider DSD Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 public realm (See Appendix 1 for design plans);▪ Consider the relocation of the three large navigation buoys currently in Cathedral Gardens to Titanic Quarter area of the city, as suggested by Commissioner for Irish Lights, subject to feasibility and affordability assessments;▪ Agree to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Council gift the buoys to the Titanic Foundation Ltd - a registered charity whose aim is to develop and promote Queen's Island as an authentic maritime heritage destination and shared space for Belfast and Northern Ireland.

3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>A development brief for Cathedral Gardens was developed in 2014 with a key aim to create a predominately green/soft space to provide relief from the urban landscape. This approach helps address the need, as reflected in the Council’s City Centre Regeneration plan, to improve and enhance the public realm and public space in the north area of the city centre. Indeed the DSD Streets Ahead Phase 3 project, a significant investment in city centre public realm also ties in with council’s aspirations for this area of the city.</p>
3.2	<p>As part of DSD’s public consultation on Streets Ahead Phase 3 project, concept designs for the Cathedral Gardens were produced, final concept design plans were subsequently agreed following Transition Committee and Council response to DSD in January 2015. Since then officers have been working with DSD to develop further the detail around the proposals, which received planning approval in October 2015. At this juncture, consideration is required around the future of the three navigation buoys and potential relocation opportunities.</p>
3.3	<p>By way of background, the buoys were gifted to the Council from the Commissioner for Irish Lights¹ in the early 1980’s in recognition of the sea port and maritime tradition of the city, and were used as a feature within a new scheme [at that time] for Cathedral Gardens. Consequently, officers have been liaising with the Commissioner of Irish Lights to investigate if there were any legal restrictions with the re-siting of the buoys. The Commissioner’s office has been positive around a possible future relocation and confirmed there are no legal restrictions around this. Furthermore, the suggestion of a possible relocation of the buoys to the Titanic area of the city was raised by the Commissioner’s office, given the proximity to water and relevance of the buoys as navigation aid; links to maritime heritage of the city; and potential to maximise the impact of other efforts to promote this area of the city.</p>
3.4	<p><i>Possible sites within Titanic area</i></p> <p>Officers have followed up with representatives from Titanic Foundation Ltd and Titanic Quarter Ltd to explore possible sites in the Titanic Area, and two sites emerged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An open green space along the current waterfront area to the rear of the Odyssey (Site 1); - An open area at the bottom of the Titanic slipways which has plans for a new public

¹ The Commissioners of Irish Lights is an all island body responsible for aids to navigation.

realm scheme, linking Titanic Belfast to further redevelopment plans to enhance this waterfront area (Site 2).

See appendix 2 for aerial photo and potential sites.

3.5

Some site observations:

- SITE 1: the area is already a green landscaped area, with public walkway surrounding it; it is situated in a prominent, busy pedestrian area where a range of small and city-wide events are held.

- SITE 2: there is good visibility from slipways/Titanic Belfast to this site; new public realm plans have been approved to connect this area further along as a waterfront area; the addition of the buoys would enhance these plans, including the display of other maritime artefacts (anchor; ropes) along the scheme.

Both sites require further follow up work around site conditions and will be subject to feasibility assessment and overall cost considerations.

3.6

Land considerations

Titanic Quarter Ltd own both sites as shown in Appendix 2. As a result Council will not be required to lease or provide a license for the land to accommodate any relocation process.

3.7

Asset considerations

As mentioned in above paragraph 3.3, it is proposed that the buoys are gifted to Titanic Foundation Ltd, and as such it would mean that Titanic Foundation Ltd would subsequently own, manage and maintain the buoys.

3.8

Financial & Resource Implications

The redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens is a Stage 2 project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed at SP&R committee meeting January 2016. As a result this project will be subject to the normal capital programme approval process and any costs associated with the removal, relocation and installation of the buoys will be investigated as part of this process. In addition, if Members are in agreement to gifting the buoys to Titanic Foundation Ltd, there will be no further finance (re maintenance etc) commitment to the council.

3.9

Equality or Good Relations Implications

Equality and good relation implications of this project will be considered at part of the

	Outline Business Case, as required as part of the Stage 2 Capital Programme approval process.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 – Cathedral Gardens design plan Appendix 2 – Aerial photo of indicated sites