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Ms E McGoldrick
Belfast City Council
Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Dear Ms McGoldrick

**SHANKILL GATEWAY PHASE I PUBLIC REALM/ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPROVEMENT SCHEME & GREAT PATRICK STREET / FREDERICK ST
JUNCTION**

The Minister for Communities has asked me to thank you for your correspondence of 12 October 2020 regarding proposals within the Shankill Gateway Phase I PREI Scheme around the Peter's Hill junction and also proposed improvements to the Great Patrick Street / Frederick Street junction. The Minister has asked me to reply on her behalf.

With regards to the Shankill Gateway Phase I PREI scheme, the original designs submitted for planning approval in January 2019 included substantial changes based on the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) proposals, specifically around the re-design of the Peter's Hill junction.

In December 2019 the planning committee endorsed the recommendation of the planning officers to grant planning approval for the scheme subject to agreement on

any planning amendments required by DfI. In February 2020, The Department for Communities (DfC) provided DfI with further detailed scheme drawings for their consideration.

In June 2020 DfI advised that it could not accept the proposals for the re-design work at the Peter's Hill junction within the timescales required and were content at that stage to keep the existing junction layout but to resurface the area as part of the scheme. DfI also advised they have significant future plans for a number of junction works within the city centre, which could include the Peter's Hill junction and would be happy to work with DfC to consider any improvements that could be made when carrying out that work.

Based on the information provided by DfI no changes were made to the layout of the junction other than upgrading of materials. This was to ensure the scheme was not delayed any further and the local community could benefit from the much needed public realm improvements to the area. It would also allow for future changes to be made to the junction by DfI as and when they take their planned work forward.

DfC informed the Planning Manager within BCC of this compromise agreement with DfI for the junction re-alignment to be removed from the scheme. Full planning approval was received in July 2020 based on these changes.

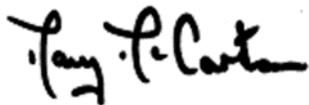
In relation to the proposed improvements to the Great Patrick Street / Frederick St Junction, this area is part of DfC's Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 project. As this project is currently on hold, DfI and their consultants (for the York Street Interchange project), have carried out work to review the existing junction design, the proposed Phase 3 design and the emerging active travel needs of the existing communities and the growing student population in this area.

DfC has established a working group made up of representatives from BCC, DfC and DfI to move the redesign work forward for both this and the Carrick Hill/Frederick Street/Donagall Street junction and to ensure that any emerging designs take account of the principles from the "Bolder Vision" for Belfast city centre.

DfC was one of the partners who helped develop the “Bolder Vision” which has been endorsed by the DfC Minister. DfC’s contribution to delivering transformation in Belfast City Centre will focus on the design of public realm schemes. These schemes provide an opportunity for the three statutory partners (DfC, DfI and BCC) to work collaboratively to improve the streetscape for pedestrians, cyclists and local communities while finding ways of providing lively, safe and green streets. In order to ensure that co-design takes place the Department has embedded the need to take account of the Bolder Vision principles and an inclusive design approach into the design development of public realm projects.

I trust this response addresses the questions you raised and please feel free to contact me on 028 9082 9229 or by e mail: Mary.mccartan@communities-ni.gov.uk should you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary McCartan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'C'.

Mary McCartan
Deputy Director
Belfast Regeneration Directorate