



Department for

Communities

An Roinn

Pobal

Deapartment fur

Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Carolyn Donnelly
Democratic Services Officer
Legal and Civic Services
Belfast City Council

Belfast Regeneration Directorate
Level 4, NINE Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3LP
Phone: 028 9082 9274
email: Patrick.anderson@communities-ni.gov.uk

Via email: donnellycarolyn@belfastcity.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Our Ref: CORR-1734-2021

30 November 2021

Dear Ms Donnelly,

PUBLIC REALM PROJECT BELFAST

Thank you for your letter of 11 November 2021 in relation to public realm projects in Belfast city centre. Minister Hargey has asked that I respond on her behalf.

As part of the Belfast Streets Ahead (BSA) programme the Department plans to deliver two major public realm projects over the next number of years. The BSA Phase 3 will see public realm improvements delivered in the north of the city and BSA Phase 5 will deliver public realm improvements in the south of the city centre. Together these projects will cover a significant part of the Civic Spine (from the Ulster University to Queens University) as set out in "A Bolder Vision for Belfast".

The Department has ambitious plans to deliver high quality streetscapes and public spaces for those who live, work and visit the city centre as well as creating an enhanced environment for those communities living on the periphery of the project areas. In order to deliver these schemes effectively consideration must also be given to the Department for Infrastructure's plans for the area and the future operation of the transport system before BSA Phase 3 and BSA Phase 5 plans can be finalised.

Minister Hargey has noted that the Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 (BRT2) proposals, (which were recently consulted on) and realises that these could potentially pose challenges for the strategic commitment as set out in the Bolder Vision, "for a greener, cleaner and more liveable city centre". The potential BRT2 route along Royal Avenue/Donegall Place and along Dublin Road impacts will impact upon both the BSA

Phase 3 and Phase 5 projects and may be regarded by some to reverse improvements achieved in Donegall Place which were introduced in BSA Phase 1 of the programme.

As a result, Minister Hargey has asked officials to set up a workshop with the Minister for Infrastructure, her senior officials and Belfast City Council to discuss these issues and agree a way forward. This workshop has been arranged for 12 January 2022.

Subject to the outcome of this workshop it is the Department's intention to move forward with finalising the designs for both BSA Phase 3 and BSA Phase 5 as quickly as possible so that we can commence the construction stage of these projects. It should, however, be noted that, due to the exceptionally high levels of funding required to deliver these schemes and taking account of Departmental budget constraints it is planned that the construction stage of BSA Phase 3 will have to be completed before the construction of BSA Phase 5 can commence on the ground.

I trust this addresses your concerns but if you require any further information please let me know.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Anderson', is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

PATRICK ANDERSON
Acting Director, Belfast Regeneration