

Appendix A

Legal and Civic Services Department



Democratic Services Section

Your reference

Being dealt with by Ms Eilish McGoldrick

Our reference EMcGCGR170423RW

Email democraticservices@belfastcity.gov.uk

Date 17th April, 2023

Julie Harrison
Permanent Secretary
Corporate Policy Unit
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast, BT2 8GB

Dear Permanent Secretary,

Rosetta Way – “quietway”

Belfast City Council, at a meeting of Council on 3rd April, passed the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor McKeown:

“Belfast City Council:

- Recognises that many neighbourhoods across the city suffer from the blight of congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic, under investment in active travel measures and road safety issues;
- Recalls that the Council has already expressed its support for measures like School Streets and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as well as the creation of a “quietway” linking Lagan Gateway to Cregagh Glen, through Cherryvale Playing Fields;
- Believes that a “quietway” through Rosetta - a “Rosetta Way” along with associated measures like active travel infrastructure, reduced speed limits, the closing up of rat runs, the installation of tree pits as chicanes could all help to reduce congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic and road safety issues;
- Agrees to write to the Department for Infrastructure seeking an update on the agreed puffin crossing on the Knockbreda Road which would

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facilitate the opening of the pedestrian gate into Cherryvale and the creation of the Rosetta Way “quietway”;

- Further agrees to ask the Department for Infrastructure to draw up an action plan, in consultation with the Council and relevant local organisations and residents, to deliver the Rosetta Way “quietway” and tackle the challenges associated with congestion, poor air quality, commuter traffic and road safety issues in the area.”

I invite you to consider the motion and advise me of your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eilish McGoldrick', written in a cursive style.

Eilish McGoldrick
Democratic Services Officer

From the Permanent Secretary
Dr Julie Harrison

Eilish McGoldrick
Democratic Services Officer
Belfast City Council
Legal and Civic Services Department
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Belfast, BT1 5GS

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Your reference: EMcGCGR170423RW
Our reference: SCORR-0199-2023
29 August 2023

Dear Ms McGoldrick

ROSETTA WAY QUIETWAY AND PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING ON KNOCKBREDA ROAD.

Thank you for your letter of 17 April 2023 in which you refer to a motion made by the Council on 3 April requesting that my Department draws up an action plan to deliver the Rosetta Way Quietway and to seek an update on the proposed puffin crossing on Knockbreda Road. Firstly, can I apologise for the delay in responding to your letter. The Department has in the meantime had a lot of engagement with Council colleagues and elected representatives over recent months including on Active Travel and on the forthcoming Transport Plan.

Quiet Streets were referred to as a potential tool in the Making Belfast an Active City: Belfast Cycling Network 2021', however, the Department has yet to develop this as a policy and since that time has been developing its thinking in light of the Climate Act and progression of both a Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland and more local transport plans.

As you will have seen from coverage of such initiatives in other places, they must have the support of local communities and care is needed to consider the impacts on the wider transport network, as there is the potential to displace problems elsewhere. Quiet Streets / Low Traffic Neighbourhoods also require substantial professional input and community consultation. These schemes can also be contentious as has been evidenced by the review of schemes in England initiated by the Prime Minister.

I would like to see the outcome of that review before I ask my team to consider the implementation of schemes locally here. They also need to do so in light of other relevant plans.

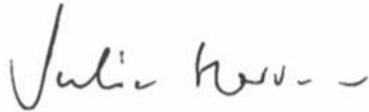
In the meantime, the team is currently undertaking the initial scoping phase for the development of a Transport Demand Management Framework for Northern Ireland to outline the range of potential measures that may be brought forward to encourage sustainable travel choices and reduce the dominance of private use cars. It is intended

that the framework will be subject to stakeholder engagement throughout its development.

In relation to the proposed crossing on Knockbreda Road, the Department wrote to the Council's Chief Executive on 4 May 2023 to provide an update. An alternative location is being considered and the team will be in touch with Council officials once they have developed their plans further.

I trust that you will find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

JULIE HARRISON

Appendix C

Network Traffic, Street Lighting and
Transportation
Eastern Division



Department for
Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

Department for

Infrastructure

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Mr John Walsh
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Being Dealt with By: Graeme Salmon
Direct Line: (028) 90526238

Our Ref:

Date: 4 May 2023

Dear Mr Walsh

KNOCKBREDA ROAD, BELFAST – CONTROLLED CROSSING AND OPENING OF CHERRYVALE PLAYING FIELD REAR ENTRANCE.

I am writing to update you on the request for DfI to provide a controlled crossing on Knockbreda Road, Belfast at the rear access to Cherryvale playing fields.

As you will be aware this request was made to previous DfI Minister Nicola Mallon to facilitate the opening of the rear gate to Cherryvale playing fields.

The Minister then asked the Department to consider this request and DfI Eastern Division commissioned its consultants to carry out a feasibility study.

The study looked at three options, the signalisation of the Rosetta Park/Knockbreda Road junction and two possible locations for a puffin crossing along Knockbreda Road.

Accordingly, the study highlighted a preferred location for the puffin crossing, which was outside no 30 Knockbreda Road. This was focused on the aspiration to have a crossing located as close to the rear gate of Cherryvale Playing fields as possible, even though it had extremely limited forward sight distance to the primary signals and was in very close proximity to the very busy Rosetta Park/Knockbreda Road junction.

The detailed design of a puffin outside no 30 was then subject to the normal DFI design process and an independent safety audit carried out on the proposed location.

I can advise that as part of the audit report the Safety Audit team were of a view that whilst it understood that the location has been chosen to coincide with the desire line from the new access/egress gate from Cherryvale, the audit team are of a view that moving the crossing east could further help improve visibility from the west and still provide a crossing on the desire line from Knock Eden Park (which is utilised as a rear entrance to Aquinas School).

This was then considered by Eastern Divisions approval 'A Group' system and the view of the Safety Audit team was confirmed. As such, I can advise that we are now focusing our attention on a crossing situated close to the Knock Eden Park junction and have instructed our consultants to carry out the detailed design and a further safety audit for this location.

We will keep you informed on progress and the effect on adjacent residents so the Council can carry out the consultation. We also realise that the council is awaiting completion of a crossing before proceeding any further with its proposal to open the rear gate of the playing fields. I would suggest that no expenditure is committed until the outcome of a crossing is known.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Salmon

GRAEME SALMON
Network Traffic Manager

Appendix D

From the Transport and Road Asset Management Deputy Secretary
Mr Colin Woods

John Walsh
Chief Executive
Belfast City Council

Via email:
officeofthechiefexecutive@belfastcity.gov.uk



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Telephone: (028) 9054 7873
Email: Colin.Woods@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:
Our reference:
Date: Thursday, 21 September 2023

Dear Mr Walsh,

DfI Transport & Roads Update to Belfast City Council

Ahead of the updates the Divisional Roads Managers will be providing to Councils, I'd like to offer some wider context, especially in relation to the Department's budgetary position and the impact that has on our work.

DfI's Financial Position and the impact on Roads Functions

The Department is managing a 14% reduction in its 2023-24 resource budget allocation when compared to 2022-23 on a like for like basis. Significant action has been taken to reduce spending across all areas, and fares and other charges have been increased to help sustain essential services. Having done all of that, the Department is still facing a large funding gap against its resource budget allocation.

In July 2023, the Department published on its website an Interim Consultation Report of the equality implications arising from a range of options on the possible reduction of services. This Report recognised the impact of these potential reductions to Winter Service provision, road maintenance and flood risk management to emergency levels only, and turning off streetlights, which would affect all road users and communities. It is important to note that these options are decisions which are not currently within the power of senior officials to take.

Due to the Department's budget position, we have had to take the decision to continue with a Limited Service on road maintenance activities such as defect repairs, like potholes, and gully emptying. At this stage it is planned that winter service will continue as before, though a large volume of vacancies and the impact of industrial action could place that service under additional strain.

The Department's 2023-24 Capital budget is also well below our requirement. The opening Capital budget for structural maintenance of the road network is £85m, which is welcomed but still falls well short of the £143 million required annually to maintain the road network in a reasonable condition. Budget has also been made available for things

like Local Transport Safety Measures, though our capacity is more limited than we may wish it to be. The constrained budget position also means that the Department is unable to fill posts becoming vacant through retirement or other departures; with over 400 vacancies in my Group alone you will appreciate how this impedes our ability to offer the level of services that we would wish across the full range of responsibilities.

The Strategic Direction for Transport

I am mindful of the need to develop our strategic and policy thinking to manage the impact of budget constraints and set out what the Department believes the future of transport should be. Later this year the Department hopes to publish a Transport Strategy for public consultation. It is an overarching framework which will inform the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services across Northern Ireland up to 2035.

While the historic focus has been on the how the network facilitates the movement of private cars, responding to the challenge of climate change and our new legal obligations to deliver net-zero by 2050 means that we need to think hard about how we view and engage with the transport network.

Through the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 the Assembly has set out a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, along with interim targets including at least a 48% reduction in net emissions by 2030. There is a legal requirement on all Northern Ireland departments to exercise their functions, as far as is possible, in a manner consistent with the achievement of the targets of the Act and carbon budgets set under it.

Given that transport is the second highest emitter of greenhouse gases, DfI and its partners have a major role in ensuring Northern Ireland is able to achieve the overall target. The rapid decarbonisation of transport represents the single greatest challenge facing the planning and management of our transport network since it developed into the modern network we recognise today. As such, the decarbonisation of transport is likely to be the single largest strategic driver for our work over the next decade. The Transport Strategy will aim to support this strategic direction for all involved in the transport sector. The scale and pace of the change necessary to reduce our transport emissions to the levels necessary should not be underestimated.

It will be crucial for the Department and local government to work together to deliver the aims of Transport Strategy. The emerging Transport Plans, which will link in with the development and timing of your Local Development Plan, are a key delivery mechanism. They will seek to apply the carbon and modal hierarchies in a pragmatic way to deliver proposals for a multimodal sustainable transport network across Northern Ireland that will support the development of local communities and economies. This approach will describe how active travel and improved public transport can retain and enhance the function of the transport network.

Development of Active Travel Infrastructure

The Climate Change Act states that, *“The Department for Infrastructure must develop sectoral plans for transport which set a minimum spend on active travel from the overall transport budgets of 10%”*. This obligation is a significant increase in active travel spend and extensive efforts are being made to ensure that we scale up our delivery capacity

from a relatively small base. We must also fully understand the consequential impact on other areas of transport spend that may need to be reduced in order to provide the investment in Active Travel.

The Department is working closely with Councils to better understand their five-year Active Travel programme and developing an appropriate grant and support framework for the delivery of greenways. We have commissioned a Northern Ireland wide Active Travel Network Delivery plan which is due for consultation in 2024. When complete, this will provide a firm basis for the prioritisation of the delivery of high quality active travel infrastructure within, and connecting, our towns and cities. The plan will complement and take account of the Belfast Cycle Network Delivery Plan and the greenways network. Steps are currently being taken to ensure increased planning, design and delivery resource moving forward, including additional consultancy support capacity.

Strategic Asset Management Plan for the Road Network

All of this activity takes place in the context of the budget challenges that I have already described, as well as all of the other work that goes into managing an asset worth over £30Billion. The underinvestment in the road network over the past decade increases the need for a sound strategic approach to the allocation of resources, and the delivery of services.

The Department plans to consult with the wider public this year to gain views on a Strategic Assessment Management Plan for the Road Network Asset. The draft Plan aims to outline the key principles that will guide the work of the Department in the development of its maintenance and development functions at an operational level. Understanding our approach to managing the road network at a strategic level will complement other strategic transport plans, ensure we are thinking consistently about the key drivers for change, and inform the implementation of future transport planning decisions.

Hopefully, the document and subsequent consultation will generate comment on aspirations for a future road network, whilst balancing constrained resources, an expanding asset base, maintenance backlogs, and current levels of service delivery.

If it would be helpful in engaging with these matters, I would be very happy to accompany my colleague Des McFarlane when they present their annual report to the Council at the annual meeting, when arranged, and to try and answer any additional questions that you may have.

Yours sincerely



COLIN WOODS