



Belfast
City Council

Your Reference:
Our Reference:

Being dealt with by: Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration & Development
Date: 5th November 2025

DfI Active Travel,
Hydebank House,
4a Hospital Road,
Ballydollahgan,
Belfast, BT8 8JL

Email: activetravel.eastern@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

Sailortown and Ulster University Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements

Belfast City Council welcomes this opportunity to respond to the consultation on the proposed Sailortown and Ulster University Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements. The Council is generally supportive of the vision and the ambitions set out within the Sailortown and Ulster University Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements scheme. The plans to provide 1.5km of new high quality active travel infrastructure, connecting York Street Station to Ulster University and the Cathedral Quarter, will support the city to achieve the targets set out in 'The Belfast Agenda,' and 'A Bolder Vision.'

The recommendations would contribute to realising the vision for Belfast as set out in the Belfast Agenda, to be 'beautiful, well connected and culturally vibrant and being a sustainable city, shared and loved by all its citizens, free from the legacy of conflict.' In addition to assisting in meeting the Agenda's targets to 'reduce the city's carbon emissions by 80%' and for 'the economy to support 46,000 additional jobs by 2035.

This proposal would specifically deliver on the strategic intent to support behavioural change projects that replace car journeys with walking, wheeling and cycling' and the action to 'deliver enhanced cycling infrastructure across the city' within the 'Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel' action plan within the Agenda.

A Bolder Vision is an ambitious blueprint for Belfast to explore a shared approach to creating a more attractive, accessible, safe and vibrant city, developed by Belfast City Council. The Sailortown and Ulster University Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements proposal will help to support the strategy's vision to 'fundamentally change the centre of Belfast to prioritise integrated walking, cycling and public transport and end the dominance of the car' and to 'remove severance and barriers to movement between the centre of Belfast and the surrounding communities to improve access for all.'

The proposal will also compliment Council's 'Under the Bridges' project to address its aim to improve the connectivity links between the City Centre and City Quays / Sailortown and to provide an enhanced amenity / urban recreation space in the area under the M3 bridges.



The need to improve the connection between the city and the harbour area has been highlighted in previous plans including the Great Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan, A Bolder Vision and the Belfast Waterfront Framework, and is of increasing importance to overcome the long-standing severance to communities and given the growth in population as a result of new residential developments, educational and leisure opportunities within the area. There is fragmentation in the urban form and blight caused by large road infrastructure that generates air and noise pollution and creates a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The sporadic lighting and unoccupied spaces also raise issues in relation to personal safety, which prevents people from taking this route, despite it being a direct link to the city centre and the Sailortown and City Quays areas.

In relation to the design, Council would ask that the Department considers the following;

- Continue to engage with the local communities to address the safety concerns highlighted with the Dock St Underpass arrangement through effective design within the scheme.
- Continue to engage with the Under the Bridges design team to optimise the key connectivity links that both schemes will bring to the area, including maximising the desire lines between City Quays/Sailortown and the city centre along Gamble Street,
- Support the creation of a 2-way cycle lane through the Under the Bridges site to connect Corporation Street with Donegal Quay,
- Council welcomes the introduction of the proposed pedestrian crossings to Corporation St and the Dunbar Linl and ask that DfI continue to engage with the Under the Bridges and the Corporation Street Housing Led Regeneration design teams to optimise the locations of these proposed crossings.
- Council would ask that the Department takes cognisance of the proposed 'Sailortown / Titanic Quarter Bridge,' to ensure alignment with future active travel provision within the area.

In conclusion, Belfast City Council is supportive of the proposed Sailortown and Ulster University Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements but requests that the Department for Infrastructure take into consideration when finalising its plans and during their implementation, the matters raised by Council in this response.

The Council would highlight that this response is being submitted as draft, given the deadline for submissions, it is subject to Council ratification on 1 December 2025. Following the meeting of full Council on 1 December 2025, the Council will follow up to confirm if this response should be treated as final or if there are further addendums which Elected Members have requested.

Yours sincerely,



Belfast
City Council

CATHY REYNOLDS
DIRECTOR OF CITY REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT