



Subject:	BCC Draft Response to DfI Consultation on Dublin Road and Botanic Avenue Pedestrian & Cycling Improvements
Date:	15 April 2026
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
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Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the Council's response to the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) preliminary engagement on proposed pedestrian and cycling improvements along Dublin Road, Shaftesbury Square and Botanic Avenue.
1.2	The response has been prepared in the context of the Council's adopted and emerging strategic frameworks, including A Bolder Vision for Belfast, the Belfast Agenda, the Local Development Plan (LDP), the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) Stocktake, the Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, the Resilience Strategy, and the emerging Eastern Transport Plan (ETP).
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the draft consultation response (Appendix A) for submission to the Department for Infrastructure. • Agree that the response continues to emphasise the need for the scheme to be designed in accordance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department for Transport's LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design ○ Wheels for Wellbeing – A Guide to Inclusive Cycling (4th Edition, 2020) ○ IMTAC's "A New Approach to Travel, Our Streets and Our Places" (2022) • Note that the scheme represents a significant early delivery opportunity for A Bolder Vision and the Eastern Transport Plan, and that the Council will continue to engage with DfI to ensure alignment with wider city centre regeneration priorities. • Note, that as outlined in Item 3.15, the consultation closes on the 10th April and before this Committee meeting. Therefore the draft response as Appendix A will be submitted to DfI, subject to this Committee's approval and Council Ratification on the 5th May 2026.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>DfI has commenced preliminary engagement on proposals to enhance pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along Dublin Road, Shaftesbury Square and Botanic Avenue. The scheme includes a dedicated cycle track, improved pedestrian crossings, and public realm upgrades. A link to the consultation page, including the scheme drawings, is included here with the consultation with consultation CGI's included in Appendix B of this report.</p>

3.2	The corridor is a strategically important link between the city centre, the university quarter, major employment clusters and South Belfast communities. It is also a key section of the Civic Spine identified within A Bolder Vision for Belfast.
3.3	<p>The Council has consistently supported the rebalancing of street space in favour of walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, as set out in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Bolder Vision for Belfast (2026) ○ Belfast Agenda – Connectivity, Active & Sustainable Travel (CAST) ○ Local Development Plan (LDP) Plan Strategy (2023) ○ BCCRIS Stocktake (2024) ○ Net Zero Carbon Roadmap ○ Resilience Strategy
3.4	<p>The emerging Eastern Transport Plan (ETP) reinforces this direction, adopting a “vision and validate” approach that prioritises people centred streets, reduced through traffic, and high quality active travel corridors.</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p>
3.5	<p>Strategic Fit</p> <p>The proposed scheme is strongly aligned with A Bolder Vision, particularly the Key Move to deliver a Civic Spine with a focus on people on the corridor. It supports the transition toward a city centre that is more inclusive, climate resilient and less dominated by private vehicles.</p>
3.6	<p>The BCCRIS Stocktake (2024) highlighted the need for improved connectivity, better public realm, reduced car dominance and increased greenery. The scheme responds directly to these findings.</p>
3.7	<p>The LDP Plan Strategy provides a statutory basis for prioritising active travel (Policies SP7, TRAN 1, TRAN 2), improving city centre streets and public spaces (CC1, CC2), and integrating green and blue infrastructure (ENV 3). The scheme is fully consistent with these policies.</p>
3.8	<p>The Eastern Transport Plan identifies the need to reduce through traffic, enhance walkability, and create safer, gender inclusive environments. The Dublin Road–Botanic corridor is one of the clearest opportunities to demonstrate early delivery of the ETP’s principles.</p>

3.9	<p>Design Standards and Inclusive Mobility</p> <p>The Council’s response emphasises that support for the scheme is contingent on the design meeting the highest standards of safety, accessibility and inclusivity. The Council will seek assurances that the scheme will be designed in full accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design, ensuring coherent, direct, safe and comfortable routes, protected cycle tracks, and junction treatments that minimise conflict. ○ Wheels for Wellbeing – A Guide to Inclusive Cycling, ensuring the route accommodates non standard cycles, avoids exclusionary access controls, and supports neurodivergent users. ○ IMTAC’s “A New Approach to Travel, Our Streets and Our Places”, ensuring predictable, legible layouts, clear separation of modes, and streets designed for disabled people first.
3.10	<p>These standards are essential to ensuring that the scheme delivers on the Council’s commitments to equality, accessibility and inclusive mobility.</p>
3.11	<p>Climate Resilience and Blue–Green Infrastructure</p> <p>The scheme provides a significant opportunity to integrate climate led placemaking, including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), street trees, biodiverse planting and permeable surfaces. These measures support the Resilience Strategy, Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, A Bolder Vision, and LDP Policy ENV 3, and align with the ETP’s emphasis on climate resilient corridors.</p>
3.12	<p>Integration with Wider Regeneration and Transport Programmes</p> <p>The corridor intersects and compliments with several major regeneration initiatives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5 ○ Housing Led Regeneration seed sites ○ Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2 ○ Future City Centre Programme ○ Waterfront Promenade Framework ○ Belfast Bikes expansion ○ Greenways and Connectivity, Active & Sustainable Project ○ Private Sector Investments including Bankmore Square, Weavers Cross, Weavers Hall & Botanic Studios
3.13	<p>The Council will continue to work with DfI to ensure that the scheme is coordinated with these programmes and forms part of a coherent, city wide active travel network.</p>

3.14	The Council also encourages DfI to undertake meaningful engagement with residents, businesses and community stakeholders along the corridor. Given the potential impacts on access, servicing, trade and neighbourhood character, it is important that the Department works collaboratively with those directly affected to ensure the final scheme reflects local needs and supports the vitality of the area.
3.15	As the consultation closes on the 10 th April, the draft response as included within Appendix A of this report will be submitted in line with the Consultation timetable, subject to comment/approval at this Committee meeting and ratification at full Council.
4.0	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
5.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
5.1	The Council's response emphasises the need for inclusive design in line with LDP Policy DES 2, ABV commitments, and IMTAC guidance.
5.2	The scheme has the potential to improve accessibility and safety for disabled people, older people, women, girls and other vulnerable groups.
5.3	Equality, Good Relations Implications, and Rural Needs impacts have been considered within the proposed response, and will be the responsibility of DfI as the delivery agent to undertake the full assessments.
6.0	Appendices
	Appendix A – BCC Draft Response to DfI Consultation on Dublin Rd and Botanic Ave Pedestrian & Cycling Improvements Appendix B – Dublin Road Botanic Cycling Visuals