

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
LIZ KIMMINS MLA

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Elish, a chara,

BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL

Thank you for your letter of 6 May 2026 relating to discussions at the recent Belfast City Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. I have set out below further information in relation to the 3 infrastructure projects included within the Belfast Region City Deal which I trust will address the points raised.

Lagan Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge


As you may be aware, my Department has lodged an appeal against the High Court ruling issued in June 2025 in relation to the previously authorised section of the A5 Western Transport Corridor. While elements of the case have already been considered, the matter will now be returned to the Court of Appeal for final determination. The conclusion of the legal process is expected to provide essential clarity on the application of section 52 of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 in the context of approving major projects. That clarity is required not only for the A5, but for all major infrastructure schemes. Given that the issues being examined in the A5 case are relevant to the approval of all major projects, it is considered appropriate not to take decisions on those schemes at this time. Proceeding in advance of legal clarity could introduce uncertainty and increase the risk of further legal challenges. In these circumstances, a decision on the Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge will be taken following the outcome of the appeal.

Projects like this Bridge are at the core of my Department's plans for the future of our transport network and I remain fully committed to its delivery. My Department is very aware of the need to ensure that the action it takes to progress major transport projects takes account of the law as set out in the Climate Change Act and interpreted by the courts. This project, like almost every project involving major construction, will involve a net increase in carbon emissions; steel and concrete results in more carbon whether it's used to drive on or walk on and the Act does not distinguish between different uses. Works on the Project are ongoing to refine the tender documentation, update the design, and other preparatory elements, ensuring the project can progress as quickly as possible once the legal position is clarified.

Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 (BRT2)

I remain committed to the delivery of BRT2, which will extend the Glider network into north and south Belfast. My officials have been working to progress the scheme at pace since my announcement in February 2025. On site survey works began in June 2025 to inform the preliminary design, and the Outline Business Case was approved in December 2025. I am also pleased to confirm that AtkinsRéalis has been appointed to advance the detailed design and work closely with the DfI project team to prepare for the construction phase. A detailed delivery programme is currently being developed in consultation with our design consultants. Once finalised, further information on the timing of the Ormeau Avenue section of works will be provided. Subject to a phased delivery approach reflecting available funding, Gliders services are scheduled to operate in the south of the city, serving Queen's University Belfast and City Hospital by 2030. The new O'Neill Road Park & Ride is also on track for completion by that time.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Kimmins', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

LIZ KIMMINS MLA
Minister for Infrastructure