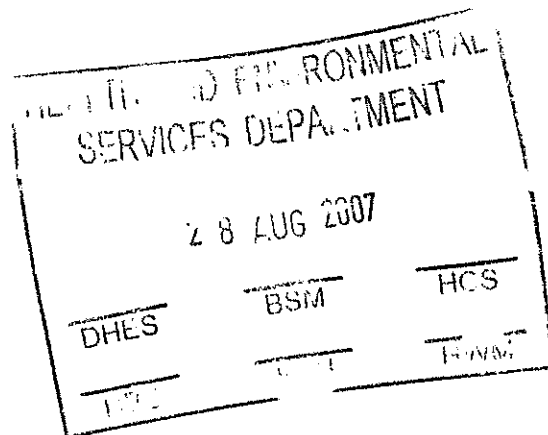


Department for  
**Social  
Development**  
www.dsdni.gov.uk

**BELFAST CITY CENTRE REGENERATION DIRECTORATE**  
Director: Jackie Johnston

Mr James Cunningham  
Regulatory Services  
Belfast City Council  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linenhall Street  
Belfast BT2 8DP



24 August 2007

Dear James

**DSD COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED LICENSED STREET TRADING LOCATIONS**

I refer to your consultation of 24 July 2007 inviting representations on the designation of street trading pitches.

As you are aware the Department for Social Development (DSD) is in the process of implementing its Streets Ahead Programme for Belfast City Centre to improve and enhance the physical appearance of the city. This works programme involves a significant amount of government funding, it is therefore vital that this investment is safeguarded through robust management and maintenance policies.

DSD has also taken over the legacy of the Laganside Corporation. Laganside land holdings, Development Agreements and statutory responsibilities have transferred to the Department for Social Development and these are now managed by Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate.

It is against this background that the Department for Social Development (DSD) comments in relation to the proposed licensed trading locations are made.

**General Comments**

DSD agrees that there is a role for licensed street trading as this can provide an attraction and add to the vibrancy to the city. The Public Realm masterplan recommends that careful stall design, considerate positioning and the correct products can bolster the existing traders in an area.

Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate (BCCRD) is currently funding Belfast City Council (BCC) to take forward a study to look at city centre branding for licensed trading stalls. It is hoped that the outcome of this work will lead to the introduction of high quality



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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stalls which will complement the improved city centre streetscape and make Belfast a more attractive place. DSD would be concerned that if a stall branding policy is not agreed in advance of the designation of sites and issuing of licences, the city centre may end up with poor quality stalls trading on upgraded streetscape, which would have a detrimental impact on the improvement works.

DSD wants BCC to ensure that the position of any designated site does not compromise the street design, impede pedestrian movement or add clutter and to this end it is suggested that all sites should be positioned to fit in with the proposed tram line (pavement band) of the Streets Ahead design or along the same line as street furniture. The Streets Ahead team would be happy to assist in identifying stall positions that could be incorporated into the streetscape designs which are currently being developed.

It is noted that a number of the sites identified for designation, are in areas which are on DSD's Street Ahead programme of works. If designation is given, BCC would need to be in a position to reallocate those traders who get a license to trade to temporary sites during the period of the site works.

### **Comment on Proposed Positions**

#### Site 6 Little Patrick Street

- DSD would have no issue with the proposed hot food stall at little Patrick Street apart from a concern for the potential of litter.

#### Site 8-9. College Street

- DSD are proposing to extend Disabled Parking along the north side of College Street as part of the Streets Ahead Scheme. Given the space requirements required for disabled parking and opening of car doors, position 8 would not be possible as indicated. It may be possible to accommodate this on the opposite side of the street, but detailed vehicle tracking analysis would be required to prove that this position would not interfere with Council refuse collections or other vehicle movements.
- Position 9 would require vehicle tracking to ensure that enough space is available for vehicles to make the turn from Fountain Street and again pass the disabled spaces whilst maintaining adequate pedestrian movement and line of sight to shop fronts and doorways.

#### Site 10-11. Fountain Street

- With regard to position 10, DSD would want the positioning of a designated site to be parallel with the tram lines or along the same line as the other street furniture.
- Position 11, under the Streets Ahead project this site has been proposed as a location for artwork.

#### Site 16. Arthur Square

- Position 16 conflicts with the Arthur Square artwork position.

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### Site 17. Arthur Square

- The position shown would conflict with the store access to Frasers. Arthur Square is a difficult area to accommodate stalls because of the vehicle and pedestrian movements that are required.

### Site 21 Writers Square

- DSD own Writers Square and this is currently used as an events space. The Department has given a commitment to consult with Dean McKelvey prior to issuing permits for events, to ensure that the use of this space is not in conflict with activities at St. Anne's Cathedral. BCC should ensure that the Dean is consulted on the proposal for a designated licensed trading stall in this area.
- DSD considers that licensed street trading could provide an attraction for Writers Square as it could bring activity to the area that may counter some of the existing anti social behaviour problems. However it should be noted that this area will be redeveloped as part of the North East Quarter development.

### Sites 18, 19 & 20 Cotton Court, Hill Street and Commercial Court

- DSD note that the proposal already addresses the lack of space in Cotton Court, Hill Street and Commercial Court which would have been a concern in relation to the H&S of the public.
- DSD are content with the proposal, subject to property owner's consent, for artists to sell arts and crafts in these areas displayed on the walls of properties or suspended from specially erected cables.

### Site 22 Donegall Quay

- DSD would oppose the sale of beverages and confectionary at Donegall Quay due to the potential for litter although if the Lookout were to reopen as an education and visitor's centre, stalls selling refreshments would provide a useful public amenity.
- DSD is concerned that this would not be managed effectively and the site, which includes the iconic Big Fish, could become buried in litter.
- This area is also undergoing development with the OBEL building due to complete in 2008 and consideration would have to be given to the views of the residents that will reside there.

### Site 23 Lanyon Place

- It is noted that the commodity to be sold at this site is yet to be determined, If this site is designated, DSD would want the commodity to be in keeping with Lanyon Place, which houses the iconic Waterfront Hall and soon to be constructed Soloist building.
- Any decision on designated street trading pitches within Lanyon Place would have to canvas the view of Lanyon Place Management Company.

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I hope these comments are of assistance to the Council.

Yours sincerely



**Jackie Johnston**

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