



Subject:	Draft East Bank Strategy
Date:	10 th May 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nuala Gallagher, Director of City Development
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on work commenced to develop a detailed framework for the area identified as the East Bank, referred to as the East Bank Strategy (See Map in Appendix 1) and to seek agreement to undertake a public consultation exercise on the draft Strategy (see Appendix 2).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: - Agree to recommend to Council that a public consultation exercise on the draft East

	<p>Bank Strategy be undertaken over a 12 week period during summer 2017;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the intention to report back to Committee on a finalised version of the Strategy for approval in the autumn.
3.0	Main Report
	Background
3.1	In autumn 2016 the Council appointed a multi-disciplinary consultant team led by Arup to take forward a detailed framework for the area identified as the East Bank (See map in Appendix 1).
3.2	The East Bank work is being undertaken in the context of the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) and the identified Special Action Areas (SAA) for places in need of an immediate, detailed and integrated planning approach. An example of this is the previous work undertaken in Linen Quarter which Members approved in May 2016.
3.3	The Council established a Steering Group with council staff from City Centre Development and the Local Development Plan team to work alongside the appointed multi-disciplinary team led by Arup. In recognition of our shared undertaking to work together on City Regeneration and in acknowledgement of the anticipated emphasis on future infrastructure requirements and the large land holdings of DFC, both Transport NI and DfC nominated senior representatives as members of the steering group. Officers from BRT and Translink also attended.
3.4	Arup has undertaken a comprehensive review of land use, policy and the transport and economic context and has held two stakeholder workshops to inform our understanding of the area and key issues. Early consultation with elected Members and other key stakeholders including major landowners, residents and community groups began in December 2016 as part of Stage 1 of the project. A second stakeholder workshop took place in February 2017 which explored options to be included in the draft consultation strategy (Stage 2).
3.5	<p>Summary of the Vision and Place-making Themes</p> <p>The draft strategy seeks to make a new city quarter so that by 2030, the East Bank will be fully woven into the fabric of the city centre. It will be lively, diverse, accessible and well-connected to the city core, the River Lagan and surrounding communities; providing places</p>

	<p>to live, work and socialise. Four place-making themes are explored in the draft strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the potential of development sites across the area; • Energising the River Lagan Corridor; • A connected and legible East Bank; • Making streets and spaces for people.
3.6	<p>Options for discussion in the draft Strategy include significant rationalisation of road and rail infrastructure in the study area to create a visionary sustainable transport corridor or boulevard on Bridge End. These changes include the removal of the Station Street flyover adjacent to Queen’s Quay (which already has planning consent); the removal of the Bridge End flyover; the reduction of road space for general traffic and the proposed relocation of the TQ railway station. TNI, Translink and BRT have contributed to the development of proposed options and they have also been discussed with NI Permanent Secretaries at the Belfast Strategic Issues Group and with the Department of Infrastructure’s Director of Network Services. Their input to the draft document emphasises the level of complexity in terms of traffic movements arising from the implementation of the infrastructure options proposed. It is envisaged that changes to the road and rail infrastructure will be introduced in phases over time and each stage will require more detailed traffic modelling studies, on a localised and city-wide scale to understand the full impact of the change prior to its implementation. A significant change will be required in the way people travel on this corridor, in favour of public transport, walking and cycling, to compensate for the reduction in road space. It is expected that the issues around the need for more detailed studies will be raised as part of the public consultation exercise.</p>
3.7	<p>The Strategy is defined within the parameters of existing policies and is intended to complement rather than replace them. Should any guidance conflict with statutory guidance then the latter will prevail. It is proposed that, when approved by the Council, the Strategy would complement planning policy that applies to the city and together help to shape its future direction. These include the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP 2015) which is the statutory development plan for the city and BCCRIS which builds upon some of the key objectives of existing policies and sets out a broad vision to regenerate and influence investment in the City Centre</p>
3.8	<p>Public Consultation</p> <p>Arup presented a summary of the draft strategy for public consultation to City Growth and Regeneration Committee in April 2017. The draft strategy document itself is attached as</p>

<p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p>	<p>Appendix 2. The next step is to consult with key stakeholders and adjacent communities to seek their input on the options proposed and opportunities identified. The proposed consultation and engagement exercise will commence following the Council meeting on 1st June and last for 12 weeks until 25th August and will include on-line consultation via the Council's web-site and public consultation workshops and drop-in sessions.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Equality and good relations screening will be conducted in parallel with the proposed consultation processes.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The cost of potential public realm/environmental improvement projects or economic intervention projects which may emerge, and which have potential implications for the City Centre Investment Fund, will be reported to a future Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Map of East Bank</p> <p>Appendix 2: Draft East Bank Strategy for public consultation</p>

