



<b>Subject:</b>	Transport Hub Update
<b>Date:</b>	23rd November 2018
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Alistair Reid, Director of Place and Economy
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Cathy Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development Lead Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
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"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress of the proposals for the Transport Hub and to confirm the Council's corporate support for the Transport Hub development.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to note the update in relation to the planning application for the proposed Transport Hub and its strategic importance in the regeneration and growth of the city. In light of its strategic and economic significance, Members are asked to provide their support to the proposed development and to note that this is in the context of the comments already made from a planning perspective, as agreed by the Planning Committee on 11 September 2018 and 17 October 2017.

	Members are also asked to note that the future proposals for the wider Weavers Cross regeneration will be brought to both the City Growth & Regeneration Committee and to the Planning Committee in due course. This will of course consider neighboring communities.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	The proposed Belfast Transport Hub and wider Weavers Cross regeneration is a transport-led regeneration project which will ultimately involve the redevelopment of the Europa Bus Centre, Great Victoria Street Railway Station and surrounding NI Transport Holding Company (NITHC) land. It is proposed that this 20 acre mixed-use development site will comprise a multi-modal transport hub alongside commercial, leisure and residential facilities.
3.2	NITHC served a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) on the Council in October 2016 in respect of both the Transport Hub (PAN deemed acceptable) and the wider Weavers Cross Regeneration proposal (PAN deemed not acceptable and expected to be re-submitted). Subsequently a planning application was received for the new integrated Transport Interchange element only on 16th June 2017. This was called in by the Department for Infrastructure on 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2017 due to its regional significance and it is still under consideration. Consequently, the proposed development now consists of two separate elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport Hub; and</li> <li>• Wider masterplan development scheme (Weavers Cross)</li> </ul> <i>Transport Hub</i>
3.3	As noted above, in June 2017 NITHC submitted a full planning application ( <u>LA04/2017/1388/F</u> ) for a new integrated transport interchange comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• station concourse;</li> <li>• 26 bus stands;</li> <li>• 8 railway platforms;</li> <li>• bus maintenance and parking;</li> <li>• track and signalling enhancements;</li> <li>• bus access bridge;</li> <li>• cycle and taxi provision;</li> <li>• car parking;</li> </ul>

- new public square and public realm improvements;
- highway and infrastructure improvements; and
- temporary structures and compounds for bus operations during construction.

3.4

The application is currently being considered by DfI and a decision is expected before the end of 2018. The Council, as the local planning authority, responded formally to the consultation supporting the application, following meetings of the Planning Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and 11 September 2018.

Key Issues.

3.5

By way of policy background, the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) sets out the Council's collective ambition for the continuing growth and regeneration of the city core and its surrounding area and includes a road map of policies and projects to underpin this growth, with the Transport Hub highlighted as a key strategic project in this overall regeneration. The Strategy was shaped by extensive engagement with city stakeholders from all sectors.

3.6

Transport and connectivity will play a key role in the economic growth and regeneration of Belfast by enhancing access and serving as one of the key elements to catalyse growth and support Belfast as a successful modern city. BCCRIS underscores the importance of this in terms of city wide regeneration.

3.7

The proposed Transport Hub is located in one of the identified signature areas of the BCCRIS i.e. the South Centre and the significance of the Transport Hub becoming the gateway to the city centre and its immediate vicinity is emphasised in this. It highlights that the proposal for a new Transport Hub at this location is to be welcomed as a major improvement in convenience and connectivity of the regional rail system and associated transport links, with significant increases in passenger traffic anticipated. It also emphasises that the opportunity is not just one of transport engineering but is a chance to redefine the gateway to Belfast's city centre and act as a major regeneration opportunity for the entire city centre and neighbouring areas.

3.8

The Transport Hub is also identified in the Belfast Agenda as a key element of the City Development growth ambitions. It highlights the importance of improved connectivity and

that we will seek to maximise the opportunities of the Transport Hub and provide the development of sustainable transport.

3.9 The Council's Planning Committee responded to the planning application as consultee and the response was agreed by the Planning Committee on 27th October 2017 and again on 11 September 2018. A copy of the response is attached at **Appendix 1**.

3.10 With regard to community engagement, Translink has consulted and engaged with a range of stakeholders prior to and as part of the submission of the full planning application. A dedicated Engagement Manager has also been appointed by Translink to provide communication and engagement support specifically for the development. Translink is also liaising with Council to bring forward various aspects of the development. There has been ongoing liaison on the Buy Social clauses and a draft Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared and will be finalised upon planning approval and appointment of the contractor. A Construction Employment Academy is also proposed to support jobs around enabling works and Transport Hub build.

3.11 It is clear that the Transport Hub will bring about significant regeneration, economic and environmental benefits to the city and aligns with the Council's ambitions within the Belfast Agenda and the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy. The Council will however continue to work with Translink to ensure that delivery of the Transport Hub generates the greatest possible regeneration benefits to local residents in terms of jobs, training and economic impact.

*Wider masterplan development scheme (Weavers Cross)*

3.12 The full application for the wider regeneration scheme has not yet been submitted to the Council. The site sits within the wider context of a regeneration masterplan, referred to collectively as Weavers Cross, which will be submitted in outline planning application form. The proposed regeneration masterplan for this wider area is expected to consist of a mix of commercial and residential development. Initially both the outline and full applications were to be submitted in tandem but the outline application for the wider site is yet to be submitted pending planning approval for the Transport Hub.

3.13 Further reports on the wider Weavers Cross regeneration proposals will be brought back to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee in due course and officers are continuing to

	engage with Translink on this. In addition, it is expected that the outline application for the wider site will be processed and determined by the Council. Prior to the submission of an outline application for the wider development, the applicant will be required to undertake pre-application community consultation as the proposal will be for Major development.
3.14	Given the strategic and economic significance of the proposed Transport Hub, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee is being asked to note the update in relation to planning and to provide its support to the proposed development of the Transport Hub. This is in the context of the comments already made from a planning perspective and agreed by the Planning Committee on 17 October 2017 and 11 September 2018.
	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
3.15	No direct resource implications associated this report.
	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</b>
3.16	No specific equality or good relations implications at this time.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 - Planning Addendum report 11 September 2018.