

35-39 HILL STREET, BELFAST, BT1 2LB

6th May 2021

FAO: Ms Suzanne Wylie CEO,

Belfast City Council,
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP

Chief Executive's Office	
Date:	11.5.21
Noted by CX:	Y/N
Ref:	Sus 215
Referred to:	Aileen in this/Cheryl Reynolds
Copy sent	Original sent
MB updated	Invite reg

Dear Ms Wylie,

CATHEDRAL QUARTER PUBLIC REALM

In 1986, we the undersigned, were the first to invest in the, now named, Cathedral Quarter.

In the following years to the present day further investments continued to be made.

These investments included those of an altruistic nature such as:

- The commissioning of young artists to make non-sectarian urban-murals.
- The creation of an entrance-free courtyard which, through the medium of inscribed verse, displays and pays homage to Northern Irish poets and wordsmiths.
- The establishment of an art gallery [The Seaholly Gallery] which offers exhibitions free of charge to young local artists.
- The achievement of planning permission for an arts and crafts workshop, the implementation of which has been delayed by the current pandemic.
- The creation of an entrance-free museum celebrating the history of Belfast whiskey with plans to expand and enhance that existing attraction.
- The constant bedecking of the streets with floral displays, festooned lighting and a frequently changing variety of overhead-suspended mobiles.
- The conservation, salvaging and acquisition of local artefacts and elements of the built heritage and their redeployment in various hostelrys in the Cathedral Quarter.
- The creation of a new street and square to serve and bring back into use vacant back land properties.

At the outset of the regeneration of the Cathedral Quarter, both of the undersigned lobbied the Department of Environment and the then, Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Richard Needham, to ensure the retention of the 'cobbled' streets and the installation of overhead suspended cantina-lighting, both of which at that time were strongly opposed by Roads Service.

At this point in time virtually every town and city is witnessing a rapid decline of their respective centres.

It is also widely recognised that, with the closure of many department stores - which traditionally represented major people-attractors - other forms of attraction will need to be produced to prevent the complete demise of these urban centres.

For instance, in an attempt to lure visitors back to London's West End, Westminster Councillors have applied for planning permission to create a 25 metre high landscaped climbing-mound beside Marble Arch, the entrance to one of the busiest streets in the world - Oxford Street.

In the Cathedral Quarter Belfast has, ipso facto, already such a powerful attractor.

But, as can be observed from the photo-images in the enclosed dossier, which highlight a complete disregard and lack of respect for the Quarter's public realm through evidencing a surveyed total of 100 sq. metres of 81 post-excavation - botched patches, something radical has to take place to, repair these eyesores and arrest future recurrences.

This is, therefore, to respectfully implore you to personally study this document and employ your influence to have made-good the results of irreverent actions caused by the utter contempt shown by others for Belfast's arguably most cherished quarter - The Cathedral Quarter.

We would appreciate your response to this appeal and thank you in anticipation for doing so.

Kind regards,



Willie Jack



Barrie Todd MBE

Copies:

- Ms Nichola Mallon, MLA Minister for Infrastructure
- Mr Simon Hamilton, CEO Belfast Chamber of Commerce

Historic Whinstone Setts & Caithness Stone Pavers
Cathedral Quarter Condition Survey Report



April 2021

Mark Todd Architects

Ormeau Baths
18 Ormeau Avenue
Belfast - BT2 8HS

+44 7834596922
mark@marktoddarchitects.com
marktoddarchitects.com

Mark Todd

Ref-
CQ Condition Survey

Date-
11.04.21

Introduction

Mark Todd Architects were invited to carry out a condition survey of the existing Whinstone setts and Caithness stone pavers that form the majority of the hard landscaping within the Cathedral Quarter, Belfast. The survey was specifically limited to Hill Street, Gordon Street, Commercial Court, Exchange Place and Waring Street - all of which lie within a designated conservation area.

Conclusion

On Sunday 11th April 2021 Mark Todd Architects recorded 81 instances where stone setts and pavers, deemed to be of significant historical interest, had been removed and replaced with a bitumen based material.

21 of those instances were areas of Whinstone setts and 60 were areas of Caithness stone pavers. In all, approximately 100 square meters of historic fabric has been removed and replaced with a bitumen based material. This accounts for around 3.7% of the hard landscaping within area surveyed.

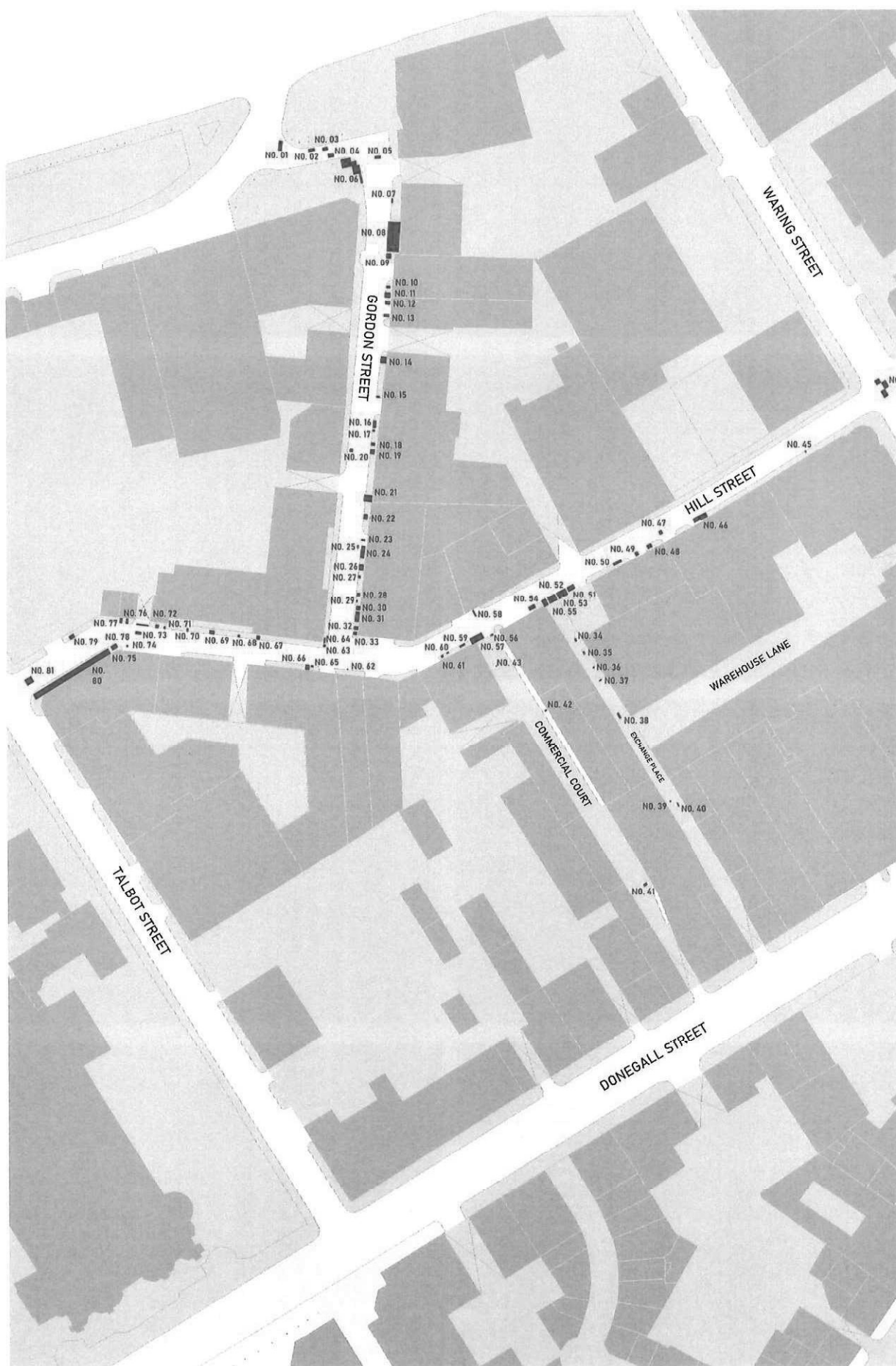


Mark Todd
Architect (ARB, RIBA, RSUA)

Approximate Bitumen Locations & Measurements (m)

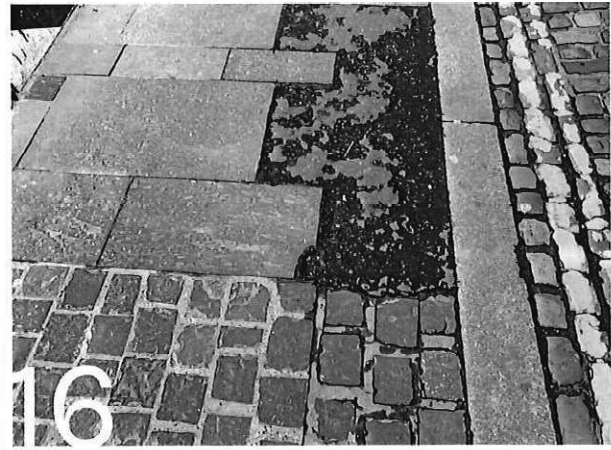
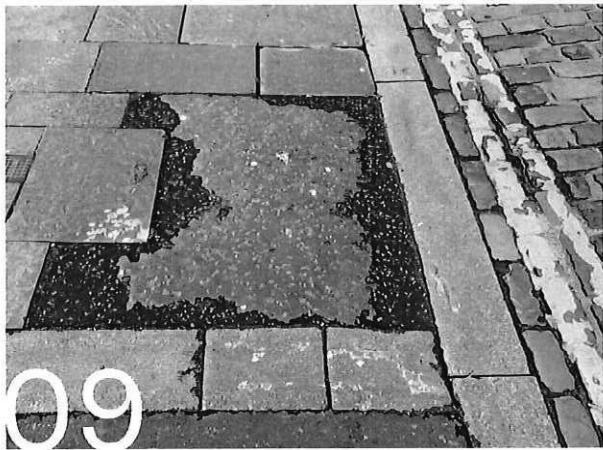
1.	2.00 x 0.76	22.	1.00 x 0.60	43.	0.18 x 0.28	64.	1.10 x 0.26
2.	1.28 x 0.58	23.	0.85 x 0.36	44.	3.00 x 2.00	65.	0.37 x 0.50
3.	1.10 x 0.65	24.	0.85 x 2.50	45.	0.80 x 0.20	66.	1.00 x 0.85
4.	1.20 x 0.87	25.	0.65 x 0.42	46.	0.60 x 1.34	67.	0.82 x 0.70
5.	1.27 x 0.58	26.	1.05 x 1.00	47.	0.40 x 0.44	68.	0.53 x 0.55
6.	4.00 x 2.00	27.	0.50 x 0.50	48.	0.60 x 1.00	69.	0.74 x 1.08
7.	0.26 x 0.86	28.	0.70 x 0.75	49.	0.70 x 0.85	70.	0.60 x 0.37
8.	1.47 x 6.00	29.	0.26 x 0.50	50.	1.80 x 0.44	71.	0.36 x 0.47
9.	0.92 x 0.98	30.	0.85 x 0.85	51.	1.55 x 1.06	72.	0.72 x 0.64
10.	0.80 x 0.50	31.	2.10 x 0.85	52.	2.10 x 1.40	73.	0.30 x 2.60
11.	1.17 x 1.05	32.	0.87 x 0.70	53.	1.10 x 1.70	74.	1.30 x 0.60
12.	0.97 x 0.57	33.	0.75 x 0.64	54.	1.05 x 1.45	75.	0.36 x 0.36
13.	1.2 x 0.57	34.	0.37 x 0.65	55.	0.80 x 1.39	76.	0.97 x 0.61
14.	1.20 x 1.32	35.	0.37 x 0.65	56.	0.65 x 0.35	77.	0.51 x 1.00
15.	0.70 x 0.37	36.	0.52 x 0.40	57.	2.80 x 1.30	78.	0.89 x 1.30
16.	0.67 x 1.40	37.	0.60 x 0.25	58.	1.40 x 0.30	79.	1.10 x 0.90
17.	0.52 x 0.36	38.	0.40 x 1.20	59.	0.40 x 1.20	80.	20.0 x 1.20
18.	0.84 x 0.60	39.	0.20 x 0.25	60.	0.30 x 0.50	81.	1.30 x 1.56
19.	0.87 x 1.05	40.	0.85 x 0.20	61.	0.42 x 0.55		
20.	0.72 x 0.79	41.	0.50 x 0.80	62.	0.20 x 0.20		
21.	1.70 x 1.35	42.	0.45 x 0.30	63.	0.51 x 0.55		

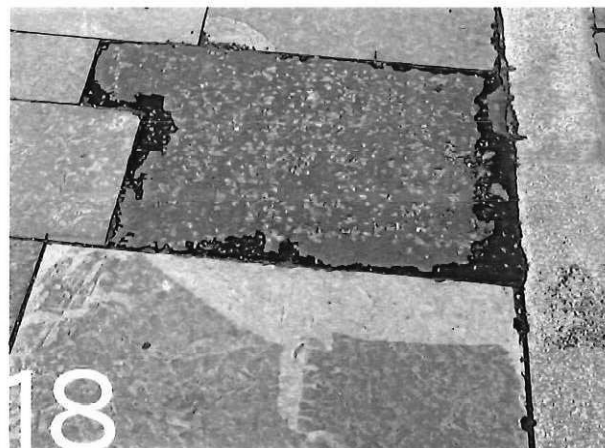
Total: 102.29 sq m

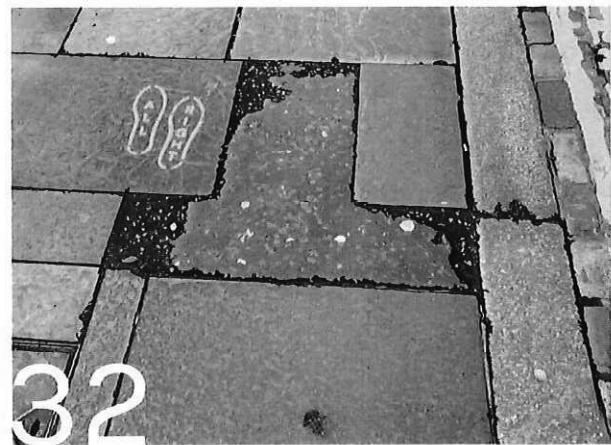
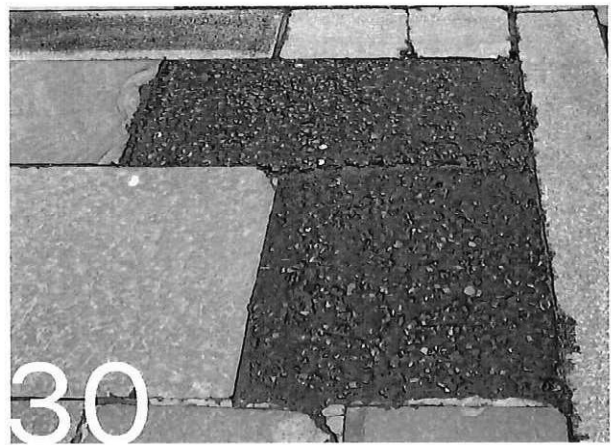
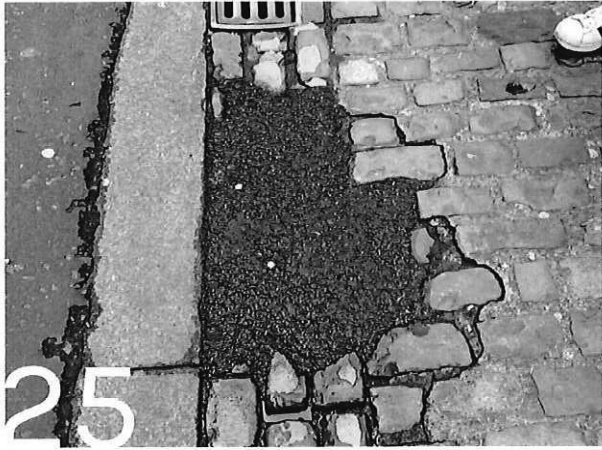


Map A: Approximate locations of missing Whinstone Setts and Caithness Stone Pavers

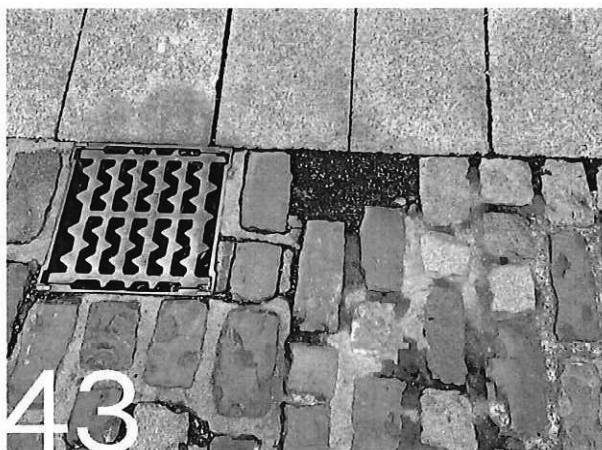


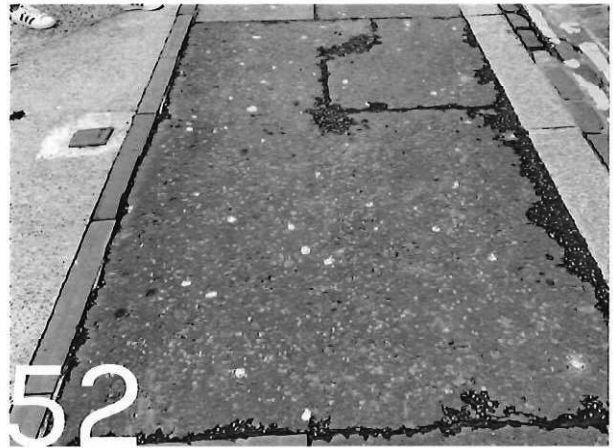


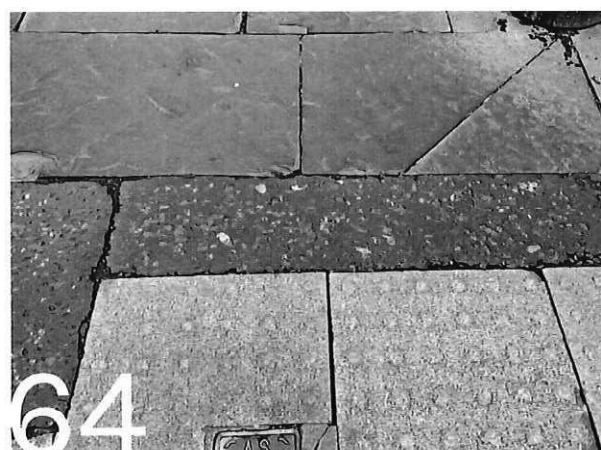
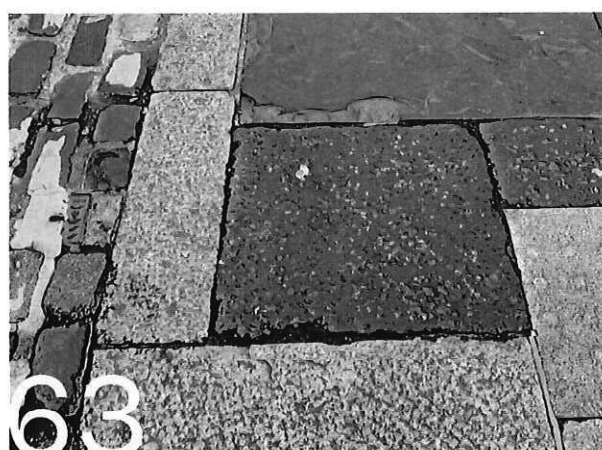






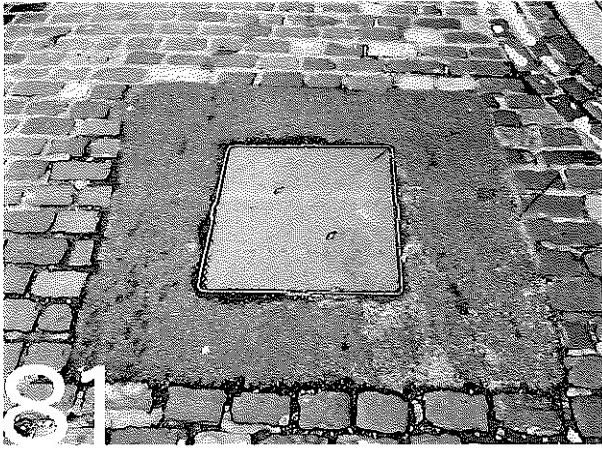












Ormeau Baths
18 Ormeau Avenue
Belfast - BT2 8HS

+44 7834596922
mark@marktoddarchitects.com
marktoddarchitects.com

Mark Todd

Architects

