



SOUTH BELFAST PARTNERSHIP BOARD

South West Gateway Masterplan,
c/o The Paul Hogarth Company
Potters Quay,
5 Ravenhill Road,
Belfast,
BT6 8DN

Please find below our response to the Draft South West Gateway Masterplan. This response has been prepared by the South Belfast Partnership Board in consultation with a number of local community, statutory and business groups in South Belfast. In particular, views have been captured and input into the response from a number of local structures, including:

South Belfast Partnership Board – A Board which brings together all sectors – community, statutory, political and private – to strengthen and better target the efforts being made by the community, the private sector and the Government to tackle the economic, social and environmental problems which affect the most disadvantaged areas of South Belfast.

South West Belfast Neighbourhood Partnership – A Partnership that brings together all sectors to facilitate the implementation of the Government’s Neighbourhood Renewal Programme in the South West Belfast area, which covers Sandy Row, the Village, the mid-Donagall Road and Roden Street.

South Belfast Economic Forum – Collectively address the economic well-being of South Belfast, ensuring that all sections of the community benefit from economic and employment opportunities, supporting the growth and success of existing businesses and encouraging new enterprises through the collaboration of key representatives from business, community, public agencies, education and training providers.

The vision for the South West Gateway Masterplan actively attempts to re-stitch two communities and improve Boucher Road as an amenity. The Economic Forum noted and welcomes the strategic nature of this project and a number of community representatives had been positive about the draft plans. There have been a number of suggestions put forward for the next stage of planning:

- Potential funding streams should be outlined in the plan to provide steps which key stakeholders may wish to take to help realise the plan.
- Need for linkages to Donagall road as a main arterial route into the city centre, better links with surrounding communities and it was felt that the connection to the M1 was a serious omission.
- Improvements needed around traffic management: the speed and volume of traffic on this section of road is a concern for surrounding communities.

- There is a strong view that the lack of pedestrian crossings presently is not only dangerous but negligent on the part the Department of Regional Development. There has been continued lobbying by local community groups on this point.
- The site is almost completely car dominant and air pollution is also a major concern.
- It was felt that the draft plans should marry with surrounding developments such as Olympia Leisure centre, links to the planned Transport Hub and Adelaide Train Station.
- It is essential that the area be developed so that it is more permeable and should be cognisant of local public realm projects- e.g. those at Tates and Windsor.
- The draft plans should take stock of BCC's Economic Strategy and City centre regeneration strategy and investment plan.
- Attempts to de-urbanise the site area are largely welcomed as there is great potential within the surrounding sites to create a balance of economic activity and safe open spaces for people to enjoy.
- Due to the vastness of the site, throughout the plan it would be helpful if there was a better indication of access points which the surrounding communities could use. There could be some work carried out on pedestrian patterns in and around the area and suggestions for further gateways and connections.
- Planning and increasing viability for cycling infrastructure is crucial.
- There has been some indication that the Bridge across the motorway would not be a priority and there was a preference for the name 'Blackstaff Gateway.'
- Creation of a River walk is desirable with a path along each bank. Along the walkway there is support for viewing areas- 2 at Boucher Crescent and 1 at Glenmachan Place.
- Improvements needed to link the area to the Lisburn Road and the existing bridges do not cater for wheelchair users.
- Better signage which indicates the surrounding amenities in both South and West Belfast.
- Need for better signage to the new entrance gate of Bog Meadows Nature Reserve.
- If there is support for the bridge, there will need to be emphasis on what the bridge will bring to the surrounding area. E.g. will there be on-off point on the bridge, as bus services in the area are poor.
- Further consultation needed with Translink around regional services and connections to South and West Belfast, Boucher and Belfast City Centre.

We trust that you will use the points raised in this response and we look forward to next stages of the project's development. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the matters raised within this response and you may contact my colleague Emma Campbell on 02890 244 070 or emma.campbell@southbelfast.org if you would like any further information or clarity in relation to this response.

Yours faithfully,

Kind regards



Briega Arthurs

Chief Executive Office