



# Belfast Local Development Plan

Technical Supplement 14  
Transportation  
August 2018

[www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP)



Belfast  
City Council

Energising  
Belfast



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## 1.0 Introduction

### Purpose of this Document

- 1.1 This technical document has been prepared to draw together the evidence base that has been used to inform the preparation of the Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) 2035. It is one of a suite of topic-based Technical Supplements that should be read alongside the LDP to understand the rationale and justification for the policies proposed within the draft Plan Strategy.
- 1.2 It builds upon the suite of 17 thematic Topic Papers prepared and published alongside the Preferred Options Paper (POP), which established the baseline position as at April 2017 and identified the key issues that need to be addressed by the LDP. This Technical Supplement therefore updates this baseline position and sets out the evidence base that has informed the transportation policies within the draft Plan Strategy.
- 1.3 Again, it forms part of a series of thematic reports to accompany the draft Plan Strategy. Whilst each of the Technical Supplements can be read separately, there are inevitably some important related matters and background evidence within other Technical Supplements also.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the evidence base collected to inform the LDP also informs the basis on which a series of additional assessments and appraisals required as part of the plan preparation process, most notably the Sustainability Appraisal. By combining the evidence gathering stages for both the Sustainability Appraisal and the Local Development Plan, we aim to streamline the documentation produced and avoid duplication. It will also help to ensure that sustainable development is embedded in the planning process and that the Sustainability Appraisal is one of the main drivers informing the preparation of the LDP.

### Transportation

- 1.5 The need to integrate transportation and land use to maximise development around quality sustainable transport networks is an essential element of the LDP. As Belfast continues to grow and modernise, continued developments and enhancement to our transport network are required.
- 1.6 The responsibility for transport policies and initiatives lies with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). During the plan-making process the Council are required to work closely with DfI to incorporate transport policy and initiatives into the Plan. The Local Development Plan (LDP) will need to be consistent with the objectives of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 and relevant Transport Plans. Regional guidance outlines the need to deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure, support the growth of the economy, enhance quality of life for all and reduce the environmental impact of transport.
- 1.7 The main policies relating to transportation are outlined in the RDS, Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation, the Strategic Planning

Policy Statement (SPPS), the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) and the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP).

- 1.8 This paper provides an overview of the regional and local planning policy context, alongside details on various issues relating to transport schemes and initiatives. Off-street car parking is now a Local Government responsibility and must also be afforded greater weight in the preparation of the new plan.
- 1.9 Also of relevance is the obligation at a local level for the Council to regularly review, assess and report on air quality under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime. In Northern Ireland, this is established via Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 and the relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents (LAQM.PGNI(09)). Under the LAQM process, where a local authority determines that exceedance of an air quality objective is likely, they must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan with measures to pursue the relevant objective.

## 2.0 Policy Context

This section introduces the regional policy context and local policy context relevant to transportation.

### Regional Policy

- 2.1 The Regional Policy Context is provided by the RDS, Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation, the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), and Development Control Advice Note 15 (DCAN15). A summary of these documents as they pertain to plan making and transport development policy is provided in the following sections.

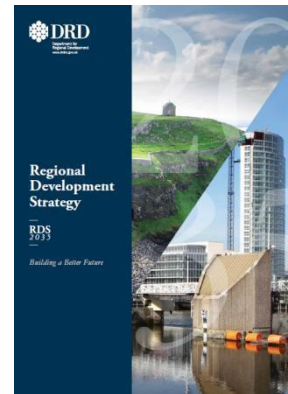
### Regional Development Strategy 2035

- 2.2 The RDS sets the context for the sustainable development of Northern Ireland (NI) to 2035. The RDS acts as the spatial strategy of the NI Executive's Programme for Government. The strategy was revised in 2010 to reflect the changing development of Northern Ireland and continues to set the overarching planning framework for the region. It outlines two types of strategic guidance:

- Regional Guidance (RG) which is applied to the entire region and relates to the three themes of sustainable development – Economy Society and Environment
- The Spatial Framework which enables strategic choices to be made in relation to development and infrastructural investment.

The Spatial Framework comprises of the following 5 components:

- The Metropolitan Area centred on Belfast
- Londonderry – principal city of the North West
- Hubs and Clusters of Hubs
- The Rural Area
- Gateways and corridors.



### Strategic Guidance

- 2.3 Strategic Guidance relating to transport and associated issues are outlined below:

### Regional Guidance

- 2.4 RG2 'Deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure'<sup>1</sup>:
- Improve Connectivity
  - Maximise the potential of the Regional Strategic Transport Network
  - Use road space and railways more efficiently
  - Improve social inclusion
  - Manage the movement of freight
  - Improve access to our cities and towns
  - Improve safety by adopting a 'safe systems' approach to road safety

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/rds2035.pdf>

- 2.5 RG9 'Reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality':
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport
  - Reduce noise and air pollution from transport
  - Use more energy efficient forms of transport

### **Spatial Framework Guidance**

- 2.6 SFG4 'Manage the movement of people and goods within the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA)':
- Manage travel demand within the BMUA
  - Improve the public transport service
  - Integrate Land Use and Transportation
  - Introduce a Rapid Transit system
  - Manage the efficient movement of freight
  - Improve facilities for walking and cycling which is co-ordinated with infrastructure investment
- 2.7 SFG 14 'Improve accessibility for rural communities':
- Improve the overall connectivity of rural communities to services and other parts of the Region by exploring innovative ways of bringing these services to the communities
  - Integrate local transport
- 2.8 SFG15 'Strengthen the Gateways for Regional competitiveness':
- Provide high quality connections to and from the air and sea ports.
  - Enhance Gateways and their environmental image.

### **Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation**

- 2.9 This document sets out the approach to regional transportation and particularly future decisions on investment. Unlike the former Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS), the emphasis of this approach moves away from specific road building schemes and has the drive for sustainability in the travel choices at its core. It sets three high level aims for transportation along with twelve supporting objectives covering the economy, society and the environment.

- 2.10 A. Support the Growth of the Economy
1. Improve connectivity within the region
  2. Use road space and railways more efficiently
  3. Better maintain transport infrastructure
  4. Improve access in our towns and cities
  5. Improve access in rural areas
  6. Improve connections to key tourism sites <sup>2</sup>



- 2.11 B. Enhance the quality of life for all

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<sup>2</sup> <https://s.inyourpocket.com/gallery/136364.jpg>



7. Improve Safety
8. Enhance Social Inclusion
9. Develop transport programmes focussed on the user



- 2.12 C. Reduce the Environmental Impact of Transport<sup>3</sup>
10. Reduce Greenhouse gas emissions from transport
  11. Protect biodiversity
  12. Reduce water, noise and air pollution
- 2.13 The document also outlines a new approach to regional transportation decision making through a transportation policy prioritisation framework. The Policy Prioritisation Framework will be used to identify the priority strategic transportation interventions that most closely align with the strategic direction set by the Northern Ireland Executive Programme for government and the RDS. It will be used to guide decisions on strategic transportation interventions beyond 2015.
- 2.14 Further details of the transportation proposals outlined in the previous Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) 2002-2012 are included in Appendix A. The RTS identified strategic transportation investment priorities and considered potential funding sources and affordability of planned initiatives over the 10 year period. The RTS signalled a move away from a transport system that is dominated by car use towards a more balanced and integrated system. The delivery of the RTS was through three Transport Plans, the first two are relevant to the Belfast area: the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) 2004; the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP 2015; and the Sub Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) 2015.

### **Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland**

- 2.15 The SPSS sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development. It sets the strategic direction for the new councils to bring forward detailed operational policies within future local development plans.
- 2.16 The SPSS highlights the importance to successfully integrate transport and land use generally in order to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel. The policy recognises that planning should help to mitigate and adapt to climate change by promoting sustainable development which reduces the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitates travel by public transport in preference to the private car.
- 2.17 The SPSS contains the following five core planning principles:
- Improving Health and Well-being;
  - Creating and Enhancing Shared Space;
  - Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth;
  - Supporting Good Design and Positive Place Making; and

<sup>3</sup> <http://i3.belfastlive.co.uk/incoming/article9165444.ece/ALTERNATES/s615/train.jpg>

- Preserving and Improving the Built and Natural Environment.

2.18 Under 'Improving Health and Well-being', the need for better integration between land use planning and transport is outlined.

**PPS 13: Transportation and Land Use**

2.19 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 13 was published in February 2005 to assist in the implementation of the RDS by being a material consideration in dealing with individual planning applications and appeals. The PPS is shaped by the following RDS strategic objectives:

- To develop a Regional Strategic Transport Network, based on key transport corridors, to enhance accessibility to regional facilities and services (SPG-TRAN 1).
- To extend travel choice for all sections of the community by enhancing public transport (SPG-TRAN 2).
- To integrate land use and transportation (SPG-TRAN 3).
- To change the regional travel culture and contribute to healthier lifestyles (SPG- TRAN 4.)
- To develop and enhance the Metropolitan Transport Corridor Network; to improve public transport service in the Metropolitan Area; to manage travel demand within the Metropolitan Area (SPG-BMA 3-5).
- To create an accessible countryside with a responsive transport network that meets the needs of the rural community (SPG-RNI4) The primary Objective of PPS 13 is to integrate land use planning and transport by promoting sustainable transport choices, promoting accessibility for all and reducing the need to travel, especially by private car.

**2.20 PPS 3 Access, Movement and Parking**

PPS 3 sets out the Departments planning policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessment, the protection of transport routes and parking. It forms an important element in the integration of transport and land use planning. The Policy was prepared in close consultation with DRD and needs to be considered together with PPS 13 Transportation and Land use. The main objectives of PPS3 are to:

- Promote road safety, in particular, for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users
- Restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes
- Make efficient use of road space within the context of promoting modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport
- Ensure that new development offers a realistic choice of access by walking, cycling and public transport, recognising that this may be less achievable in some rural areas
- Ensure the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired are taken into account in relation to accessibility to buildings and parking provision
- Promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development
- Promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion
- Protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse.

### **Development Control Advice Note**

- 2.21 The purpose of DCAN 15 is to give general guidance to intending developers, their professional advisors and agents on the standards for vehicular access. PPS3 refers to the Department's standards for vehicular accesses. DCAN15 sets out and explains those standards and is a material consideration for planning applications and appeals.

### **Programme for Government**

- 2.22 The Programme for Government (PfG) adopts an outcomes based approach supported by a number of indicators that highlight the Executives desired direction of change. There are a number of indicators relating to transportation including: to improve transport connections for people, goods and services: increase the use of public transport and active travel; increase environmental sustainability and improve air quality. The role the LDP can play in delivering of Programme for Government's economic, social and environmental outcomes is recognised.

### **Local Policy**

- 2.23 The current local policy context is complex as a result of a successful legal challenge to the adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Plan (BMAP) 2015. Local transport policy is mainly provided in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP). There are relevant sections of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP), the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), the Belfast Air Quality Action Plan 2015-2020, Belfast City Council's Transport Policy and the Car Parking Strategy. A summary of these documents is provided in the following sections.

### **Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001**

- 2.24 The current development plan for the majority of the Belfast district is the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001, which was adopted in December 1989. The area covered by the plan included the whole of the administrative area of the former Belfast City Council area, together with the urban parts of the former district council areas of Castlereagh, Lisburn and Newtownabbey as well as Greenisland and Holywood.
- 2.25 The purpose of the BUAP was to establish physical development policies for this broad urban area up to 2001, clarifying the extent and location of development and providing a framework for public and private agencies in their investment decisions relating to land use. Although alterations were made in 1996, the BUAP is now largely out-of-date and was formally superseded by the BMAP in September 2014. However, BMAP was quashed as a result of a judgement in the court of appeal delivered on 18 May 2017, meaning that the BUAP 2001 remains the statutory development plan for most of the council's area.

### **Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan**

- 2.26 The BMTP was launched on November 2004 and is the local transport plan for the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA) prepared by DRD (now DfI) to take forward the strategic initiatives of the RTS. The elements of the plan are outlined under four main headings: walking and

cycling, public transport, highway network and management. The document outlines the transport schemes and measures under these headings which are expected to be implemented up to 2015. The plan was subject to an internal interim review by DfI in 2017.

- 2.27 The process of preparing the BMTP was separate from the statutory process for the preparation of the BMAP but preparation of the Plans proceeded in parallel. There was close liaison between the plan teams to ensure that the Plans were mutually supportive and that land use and transportation proposals and strategies were coordinated and integrated.

#### **Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP)**

- 2.28 Although formally adopted in 2014, this process of final BMAP adoption was declared unlawful as a result of a judgement in the court of appeal delivered on 18 May 2017. This means the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001 and the other Development Plans provides the statutory plan context for the area. However, BUAP was published in 1990, nearly 30 years ago. The Belfast City Council Plan Area has undergone massive transformation since then, particularly in the city centre. The formal development plans which apply are dated and silent on many of the planning issues pertinent to needs of current planning decision making. In recognition of this unique circumstance and taking account of the short term transitional period in advance of the adoption of the Local Policies Plan it is important to provide clarity in relation to the application of planning policy.
- 2.29 Draft BMAP, in its most recent, post-examination form remains a significant material consideration in future planning decisions. It was at the most advanced stage possible prior to formal adoption. Draft BMAP referred to throughout this document therefore refers to that version. However, in preparing this document the council has also had regard to the provisions of the draft BMAP which was published in 2004, the objections which were raised as part of the plan process and the Planning Appeals Commission Inquiry report.
- 2.30 The SPSS's transitional arrangements provide for continuity until such times as a new LDP for the whole of their council area is adopted to ensure continuity in planning policy for taking planning decisions.
- 2.31 BUAP contains less zonings or designations than draft BMAP and delineates a city centre boundary which has expanded significantly since then by virtue of the application of Draft BMAP. The council therefore intends to use a number of the existing designations contained in the draft BMAP, insofar as it relates to the Belfast City Council Plan Area, to form the basis of decision making until the LDP is adopted in its entirety. A list of the existing draft boundaries and designations is contained in Appendix A of the LDP Draft Plan Strategy.
- 2.32 The land use allocations in BMAP are closely linked with the priorities and proposed transport investment in BMTP. Proposals in the BMTP focus on improving accessibility to key strategic sites and regeneration areas identified by the RDS and being progressed by BMAP. In addition BMAP takes into account the land use requirements of transportation infrastructure. BMTP sets out the transport schemes and measures expected to be

implemented up to 2015 and the Plan Proposals incorporate those elements of BMTP which have land use and spatial planning implications.

- 2.33 A key component of the BMAP plan strategy is to develop an integrated inclusive transport system. The plan proposals seek to reduce reliance on the car by a closer integration of transportation and land use by promoting significant improvement in public transport and by management measures to influence the choice of travel mode. The provision of improved facilities for walking and cycling as a means of providing greater travel choice is a key principle.
- 2.34 The plan proposals seek to manage integrated transportation with benefits to the environment and human health and to enhance accessibility to employment, community and other facilities for those without access to the use of a car. There is an emphasis on provision of housing and employment within existing urban footprints and on mixed use development to ensure patterns of development are supportive to a choice of modes of transport including public transport.
- 2.35 The BMA is the major gateway to NI and fast and efficient transportation links to the Belfast Harbour are recognised as essential to the economic prosperity of the region. The plan proposal identifies road improvements necessary to ensure the efficient movement of freight and people. Further details of the transportation policies and proposals contained in BMAP are outlined in Appendix B.

### **Belfast Agenda**

- 2.36 The Council took on responsibility for community planning in 2015 as a result of local government reform. It is a process whereby councils, statutory bodies and communities themselves work together in partnership to develop and implement a shared vision for their area, to make sure that public services work together with communities to deliver real improvements for local people. The Belfast Agenda, which is the adapted community plan, sets out a joint vision and long-term ambitions for Belfast's future, as well as outlining priorities for action over the next four years.
- 2.37 The vision for Belfast in 2035 set out in the Belfast Agenda is:  
*“Belfast will be a city re-imagined and resurgent. A great place to live and work for everyone. Beautiful, well connected and culturally vibrant, it will be a sustainable city shared and loved by all its citizens, free from the legacy of conflict. A compassionate city offering opportunities for everyone. A confident and successful city energising a dynamic and prosperous city region. A magnet for talent and business and admired around the world. A city people dream to visit.”*
- 2.38 Delivery of this vision is based on a number of strategic outcomes, together with four bold ambitions to be achieved by 2035, including an additional 66,000 residents living in the city. The LDP is recognised within the Belfast Agenda as one of the key tools available to shape the physical future of Belfast in a sustainable way. Its development is described as one of several immediate priorities, under the theme of City Development, where it explains that the LDP will be vital to the delivery of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda. Councils must

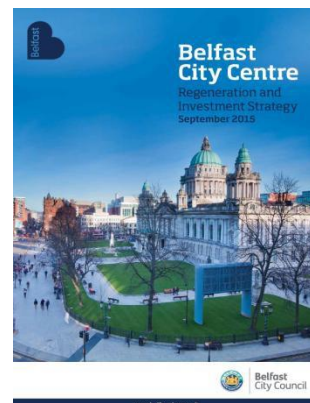
take account of their current Community Plan when preparing a Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP will provide a spatial expression to the community plan, thereby linking public and private sector investment through the land use planning system.

### **City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy**

2.39 The BCCRIS outlines the council's vision to develop a world-class city centre for the future. The strategy sets out a collective ambition for the continued growth and regeneration of the city core and its surrounding areas to 2030.

2.40 The strategy is based on several core principles. It will aim to:

- increase the employment population
- increase the residential population
- manage the retail offer
- maximise the tourism opportunity
- create a regional learning and innovation centre
- create a green centre, accessible to cyclists and walkers
- connect to the city around
- enhance shared space and social impact.



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2.41 The strategy recognises the vital role transport and connectivity will play in the economic growth and regeneration of Belfast by enhancing access.

### **Belfast Air Quality Action Plan 2015 – 2020**

2.42 The council in partnership with other organisations have developed a new Air Quality Action Plan for the city for 2015 – 2020. In Belfast, there are four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in places where the air has been affected by pollution, principally nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) from road transport. These are located along:

- Westlink Corridor;
- Ormeau Road;
- Upper Newtownards Road; and
- from Cromac Street to the Short Strand.

2.43 The previous Air Quality Action Plan delivered improvements to our air quality. However, some parts of the city continue to exceed the European Limit Values for NO<sub>2</sub>. The plan aims to promote the use of sustainable methods of transport to achieve compliance with the nitrogen dioxide European Limit Values by 2020.

2.44 In relation to air quality and land use planning, the Council has produced a guidance document for developers and consultants planning building work. These guidelines give technical advice to developers and consultants dealing with planning applications which could have an impact on air quality.

### **Transport Policy**

2.45 The council has an agreed Transport Policy document which was updated in 2008. The policy was established to provide the council with an inclusive and consistent approach to

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=13525&SID=7616>

transport development and to allow us to take a proactive role in ensuring that the city continues to grow and prosper in a sustainable manner. The key message of the revised policy is: “to support and promote the development of a modern, safe, accessible and integrated transportation system to enhance the connectivity for Belfast and its wider regions, which benefits the environment, supports sustainable development; and enhances the quality of life of all those who live, work, visit and do business in the city”.

### **Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan**

- 2.46 The BCCRIS identified car parking as a major issue for Belfast city centre and recommended that the council work with the Department for Infrastructure to develop and implement a strategy for car parking for Belfast. The Car Parking strategy has informed the development of policies in the draft plan strategy relating to transport and car parking. The Strategy was published in May 2018 and provides a baseline review of parking in Belfast; identifies key issues, challenges and opportunities, and outlines a number of objectives to support the Strategy’s vision. The following vision is outlined in the strategy “Belfast is a city offering sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors”
- 2.47 The objectives that support this vision includes:
- ensuring appropriate provision and location of car parking to support and improve the economic vitality of the city centre and district centres;
  - ensuring car parking provision encourages sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the city centre and supports access by public transport, cycling and walking;
  - minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities in the city particularly in inner city areas;
  - working with stakeholders to improve the quality of parking and information available, ideally through technology and, in particular, develop a new parking signage and information system that supports parking and wider applications;
  - identifying opportunities to provide secure bicycle and coach parking in appropriate city centre locations; and
  - ensuring appropriate provision for taxis within the city centre.

## **3.0 Transportation Profile**

- 3.1 Belfast is a city that has historically been dependent on the private car and the streetscape has evolved to cater to these demands, resulting in road infrastructure that is over sized, over complicated and a barrier to non-motorised accessibility. However, in the recent regional and local policy and initiatives there has been a move towards a more balanced approach to pedestrians, public transport and the private car. The recent ‘Belfast On The Move’ initiative sought to reorganise traffic management within Belfast City Centre to facilitate the reduction in general traffic levels and encourage walking, cycling and public transport.

- 3.2 According to the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) 2014-2016<sup>5</sup>, Car travel in Northern Ireland made up just over four fifths (82%) of the total distance travelled in 2014-2016. Public transport (Ulsterbus, Metro, Other Bus, Northern Ireland Railways and Black Taxi) accounted for 8% of total distance travelled and walking 3%. In this period, 63% of households in Belfast had access to at least 1 car, with 18% having access to 2 or more cars. The figures are lower than the percentages for households in the east and west of NI.

### **Highways and Parking**

- 3.3 DfI Roads is the sole Roads Authority in Northern Ireland and is responsible for over 25,000km of public roads, 9700km of footways, 5800 bridges and 271,000 street lights. The Northern Ireland Transport Statistics (NITS) 2015-16<sup>6</sup> identify 1084km of adopted roads in Belfast, including 12.4km of motorway, 21.1km of dual carriageway and 90.6km of single carriageway.
- 3.4 DfI were also previously responsible for 367 public car parks. However off street parking, has from the 1st April 2015, become a Local Government responsibility. The Council has responsibility for 29 car parks containing 2196 spaces. The figures include 15 fee paying car parks with 147 spaces and 14 free car parks with 739 spaces. It is important to acknowledge that while the Council is now responsible for off street parking it has no authority over the road network within the Council area.

### **Public Transport**

- 3.5 In the context of NI, public transport modes are primarily buses and trains. In 2014-2016, 67% of households lived within six minutes' walk of a bus stop or place where they could get a bus. Relatively few households were close to a train station. 60% said it would take them 44 or more minutes or that it was not feasible to walk.

With 38% of households in Belfast not owning a private vehicle, it is evident that there is a fairly substantial reliance on public transport to allow people the ability to travel. These people tend to be elderly, disabled or economically disadvantaged. This statement is further backed up by evidence provided in Topic Paper 1 (Population and Growth) which found that in NI as a whole, 25% of retired couples, 33% of single pensioners and over 50% of single parents do not have access to a private car. This demonstrates that there may be an equality issue here which must be further considered.

- 3.6 DfI retains overall responsibility for public transport policy and is responsible for the safety and operating standards and licensing of bus routes. The majority of public transport services are provided by subsidiary companies of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC), an overseeing public corporation. The principal NITHC subsidiary companies operating under the brand name Translink are: Metro (serves Belfast area), Ulsterbus (serves regional network) and Northern Ireland Railways (NIR).

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/TSNI-in-depth-report-2014-2016.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/Northern-Ireland-transport-statistics-2015-16.pdf>



- 3.7 Improvements have been made to the Metro Bus Network over recent years offering higher frequency services in core corridors however the network of quality bus corridors and the introduction of orbital routes proposed in the BMTP have not been fully implemented. In order to encourage the greater use of public transport, there is need to expand and increase the number of bus lanes and to improve enforcement so that journeys by public transport are quicker for users than by other means of transport.

### **Cycling and Walking**

- 3.8 Between 2014-2016 38% percent of households in Northern Ireland owned at least one bicycle but despite this, only 1% of journeys per adult per year were by bicycle and 17% of journeys per adult per year were by foot.
- 3.9 A key Government priority for growing a sustainable economy involves promoting a modal shift from private car usage to cycling and walking. DfI have taken responsibility for co-ordinating relevant cycling and walking policy. A Cycling Unit was established in November 2013 and provides a focus and co-ordination role for cycling issues and cycling related activities. The Unit works towards making cycling an integral part of network planning and development and ensures that cycling provision is a key element in both strategy and delivery.
- 3.10 A Bicycle Strategy for NI, published in August 2015<sup>7</sup>, sets out plans to make NI a cycling community over the next 25 years. The strategy promotes the development of a 'three pillar approach' for the development of cycling which includes careful planning, high quality infrastructure and effective behaviour change campaigns. The strategy also develops four key elements which will contribute to achieving the vision for cycling in NI:
- Developing a comprehensive network in both urban and rural areas
  - Safe Places
  - Greater Numbers
  - Inviting Places
- 3.11 DfI intend to produce a delivery plan following the finalisation of this draft strategy.
- 3.12 The Cycling Unit plans to develop a number of Bicycle Network Plans for the urban areas to build on the Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland. DfI published the draft Belfast Bicycle Network Plan for public consultation in January 2017. The consultation report was published in February 2018. DfI has also established a Greenways Working Group to scope a plan for the development of greenways.

### **Belfast Transport Hub**

- 3.13 Translink and the DfI working in conjunction with the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) have identified the potential to create an integrated Public Transport Hub (see Figure 1) that will be a high class gateway for Belfast located on the site of the Europa Buscentre and Great

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/a-bicycle-strategy-for-northern-ireland.pdf>

Victoria Street Train Station. The potential of the new Hub to create an excellent first impression of Belfast and create new jobs, provide investment opportunities and reduce congestion in Belfast is recognised.

**Figure 1: Transport Hub**



Source: Translink<sup>8</sup>

- 3.14 The development of a new Transport hub around Great Victoria Station has been identified in the BCCRIS as one of the key transformative interventions for the city centre. The proposed site is in close proximity to a number of inner city residential areas and the Council would advocate that the community needs are taken in consideration. Detailed design and public consultation is already underway.

### **Belfast Rapid Transit**

- 3.15 The introduction of a network of high quality rapid transit routes will enhance the existing public transport network in Belfast. The pilot Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) network will link East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter via the city centre and is planned to be operational from September 2018.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.translink.co.uk/Translink-Footer/the-hub/>



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- 3.16 The pilot route does not contain proposals for north and south of the city. North Belfast contains some of the most socially deprived areas in the city and contains the Mater Hospital which is a large trip generator that could benefit from improvements in public transport provision along with a number of regeneration opportunities such as the proposed new Ulster University campus on York Street and the development of the Girdwood site.
- 3.17 Similarly, a bus rapid transit network serving the south of the city where large volumes of commuters use the southern approach would also be beneficial. In addition Queens University and the large student population living in the Ormeau Road area would benefit from improvements in public transport and connectivity.
- 3.18 There is need to link with and maximise potential regeneration opportunities along the route alignment. Integration with land use planning along the route alignment is essential to allow higher density development and identification of regeneration opportunities. There is also a need for integration with other road proposals such as the City Centre ring southern section and the York Street interchange (YSI).
- 3.19 In the longer term opportunities could be developed to link BRT to the wider region such as the International Airport as part of any roll out of the system.

### **Belfast Bicycle Network**

- 3.20 Work has already started on delivering infrastructure in Belfast city centre. It is primarily focused on developing a core coherent city wide bicycle network to provide convenient access to safe cycling facilities throughout the city and further develop the strategy vision for the delivery of cycling for Belfast.
- 3.21 The cycle routes proposals include:
- Grosvenor Road / Durham Street / College Square North / College Street & Queen Street - an upgrade of the existing cycle infrastructure along the Grosvenor Road and Queen Street with an extension to provide a new connecting two way segregated cycle

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/styles/inline-expandable/public/images/drd/exqui-city-belfast-side-view.jpg?itok=c95Ng4NX>

lane along Durham Street and College Square North. The route will provide a dedicated connection between the Grosvenor Road Junction with the Westlink to the city centre.

- High Street to Middlepath Street - proposal to upgrade and add to the existing cycle infrastructure along High Street to Middlepath Street. The proposed route will provide a dedicated connection between the High Street Junction with Bridge Street to Middlepath Street. It will provide an opportunity for people to avail of designated cycle infrastructure between the city centre and the eastern city approaches, as well as a connection to Titanic Quarter.
- Cycle Route along Alfred Street /Upper Arthur - an upgrade of the existing cycle infrastructure along Upper Arthur Street with an extension to provide a connecting two way segregated cycle lane along Alfred Street. This proposed new bicycle route along Alfred Street and Upper Arthur Street was implemented in March 2016 and provides a continuous segregated cycle facility between Ormeau Avenue and Chichester Street. It offers an opportunity for people to avail of designated cycle connection between the Lagan Towpath (Gasworks / Lower Ormeau) to the city centre.

3.22 It is recognised that increased levels of cycling in Belfast can have benefits for regeneration, tourism and culture, the local economy, health improvement, environmental, sports and recreation, learning and skills and services and facilities.

### **Belfast Bikes**

3.23 In August 2013, the Council secured funding for the provision of a Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme as part of the Active Travel Demonstration Projects fund. The Belfast Bikes Scheme was subsequently launched on 27 April 2015 providing the public with access to 300 bikes across 30 docking stations in the City Centre.

3.24 Since the launch, additional stations have opened in a number of locations, including Titanic Quarter, 3 hospital sites and at Queen's University Belfast. The latest docking station to come into operation are located in East Belfast, West Belfast and North Belfast which brings the number of docking stations in the city to over 40.

3.25 In order to support Bike Share scheme there is a need to improve the general cycling infrastructure across the City for current and future users. There is a desire to expand the scheme to areas outside the city centre which will be subject to securing additional resources and Council approvals.



### **York Street Interchange**

3.26 The public inquiry into the YSI proposal was held in November 2015. It is recognised that the YSI proposal (see Figure 2) will alleviate a significant bottleneck at the M2/Westlink junction which adversely impacts on city centre traffic volumes and congestion levels on a

daily basis. The interchange is therefore viewed to be strategically important for vehicular access in the city. However, there is a need for careful design to reduce the visual impact of the interchange and enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Investment is needed in the design of the interchange proposal with the aim of improving development. Regeneration potential and non-motorised movement could have significant future benefits.

- 3.27 There will be five surplus land parcels resulting from the proposed scheme post construction which can be used for development. The regeneration and development potential of these sites will be considered at the local policies plan stage.

**Figure 2: York Street Interchange Proposal**



Source: DfI<sup>10</sup>

### **City Centre Ring Southern Section (Shaftesbury Link)**

- 3.28 Belfast is currently undertaking a long-term scheme to redirect general traffic flows out of the city centre, in order to permit a greater role for buses, rapid transit, pedestrians and cycling. The scheme is called Belfast on the Move (BOTM) and the work is being carried forward through six phases. The City Ring Southern Section proposal is part of the fourth phase and in the longer term BOTM proposals will be tied in with Streets Ahead Phase 2 as outlined in the BMTP and BMAP. There are a number of issues to be considered in relation to City Ring Southern Section proposal, including:
- Design of road infrastructure and link to regeneration opportunities;
  - Air quality;
  - Quality walking corridor;
  - Community severance and impact on adjoining communities in particular along Cromac Street;
  - Cycling strategy and opportunities of using the City Centre Ring;
  - Link with Belfast Rapid Transit and Translink connectivity to the City Centre; and

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/york-street-interchange-overview>

- Reducing the barrier effect of the City Centre Ring – ‘boulevard’ treatment.

### **Car Parking Strategy**

- 3.29 The BCCRIS identified car parking as a major issue for the city centre and recommended that the Council work with the DfI to develop and implement a strategy for car parking for Belfast. The Council commissioned consultants in October 2015 to develop a Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan for the City. The main objectives of the draft strategy are:
- Ensuring appropriate provision and location of car parking to support the economic vitality of the City Centre
  - Ensuring parking provision does not encourage less sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the City Centre and supports access by public transport, cycling and walking.
- 3.30 The draft Car Parking strategy was subject to public consultation between 30 August 2016 and 21 November 2016. The recommendations have been used as evidence for drafting policies relating to car parking in the draft plan strategy.

### **Residents Parking Schemes**

- 3.31 The first Residents’ Parking Scheme to be introduced in Northern Ireland became operational in an area of South Belfast in April 2018. The Department for Infrastructure initiative has created Controlled Parking zones for residents and business owners in the Rugby Road and College Park Avenue area. A total of 236 parking bays are defined, 117 of which will be for permit holding residents only, with a further 119 bays designated for Pay and Display available to anyone and subject to terms and conditions. In addition a further seven bays are available adjacent to local creches on Rugby Road which are designed for drop off/pick up and will be limited to a 10 minute maximum stay. The scheme operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Fridays with the exception of a Loading Bay in Carmel Street which operates from 7am to 6pm.
- 3.32 There has been difficulty in delivering residents’ parking schemes around the edges of the city centre, mainly a result of opposition from residents and businesses to the proposed charge and access for visitors.

### **Park & Ride**

- 3.33 Park and Ride sites are situated convenient to a public transport link connection, such as a train station or a bus stop and are an effective way to reduce traffic congestion. The main Park and Ride sites serving Belfast are Ballymartin, Dundonald, Cairnshill, Sprucefield and Black's Road. The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is proposing to build a further Park and Ride facility at Tillysburn incorporating approximately 520 spaces as part of advanced works to improve public transport options for commuters during the proposed York Street Interchange construction works.

## 4.0 Draft Plan Strategy Policy Approaches

- 4.1 The LDP Preferred Options Paper (POP) set out the proposed vision, key aims and objectives for the new Belfast LDP and the public consultation has indicated wide general support for the proposed approach. The approach is in line with regional guidance which outlines the need to deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure, support the growth of the economy, enhance quality of life for all and reduce the environmental impact of transport.
- 4.2 The importance of integrating transport and land use in order to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel is highlighted in the SPPS and by the Department for Infrastructure in their response to the Preferred Options Paper. This has shaped the approach to transport policies within the draft plan strategy. The policies contained in PPS 13: Transportation and Land Use and PPS 3 Access, Movement and Parking have been transferred across to the draft Plan Strategy where appropriate. In addition, there are a number of Programme for Government indicators relating to transportation including: to improve transport connections for people, goods and services: increase the use of public transport and active travel; increase environmental sustainability and improve air quality. The approach adopted in the draft plan strategy will play a role in delivering of Programme for Government's economic, social and environmental outcomes.
- 4.3 The draft Plan Strategy has been developed in the absence of an up to date transport plan for the city, however it makes reference to the Department's extant transport plan (BMTP) within the transport policy section. For example, the draft Plan Strategy contains a policy to safeguard land required to implement new transport proposals or planned improvements to the transportation network as identified in the DfI's extant plan. A number of existing designations and policies for transport contained in the draft BMAP will be retained and will continue to form the basis of decision making until the LDP is adopted in its entirety.
- 4.4 A coordinated approach is required between DfI, the Council and neighbouring authorities across the sub-region to deliver the transportation vision for the city. There is also a duty to cooperate with neighbouring planning authorities to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters including transport which is being facilitated by the LDP Metropolitan Area Working Group.
- 4.5 A Transport Plan Programme Board has been set up by DfI to oversee the preparation of the new set of Transport Plans. It is proposed that the Transport plans will be developed in a two stage approach similar to the LDP comprising a strategy document followed by a more detailed plan.

## Appendix A: The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) 2002-2012

The RTS identified strategic transportation investment priorities and considered potential funding sources and affordability of planned initiatives over the 10 year period. The RTS signalled a move away from a transport system that is dominated by car use towards a more balanced and integrated system. Its main features included providing a transport system in which walking, cycling and public transport will be more attractive options. Of the £3500 million budget to be spent on improving transportation, 63% was to be directed to roads infrastructure, 35% to public transport and 2% promoting walking and cycling. This funding would contribute to, upgrading existing railways; improving bus corridors; local improvements in towns to assist pedestrians and cyclists; local highway infrastructure measures; and strategic highway improvements.

The initiatives of the RTS are presented across 4 “areas” comprising:

1. The Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN)
2. The Metropolitan Area (BMA)
3. Other Urban Area
4. Rural Areas

The delivery of the RTS is being achieved through three Transport Plans, the first two are relevant to the Belfast area:

1. **BMTP** - The Metropolitan Transport Plan 2004
2. **RSTNTP** - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015
3. **SRTP** - Sub Regional Transport Plan 2015.

These contain the detailed programmes of major schemes and transport initiatives that the DRD wants to carry out to achieve the RTS objectives and targets. These Transport Plans link with relevant Development Plans and thus provide Northern Ireland with an integrated approach to transportation and land use planning. The RTS also gave a commitment that DRD would develop an Accessible Transport Strategy for NI, which was published in 2005.

The Regional Transportation Strategy included a commitment to carry out a review and resulted in the publication of “Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation” published in April 2012. This is the most relevant and up-to-date document on Regional Transportation and sets out how the Department will develop regional transportation beyond 2015.



## Appendix B: BMAP Transportation proposals

Plan Strategy & Framework outlines the following two policies:

- Policy TRAN 1: Parking Standards within Areas of Parking Restraint; and
- Policy TRAN 2: Publicly owned Off-Street Surface Car Parks within City and town Centres

### Policy TRAN 1: Parking Standards within Areas of Parking Restraint

BMAP designates Areas of Parking Restraint within Belfast City Centre Core and Belfast City Centre Fringe. Within these areas the following parking standards will be applied:

	Residential	Non-residential	Non Residential
	No. of spaces per dwelling	No. of Non-operational spaces per m2 of floorspace	No. of operational spaces per m2 of floorspace
Belfast City Centre Core	1.0	1/300	1/930
Belfast City Centre Fringe	1.0	1/100	

The policy states that reductions in the specified standard will be considered where there is evidence of alternative transport arrangements or other material considerations that justify an exception. Furthermore, proposals involving parking provision in excess of the standards will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

In line with the aspirations of the BMTP, the purpose of the policy is to reduce the need for commuting via car and to promote a shift towards other more sustainable forms of transport.

### Policy TRAN 2: Publicly owned Off-Street Surface Car Parks within City and Town Centres

BMAP stipulates that planning permission will only be granted for development on publicly owned off-street surface car parks provided that all existing car parking spaces are replaced, either on site or in an appropriate location nearby. In addition the spaces are required to be used for short-stay use only to reduce car bourne commuting.

The policy allows for long stay use where the replacement parking is associated with public park and ride schemes or with railway stations where the sole use of the parking is limited to those using train services.

The policy recognises that car parking can occupy sites with development potential as well as locations where there is pressure for development and where it is desirable to have built development to reinstate the streetscape. The Policy also states that the Department will consider proposals which seek to facilitate a number of publicly owned car parks in one location, for example, a multi storey car park replacing a number of surface level car parks.

### Regional Gateways

In relation to the regional gateways, the Plan Strategy & Framework acknowledges the important strategic role of Belfast Port and the George Best Belfast City Airport.

The Plan Strategy and Framework recognises that good access to the Port and associated facilities is fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of the Metropolitan Area and Northern Ireland as a whole. The Plan Proposals seek to facilitate development of the Harbour Area and it is stated that proposed schemes such as the Sydenham Bypass and York Street Interchange will improve the Strategic Road Network and provide better access to the area.

In relation to the George Best Belfast City Airport, the Plan Strategy highlights the proximity of the airport to a large residential population and acknowledges that a Planning Agreement is in place to control the environmental impact of airport operations on nearby residents.

It is considered that the proposed widening of the A2 Sydenham Bypass will improve accessibility to the airport. The BMAP Plan Strategy and Framework notes that policy exists to control activity and development within Public Safety Zones close to the ends of airport runways.

### **District Proposals**

#### **Belfast City Centre**

The District Proposals provide an overview of the following proposals identified in the BMTP:

- City Centre Ring Road;
- Civic Spine;
- Belfast Cross; and
- High Accessibility Zones.

The District Proposals acknowledge that there are a large number of car parking spaces available in the City Centre which has increased significantly from the 1980s reflecting an increase in private car use for journeys to the City Centre. In order to encourage a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, walking and cycling, the Plan makes provision for strategic Park and Ride sites and Areas of Parking Restraint.

The following Belfast City Centre proposals are detailed within the District Proposals:

#### **Proposal CC022 Non-strategic Road Scheme (City Centre Ring – Southern Section including Bankmore Link)**

This scheme proposes to widen Hope Street, Bruce Street and Cromac Street to two lanes in both directions and the construction of a new carriageway (Bankmore Link) between the existing Dublin Road/Bruce Street/Bankmore Street junction and the existing Cromac Street/Ormeau Avenue/Lower Ormeau Road junction. The scheme also includes junction improvements at Grosvenor Road/Durham Street and Durham Street/Albert Street/College Square North. A Road Protection Corridor has been delineated (on the DOE website) to facilitate the implementation of the scheme.

#### **Proposal CC0 23 Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge Crossings**

Two new pedestrian/cycle bridge crossings are proposed between the east and west sides of the River Lagan at:

- Corporation Square to Queens Quay (CC 023/01); and
- Gasworks to Ormeau Embankment (CC 023/02).

The purpose of the proposed crossings will be improve connectivity and improve access to the City Centre.

#### **Proposal CC024 Extended Railway Station (Great Victoria Street/Grosvenor Road)**

A new transport hub is proposed incorporating Great Victoria Street Railway Station and the Europa Bus Centre to facilitate public transport interchange. The proposal will help revitalise the surrounding area and is also considered to be of significant strategic importance by creating a Regional Gateway for the City.

### **Proposal CC025 Area of Parking Restraint (Belfast City Core)**

An Area of Parking Restraint has been designated within Belfast City Core which applies the standards noted in section 1.0. An Area of Parking Restraint for Belfast City Fringe Area is also designated under BT 009 in Outer Belfast City Proposals.

### **Belfast Harbour Area**

The District Proposals reiterate the Plan Strategy in terms of the important role of the Port and City Airport as gateways to the City and sets out a Belfast Harbour Area Strategy which seeks to facilitate development of the Port, protect and promote the City Airport and develop a new City Quarter at Titanic. The Strategy seeks to enhance the City's gateway role and encourage riverside renewal. In addition to encouraging employment, the Belfast Harbour Area Strategy seeks to improve accessibility from other parts of the city and the wider region.

### **Titanic Quarter**

The District Proposals zone 87.31 hectares for mixed use at Titanic Quarter (Zoning BHA 01).

As part of the key site requirements it is stipulated that a development Framework will be required and it should be accompanied by a Transport Masterplan for the site. In addition transportation proposals are required to include provision for appropriate public transport for the site. The District Proposals also states that the primary vehicular access to Titanic Quarter from the strategic highway network shall be a new grade separated junction off the Sydenham Bypass as detailed in Proposal BHA 08.

Provision is also required for appropriate pedestrian/cycle routes and facilities throughout the development.

### **Belfast City Airport**

The District Proposals recognised that an Article 40 Planning Agreement currently controls the level of airport operations at the City Airport. Furthermore, there are no plans to alter the provisions of the Agreement within BMAP.

In addition, *Policy BHA 02 Airport Safeguarding* states that planning permission will not be granted for development proposals which would adversely affect airport safeguarding operations.

### **The Port of Belfast**

*Policy BHA 03 Port Operations and Port-Related Land Uses* states that outside airport lands and nature conservation designations (except within Zoning BHA 04) **and subject to** criteria for Titanic Quarter, planning permission will be granted for port operations and port-related land uses within the Belfast Harbour Area.

In addition, *Zoning BHA 04 Port Operations and Port-Related Land Uses* Area of land known as D3, Airport Road West zones 19.1 hectares of land for port operations and port-related uses.

In terms of transportation, the following strategic road schemes are proposed within the Belfast Harbour Area:

### **Proposal BHA 07 A2 Sydenham Bypass**

It is proposed to widen the A2 Sydenham Bypass between Tillysburn and M3 Lagan Crossing from a 2 lane dual carriageway to a 3 lane dual carriageway. The purpose of the scheme is to increase the capacity of the road network and facilitate easier access for strategic traffic. A Road Protection Corridor has been identified on the DOE website and protection for the scheme is in accordance with policy contained in PPS 3.

#### **Proposal BHA 08 New junction on the A2**

It is proposed to provide a new junction on the A2 to replace the existing Dee Street junction and provide improved access to Belfast Harbour.

The District proposals also highlights that the Rapid Transit Scheme CITI Route is proposed to pass through part of Belfast Harbour Area thus providing a rapid transit service connecting the City Centre with Titanic Quarter.

#### **Arterial Routes**

The following 18 Arterial Routes have been designated in the City:

- York Street/York Road/Shore Road (AR 01/01);
- Antrim Road (AR 01/02);
- Oldpark Road (AR 01/03);
- Crumlin Road (AR 01/04);
- Shankill Road/Woodvale Road/Ballygomartin Road (AR 01/05);
- Divis Street/Falls Road/Glen Road (AR 01/06);
- Grosvenor Road/Springfield Road (AR 01/07);
- Andersonstown Road/Stewartstown Road (AR 01/08);
- Donegall Road (AR 01/09);
- Lisburn Road (AR 01/10);
- University Road/Malone Road (AR 01/11);
- Ormeau Road (AR 01/12);
- Ravenhill Road (AR 01/13);
- Woodstock Link/Woodstock Road/Cregagh Road (AR 01/14);
- Castlereagh Street/Castlereagh Road (AR 01/15);
- Albertbridge Road (AR 01/16);
- Newtownards Road/Upper Newtownards Road (AR 01/17); and
- Holywood Road (AR 01/18).

The Arterial Routes which connect the City Centre to the surrounding suburban residential areas are recognised not only for their transportation function but also as retail and service centres providing social, commercial, shopping and leisure functions for the communities along these routes. Arterial Routes are also considered to make a significant contribution to the overall physical appearance and regeneration of the city.

BMAP highlights that the routes are well served by public transport but recognises that some routes experience issues of pedestrian/vehicular conflict and high levels of car parking in adjacent residential areas.

Within BMAP, the Arterial Routes Strategy is intended to reflect the RDS drive to enhance Belfast City and reduce the need to travel by car.

The Plan designates 14 Commercial Nodes and 17 Shopping/Commercial Areas on most of the Arterial Routes. Within these areas specific retail and office development policies will apply with the intention of promoting appropriate scale local facilities to serve the adjacent communities. The Plan also stipulates building height requirements (Policy AR 02) in order to encourage higher density land use in close proximity to public transport routes.

In addition, the Commercial Nodes are designated as Areas of Parking Restraint to restrain long- stay commuter parking (Designation AR 02).

### **Outer Belfast City**

BMAP acknowledges the need for an efficient, safe, and sustainable transport system in order to reinforce the role of Belfast as the regional capital and focus of administration, commerce, specialised services and cultural amenities and a stronger role as an international city.

BMAP states that Belfast City Centre represents the hub of the transportation network within the Plan area. It is noted that within the City a set of radial road and public transport links connect the City Centre with suburban areas, other settlements within the Plan Area and beyond.

BMAP states that the existing transport system has suffered from underinvestment and requires substantial new investment to transform it into a modern integrated transport system, which is required to support the wider Plan Strategy. It is noted that the environment and the quality of life of citizens within the City are adversely affected by transport problems.

Furthermore it is stated that increasing congestion is impacting on the economic competitiveness of both the City and the wider region. Concerns are also being raised regarding road safety issues on the City's road network.

It is noted that the development of the transportation strategy for the City and the Plan Area has required a co-ordinated approach to preparation of BMAP and BMTP which have been prepared in parallel in order to ensure successful integration of land use and transportation proposals. In this regard it is noted that BMTP provides for and encourages greater use of public transport and greater levels of walking and cycling, whilst also supporting an appropriate level of movement by cars and goods vehicles. BMAP incorporates the integration between transportation and land use and identifies those elements of BMTP which require protection through the planning process.

The following strategic road schemes have been proposed in the Outer Belfast City Area:

- Proposal BT 006 - Widening of the A55 Outer Ring Road (Knock Road) from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction with right hand turning provision.
- Proposal BT 007 - Widening of the M1 between Blacks Road and Sprucefield (Lisburn) to dual 3 lane motorway.
- Proposal BT 008 – Construction of Blacks Road Link between Upper Malone Road and the M1 at Blacks Road, Dunmurry, with slip roads onto the motorway.

An Area of Parking Restraint has been designated within the Belfast City Fringe Area (Designation BT 009).

BMAP also notes the following proposals within the BMTP:

- Orbital Bus Services
- Upgrading the commuter rail network by increasing service frequencies on all routes and extending the railway station at Great Victoria Street
- Establishing quality walking and cycling networks focused on Belfast City
- Improving access to and from public transport facilities
- Enhancing the cycle network.

## **Appendix C: The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015 (RSTN TP)**

The purpose of the RSTN TP is to plan the maintenance, management and development of the NI Strategic Transport Network up to the end of 2015. It comprises the complete rail network, 5 Key Transport Corridors (KTC's), 3 of which encroach on Belfast; 4 Link Corridors, Metropolitan Transport Corridor's and the remainder of trunk road networks. The measures in the plan fall into the following categories: walk/cycle; bus; rail; and highways. The Draft SPPS was launched for consultation in February 2014 and is intended to supersede 20 individual planning policies into 1 strategic policy. The aims of the Draft SPPS with regard to transportation are to secure improved integration with land-use planning, consistent with the RDS; and to facilitate safe and efficient access, movement and parking. There are seven policy objectives identified for transportation and land-use planning within the Draft SPPS which are:

- Promote sustainable transport choices including walking, cycling and public transport, recognising that this may be less achievable in some rural areas;
- Ensure accessibility for all, particularly the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired;
- Promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development;
- Promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion;
- Protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse;
- Restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes;
- Promote road safety, in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.





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