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**Eastern Division**

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Being Dealt With By: R J Spiers/C R Pentland  
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Date: 10 March 2015

Dear Mr Ford

**YORK STREET INTERCHANGE FORMAL CONSULTATION**

Thank you for your response to the consultation on the proposals for the York Street Interchange. Your views have been recorded as part of this process and will contribute to the decision on whether the Department should hold a Public Inquiry into the scheme.

Yours sincerely

*Jacqueline Campbell*

ROY SPIERS  
Strategic Route Improvement

ROADS SERVICE - EASTERN DIVISION			
REFERRED TO	Action	Info	Inits
K. McLAGHAN R. SPILLER			
- 6 MAR 2015			
FILE REF:			
FILE REF:			

Divisional Manager  
Transport NI – Eastern Division  
Hydebank  
4 Hospital Road  
Belfast  
BT8 8JL

Date: 05 March 2015  
Telephone: 028 905 69615  
Your Ref: RDS 10/8/1/14  
Our Ref: CC 57/4/31

**RE: York Street Interchange**

To whom it may concern,

I refer to the Environmental Statement (ES) which was received in this office on 28 January 2015.

Having considered the content of the Environmental Impact Assessment consultation submitted by URS in support of this proposal, NIEA would make the following comments.

We are pleased to note from submitted documents the proposed mitigation for bats and breeding birds on the development site and are of the opinion that should these be followed, the site may become of greater value for biodiversity.

We remind Transport NI that Under Article 1 of the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 it is the duty of every public body, in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

Conserving biodiversity includes:

- a) In relation to any species of flora or fauna, restoring or enhancing a population of that species;
- b) In relation to any type of habitat, restoring or enhancing the habitat.

We note that two stands of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) were discovered on the development site. We remind the applicant of their responsibility under Article 15 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) under which it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant included under Part II of Schedule 9 of the Order, which includes Japanese knotweed. This highly invasive plant species has been recorded on site and control measures must be taken to ensure that any works do not cause it to spread either on or off the site. We would expect best practice to be followed at all times when dealing with Japanese knotweed.

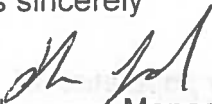
The submitted documents have identified the following perceived risks as a result of the proposed development:

1. The drainage velocity of storm water from the scheme entering Belfast Harbour has the potential to disturb and re-suspend contaminants from pervious industrially contaminated lands on the bed of Belfast Harbour;
2. Disturbance of contaminated ground/contaminated groundwater within the construction footprint has potential to indirectly introduce the contaminants to Belfast Lough SPA/Belfast Lough Open Water SPA via new pathways or groundwater mobilisation;
3. The effect of the proposed scheme in-combination to other plans or projects in the area.

The impact of the proposal on the Natura 2000 sites has been assessed and it has been determined that adherence to a series of strict protocols and mitigation measures should alleviate any adverse impact. Mitigation measures include adherence to relevant PPG's and environmental legislation as well as specific measures such as sediment traps, emergency pollution control cut-off valves, bunding and utilising the existing drainage system.

NIEA is content that URS on behalf of Transport NI have identified the potential adverse effects on both Belfast Lough SPA & Belfast Lough Open Water SPA from this proposal and presented appropriate mitigation measures. Due to the scale and nature of the proposed development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted by the appointed contractor to ensure they are aware of the potential risks at each stage of the development and the mitigation measures to be employed to ensure there are no significant impacts on the designated sites from this proposal.

Yours sincerely



Development Management Team

