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**Campbell, Jacqui**

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**From:** Roads Eastern Srit  
**Sent:** 09 March 2015 11:32  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** York Street Interchange Formal Consultation

Stephen

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.

Regards

*Colin Pentland*

Strategic Road Improvements

DRD - Eastern Division, Hydebank, 4 Hospital Road, Belfast BT8 8JL.

Campbell, Jacqui

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**From:** Stephen O'Kane [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 March 2015 16:59  
**To:** Roads Eastern Srit  
**Subject:** Response to proposed York Street Interchange Scheme.

After attending the consultation event at the Ramada Encore hotel, I was asked to make my points again to this email address, as no one at the event was recording responses on the night I attended. I was told this by a URS employee, and this seems to me to be an attempt at URS to defend their flawed plans by deflecting any criticism.

I hope I am wrong.

I feel that this is a very poor, and highly flawed way to consult with the public, and I would request that the event is held again in the near future, and that responses are recorded during the event.

However I will do as suggested any make my points again here.

This is a rare development opportunity, one that will not come around again for probably at least 40 years. This opportunity must be taken now to future proof this junction for people. Not just cars and buses.

Cities are about people, and movement of people. Not just about the movement of cars. Cities work better for everyone, (including motorists) if cities are designed for people, not just transport.

The opportunity must be seized now to ensure that this vital piece of infrastructure is designed for everyone, not just for motor vehicles.

This junction is in a residential area, one of the few residential areas close to the city centre, and we need to encourage more residential areas in the city to bring life back into the city centre.

This scheme needs to ensure that it does not further restrict access to the city centre along this vital route further eliminating any incentive to enter the city after core shopping hours.

One of the major flaws in this scheme is the lack of consideration given to cyclists. What consideration there was, was done in by someone with little or no understanding of cyclists needs.

The proposed layout, in particular, the York Street bridge/overpass is especially dangerous to cyclists.

Cycling in shared lanes in a busy city is dangerous. Cyclists need space. Cyclists need protection. Cyclists need to be segregated from larger and faster moving vehicles, or else cyclists will die.

Giving space to cyclists will benefit all road users.

If space is given to cycling, it will encourage more cyclists, it will move more people out of cars, reducing congestion for everyone.

If space is given to cycling, it will remove cyclists from motor vehicle lanes, and improve traffic flow for both cyclists, and motorised traffic.

If space is given to cycling, less cyclists will die.

The DRD minister wants Belfast to be a cycling city, and to help lead the cycling revolution in the UK. To achieve this cycling needs to be prioritised and safe routes must be provided.

This is a golden opportunity to provide quality cycling infrastructure, and to keep encouraging more people out of their cars.

The proposed cycling infrastructure is sub-standard, and in the 21 Century that is unacceptable, and it shows a complete lack of foresight in the minds of the architects of this scheme.

To allow only 1.5m for cyclists in an unprotected lane out of over 27metres in total width is unfathomable. This single statistic shows clearly how much consideration was given to cyclists in this design.

There is enough width in this bridge/overpass to allow wide footpaths, segregated bus lanes, protected cycle lanes and enough lanes for other motorised traffic.

With this proposed layout, if a cyclist makes a mistake, the cyclist will likely be injured or killed by traffic.

It is also the case in this layout that if a driver makes a mistake, the cyclist will also likely be injured or killed.

Everyone makes mistakes, and enough is known about road design that the designers should know that road design needs to allow for a small mistake to not result in a fatality.

In this proposed scheme, a drivers momentary lapse of attention, a moment of distraction, a misreading of road layout could easily result in a cyclists death.

The BRT (Bus Rapid Transport) routes are being rolled out in various parts of the city, and it is likely that if it is expanded to the north of the city it will be along this route, and therefore the bus lanes should be separated from bicycles, and other motorised traffic.

The University of Ulster will be providing at least 200 bicycle parking spaces, primarily on Fredrick Street right at the southern edge of the junction development. Therefore it is clear that the number of cyclists in this area will be increasing greatly, as courses and students move from Jordanstown to the new campus buildings.

Another flawed aspect is the junction design. There has been as much consideration for cyclist in the junction design as there has been in the width allocation for cyclists.

- The York Street/Frederick St junction southbound should provide provision for a cyclist turning right into Frederick St for the University parking facility.

- No cycle lanes have been provided at all on York Street between Frederick St and Gt Georges St.

- No provision for southbound cyclists to turn right onto Gt Georges St.

- Southbound bus/cycle lane narrows to a dangerous pinch point at Gt Georges St/York St junction.

- Southbound buses on York Street bridge/overpass will either have to squeeze past cyclists or move into oncoming traffic, either situation is highly dangerous.

- The cycling lane markings should continue through the junctions

- \* especially on the southbound direction reaching the York St bridge/overpass other wise M2 traffic will likely cut across cyclists.

- pinch points at the traffic signals must be resolved. Pinch points such as this cause the most difficulty for cyclists forced to share road space with incompatible vehicular traffic.

- the loops at the junctions must detect cyclists

- traffic light timing must allow ample time for cyclists to pass

- \*especially southbound reaching the York St bridge/overpass due to the length of the open junction.

- drivers travelling North on York Street are used to one way, making this two way is dangerous, so southbound lanes need to be segregated/protected.

There are a number of simple, low cost solutions:

- Wider protected cycle lane on the north bound side.

- Protected cycle lane on the south bound side - separated from the bus lane/ This can be achieved is several ways,

One less north bound lane, i.e. two towards M2, and a single lane towards York Road.  
Remove one or more (or narrow both) lane separators.

As a last resort narrow or remove path on East side of the bridge (virtually no pedestrian traffic there)

I would have preferred these points to have been recorded on the night, as it is possible that I have missed some points, but it is clear that the road design needs to be revisited.

We need to bring this junction up to the highest standard for all road users, and pedestrians. This cannot and should not be just a scheme for motorised traffic.

I hope that my points will be considered carefully.

I would greatly appreciate an acknowledgement that my email has been received, and ideally I would like a response to the issues I have raised here.

Regards,  
Stephen O'Kane.