

Support number **SU09**
Supporter's Name Bernard Clarke, Translink
Date submitted 13 March 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

TransportNI has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. Translink, as a key stakeholder, would wish to put on record their general support for the York Street Interchange.

a) TransportNI notes your email of 13 March 2015 and welcomes your general support of the Proposed Scheme.

2. With respect to the publication and exhibition last month of the draft orders and environmental statement, we took the opportunity to commend officials from DRD TransportNI and representatives from URS for the inclusion of a new southbound bus lane on York Street as well as remind them that urgent consideration now needs to be given to the Temporary Traffic Management Strategy (TTMS) that will be needed for the anticipated 3 year construction period, particularly as we understand that it is now expected that the start date for the scheme is to be accelerated to 2017/18.

Construction Programme

a) It is anticipated that the scheme would require a minimum period of just over 3 years (38 months) to construct, subject to the advance completion of service diversion works or advance placement of service diversion Orders with the relevant utility providers. Based on the current programme, TransportNI expects construction works to commence in Autumn 2017, subject to successful progression of the Statutory Orders procedures (including Public Inquiry), availability of funding, and detailed economic appraisal. On this basis, the scheme could be completed by late 2020.

Traffic Management during Construction

b) TransportNI notes that further to your response, a Temporary Traffic Management Strategy Group (TTMSG) has been established comprising representatives from both TransportNI and Translink to consider requirements for temporary traffic management during the construction period. The TTMSG is considering several points raised by your response, including:

- a. Requirements for minimum lane provision through the works;
- b. Access for public transport services through the works;
- c. The potential delivery of additional Park and Ride facilities;
- d. The potential delivery of a hard shoulder busway citybound on the M2 (as requested in your response), along with the potential extension of the existing M1 citybound hard shoulder busway to Sprucefield;
- e. Alternative routes during the construction period;
- f. Communication with the general public and other key stakeholders.

3. **As has been the experience with other recent strategic road improvement schemes e.g. M1 / Westlink and the A2 Shore Road at Greenisland, public transport will have a key role, particularly as overall travel demand in the environs of the scheme will change considerably with the Ulster University at York Street opening in September 2018.**

The consequences of the recent 2015 / 16 budget settlement and with further funding cuts anticipated in subsequent years will impact on our collective ability to ameliorate the potential traffic disruption along the M2, Westlink and M3 as well as adjacent roads.

For these reasons, Translink formally request DRD TransportNI to now develop proposals for the introduction of hard shoulder bus lane(s) on the M2 to be operative in advance of the start of the construction. These in combination with the new Park & Ride scheme at Ballymartin, which commences operation in July 2015, will off-set the loss of the car parks at Northside and York Street 2 – a total of 369 spaces – (both needed for the proposed York Street Interchange scheme) but also help to achieve the demanding bus and rail modal share targets set for the relocation of the University of Ulster.

Traffic Management during Construction

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- a. Requirements for minimum lane provision through the works;
 - b. Access for public transport services through the works;
 - c. The potential delivery of additional Park and Ride facilities;
 - d. The potential delivery of a hard shoulder busway citybound on the M2 (as requested in your response), along with the potential extension of the existing M1 citybound hard shoulder busway to Sprucefield;
 - e. Alternative routes during the construction period;
 - f. Communication with the general public and other key stakeholders.
4. **Translink look forward to working with DRD TransportNI in developing suitable TTMS arrangements as well as appropriate traffic and travel advice in advance of, as well as during, the construction of the York Street Interchange scheme.**
- a) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme and look forward to working with Translink in advance of and during construction.