B.C.C.R.D.
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26 January 2007

Department for Social Development
Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate
2nd Floor
McKelvey House
25 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6GB

To whom it may concern

We the Castle Street/King Street Traders whilst recognising and welcoming plans to strategically regenerate all areas of Belfast, have serious concerns in relation to your approach to the regeneration of the North West Quarter.

We are particularly anxious about the fact that you are now seeking comments and opinions in relation to Part Two of your proposed strategy. We only recently became aware of such a proposed regeneration scheme and would like to inform you that the majority of our traders were unaware of any consultation relating to Part One. This part of your proposed strategy, which directly relates to our location, as far as we have been told, was closed for comments and opinion almost two years ago and has been shelved until 2011.

Some of the undersigned traders have been trading in the Castle Street/King Street/Berry Street area in family business for many years and are disappointed that we as a group were not consulted. We feel that we have been neglected by statutory agencies in the same way the general area has been for the past few decades. We are rate paying traders and we have had to survive through the difficult years when Castle Street, as a gateway to the city centre from West Belfast, was a heavily fortified British Army military zone.

Having belatedly looked at Part One, we feel that an urgent meeting with senior personnel in DSD is required to solely address our localised concerns. We particularly are concerned that parts of King Street and Queen Street as well as some small side streets in the Castle Street area actually are not included within the boundary. This boundary should be extended. Whilst we feel that a multi agency approach must be welcomed to deal with the long term strategy, we also firmly believe that a short term approach is urgently required to deal with the problems traders face in the area on a daily basis.

In comparison to gateways to the city centre from the South and East of the city, the gateway to and from West Belfast highlights obvious wide ranging neglect to the tens of thousands who pass through each day. We feel that such dereliction and deprivation is unwarranted in this new era of equality, peace and prosperity. This suggested post 2011 timescale for the implementation of the "works in the North West Quarter" is impractical both in relation to Part One of the North West Quarter area.

What has to be taken into consideration is that in most instances those who wish to visit areas in Phase 2 will have to utilise areas included and excluded in Phase 1 to get to the desired point in Phase 2.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

John Noel Havlin

Havlin's
Castle Street Traders