

26 January 2007

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

B.C.C.R.D.

29 JAN 2007

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Dear Sir/Madam

BELFAST CITY CENTRE NORTH WEST QUARTER PART TWO
– **PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT OCTOBER 2006**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above document.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) welcomes this proposed physical, social and economic regeneration of the wider North West Quarter of this City Centre which will complement the work in Part One of the Masterplan which focuses on the Main Shopping Area (MSA) of Castlecourt and Smithfield Market.

The area has a wide range of potential attractions such as Clifton House, Central Library and St. Patrick's Church, which have yet to be developed or utilised to their full potential. The area also lies contiguous to other potential attractions such as Crumlin Road Gaol and Cathedral Quarter.

NITB welcomes the recommendation in 8.2 for an arts venue in the area. From a tourism perspective it would be desirable to see a public arts venue, including an art gallery located within walking distance of Royal Avenue.

NITB has secured funding for two initiatives which will impact on the area:

- **North Belfast and Shankill Visitor Servicing Initiative** – a £200,000 Renewing Communities visitor servicing project to put in place visitor infrastructure such as tourist signage and interpretation and visitor guiding/customer care training. This project is being managed by Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) and a Project Officer is in place to deliver to March 2008.
- **Belfast Visitor and Cultural Diversity Programme** – a £150,000 International Fund for Ireland pilot project, supported by the 5 Belfast Area Partnership Boards to put in place a series of podcasts and downloads for each area and also to set up a mobile phone visitor information texting service. This project is currently out to tender and will be managed by BVCB.

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In conclusion, NITB welcomes this initiative which will complement work already underway through NITB and BVCB and other regeneration projects in the area such as Cathedral Quarter and the development of the Main Shopping precincts of Castlecourt and Smithfield Market. This project fits well with the ongoing Belfast Public Realm scheme and will improve the connectivity between the City Centre and the North West of the City

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Rubery', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

JOHN RUBERY
Director
Special Projects