

Place and Economy Department
Planning and Building Control



Belfast
City Council

Your Ref: LDP2019/BCC/PS
Our Ref: DPSPAC002
(Please quote at all times)

James Bickerstaff
Programme Officer
Planning Appeals Commission
Park House
87/91 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7AG

Belfast Planning Service
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
BELFAST
BT2 8BP

Tel: 028 9050 0510
Date: 31 July 2020

Dear James

Belfast Local Development Plan – Revised Timetable

I refer to your letter of 3rd July following the Commissioners' initial assessment of the draft Plan Strategy. At the outset I would wish to thank you and the Commissioners for the work they have undertaken over the past 7 months in reviewing the submission in preparation for the independent examination. As the first submission of its type under the new system following the restoration of planning to local government it represents a significant milestone in bringing the full range of functions back to the Council.

As you are aware reaching this stage of the plan development has taken an enormous effort both in terms of the resourcing and engagement to fully capture the views of the stakeholders, citizens of Belfast and our elected representatives - who on a cross party basis endorsed the draft Plan Strategy. The full extent of this engagement and the wider process form part of the plan submission.

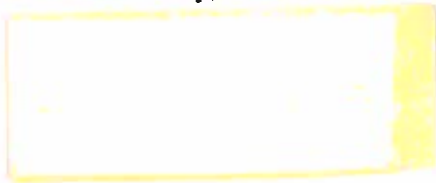
As requested, the Council has reviewed the commentary from the Commissioners and whilst we have endeavoured to address these as best as possible in order to assist the Commissioners, it should be recognised that a number of the points raised are matters which the Commissioners ought not come to any final conclusions on until they have considered all the representations made at IE. The Council is mindful that the role of the IE is to consider whether the dPS is sound, not to consider whether the dPS could be made *more* sound.

As noted above where appropriate the further detail of the Council's response to specific questions raised by the Commissioners is set out in the enclosed Appendix 1. You have indicated that the Council's response will be published on the Commission's website. In relation to some matters the Commissioners have requested that the Council provide further documentation, however your correspondence does not indicate how this further documentation will be treated and this is not a matter which is covered in the Commission's Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans. Before providing any additional information, I would therefore be grateful if you would confirm how the Commission intends to treat any additional documentation provided at this stage and any procedures which will apply to the submission of such documentation.

I would also be grateful if you would indicate anticipated dates for the next stages in the Commissioners' consideration of the dPS.

As previously discussed the Council would welcome the opportunity to clarify or respond further to any of these aspects through an initial exploratory meeting, if that is considered necessary, and on that basis please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Keith Sutherland.

Yours sincerely,

A rectangular area that has been redacted with a yellow highlight, obscuring the signature of Aidan Thatcher.

Aidan Thatcher
Director of Planning and Building Control

Copied to: Andrea Kells, Chief Commissioner