

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

The Northern Ireland Planning Service

The Belfast Metropolitan Area has the largest concentration of population and commercial activity in Northern Ireland. Securing its prosperity and vibrancy is vital to the economic, environmental and social well-being of the Region.

Provides a wide range of opportunities for employment, office and commercial activity throughout the city.

The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025, agreed by the NI Assembly in September 2001, provides a vision of a thriving Belfast Metropolitan Area centred on a revitalised City of Belfast. It also provides a complementary vision for Belfast City as being the regional capital and a major focus for commerce, services, cultural amenities and employment opportunities.

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan is currently being prepared and will cover the six District Council Areas that comprise the Metropolitan area, including Belfast City. It has a significant role to play in achieving both these visions and contains a Strategic Planning Framework for Belfast City that:

- Promotes a strong city centre with a multi-functional role and as a focus for commerce.
- Recognises the important role of the Belfast Harbour Area, in particular Belfast Port and City Airport, and identifies Titanic Quarter as a mixed-use redevelopment opportunity of major significance.
- Provides a wide range of opportunities for employment, office and commercial activity throughout the city.
- Includes a wide range of proposals relating to urban design and environmental protection.
- Accommodates widespread opportunities for new housing across all parts of the city.

Arlene Foster (Minister for the Environment) and Mike Smith (Chief Executive of Titanic Quarter) survey the site from above



- Promotes tourist development in the city through recognition of its existing assets.
- Includes transportation related proposals consistent with its focal role.

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan seeks to deliver this Strategic Framework through a set of 'Planning Actions' that include:

- A wide range of land use designations that will help revitalise the city centre.
- Designations and policies that will promote revitalisation of arterial routes in the city.
- Focus on reducing the need for greenfield expansion and protect the landscapes that provide the unique city setting.
- Creating the majority of employment opportunities in locations that will help secure regeneration and revitalisation.
- Specific zonings for social housing.
- Providing urban design frameworks for the city centre, arterial routes and Conservation Areas.
- Protecting the built heritage through the designation of Areas of Townscape Character.
- Protecting existing parks, green areas, the coastline and designating Local Landscape Policy Areas, Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Community Greenways and Urban Landscape Wedges.

- Positive protection of the Lagan Valley Regional Park.
- Promoting public transport and equitable access to services, facilities and employment opportunities for all the community by proposed park and ride sites, new railway stations and rapid transit routes.

These actions will aim to enhance the quality of life in the city, promote equality of opportunity for all sections of the community, while also promoting urban renewal. They will also protect the city's built and natural environmental assets.

Within Belfast city centre a further focus for commercial activity will be established through the Victoria Square development, which opened in Spring 2008. Ongoing regeneration in the Cathedral Quarter is providing a valuable alternative focus for cultural and entertainment activity. Further regeneration initiatives in the North West Quarter areas adjacent to Castlecourt will also in the longer term further strengthen city centre vitality.

Outside the city centre a number of major mixed-use regeneration projects are facilitated by The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015, including the Titanic Quarter within Belfast Harbour Area and the former Crumlin Road Gaol / Girdwood Barracks area. ▶



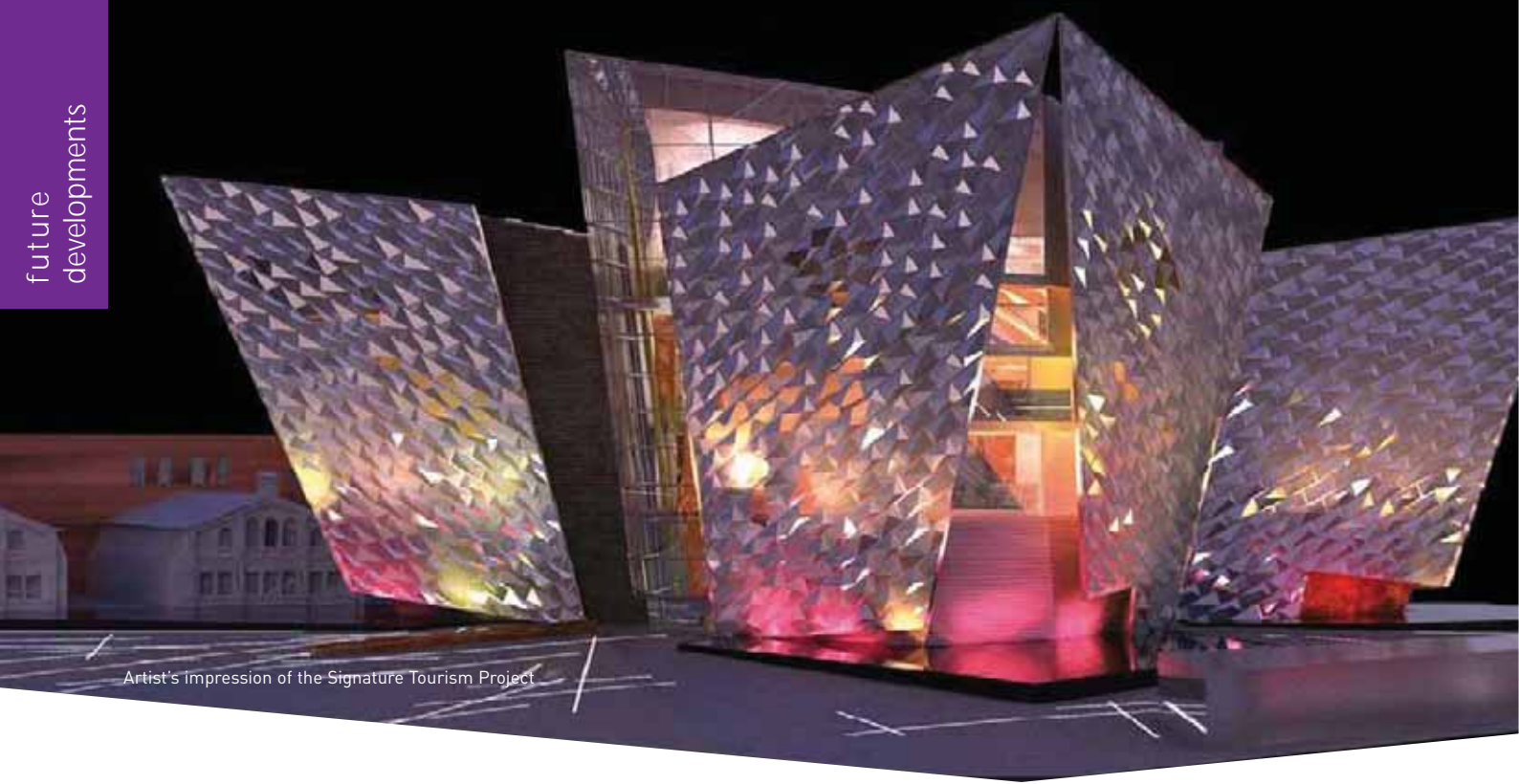
Cranes in operation at Titanic Quarter



Another part of Titanic's industrial heritage

These actions will aim to enhance the quality of life in the city.





Artist's Impression of the Signature Tourism Project

► Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 continued...

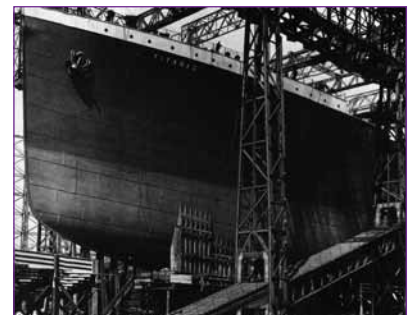
The Titanic Quarter

Titanic Quarter is a 75 hectare area of largely cleared land located at Queen's Island in the Belfast Harbour Area. The site is owned by the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and leased to Titanic Quarter Ltd and Titanic Properties Ltd. Titanic Quarter was formerly part of the Harland and Wolff shipyard and contains a number of listed structures and scheduled monuments that relate historically to the shipyard, which in its heyday was one of the main economic drivers in Belfast.

Development of Titanic Quarter is seen as a unique opportunity to build a north-easterly extension to the successful riverfront renewal along the River Lagan undertaken by the Laganside Corporation over the past decade in Belfast. The Titanic Quarter is seen as key to the establishment of Belfast as a first class European city.

The total development period for the Titanic Quarter is planned to develop over the course of 15-20 years, with infrastructure provision and development proposals being phased over this period. The overall development will provide a mixed range of land uses.

Significant opportunities will be created for employment and inward investment including offices, business support, high technology and research and development establishing a business environment to complement the existing city centre. Business and leisure tourism will be an important element with several hotels planned and the proposed Titanic Signature Project, which is seen as a key tourist attraction. There will also be recreation and leisure spaces to include restaurants, cafes and bars which will provide an extension to the existing leisure spaces already found within the nearby Odyssey complex.



Images from top:
Ferry across Lagan in times gone by
Modern development along the Lagan
Titanic under construction

A high profile European waterfront development firmly rooted in the history and character of Belfast.

Work commenced in May 2006 on the infrastructure and public realm to facilitate the initial development proposals associated with Phase I. Work has also begun on the development proposals within Phase I, which include a gateway office development with an expected completion in autumn 2008, a hotel adjacent to the Odyssey complex and residential development.

is the restoration of the scheduled Titanic and Olympic slipways, which will become a major new recreation and events space for the city.

Titanic Quarter will also involve the implementation of a high quality public transport system designed with the potential for future light rapid transport. Cycle routes will also be provided with safe and accessible pedestrian routes key to the integration of the public realm as an integral element of the overall development.

The planning application for Phase II was the largest ever dealt with by the Planning Service in terms of the scale of development proposed. The development of 16.5 hectares of the overall site will result in approximately three million sq feet of new floor space. Phase II will include further residential development for some 2000 homes and the creation of a new educational campus. Refurbishment of the listed former Harland and Wolff Headquarters building will be undertaken and further development of the public realm. Of significance

The Titanic Quarter will be a high profile European waterfront development firmly rooted in the history and character of Belfast. It presents the opportunity to create a new urban quarter essential to the future prosperity of Belfast as a whole, attracting high quality investment and development.

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Image courtesy of GOTOBELFAST.COM



Statue in front of the Waterfront Hall, Belfast

Image courtesy of GOTOBELFAST.COM

