Local Development Plan 2032

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

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Contents

A: A Quality Place - Enabling Sustainable Communities and Delivery of New Homes

Established Residential Areas

The Plan Strategy, whilst seeking to achieve higher densities in urban areas, does not support overdeveloped and unsympathetic housing schemes in established residential areas. The overriding objective in such areas should be to avoid unacceptable damage to the environmental quality, density and privacy enjoyed by existing residents.

Proposals for the redevelopment of existing dwellings and infill development in residential areas will be assessed in the context of Council's Operational Policies (HOU1-HOU12) and in particular Policy HOU8 – Protecting Local Character, Environmental Quality and Residential Amenity in Established Residential Areas.

Residential development should be brought forward in line with the following density bands:

- City Centre Boundary 120-160 dwellings per hectare
- Settlement Development Limits of City, Towns and Greater Urban Areas: 25-35 dwellings per hectare
- Settlement Development Limits of Villages and small settlements 20-25 dwellings per hectare.
- Within the above designated areas, increased housing density above the indicated bands will be considered in town centres and those locations that benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities.

Definition of an Established Residential Area

For the purposes of the Council's Operational Policies, established residential areas are normally taken to mean residential neighbourhoods dominated by medium to low density single family housing with associated private amenity space or gardens. These areas may include buildings in commercial, retail or leisure services use, usually clustered together and proportionate in scale to the size of the neighbourhood being served.

Within our city and towns established residential areas often display a clear spatial structure. Building forms, plot sizes and shapes are sometimes similar with a well-defined pattern of local development. Properties may exhibit comparable design styles including common architectural detailing and treatments. Areas of public amenity space together with the private gardens of properties are frequently defined with mature trees, shrubs and hedgerow planting. The overall spatial structure is often delineated by a clear network of streets and roads. However, it is recognised that there are also settled housing areas where there is a greater range and mix of dwelling styles and where the overall pattern of development is less uniform. These areas too have an established residential character worthy of protection against redevelopment or infill at a significantly higher density than that found in the locality.

In our villages and small settlements, established residential areas generally display a more intimate character and spatial scale. There is often more local variety in architectural styles and treatments, with building lines, property sizes, plot ratios, and road layouts being much more changeable. Residential developments in these locations may have a close spatial relationship with land used for other purposes such as for employment, local schools, and other local services.

Exceptions

In recognition of the desirability of promoting increased density housing in appropriate locations, the term established residential areas will not apply to:

- the designated city centre, and designated town centres (including previously developed land/brownfield land);
- higher density inner city areas (including previously developed land/brownfield land)

- along key and link transport corridors (including designated arterial routes) within the city and on sites adjacent to main public transportation corridors and arterial routes nodes within the city and towns.

Space Standards for Dwellings

The following table must be used to calculate minimum dwelling sizes in new developments. The space standards represent the required area of internal floor space.

Space Standards			
Type	**Single Storey / Flat (m^2)**	**Two Storey (m^2)**	**Three Storey (m^2)**
1-Person / Bedsit	30/35	-	-
1-Person / 1-Bedroom	35/40	-	-
2-Person / 1-Bedroom	50/55	-	-
3-Person / 2-Bedroom	60/65	70/75	-
4-Person / 2-Bedroom	70/75	75/80	-
4-Person / 3-Bedroom	75/80	80/85	-
5-Person / 3-Bedroom	80/85	90/95	95/100
6-Person / 3-Bedroom	85/90	95/100	100/105
6-Person / 4-Bedroom	90/95	100/105	105/110
7-Person / 4-Bedroom	105/110	115/120	115/120

Guidance for Residential Extensions and Alterations

This guidance seeks to provide a consistent basis against which to consider an extension and/or alteration to a dwelling house or flat, including those in multiple occupancy and any proposal for a domestic garage or an outbuilding.

The guidance is intended to expand on the requirements of Operational Policy HOU7 to advise home owners on how to extend or alter their property in a neighbourly manner that is sympathetic with the original property, respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area and contributes towards a quality environment.

Although the guidance may not cover all the site specific issues that can arise it covers the main considerations that will be taken into account when determining a planning application. If it is followed, an extension or alteration is more likely to be granted planning permission.

Context and Design

An extension or alteration to a residential property should be designed to become an integral part of the property both functionally and visually. Such works should not be designed in isolation solely to fit in a required amount of accommodation. Proposals that are badly sited or designed, or that are incompatible with their surroundings, can lead to an undesirable change in the character of the existing property and the area in which they are located. Success depends upon striking the right balance between adaptation and sensitivity to the original design.

The overall aim is to encourage high quality design solutions irrespective of whether the approach followed seeks to mirror the style of the existing property or adopts a contemporary modern design approach. To ensure good design any extension or alteration will need to complement the host building and respect its location and wider setting.

An extension or alteration should not be so large or so prominent as to dominate the host property or its wider surroundings, rather development proposals should be in scale with existing and adjoining buildings. All such works should have proportion and balance, fitting in with the shape of the existing property. The height, width and general size of an extension should generally be smaller than the existing house and subordinate or integrated so as not to dominate the character of the existing property, although it is accepted that on occasion a larger

extension may be required, for example to facilitate the renovation and upgrading of a small rural dwelling to meet modern amenity standards. It will not usually be appropriate to allow an extension to project above the ridge line of the existing dwelling and this will be especially important where uniform building height is part of the street scene.

Proposals in an urban context should not overdevelop the site in terms of massing, plot size and proximity to boundaries thereby, for example, creating a visual 'terrace' effect. This is one of a number of problems associated with side extensions, where they can alter the character of the area by filling the visual gaps between residential properties. The need for adequate space alongside boundaries is also important to provide ease of access to the rear of the property and to allow for maintenance. This will also serve to eliminate the possibility of any part of the extension, including rainwater goods, overhanging neighbouring property.

A further concern may arise where a side extension to a semi-detached dwelling is proposed at the same height and follows the same building line as the block comprising an original pair of dwellings. This will often compromise the appearance and architectural integrity of the block, and if repeated throughout a neighbourhood is likely to have an adverse impact upon the character of the wider area. To address this particular problem, proposals of this nature should be 'set back' from the building line or front of the house and also 'set down' from the ridge line.

Extensions or alterations to the front of a property require great care as the front elevation is often the most visible to public view. Poor design can upset the architectural integrity of the existing property and have an intrusive effect on the street scene. It is important, therefore, to ensure that extensions and alterations to the front of property do not detract from the street scene, especially where there is a clear and visually obvious 'building line' or architectural features. In such cases they should appear to be part of the existing property and not an obvious addition.This can be achieved by ensuring any such works are in proportion with the property, its fenestration and detailing, with matching materials, roof design and pitch.

Alterations or an extension to a dwelling should not infringe upon a neighbour's property. For example, it is an infringement of a neighbour's property rights should foundations or guttering encroach onto their land or if an extension overhangs or attaches to their property. Where an extension abuts or runs close to a property boundary, permission to enter neighbouring land will also be required to enable approved works to be carried out or for future maintenance purposes. Consequently, it is advisable to discuss proposals with neighbours before submitting a planning application. Infringement of property rights is primarily a legal matter between the relevant parties.

Garages and other associated outbuildings

Buildings within the residential curtilage, such as, garages, sheds and greenhouses can often require as much care in siting and design as works to the existing residential property. They should be subordinate in scale and similar in style to the existing property, taking account of materials, the local character and the level of visibility of the building from surrounding views. The use of false pitches should be avoided as these often detract from the appearance of these buildings, particularly when viewed from the side.

Garages or outbuildings wholly located in front gardens or those that extend in front the established building line can over-dominate the front of the property and detract from the street scene and will therefore generally be resisted.

In the countryside, ancillary buildings should be designed as part of the overall layout to result in an integrated rural group of buildings.

Roof Extensions

An extension or alteration which copies the roof type and angle of pitch of the original residential property will be more successful than those proposals that introduce a completely different type of roof. The roofing material of any pitched roof extension should seek to match that of the original. Flat or mansard roofed extensions to traditional buildings are

seldom harmonious. However, they may be acceptable where they are not open to public views.

The use of loft space to provide bedrooms or other living space can often provide additional accommodation. However, alterations to the roof profile of any building can be particularly sensitive as roofs play an important part in contributing to a building's appearance and the overall character of the area. An extension to the rear of a property should ensure that the roof of the extension does not project above the ridge of the existing dwelling as this can give an unsightly view along the streetscape. Roof lights, which lie parallel with the plane of the roof, are a particularly sympathetic way of providing light to a room within a roof space. They may often constitute permitted development but care should be taken to ensure compliance with Building Regulations where such windows are intended to provide a means of escape.

The regular repeated rhythm and uniformity of roof forms and chimneys may be a particular feature of a group of similar buildings or the wider townscape and should therefore be retained. If elements, which are not part of the original property are proposed, for example, a dormer roof extension, these should be designed in a manner that complements the period and style of the original property, or to reflect the best examples of such features on properties of a similar period in the area.

Where a dormer is open to public view, it can interfere with both the original design of the existing building and cause a visual intrusion into the street scene or rural setting. Dormer windows to the front or side of a property will be resisted in areas where they are uncharacteristic, particularly large box dormers that are over-dominant often extending the full width of the roof. The size and number of dormers should therefore be kept to a minimum to avoid dominating the appearance of the roof and should be located below the ridge line of the existing roof. Positioning dormer windows vertically in line with the windows below and ensuring that they are smaller in size will usually avoid a top-heavy or unbalanced appearance.

Detailing

Attention should be paid to design details such as the position, shape, proportion and style of windows, doors and other features to complement the existing property and respect the character and appearance of the area. To facilitate the integration of an extension or alteration with the existing property, new windows should be aligned to the existing fenestration and match the symmetry of the existing dwelling. The relationship between solids and voids is an essential component of any new proposal, but particularly when extending or altering an existing property where window size and height diminish on upper floors.

Older residential properties in particular often have interesting arches, brick detailing and other special features or ornamentation which add character. Continuing or reflecting such ornamentation around doors, windows and at the eaves in the design approach followed can be an effective way of integrating any extension or alteration work with the existing property.

External Finishes

The external finish of a proposal should aim to complement the type of materials, colour and finish of both the existing building and those of neighbouring properties, particularly where certain materials strongly predominate. Using similar or complementary materials to those of the existing property is more likely to produce a successful extension or alteration. The re-use and recycling of building materials is encouraged and will be especially important when carrying out work to a listed building, or buildings within a conservation area or an area of townscape character.

Sustainable Design

A sustainable approach to development is encouraged. The extension or alteration to a residential property can provide the opportunity to improve its sustainability in terms of incorporating energy efficiency

measures, renewable energy technologies and the re-use of existing materials.

Where existing walls are being demolished or roofs altered, existing materials can often be salvaged and re-used, which will benefit the visual appearance of the new work and its integration with the existing property. Solar thermal panels that produce hot water and photovoltaic (PV) panels that produce electricity can be installed in roofs. PV tiles are now available that look like traditional tile and slate roofs, allowing the installation of these systems to be sensitive to the character, colour and style of the existing roof. Green or 'living' roofs can further benefit the environment by enhancing biodiversity and providing high standards of insulation. Extensions also provide the opportunity to consider the provision of additional landscaping to soften the impact of such works.

Walls and Fences

Walls and fences, particularly in front gardens, can have a significant effect on the appearance of the property and streetscape. When erected beside driveways or on corner sites they can have an impact on sightlines and traffic safety. Both the visual and road safety aspects of a wall or fence will be assessed when proposals are being considered. Materials should always complement the character of the property and the neighbourhood. Expanses of close-board fencing bordering public areas are visually unacceptable. It should be noted that some walls or fences may be permitted development.

The Countryside

The impact of an extension or alteration on the visual amenity of the countryside and, in particular, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty needs to be considered. Proposals should be in keeping with the character of the existing property and its countryside setting. Through poor design the individual and cumulative effect of extensions and alterations which are disproportionate in size to the existing property, or which require the use of land outside the established curtilage of the property, will result in a detrimental change to rural character.

Many rural dwellings occupy larger plots than their urban counterparts. Whilst there may be sufficient room on the plot to accommodate an extension in physical terms, great sensitivity is required to ensure the proposal integrates with the existing dwelling and surrounding landscape. In assessing the potential impact of development in the countryside, particular regard will be paid to the quality and nature of the landscape in the locality and at the particular site.

The suburban boundary treatment of walls or fences and the introduction of ornate pillars are inappropriate in the rural landscape and will be resisted.

Residential Amenity

It is important that the amenity of all residents is protected from 'unneighbourly' extensions as these can cause problems through overshadowing/loss of light, dominance and loss of privacy. The extent to which potential problems may arise is usually dependent upon the separation distance, height, depth, mass and location of an extension and window positions. Single-storey extensions to the rear of a semidetached or terraced dwelling will generally be acceptable where the depth does not exceed 3.5 metres from the back wall of the original building, at the boundary with an adjoining dwelling. Larger extensions will be assessed in light of the following guidance, although it is acknowledged that flexibility may be needed in respect of older properties with small plot areas or where the proposal seeks to meet the specific needs of a person with a disability.

Privacy

Except in the most isolated rural location, few households can claim not to be overlooked to some degree. The protection of the privacy of the occupants of residential properties is an important element of the quality of a residential environment. It is a particularly important consideration

where an extension or alteration is proposed adjacent to existing properties. Balconies, roof terraces, decking, dormer windows, windows in side elevations and conservatories all have the potential to cause overlooking problems, due to their position and orientation, particularly from upper windows. The use of obscure glass, velux windows and high-level windows in appropriate circumstances can often minimise this potential, for example, the use of obscure glass for bathroom and landing windows. However, this is not considered an acceptable solution for windows serving main rooms such as bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms or kitchens.

Proposals should seek to provide reasonable space between buildings in order to minimise overlooking. This will also assist in providing acceptable levels of daylight to properties. In the case of dormer windows, restricting the size of the window and setting it back from the eaves is usually an adequate solution that can protect neighbouring privacy.

Overlooking of gardens may be unacceptable where it would result in an intrusive, direct and uninterrupted view from a main room, to the most private area of the garden, which is often the main sitting out area adjacent to the property, of your neighbours' house. As a general rule of thumb this area is the first 3-4 metres of a rear garden, closest to the residential property.

Dominance

Dominance is the extent to which a new development adversely impinges on the immediate aspect or outlook from an adjoining property. Neighbouring occupiers should not be adversely affected by a sense of being 'hemmed in' by an extension. This can often result from the construction of a large blank wall. Dominance can be increased when the neighbouring property is at a lower ground level to the development site. Loss of light is usually a consequence of dominance. Two storey rear extensions to semi-detached and terraced dwellings are usually very prominent when viewed from adjoining dwellings and can dominate outward views from adjoining ground floor windows, appearing excessively large and overbearing. It is appropriate, however, to take account of the prevailing local environment.

Overshadowing/Loss of Light

Sunlight and daylight are valued elements in a good quality living environment. Effective daylighting can reduce the need for electric lighting, while sunlight can contribute towards meeting some of the heating requirements of our homes through passive solar heating. In designing a new extension or alteration to a residential property care should be taken to safeguard access to sunlight and daylight currently enjoyed by adjoining residential properties.

Where an extension is poorly sited or badly designed it can cast a shadow that may reduce a neighbour's daylight and adversely affect their amenity to an unacceptable level. It is important, therefore, that every effort should be made to avoid or minimise the potential for overshadowing to a neighbour when drawing up plans for an extension. Overshadowing to a garden area on its own will rarely constitute sufficient grounds to justify a refusal of permission.

In terms of daylighting, the effect on all rooms, apart from halls, landings, bathrooms and utility rooms will be considered. Where an extension would be likely to reduce the amount of light entering the window of a room, other than those indicated above, to an unreasonable degree, planning permission is likely to be refused.

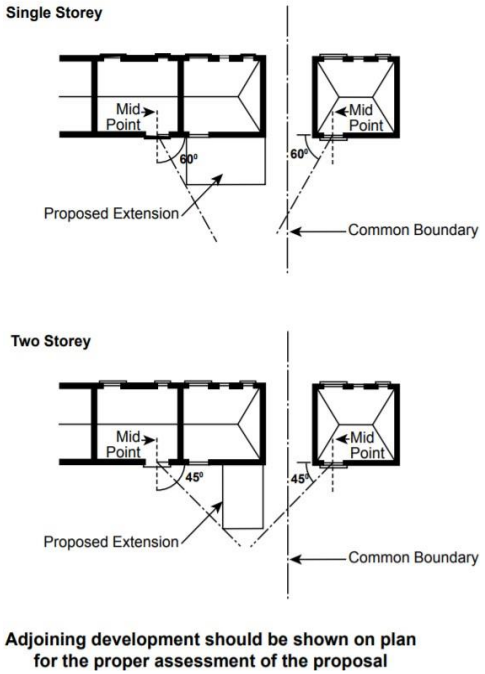
Significant problems of sunlight or daylight loss are most likely to occur in terraced or semi-detached housing situations and it is here that most care needs to be taken. An extension should be kept as far as possible from neighbouring windows and boundaries to minimise impact.

To help assess the loss of light as a result of a proposed development to the front or rear of a residential property, the 60 degree and 45 degree lines, as shown in Figure 1 for single storey and two storey extensions respectively, will be employed. These lines will be taken from the centre of the closest neighbouring window. It should be noted that where the

closest window is located at first floor level it may be more appropriate to consider this against the 60 degree line. The elevations and outline plans of adjoining properties must be shown on drawings, accurately scaled (in metric measurement) to allow proper consideration of this matter.

Figure 1

House Extensions



Adjoining development should be shown on plan for the proper assessment of the proposal

The guidance in Figure 1 is not however a rigid standard which must be met in every case. Rather it is an assessment tool which will be used in conjunction with other relevant factors in order to gauge the acceptability of proposals in terms of the overshadowing / loss of light impact upon neighbouring properties. Other relevant factors which will be considered in this assessment are set out below:

- The existing form and type of extension prevalent in the area. For example, where the majority of dwellings in a terrace have already been extended in a similar way to the application proposal this matter will be balanced against any adverse impact on neighbouring properties.
- The proposed design of the extension or alteration. For example, where a proposed extension incorporates significant glazing in the design, the impact on neighbouring properties may be acceptable in circumstances where alternatives might result in unacceptable overshadowing.
- The particular characteristics of the site and its context. For example, where daylighting to an adjacent dwelling is already impeded by an existing building or boundary wall and the proposal would not significantly exacerbate the existing situation.
- The orientation and position of a neighbour's window in relation to the proposed extension, the room it serves and whether the window affected is the primary source of light for that room. For example, account will be taken as to whether a room affected by a proposed extension benefits from an alternative natural source of light.
- The potential size and form of an extension allowable under permitted development. For example, where a proposal would not have an impact significantly greater than that of an extension allowable under permitted development rights.
- Provision of an extension or alterations to meet the particular needs of a person with a disability. For example, a modest single storey extension required to meet the particular needs of the person in question will be a material consideration to be balanced against any adverse impacts on the neighbouring property. This may result in the criteria relating to daylighting and overshadowing being relaxed.

Noise and General Disturbance

Residential areas can be sensitive to noise and general disturbance, particularly in the late evening when there is an expectation that surrounding background noise will remain low. An extension or alteration such as a balcony, roof-terrace or high level decking can all increase the level of noise and general disturbance experienced by residents of adjacent properties and will be subject to particular scrutiny.

Landscape

Landscaping is a vital consideration for all development and should form an integral part of any proposal. Landscaping can create a high quality setting, help integrate new development into its surroundings and assist the promotion of biodiversity of native species or other species characteristic of a particular area.

Proposals for landscaping should therefore always be considered as part of any application for an extension. The retention of existing trees, hedges and other significant landscape features will often be an important element in this and will usually help to reduce the impact of an extension on the character of the surrounding area more readily than walls or fences. Where important trees and landscape features exist within a site, care should be taken that extensions are not sited too close to them. Best practice in relation to this matter can be found in the publication 'Trees and Development' co-sponsored by the former Planning Service (DoE), the Forest of Belfast and the Construction Employers' Federation.

To ensure that full account is taken of existing trees and landscape features within the residential curtilage, such features should, as part of a planning application, be accurately detailed on a site survey map in accordance with British Standards BS 5837 (2012) 'Trees in Relation to Construction'. Where it is proposed that existing trees or significant landscape features are to be removed, the layout plan should indicate proposals for compensatory planting.

Private Amenity Space

Amenity space is an essential part of the character and quality of the environment of residential properties. It is important therefore to ensure, when bringing forward a proposal to extend, that adequate amenity space - particularly private space, is left. Garden space around a residential property is an integral part of its character and appearance and should not be reduced to a point where it is out of scale or fails to meet the present and future occupiers need for adequate useable private amenity space.

All residential properties require some in-curtilage private open space, usually to the rear, compatible with the overall size of the plot, for normal domestic activities, such as, bin storage, clothes drying, sitting out and play space. This space should enjoy a high degree of privacy from the public street and from any other public places.

Residents now have several bins per household to facilitate recycling. It is not appropriate for these to be stored in front gardens, which are rarely private, as they provide a public aspect and can adversely affect the character and appearance of the area.

Care should be taken to ensure that proposals to extend do not decrease the amount of private open space to a level that cannot accommodate the normal domestic activities identified above.

The level of private open space for new residential property is detailed in the 'Creating Places' design guide. In considering the effect of an extension on private amenity space the Council will take these guidelines and the prevailing standard of private amenity space in the local environment into account.

Extensions, particularly to the side of a residential property, whereby refuse and garden equipment will need to be carried through the house or stored in the front garden, will not normally be permitted. An exception may be made where a route can be maintained through the extension via a garage or utility room on the ground floor.

Access and Car Parking

An extension or alteration to a residential property that involves the conversion of an attached or integral garage to create additional living space can result in the loss of in-curtilage car parking provision. In such cases, care should be taken to ensure that any car parking space lost due to the proposed development is capable of being accommodated elsewhere within the curtilage of the site or can be accommodated on street.

Proposed works that would result in the significant loss of car parking spaces or a turning area, with no reasonable alternative being available, will not be acceptable. Similarly the use of an entire garden area to provide car parking or a turning area will be resisted.

Garages should be positioned where they can be accessed safely. To ensure the highway is not blocked while the door is being opened, a new garage which gives access to the public highway should retain a minimum of 6.0m driveway within the residential curtilage. Further detailed guidance in relation to in-curtilage driveways, hard standings and vehicle turning facilities is set out in the 'Creating Places' design guide.

Extensions and Alterations to provide for Ancillary Uses

An extension or alteration to a residential property to provide an ancillary use, such as additional living accommodation for elderly or dependent relatives, should be designed to demonstrate dependency on the existing residential property. Proposals of this nature should be designed in such a manner as to easily enable the extension to be later used as an integral part of the main residential property. Ancillary uses should provide limited accommodation and shared facilities, for example kitchens and be physically linked internally to the host property. Ancillary uses that could practically and viably operate on their own will not be acceptable.

Security and Designing out Crime

When undertaking any building work in the home, it is important to consider how this could affect security. Indeed planning for such works provides an ideal opportunity for householders to review security measures for their entire property and this can help promote a more secure residential environment.

Incorporating sensible security measures during the extension or refurbishment of buildings has been shown to reduce levels of crime and the fear of crime. By bringing the crime prevention experience of the police more fully into the planning and design process, a balance can be achieved between safety and security. The Police Service of Northern Ireland have specially trained officers who, free of charge, can advise on Crime Prevention and how to design out crime. Contact your local Crime Prevention Officer or visit the police web-site www.psni.police.uk for more information.

Permitted Development

In some cases it is possible to carry out an extension or make an alteration to a dwelling house (for the purposes of permitted development a dwelling house does not include a building containing one or more flats, or a flat contained within such as building. It also excludes any house or flat in multiple occupation) without the need to obtain planning permission, provided you meet specific requirements. This is known as 'permitted development' and detailed information on this matter is contained in the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Permitted development rights are complex and sometimes more restrictive in designated areas, such as, conservation areas and areas of outstanding natural beauty; and for certain properties, such as listed buildings (Any works of alteration or extension to a listed building which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest require Listed Building Consent). It may also be the case that in

some instances permitted development rights have been removed from a property by condition or have already been used and you should clarify this with the Council's Planning Department before proceeding with any proposal.

If you consider the works you propose to carry out are permitted development you are advised to apply formally to the Planning Department for a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development before proceeding with the development.

Residential and Nursing Homes

The following is intended to provide general guidance on the planning criteria to be applied when an applications for residential and nursing homes are being considered. It is not a specific statement of Council policy but rather one of advice and guidance. Each application is treated on its merits and the guidance given to a particular case is always a matter calling for planning judgement.

'Residential and nursing homes' fall within Class C3(a) of the Planning (Use Classes) Order 2015 which covers the following:

'Use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care (other than a use within Class C1 (Dwellinghouses)'.

Although this advice concentrates on residential and nursing homes, the advice given can also be applied to hospitals in appropriate circumstances.

Types of Planning Application

Applications for residential and nursing homes fall into the following categories:

(1) New development. This covers situations where a new home is to be built on an undeveloped site or a site which is due for redevelopment.

(2) Change of use of a building to a residential or nursing home. Detached dwellings are likely to be the most acceptable for this type of use, particularly if they are substantial villas or mansions set in reasonably large grounds with mature landscaping.

(3) Extension to an existing residential or nursing home.

Within Settlements (Cities, Towns and Villages)

It is to be expected that, other than in exceptional circumstances, residential and nursing homes will be located in cities, towns and villages where services are readily and conveniently available. Assessment of such proposals will be made against Operational Policy HOU11, Specialist Accommodation, and any other applicable operational policy having regard to the following planning considerations:

Siting: Attention will be paid to the size of site, its configuration and any physical characteristics and constraints attaching thereto, including the position of the buildings.

Locality: The Council will consider the existing (and anticipated) character of the area in which the proposal is to be located and the compatibility of the use in such an area. The existence or otherwise of similar establishments will be considered from the point of view of precedent, noting that Operational Policy HOU11 requires a demonstration of community need for the proposal, as well as from the point of view of the effect of an additional establishment or establishments on the character of the area.

Traffic Aspects: Proposals should be in compliance with the requirements of the Department's Parking Standards publication. Whilst this set standard will be used as a guide each application will be considered on its merits and consultation with DfI Roads will be carried out as part of the planning consideration. The Council will have to be satisfied on the following points:

(a) That access requirements can be met.

(b) That the existing road network can satisfactorily accommodate any additional traffic from the proposal.

(c) On and off street parking and servicing requirements can be met taking into account provision for staff, (full-time and part-time) visitors, doctors, ambulances, service vehicles, taxis etc and bearing in mind the capacity of the site/area to accept them. Service vehicles, particularly doctors and ambulances should be able to manoeuvre unimpeded within the site.

Amenity: Due regard will be given to the effect of nursing and residential homes on the amenity of the area in question, both visually and with regard to noise, nuisance and general disturbance.

Design and Layout: In cases other than changes of use it is important to ensure that the design and layout of buildings on site are satisfactory in themselves and in relation to adjoining properties. The Council will have regard to the height, scale, massing, space around buildings, distances from boundaries etc and to the provision of garden amenity space for use by residents.

Landscaping: The impact of any proposals on existing landscaping will be considered together with the need for the provision of new or additional landscape treatment on any proposed site.

Within the Countryside

Proposals for residential and nursing homes in rural areas, having regard to the requirement for a demonstration of community need as set out in Operational Policy HOU11, will be considered in the context of the Council's rural planning policies, particularly Operational Policies COU15 and COU16 and the satisfaction of all traffic aspects of the proposal.

Planning permission is only likely to be granted for nursing or residential homes in the countryside in exceptional circumstances. In considering what might be exceptional it is necessary to weigh the relevant considerations. These fall into 2 categories:

(1) The need to locate in the countryside.
(2) Impact on the countryside.

The Need to Locate in the Countryside

Residential and nursing homes should not normally be located in the countryside where such locations can be a disadvantage due to the absence of service facilities near at hand. Convenient public transport is desirable for visitors and relatives. Exceptionally there may be circumstances where the peace and quiet of the countryside might be particularly appropriate e.g. for the nursing of the terminally ill or convalescent cases.

Impact on the Countryside

Planning considerations such as location, siting, traffic aspects, amenity, design, layout and landscaping referred to above are important. In addition in rural areas it is important to ascertain that satisfactory drainage and sewerage arrangements can be provided.

The nature of the proposal will also be important. Whilst a change of use and limited alterations or extension of a large rural house in extensive grounds may be acceptable in particular circumstances, new building or extensive additions to modest buildings would normally not be permitted.

Crèches, day nurseries and pre-school play-groups

This advice deals with the planning issues that arise concerning applications to establish crèches, day nurseries and pre-school play-groups and sets out the criteria which the Council will take into account when determining such proposals.

Early Years Teams are specialist teams of social workers within Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust. They are responsible for the registration, inspection, monitoring and support of childminders and day care providers.

Persons who wish to use their own homes for child minding will not normally require planning permission for such a use where the number of children is restricted to 6 or less. Other factors such as hours of operation,

size of premises, potential traffic hazards, etc, may however have important implications in particular situations and in such cases a planning application may be necessary.

New development or a change of use of an existing building will require planning permission for the operation of crèches, day nurseries and pre-school play-groups. There is no specific definition given in planning legislation of the term 'crèche', 'day nursery' or 'pre-school playgroup' however the following is a broad description which would cover the uses.

'A place where a number of children under 5 years of age are brought together for part or all of a working day on a regular basis and where provision is made for their care, recreation and in some cases meals'.

A crèche or pre-school playgroup normal caters for children of 3 to 5 years and for part of a day only. Day nurseries often cover the complete age range under 5 years old and normally operate on a full day basis. Also, a number of such facilities provide care for older children, i.e., over 5 years old, after school hours.

'Crèches, day nurseries, after school facility or day centres' fall within Class D1 of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

In order to allow the Council to make a full assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the amenity of the immediate area, applicants will be required to provide information on the following:-

the proposed number and age range of children to be catered for;

the proposed number of staff, the ratio of staff to children and the maximum number of staff on the premises at any given time;

hours and days of opening;

plans indicating the internal floorspace arrangements and for external playspace provision (both soft and hard surfaces);

a block layout plan indicating proposed car parking provision, landscaping and screening proposals, the means of access and internal vehicle manoeuvring space.

Settlements

Within those settlement limits defined in the Council's Local Development Plan, proposals for the development of crèches, day nurseries and pre-school play-groups will be considered against the provision of Operational Policy CF01:

Non-Residential Areas – city or town centres, villages and smaller settlements; previously developed land (brownfield sites)

In areas of predominantly commercial land uses or areas of mixed commercial and residential uses, the provision of a crèche, day nursery or pre-school playgroup would normally be acceptable subject to the consideration that such a use would not be allowed to break up an otherwise continuous shopping frontage. In some instances, it may be possible for the use to locate on the upper floors of a building thus overcoming this objection. In areas of mixed land use, the effects of the proposal on any residential properties will be considered in the same way as proposals in wholly residential areas.

Residential Areas

To a limited extent, crèches, day nurseries and pre-school playgroups have operated for some time as part of the overall activities within existing community buildings such as church complexes and community centres. However, such day care facilities have becoming increasingly specialised in nature and operated on a commercial basis with a tendency for such operations to be carried on within residential areas.

Such proposals are unlikely to be acceptable in terraced or semi-detached properties in residential areas where the predominant form of occupation is by single families. Detached dwellings may be more acceptable for this type of use, particularly if they are substantial villas set in reasonably

large grounds with mature landscaping. In determining the suitability of premises for such purposes, the Council will consider the impact of any proposed development on the existing character and amenity of the area and the implications for road safety. In residential areas, the Council will not normally grant permission for the change of use of an entire dwelling but may give favourable consideration to proposals for the joint use of a property as a residence and crèche, day nursery playgroup.

Settlements – Conservation Areas, Areas of Townscape Character and Areas of Village Character

Proposed conversion to a crèche, day nursery or pre-school playgroup will be considered in light of Operational Policy HE10 for such areas. Where the proposal is considered acceptable in principle the detail of the proposed development must have special regard to the special architectural and historic character of the area.

The change of use of a building listed for its special architectural or historic interest to a crèche, day nursery or pre-school playgroup may be acceptable especially if such a use would help prolong its viable use or enhance its appearance. Proposals for the alteration or extension of such buildings will be considered against the criteria of Operational Policy HE6. Such proposals to listed buildings will be strictly controlled and schemes which are unsympathetic to the character, structure or appearance of listed buildings will not be permitted.

Rural Areas

Beyond those settlement limits defined in the Council's Local Development Plan, proposals for the development of crèches, day nurseries and pre-school play-groups will be considered against the following operational policies:

New Build – where a new building is sought to cater for a crèche, day nursery or pre-school play-group, Operational Policy COU13 will apply. Permission will be granted for such a community facility at an existing cluster of development where it is demonstrated, with sufficient evidence, that the proposal is necessary to serve the local rural population. The proposal must also satisfy the requirements of Operational Policy COU2.

Change of Use – proposals for the change of use of non-listed vernacular buildings or a suitable locally important building to a crèche, day nursery or pre-school play-group will be considered in accordance with Operational Policy COU14. In all other cases proposals will be considered on a case by case basis and in accordance with operational policy applicable to rural areas.

In all cases proposals must satisfy Operational Policies COU15 and COU16.

In considering the impact of the proposal on the adjacent and immediate surrounding area, the Council will have particular regard to the following in all cases:

(1) Scale of Operation

One of the main determinants of the acceptability of a proposal will be its scale. Whilst a proposal involving a small number of children might be acceptable in a residential area, one catering for 30 children could have a serious detrimental effect on residential amenity. The Council will therefore wish to be satisfied that the scale of operation is appropriate both in relation to the specific site and the general neighbourhood.

(2) Potential Nuisance and Disturbance

The main source of disturbance is noise generated either by additional traffic attracted to the site, or by the outdoor playing of the children. In considering a proposal the Council will wish to be satisfied that traffic arrangements are satisfactory and adequate outdoor playspace is available. Such playspace should not be located in close proximity to habitable rooms of any adjacent residential properties. The Council will consider the impact that the proposed hours of operation may have on residential amenity.

(3) Visual Impact

Regard will be taken to the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity and character of the area. The impact on existing landscaping will be considered together with the need for the provision of new or additional landscape treatment on any proposed site. Proposals to provide car parking space in front gardens in residential areas are unlikely to be acceptable. Parking provision and outdoor play areas should normally be screened from the public road and from adjoining property. Careful consideration should be given to materials used on surfaces. As a general rule the hardsurfacing of gardens will be discouraged. Applications which involve the use of temporary structures such as portacabins will be considered only in the most exceptional circumstances, and if approved the permission will be for a strictly limited period of time. Again screening from the public road and adjacent properties would be important. Extensions to existing buildings will only be permitted where it is clear that the extension would not result in a significant impact on residential amenity.

(4) Access and Car Parking Arrangements

Proposals must demonstrate suitable access and car parking arrangements that are in accordance with Operational Policy and comply with the requirements of the Department's Parking and Vehicle Access Standard publications. Whilst these set standards will be used as a guide each application will be considered on its merits and consultation with DfI Roads will be carried out as part of the planning consideration.

(5) Proliferation of Use

The Council is of the opinion that while in many areas the introduction of one or two specialist uses of this nature may be acceptable, a proliferation of such uses can collectively lead to a change in the overall character of an area. In determining each individual application therefore, the Council will take into consideration the number and location of other non-residential and specialist residential uses and the cumulative effect of these uses on the immediate neighbourhood.

B: A Thriving Place – Driving Sustainable Economic Growth

Development incompatible with Existing Economic Uses

This guidance provides clarification in regard to the circumstances referred to in Policy ED8 where certain types of economic development use would be incompatible with existing or approved industrial undertakings requiring a particularly contaminant free environment, referred to in this guidance as 'sensitive industrial enterprises'.

There are background levels of contaminants in the air as a result of natural processes and normal human activity. However some industries, because of the nature of the product or processes, may be particularly sensitive to the presence of contaminants in the air. Examples of such industries include pharmaceuticals (drugs manufacture, research and development), medical products (e.g. medical equipment and sterile packaging), food processing, electronics, information and communication technology (ICT) and general research and development. Many of these sectors tend to represent the 'higher value' end of the economic development spectrum offering employment in specialised jobs and significant sales in markets outside Northern Ireland. Often, an individual enterprise engaged in one of these sectors will be important to the local economy and may be significant to the regional economy. It is in the public interest to ensure that their operations are not unduly compromised through new development, including the expansion of existing enterprises, likely to result in harmful air contamination.

Economic development activities that by their nature emit dust, odour, or other contaminants may have the potential to impact upon 'sensitive industrial enterprises'. Some sources of these emissions include the following:

- Dust – quarrying, manufacture of cement / concrete products, landfill.
- Odour – some agri-food business (e.g. intensive farms, dairies, slaughterhouses and rendering plants) and waste management activities (e.g. landfills, waste transfer stations, composting, land spreading, mechanical biological treatment facilities, hazardous waste treatment facilities, sludge treatment facilities).
- Microbial contamination (micro-organisms and particles) – some agri-food business (e.g. slaughter houses and rendering plants), clinical or municipal waste treatment facilities.
- Viral contamination – contamination from viruses emanating from food and other sources that are present in municipal waste.

This list is not exhaustive.

Additionally activities that generate significant levels of noise and vibration or which have indirect effects, for example, attracting pests such as flies to the area, may have potential to impact upon 'sensitive industrial enterprises'.

In assessing development proposals likely to give rise to such emissions and contaminants, the Council and applicants should consider the requirements of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 at an early stage in the planning process.

Non-planning legislation, particularly in relation to public health and the regulation of environmental pollution and the proper exercise of such controls, may to some extent limit the exposure of 'sensitive industrial enterprises' to contaminants in the air. However, this may not be a sufficient safeguard for two reasons. Firstly, such enterprises often require particularly high standards of air quality. Secondly, in assessing the impact of new economic development proposals or the expansion of existing facilities, the focus of the regulating authorities may not be on the contaminant of concern.

Policy ED8 provides protection for existing 'sensitive industrial enterprises' through the land use planning system.

The policy requires 3 tests to be met, as follows:

1) **The proposal is in the vicinity of an existing or approved economic development use.**
2) **The proposal is incompatible with the existing or approved use.**
3) **The proposal would prejudice the future operation of the existing or approved use.**

In applying the policy there are a number of process issues that flow from the above tests which the Council will consider and apply.

Policy Test 1 – The Proposal is in the vicinity of an Existing or Approved Sensitive Economic Development Use

The determination of planning applications for new industrial development will involve consideration of any potentially adverse impact(s) upon existing or approved sensitive economic development uses. Such proposals might give rise, for example, to emissions or other environmental effects harmful to sensitive processes. It should not be assumed therefore that industrial estates are suitable locations for all forms of economic development use, even those which *prima facie* might be acceptable for such development as the possibility of incompatibility between different uses is a material consideration which will be taken into account.

In liaison with relevant stakeholders the local Council will:

- compile and maintain a list of sensitive industrial enterprises located in the plan area and within industrial estates. Applicants are advised therefore to discuss development proposals with the Council's Planning Department;
- seek to minimise the potential for conflict between economic development uses for example by taking account of this issue when zoning land in development plans.

Policy Test 2 – The Proposal is incompatible with the Existing or Approved Use

The second policy test requires an assessment of the compatibility of the proposed use with 'sensitive industrial enterprises' in the vicinity. This may trigger the following actions:

- Consider the proposal in relation to the types of emissions that might arise.
- Consider the proposal in relation to its proximity to the sensitive industrial enterprise and in particular to the specific parts of the plant that require a clean or sterile environment.
- Consider the potential for pollution associated with the transport of materials to or from the proposed development taking account of such factors as the volume of such traffic and the proximity of the road to the sensitive industrial enterprise / specific areas requiring a clean or sterile environment.
- Ensure that adequate information, particularly with regard to environmental outputs or emissions, transport arrangements and intended working practices is available at the outset. This requirement should be flagged to the developer in any pre application discussion.
- Consult NIEA (IPRI[1] or LRM[2]) as appropriate to ascertain the actual or potential environmental impact of emissions from activities that it regulates. NIEA can advise on the actual or potential environmental impact of emissions from activities that it regulates where comparative information on various air quality standards is available. They may also be able to advise on whether emissions are likely to

[1] Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate

[2] Land and Resources Management

give rise to loss of amenity due to noise, dust, odour etc. While this may not address the specific impact on individual industrial enterprises, the information and advice may nevertheless help to inform decision making or highlight the need to seek specialist advice.

- Consult with the Council's Environmental Health Department in relation to potential impact on public health. In cases where the sensitive industry is one that is engaged in activities closely linked with human health; for example food processing, medical products or pharmaceuticals, it will be important to take account of any issues raised by the Council's Environmental Health Department. It may also be appropriate to consult with the relevant industry regulator for example the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) or the Foods Standards Agency (FSA) as necessary.

Policy Test 3 – The Proposal would prejudice the future Operation of the Established Use

This is an assessment of whether the proposal, if seemingly incompatible with an existing / approved sensitive industrial enterprise in the area, would be likely to prejudice its future operation.

This may trigger the following actions:

- Consider representations from the affected enterprise taking account of the precise nature of the adverse impacts that are anticipated should the proposal be approved. Likely impacts that the affected enterprise will be required to address in order to maintain regulatory standards should be specially noted.
- Assess the potential for diverting the proposed development to an alternative site.
- Consider the scope for mitigation on behalf of both the established enterprise and the proposed new development. This will be informed by consultation responses and by taking account of information sought from both parties. The aim being to identify the remedial or mitigating measures that could be adopted by one or both parties in order to render the proposal acceptable. Such measures could include the installation or upgrading of equipment (e.g. air purification / filtration systems or sealed units), internal re-siting of vulnerable areas in the established enterprise or pollution sources in the proposed development so as to increase separation distances, changes in working practices that could be adopted by one or both parties and changes to the transport systems and practices of the proposed development where this is relevant. The additional costs likely to be incurred by both parties should be quantified insofar as possible.
- Assess whether remedial measures that might be open to the established enterprise are sufficiently reasonable so as to avoid prejudice to its future operation. All evidence should be considered in the round and specialist advice sought if necessary. Relevant considerations will include the expense likely to be incurred by the established enterprise and whether there is likely to be a significant increase in the regulatory burden.
- Assess whether appropriate remedial / mitigation measures on the part of the proposed development can be properly delivered through conditions attached to planning permission. Such conditions need to meet the normal legal tests of validity and therefore, for example, must be for a planning purpose, reasonable and fairly and reasonably related to the permitted development.

The final decision rests with the Council and will require all relevant information and advice to be carefully considered. Having applied the various policy tests referred to above, it is envisaged that there will be very few cases where a new economic development proposal is demonstrably incompatible with an existing sensitive industrial enterprise, where reasonable measures of mitigation cannot be applied. However, in the event of such a case, the overall economic and employment benefit arising from the new proposal relative to the retention of the existing enterprise will be an important material

consideration in the assessment of the application. The employment potential arising from any firm proposal for expansion of the established enterprise will also need to be taken into account. In carrying out this assessment of the economic / employment implications, the Council may seek expert advice from the Department for the Economy and/or an independent consultant.

Should the proposed site be unacceptable, the Council will endeavour to work with the applicant to consider potential alternative sites that could be explored either at the pre application stage or later in the process when it may become clearer that the proposal is untenable.

The clarification provided in this supplementary guidance does not amend Policy ED8. Rather, it provides guidance on particular aspects of the policy in order to provide additional clarity for developers and the public on the main planning considerations. This guidance also seeks to assist Council planning officials in their processing and assessment of such cases.

Homeworking

Many small businesses are started by people working in their own homes, and technological innovations are likely to increase the incidence of homeworking. This will be particularly important in rural areas where modern communications permit businesses to be located without any major disadvantage.

Homeworking does not necessarily require planning permission. Permission is not normally required where the use of part of a dwelling house for business purposes does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling, for example, the use by a householder of a room as an office or the provision of a child-minding service.

With regard to this latter example, the Council considers that persons who wish to use their homes for child-minding will not normally require planning permission where the number of children does not exceed six. This is based on the maximum number of children between the ages of 0-12 years (including their own children) that child-minders registered by the Health & Social Care Trust can care for. This advice now takes precedence over the provisions of Development Control Advice Note 13 'Crèches, Day Nurseries and Pre-School Playgroups' (1993) insofar as it relates to childminding.

Those considering working from home are advised to seek the advice of the Council's Planning Department at an early stage. Homeworking is likely to be ancillary to the residential use if:

- work is carried out primarily by persons living in the residential unit;
- the business use is clearly secondary to the main use of the property as a dwelling house;
- the use is carried out totally within the building;
- there will be no loss of amenity for neighbouring residents, for example, from noise, advertising, impact on visual amenity or traffic generation; and
- the use is not one which by its nature would attract more than occasional visitors.

Where the business activity increases and the non-residential use of the property ceases to be ancillary to its use as a single dwelling, a material change of use for which planning permission is required is likely to have taken place. The likelihood of there having been such a material change of use may be indicated where the following have occurred:

- a significant alteration to the appearance of the dwelling;
- a significant increase in the volume of visitors or traffic;
- a significant increase in noise, fumes or smell;
- the installation of special machinery or equipment not normally found in a dwelling; and,
- the laying out of rooms in such a way that they could not easily revert to residential use at the end of the working day.

C: A Vibrant Place – Growing our City, Town Centres, Retailing and Other Uses

Amusement Centres

The following is intended to provide general guidance on the planning criteria to be applied when an application for proposals to establish amusement centres, however described, whether or not they comprise coffee bars, bingo halls and other amusements as well as pin tables and video games; casinos or premises used for gaming is being considered. It is not a specific statement of Council policy but rather one of advice and guidance. Each application is treated on its merits and the guidance given to a particular case is always a matter calling for planning judgement.

The development of an amusement centre, whether by new construction or by the material change of use of existing premises, requires planning permission. In addition centres may also require licences to operate legally and to not have an affect on the amenity of an area; as such considerations on a planning application for an amusement centre are its effects on the amenity and character of its surroundings, and its effects on road safety and traffic flow.

The effects on amenity and the character of the surroundings usually depend on the location of the proposed amusement centre in relation to other development, its appearance, the kind of amusement to be provided, the noise likely to be produced and the hours of operation. As regards the location, amusement centres are not normally acceptable near residential property nor are they good neighbours for schools, churches, hospitals, or hotels. They are out of place in conservation areas or other places of special architectural or historic interest. In areas where one amusement centre may not be out of place, it would be permissible to take into account the effect of larger numbers on the character of a neighbourhood.

In towns where there is no provision for areas for amusement or entertainment, amusement centres are usually best sited in districts of mixed commercial development. In areas where shopping is the predominant use, the likely effect of the development on the character of the shopping centre is relevant. An important consideration will be whether an amusement centre would break up an otherwise continuous shopping frontage; and although this can be mitigated by attention to the design of the facade and entrances, it may nevertheless be a serious objection in some shopping streets.

The kinds of amusement offered will determine the number of people visiting the centre at any one time and the likelihood of crowding and disturbance. Sessional events such as bingo cause greater concentrations of people at certain times than casual forms of amusement.

Hours of opening are important in some cases. An amusement centre may be disturbing to occupants of nearby property if it stays open late in the evenings and at weekends. One which is only open during the day may, in certain areas, be more acceptable than one which stays open late at night. These matters are, however, relevant only insofar as they affect proper planning considerations, e.g., amenity.

Noise: Amusement centres are often noisy. Although it may be possible to minimise noise by sound proofing and by limiting the area open to the street, the amount of noise likely to be caused directly or indirectly and its effects on nearby development should always be taken into account in considering the siting of an amusement centre. This may, however, be of less consequence in an area where there is already considerable noise from other sources, including amusement and sporting activities. Some activities, such as shooting galleries, are particularly noisy.

Conditional Permissions: It is sometimes reasonable to give permission for an amusement centre subject to conditions regulating the form of construction or the use of the premises. Examples of conditions which may be imposed for the reasons given above - in addition to any others

that may be necessary - are a prohibition of shooting galleries or the playing of games of a sessional character; a restriction on the times during which the premises may be open to the public; or a requirement that certain works should be carried out to control the emission of noise, such as sound proofing walls or ceilings and requiring external doors to be self-closing.

Bookmaking Offices

This advice deals with the planning issues that arise concerning applications to establish bookmaking offices, however described, and sets out the criteria which the Council will take into account when determining such proposals.

A proposal to develop a bookmaking office, whether by new construction or by the material change of use of existing premises, requires planning permission. Bookmaking offices are expressly excluded from the definitions of both 'shop' and 'office' given in the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 so that a change in the use of either type of premises will require the consent of the Council.

Additionally, to operate within the law, bookmaking offices require to be licensed under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. It is a matter for an applicant to decide in what order he will seek a licence and apply for planning permission. Normally, however, planning permission is sought first. Planning permission cannot be withheld solely on the grounds that the premises have not been licensed.

The two forms of control, planning control and licensing are quite distinct and should not be confused. The Council, as planning authority, in determining a proposal will deal only with those aspects of the proposal which are relevant to planning.

In considering applications for bookmaking offices the Council will consider their proper location, their effect on adjoining property, the question of noise, litter and disturbance, car parking, and design, especially where the proposal lies within an existing or proposed Conservation Area.

Proposals for bookmaking offices are unlikely to receive favourable consideration from the Council if located in a predominantly residential area. In such locations noise, litter, general disturbance and the generation of additional traffic both vehicular and pedestrian would be likely to give rise to conditions which would have an adverse effect on amenity and cause inconvenience to neighbours.

Bookmaking offices may be acceptable in a town centre or in areas of mixed (commercial and residential) land uses where there are concentrations of other leisure facilities, e.g. public houses. Such areas are often to be found on the periphery of a town or city centre or in secondary shopping streets. In villages or small towns or in a Conservation Area amenity value may be higher, here the major consideration will be the effect of the proposal upon the general character of the area.

The loss of retail floor space and the fact that the proximity of bookmaking offices may discourage of certain types of retail outlet will be considered when appropriate. In some instances it may be possible for bookmaking offices to locate on the upper floors of a building thus avoiding the problems associated with breaks in the continuity of shopping frontage.

Bookmaking offices by the nature of the activities carried on generate a certain amount of noise, litter and disturbance which may be detrimental to the amenities of an area. These factors are valid planning considerations. In dealing with proposals to establish such premises the Council's Planning Department will consult with the Environmental Health Department. Its advice will be considered when deciding whether or not to give permission and also when formulating any conditions to be attached to a planning permission.

The amount of car parking provision required for bookmaking offices is dependent upon their location and size. Proposals should be in compliance with the requirements of the Department's Parking Standards publication. Whilst this set standard will be used as a guide each application will be considered on its merits and consultation with DfI Roads will be carried out as part of the planning consideration.

In considering proposals for bookmaking offices, and particularly in Conservation Areas, the Council will pay particular attention to design to ensure that it does not mar the street frontage and that the nature and colour of the external finishes are compatible with the surrounding properties. This can be achieved by the provision of shop-window type display and a fascia and lettering that is compatible with surrounding retail outlets. Designs which are fundamentally alien to the existing character of an area or building are not acceptable, e.g. blank frontages with high level windows.

Public Houses

This advice deals with the planning issues that arise concerning applications to establish public houses and sets out the criteria which the Council will take into account when determining such proposals. Public houses do not fall within any particular Use Class and require planning permission whether it is a proposed new building or a change of use from another form of development.

Public houses are defined in Section 5 of the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 as premises in which the business carried on under the licence is the business of selling intoxicating liquor by retail for consumption either in or off the premises. Public houses may also be subject to additionally licensing requirements, for example, public entertainment or for the sale of food. In addition the Council's Environmental Health Department is responsible for the control of excessive noise emissions.

The effects of noise and disturbance and traffic safety are the main planning considerations in relation to public houses. There may be a number of suitable locations provided that problems of noise can be minimised and other amenity and traffic considerations are met. For example, a suitable location for a public house may be on the edge of a residential estate, in an area of mixed land uses or within a neighbourhood shopping centre. A public house may also be suitable in a town centre area or a rural area, although the proposal would be subject to the Council's policies for the control of development in countryside areas. However, a public house will not generally be acceptable within a wholly residential area. This is because of loss of amenity, including the problems of noise and disturbance which may arise, and also the possible traffic hazards associated with heavy lorries delivering supplies, and customers arriving and leaving by car in the latter part of the evening.

The amount of car parking provision required for public houses is dependent upon their location and size. Proposals should be in compliance with the requirements of the Department's Parking Standards publication. Whilst this set standard will be used as a guide each application will be considered on its merits and consultation with DfI Roads will be carried out as part of the planning consideration. It should be noted that since heavy lorries are likely to be delivering supplies to a public house, rear servicing of the establishment is preferable to on-street delivery.

Public houses can be a source of annoyance to the occupants of neighbouring properties due to problems of noise and disturbance and this is a valid planning consideration in terms of loss of amenity. However, it is possible to reduce the likelihood of excess noise emanating from a public house by the use of such measures as sound proofing and self-closing doors on entrance and exits. Where the proposed public house involves a change of use of an existing building, modifications to meet acceptable noise levels may not be possible, or if possible, may not be economic. In such circumstances the applicant may be asked to indicate

what feasible measures he proposes to take to reduce noise and the Council will consider these measures in consultation with its Environmental Health Department.

Noise from live entertainment and discos in public houses can also be a source of annoyance to neighbours. The control of such forms of entertainment is the responsibility of the Council's Environmental Health Department. However, noise from such a source is also a valid planning consideration when determining whether or not to grant permission. The Council will be particularly concerned about such noise where the proposed public house would be in the vicinity of residential property.

Any possible loss of amenity due to external noise is also a valid planning consideration, and the problems of noise and disturbance likely to be caused by customers, and the arrival and departure of delivery lorries are more difficult to resolve. For this reason a public house will only in exceptional circumstances be allowed to locate in an area which is 'noise sensitive', for example, opposite or adjacent to residential property.

A proposed extension to a public house requires planning permission regardless of the size of that extension. When considering such extensions account will be taken of the likely effects of the intensification of the existing use on the surrounding area. In particular, the suitability of any existing access and parking facilities will be carefully considered as well as any loss of amenity due to an increase in noise and disturbance.

Restaurants, Cafés and Fast Food Outlets

This advice deals with the planning issues that arise concerning applications to establish restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets and sets out the criteria which the Council will take into account when determining such proposals.

Use for the sale of food or drink for consumption on the premises or of hot food for consumption off the premises is excluded from any class specified in the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and use for the retail sale of hot food is explicitly excluded from Class 1 (Shops) of the Schedule to the Order. Therefore the construction of, or conversion of an existing building to a restaurant, café or fast food outlet is a material change of use that requires express planning permission.

Although many of the planning considerations applicable to a fast food outlet apply equally to a café or restaurant, a change of use of part of either of these premises to incorporate a 'carry-out' facility also requires planning permission. However, if the 'carry-out' facility is only of a very minor nature and obviously ancillary to the main use of the premises, planning permission will not normally be required.

Any test of whether a use is ancillary to another is a matter of fact and degree, and each case has to be determined on its particular merits. However, in practice two principal criteria have emerged in terms of assessing if an activity is ancillary. Firstly, a severability test, i.e. can the ancillary use practically and viably operate on its own were the primary use of the premises to cease, if it could then the use is very unlikely to be ancillary as there is no clear linkage or dependency. Secondly, an environmental impact test can be used to examine the outward effects of the use, in terms of the appearance of the premises, the amenity of the surrounding area or neighbourhood traffic conditions. If it could be shown that there would be a significantly greater impact following from the introduction of the alleged ancillary activity, then it is unlikely it could be described as ancillary.

<u>Hot food sales from shops</u>

Hot food sales from shops will require planning permission only if excluded by a planning condition or if beyond an ancillary level. Primary uses of land often embrace one or more ancillary activities i.e. uses which are closely linked and subservient to them. Any test for whether a use is ancillary to another is a matter of fact and degree, and each case has to be determined on its particular merits.

Mobile hot food vehicles

The casual or temporary parking of a mobile hot food vehicle is not likely to be development i.e. a material change of use, and is therefore not likely to need planning permission. However, the regular parking of such a vehicle for long periods may create a material change in the land on which it is stationed. Permitted development rights granted by the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, Part 5 – Temporary Buildings and Uses, Class B, relates to 'the use of any land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year… and the provision on the land of any moveable structure for the purposes of the permitted use'. Therefore, if a mobile food vehicle is parked for more than 28 days it ceases to be regarded as temporary, and planning permission may be required.

Delivery services

Delivery services per se may not require planning permission unless at a level where they dominate the existing restaurant or café use.

'Alfresco' eating

Planning permission is not likely to be required where it is proposed to place tables and chairs on the forecourt or any open land within the curtilage of a restaurant, where that land forms part of a planning unit. It may, however, be necessary to obtain licences from other authorities.

Other consents

Other planning consents that may be required include; Listed Building Consent; Conservation Area Consent; and, Advertisement Consent.

Other approvals may also be necessary, for example, Council's Building Regulation approval and compliance with Environmental Health regulations.

Locational Considerations

In its broadest sense, retailing refers to the sale of goods to consumers, and this includes the sale of food for consumption on the premises, or hot food for consumption off the premises. Retailing will generally be directed to existing settlements and the development of inappropriate retail facilities in the open countryside will be resisted.

Preferable locations for restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets include:

- city or town centres; and
- district centres and local centres.

Any planning application for a restaurant, café or fast food outlet, which is not in any of the above locations, will be determined on its particular merits, in accordance with the council's Local Development Plan, Operational Policies and any other material considerations.

Town centres

Restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets complement the primary shopping function of city and town centres. In accordance with operational policy TC2 the council will control non-retail uses at ground floor level within the primary retail frontage. Applications in the primary retail frontage for change of use from shops to local services, including restaurants, cafés or hot-food take-away premises may be acceptable where:

- no more than 25% of the frontage of the street is in non-retail use; and,
- no more than 3 adjacent units are in non-retail use.

Within town centres, but outside the primary retail core, proposals will be determined on their merits and in accordance with operational policy TC3.

Assessment of proposals in Town Centres

Taking into account the locational guidance set out above, the assessment of proposals for new restaurants, cafés or fast food outlets, or for the change of use of the ground floor of established shops to such uses, in primary retail core areas, will involve consideration of a number of factors including:

- The impact of the proposal (including any extension to an existing use), by itself or cumulatively, with other non-retail uses, on the role, character, vitality and viability of the town centre. While, restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets contribute to the variety and attraction of town centres, the intrusion, proliferation and/or clustering of new or additional uses of this nature can also be seriously detrimental to the character and vitality of the primary retail core. In the Lisburn City Centre primary retail frontage restaurants, cafés, or fast food outlets are unlikely to be permitted where it is considered that the integrity and continuity of the existing retail frontage would be eroded. Proposals for such uses in frontages where there are concentrations of existing and/or approved similar uses are unlikely to be acceptable.
- The impact in terms of the size of the premises and whether they can be absorbed without dominating the prime retail frontages in visual terms.
- The quality and attractiveness of the proposed development, as the design and appearance of town centre shop fronts and signage are matters to which the Council attaches considerable importance. Proposals should avoid giving the appearance of a 'dead' frontage and should therefore pay particular attention to:

  -the scale of the proposal;

  -the materials, colours and lettering to be used;

  -the design and appearance of security shutters and grilles;

  -the design and appearance of signage and means of illumination;

  -the design and appearance of the ground floor in terms of its relationship to upper floors;

  -the implications for access to upper floors; -the relationship to adjoining buildings; and -the character of the surrounding area.

  -the likely effects on the amenity of the shopping area and residents within it. This will involve consideration of the potential of the proposal to adversely affect the ambience of the shopping area for other reasons, for example, unsightly litter or excessive late night noise. Concern over such issues may be of particular significance in sensitive areas such as conservation areas where litter and smells could spoil the enjoyment of visitors or discourage residential occupation within the conservation area, thereby harming its character.

  -the possibility of the proposal causing parking and/or traffic difficulties with associated congestion and inconvenience, thereby jeopardising the safety of road users.

  -the period for which the premises have been vacant, and the general level of vacancy in the area. This will be dependent on the merits of each individual case.

If a proposed restaurant, café or fast food outlet, can be shown to cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance, particularly in relation to the issues outlined above, the application is likely to be refused.

District and Local Centres

District and Local Centres provide a focus for local shopping and offer an important complementary role to the city and town centres by providing local communities the opportunity to shop close to where they live.

Within settlements commercialised radial routes have many similarities with district and local centres, in terms of scale and function and in the variety of shops and local services. Therefore, proposals for restaurants,

cafés and fast food outlets on such routes will be subject to the same considerations as those applicable to district and local centres.

Assessment of proposals in District and Local Centres

Applications relating to new buildings, or the change of use of retail/non-retail premises to restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets in district or local centres will be considered in accordance with operational policy TC4. A number of factors need to be considered:

- The impact of the development on the vitality and viability of the centre, and the need to retain local retailing. The proposal should not by itself or cumulatively with other non-retail uses, undermine the primary role of the 'centre' in providing for local convenience shopping needs. In this respect, the following will be regarded as particularly relevant:

  -the level and nature of existing non-retail uses;

  -the number of unimplemented valid planning permissions for change of use to restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets.

  -the impact in terms of the size of the premises and whether they can be absorbed without dominating the district or local centre in the visual sense.

- The quality and attractiveness of the proposed development. In order to avoid giving the appearance of a 'dead' frontage, attention should be paid to:

  -the scale of the proposal;

  -the materials, colours and lettering to be used;

  -the design and appearance of security shutters and grilles;

  -the design and appearance of signage and means of illumination;

  -the design and appearance of the ground floor in terms of its relationship to upper floors;

  -the implications for access to upper floors;

  -the relationship to adjoining buildings; and

  -the character of the surrounding area.

- Adverse impact on the amenity of any adjoining residential areas in terms of noise disturbance, smell, fumes or litter. Unlike town centres, where there may be a residential component, district centres are often entirely commercial in nature, purpose-built and self-contained. However, they may be located in close proximity to established residential areas and so their potential impact on amenity is likely to be a consideration in determining their overall acceptability. In addition, along the commercialised radial routes, many retail and non-retail premises will often have dwellings nearby or flats directly above. If it is not possible to reduce amenity impacts, for example, from late night activity, smells and fumes to a level acceptable in such locations, this could render the premises unsuitable for restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets.
- Likely impact on the amenity of the centre itself. This will involve consideration not only of the matters referred to above but also the potential of the proposal to adversely affect the ambience of the centre for other reasons, for example, problems with litter or excessive late night noise.
- The possibility of the proposal causing parking and/or traffic difficulties with associated congestion and inconvenience, thereby jeopardising the safety of road users.
- The period for which the premises have been vacant and the general level of vacancy in the area. This will be dependent on the merits of each individual case.

If a proposed restaurant, café or fast food outlet can be shown to cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance, particularly in relation to the issues outlined above, the application is likely to be refused.

Other Considerations

Applications for restaurants, cafés or fast food outlets generally give rise to a number of issues and objections which are specific to these particular categories of land use. As a result, the likely impact of such proposals on the character and amenity of the adjoining or surrounding area will be an important concern when determining applications. In assessing this impact, a number of factors need to be taken into account i.e.

-noise disturbance;

-smells and fumes;

-refuse and litter;

-traffic considerations and car parking; and

-provision for people with disabilities.

The use of planning conditions is often paramount to the control of restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets, particularly in relation to the above considerations. The impact of many proposals which would otherwise be rejected, may be mitigated by the imposition of such conditions. Preventative measures can be taken through the development management process by, for example restricting opening hours and dealing with the technical aspects of noise and fume attenuation. The Council's Environmental Health Department will be consulted as appropriate during the processing of planning applications and in the formulation of any conditions considered necessary for the approval of the development. Environmental Health also has an important role to play and has extensive regulatory control of restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets, especially in relation to food and hygiene aspects.

Noise Disturbance

Whilst residential areas are likely to be sensitive to noise disturbance, it can also be a serious problem in town centres and in areas where commercial activities dominate but where there may be residential accommodation beside or over the proposed use.

Noise associated with restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets emanates from a variety of sources, the main ones being:

-vehicles - starting, revving of engines, screeching of tyres, sounding of horns, radios playing, opening and closing of doors, manoeuvring;

-people - the comings and goings of customers and staff (talking, shouting);

-use of equipment associated with catering establishments.

These sources of noise are especially noticeable in the late evening when local residents have a legitimate expectation that surrounding background noise levels will remain low. In that respect, take-away uses, which often generate frequent vehicle and pedestrian movements, can be particularly annoying and unacceptable. The weight that the Council will attach to noise disturbance will be greater where there is an increased likelihood that customers will seek to park close to the premises, or in nearby residential streets.

Objections to planning proposals, based on the harmful effects of noise, may, however, be overcome by means of planning conditions attached to a grant of permission in appropriate cases. If the Council is not satisfied that such objections can be overcome by the imposition of conditions, the application will be refused.

Conditions designed to prevent noise disturbance will generally involve or require some, or all of the following:

-Restrictions on hours of opening (in predominantly residential areas).

-Restrictions on the use of land within the curtilage of the premises e.g. open areas at the front or rear of the premises. -Sound-proofing of the premises i.e. walls and ceilings. -Double-glazing of windows and installation of self-closing external doors.

-The prevention or restriction of live or amplified music.

-The installation and maintenance of any necessary equipment.

-Restriction on customer numbers/floorspace. -Restrictions on servicing.

Smells and Fumes

Objections based on the likely impact on amenity of smells and fumes, particularly in relation to nearby residential property, are among the most common objections to which proposed restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets give rise.

Although nuisance caused by the unpleasant effects of smells and fumes emanating from food preparation areas can be considerably reduced by modern filtering and extraction equipment, residual odour often proves detrimental to residential amenity, particularly if there are a number of such uses in close proximity to one another. The problem can be exacerbated if ducting cannot be installed to a height sufficient to ensure efficient dispersal of smells or if topographical and atmospheric conditions combine to impair such dispersal. Where high levels of odours or inadequate odour dispersal are anticipated, an active odour abatement system may be required e.g. activated carbon or the use of electrostatic precipitation combined with odour neutralisation after the main grease filters in the canopy. The adoption of such a system coupled with atmospheric dispersion and dilution represents the best practicable means of mitigating odour nuisance.

If unacceptable smells and fumes cannot be prevented by means of effective low or high level ducting, or if ducting cannot be installed without significant detriment to visual amenity, planning permission will be refused.

Generally, conditions to prevent smell nuisance will involve or require the following:

-Approval by the Council of a scheme for the extraction of cooking odours.

-Installation of equipment before commencement of the use and maintenance thereafter.

-Appropriate siting and design of ducting and other external equipment.

Refuse and Litter

Litter is inherently unsightly and causes considerable annoyance to residents and adjoining businesses. It can also be prejudicial to regeneration efforts, particularly within town centres. The fact that litter will be a consequence of a proposed use of land, particularly a take-away premise use, is therefore a material planning consideration.

Inadequacy of storage facilities for refuse can result in harm to visual amenity as well as serious risk to public health, and it is important to ensure that there is sufficient physical space for its accommodation. Proposals for restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets should therefore include adequate facilities on the premises for the storage/disposal of refuse generated by the business. Refuse should not be left outside the premises, for example, on forecourts or on the public road (except for collection purposes) but should be stored in containers within an enclosed area of the premises. Suitable access must also be provided for the collection of refuse.

Typically, conditions to prevent nuisance arising from refuse and/or litter will involve or require:

-Provision of space within the premises for the storage of refuse in containers.

-Prohibition on the use of public footpaths and/or roads for the storage of refuse (except for collection purposes).

-Provision of litterbins both inside and outside the premises.

Traffic Considerations and Car Parking

Restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets often give rise to concerns about their effect in terms of traffic flow, road safety and car parking, and the

following matters will be taken into account by the Council on applications for restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets.

-The planning history of the site.

-The existing use of the site.

-Existing traffic conditions.

-The availability of public transport.

-The availability of public parking provision.

-The implications for the amenity of the surrounding area (particularly if predominantly residential).

-The availability of private parking provision, where required.

Fast food outlets are often located on busy urban or suburban main roads, and experience has shown that a significant proportion of their trade is car borne and short-stay. Where there is limited or no parking, either outside or in the immediate vicinity of the premises, customers may be tempted to indulge in short stay parking of an opportunistic and possibly dangerous nature, for example, near to junctions and traffic lights or within the approaches to pedestrian crossings. Combined with the manoeuvring of vehicles (in order to park in a confined space, for example) and the additional movements of vehicles stopping at and leaving the premises, the free flow of traffic on the main roads can be obstructed, causing congestion and inconvenience and jeopardising the safety of other road users.

In such circumstances, the Council may have to refuse planning permission or to impose conditions on a restaurant use, for example, to prevent its use as a take-away (this will be inappropriate where the use is ancillary). Applicants may therefore wish to consider other options such as locating on secondary roads or a location not directly fronting onto a highway, which would satisfy traffic/car parking considerations.

Inadequate car parking provision may also lead to an increase in parking in adjacent streets where parking problems may already exist, causing inconvenience to residents. Restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets cause most parking problems in the evenings and at weekends when the demand for on-street parking spaces by residents is heaviest. The Department will have regard to the availability of kerbside spaces and any off-street parking provision. Planning permission may be refused if customer and staff car parking would prevent local residents from parking their cars near to their homes.

Adequate arrangements must also be made for the servicing of the premises, both by delivery vehicles and for refuse collection. Ideally this should occur away from the main road.

It is important that each case is decided on its own specific merits and that advice from DfI Roads is fully considered.

Taxi Offices

The following is intended to provide general guidance on the planning criteria to be applied when an application for proposals to establish taxi offices are being considered. It is not a specific statement of Council policy but rather one of advice and guidance. Each application is treated on its merits and the guidance given to a particular case is always a matter calling for planning judgement.

In dealing with planning applications for a private hire taxi service office the Council is mainly concerned with the functions of the office, where staff are employed to take and relay messages to taxi drivers and for any other administrative purposes. Consideration will be given to their proper location, their effect on adjoining property including the effect of noise and disturbance, and also car parking requirements.

Proposals for taxi offices in wholly residential areas are unlikely to be favourably considered by the Council. This is primarily because of the noise and disturbance which is likely to be incurred by taxi-cabs arriving

late at night to collect customers who have called at the offices. It should be noted that taxi services tend to have their peak hours in the evening, from approximately 6.30 pm to 2.00 am.

Within an area which is predominantly residential but perhaps with some commercial land uses, the Department will carefully consider the effect of the proposed development on adjoining residential properties.

The fringe of the central area of a city/town, within an area of mixed land uses but primarily of a commercial nature, can be an ideal location for a taxi office. A secondary shopping area within a town centre may also be a suitable location. However, a prime shopping area will generally not be regarded as acceptable because of the loss of a potential retail outlet.

The amount of car parking provision required for taxi offices is dependent upon their location and size. Proposals should be in compliance with the requirements of the Department's Parking Standards publication. Whilst this set standard will be used as a guide each application will be considered on its merits and consultation with DfI Roads will be carried out as part of the planning consideration. For taxi depots, where the taxi-cabs are stored on the premises, the Department's Parking Standards additional car parking provision may be required.

Radio masts are often associated with taxi offices. These are not permitted development under the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, and require a separate planning application. Planning applications for radio masts associated with taxi offices will be considered against Operational Policy TEL1.

D: An Attractive Place – Promoting Sustainable Tourism, Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

Tourism

Glossary of Terms

Tourism – The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (World Tourism Organisation).

Tourism Asset – Any feature associated with the historic or natural environment which is of intrinsic interest to tourists.

Tourist – Includes both overnight visitors and same day visitors.

Tourist Accommodation – Overnight sleeping accommodation for tourists provided by way of trade or business (Article 2 Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992).

Tourism Amenity – An amenity, facility or service provided primarily for tourists, but does not include tourist accommodation (Article 2 Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992).

Hotel – As defined in Schedule 1 of the Categories of Tourist Establishment (Statutory Criteria) (NI) Regulations 1992, a hotel shall provide overnight sleeping accommodation for visitors in separate rooms comprising not less than 15 double bedrooms, of which 100% shall have an ensuite bathroom.

Guest House – As defined in Schedule 2 of the Categories of Tourist Establishment (Statutory Criteria) (NI) Regulations 1992, a guest house shall provide overnight sleeping accommodation for visitors in separate rooms comprising not less than 3 double bedrooms.

Hostel – As defined in Schedule 1 of the Categories of Tourist Establishment (Statutory Criteria) (NI) Regulations 1992, a Hostel is a form of tourist accommodation for the letting of single beds in bedrooms or dormitory rooms with mostly shared facilities.

Bed and Breakfast Establishment – As defined in Schedule 3 of the Categories of Tourist Establishment (Statutory Criteria) (NI) Regulations 1992, a Bed and Breakfast establishment shall provide comfortable overnight sleeping accommodation for visitors in separate bedrooms and be capable of providing a cooked breakfast.

Self-Catering Establishment – As defined in Schedule 4 of the Categories of Tourist Establishment (Statutory Criteria) (NI) Regulations 1992, a self-catering establishment shall comprise one or more self-contained units providing furnished accommodation (including sleeping accommodation and catering facilities) for visitors. The Tourism (NI) Order 1992 defines a self-catering unit as including 'houses, cottages, apartments or rooms, bungalows, chalets, cabins and caravans'.

Holiday Park – A holiday park is defined as a caravan site licensed under the Caravans Act (NI) 1963, which in addition to static caravans, may also contain holiday chalets or cabins, pitches for touring caravans, motor homes and tenting.

Touring Caravan Site – A touring caravan site is defined as a caravan site licensed under the Caravans Act (NI) 1963, which provides pitches for touring caravans and may in addition also provide pitches for motor homes and tenting.

Tourism Proposals Information Requirements

This guidance is intended to provide detail on the information that may be expected to accompany proposals for certain tourism development.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Some tourism developments, depending on their nature, scale or location may require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the provisions of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017. Schedule 2 of the Regulations lists a number of

categories of development, including defined tourism and leisure related projects[3] which will be likely to require an EIA if they meet or exceed the thresholds specified in the Schedule.

In addition, where such development is located within a 'sensitive area'[4], 'an EIA will be required if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Development Control Advice Note 10 Environmental Impact Assessment provides general guidance for prospective developers on this matter.

Transport Assessment

Under Policy TRA6 development projects likely to generate significant volumes of traffic may require a transport assessment to be submitted with the planning application. The Department's guidelines on Transport Assessment in Northern Ireland (2006) provides detailed information on this process.

Tourism Related Information

Information may be sought for any tourism development proposal, as considered necessary by the Council, to determine an application. The following information to facilitate assessment of applications for various forms of tourism development in the countryside, as detailed in Policies TOU1 to TOU8, may be required.

Tourism Benefit Statement

Proposals for tourism amenities or major tourism development in the countryside will be assessed against Operational Policies TOU2 and TOU6.

Where such proposals are of regional significance, or significant in terms of new build or the scale of engineering operations, a planning application must be accompanied by a tourism benefit statement and a sustainable benefit statement to demonstrate the benefit of the proposal to the locality.

Sustainable Benefit Statement

A sustainable benefit statement should detail the following:

Economic Sustainability

- the proposed development will result in locally significant employment and / or training opportunities;
- a significant level of spend expected to flow into the local economy;
- the proposal will enhance the range and quality of tourism attractions and facilities in the local area;
- the proposed development will extend the tourist season in the local area;
- Significant utilisation of local goods and services, including trades and crafts;
- the proposal is an important element in farm or broader rural diversification.

Community/Social Sustainability

- the proposed development will, in addition to meeting tourist needs, provide facilities (recreational / cultural / social) that can be accessed by the local community;
- the proposal will contribute to a local community regeneration scheme.

Environmental Sustainability

- the proposed development will help to protect or improve an environmental asset associated with either the natural or built heritage;

[3] *Ski-runs, ski lifts and cable cars and associated developments; Marinas; Holiday villages and hotel complexes outside urban areas and associated developments; permanent camp sites and caravan sites, theme parks*

[4] *The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 defines a sensitive area as: an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI); an Area of - Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); a National Park; a property appearing on the World Heritage List; a scheduled Monument ; or European Sites as defined in regulation 9 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995*

- the proposed development will enhance biodiversity, for example through the creation or improvement of wetland or woodland habitat;
- utilisation of 'green' technology, for example recycling waste, utilisation of renewable energy, reduction of CO2 emissions;
- utilisation of sustainable drainage systems where appropriate (SUDS);
- sustainable design in line with BREEAM standards for the environmental performance of buildings;
- development of 'green' transport initiatives, for example dedicated rail or bus links between the amenity and a nearby settlement or linking several tourist amenities in the locality;
- use of a visitor management programme for larger scale proposals or to mitigate against damage to fragile sites;

Locational Sustainability

- the proposal is accessible by public transport, walking or cycling;
- large scale proposals are conveniently accessible from the regional strategic transport network;
- the proposed development is conveniently located with respect to existing tourism development in the local area

Landscape Design Considerations for Holiday Parks

In accordance with Operational Policy TOU5 the following matters should be addressed in preparing a layout / landscaping plan:

- The creation of an appropriate link with the surrounding landscape (e.g. a dense tree belt may be appropriate in a heavily treed part of the countryside, but in an open landscape may draw attention to the development rather than allowing it to blend into the surrounding countryside).
- Appropriate boundary treatment, taking account of point 1 above and reflecting needs for shelter, screening and privacy. Buffer zones of at least 3 metres in width should be retained and kept free of development on the inside of all boundaries.
- Informal layout of caravan units / motor homes / chalets characterised by the use of small informal clusters separated by appropriate landscaping and the avoidance of 'regimented' rows of units that typically results in a detrimental visual impact (a 'sea' of caravans effect).
- The avoidance of long straight lines for roads and paths with due regard to the protection of key views from the holiday park. An exception to this may arise where an avenue is an appropriate design element.
- Integration of ancillary buildings, hard landscaping and facilities such as car parks and water points by reflecting local design characteristics, the use of local materials and appropriate planting. The use of muted colours (usually green tones) for caravan units / chalets may be appropriate particularly for those close to site boundaries.
- The use of permeable surfaces for caravan pitches, hard landscaped areas and car parking in order to safeguard against flood risk through surface water runoff.
- Appropriate planning and selection of planting taking account of function, suitability for prevailing soil and climatic conditions (e.g. coastal environments), durability, seasonal changes and ease of maintenance. Planting will be required for a variety of functions including:
  -linking the holiday park into its wider landscape setting,
  -enhancing the visual character of the development and promoting a distinctive sense of place,
  -boundary treatment and screening,
  -creating visual diversity in the layout,
  -integrating public and private open spaces into the design of the holiday park,
  -softening the visual impact of accommodation units and ancillary buildings and facilities,
  -adding definition and interest to accesses, particularly footpaths and cycle tracks.

- Retention and enhancement of existing natural features such as ponds, copses of trees and hedgerows. This may also apply in some instances to archaeology and features of the built heritage.
- The provision of communal open space should be considered as an integral part of the design in order to :
  -meet formal and informal recreation and amenity open space needs,
  -contribute to the attractiveness of the development,
  -create a safe, convenient and accessible space for all holiday park users, particularly children, the elderly and people with disabilities,
  -reduce the need for people to seek open space outside the park,
  -enhance security through providing opportunity for onsite activity.

Reliance on the use of residual areas of unused land for open space provision will not be acceptable.

Definition of Open Space

For the purposes of Operational Policies OS1 to OS6, open space is taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.

The following typology illustrates the broad range of open spaces that are of public value:

- parks and gardens – including urban parks, country parks, forest parks and formal gardens;
- outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces and either publicly or privately owned) – including tennis courts, bowling greens, sport pitches, golf courses, athletic tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas;
- amenity green space (most commonly, but not exclusively in housing areas) – including informal recreation spaces, communal green spaces in and around housing, and village greens;
- provision for children and teenagers – including play areas, kickabout areas, skateboard parks and outdoor basketball hoops;
- green corridors – including river and canal banks, amenity footpaths and cycleways;
- natural and semi-natural urban green spaces – including woodlands, urban forestry, grasslands (e.g. meadows), wetlands, open and running water, and rock areas (e.g. cliffs);
- allotments and community gardens:
- cemeteries and churchyards; and
- civic spaces, including civic and market squares and other hard surface areas designed for pedestrians.

The Council recognises that most areas of open space can perform multiple functions. These will be taken account of when applying Open Space Policies. These include:

- strategic functions - defining and separating urban areas; providing community greenways, 'green lungs' or landscape buffers within urban areas; better linking of town and country; and serving recreational needs over a wide area;
- urban quality - helping to support regeneration and improving quality of life for communities by providing visually attractive green spaces close to where people live;
- promoting health and well-being - providing opportunities to people of all ages for informal recreation, or to walk, cycle or ride within parks and open space or along paths, bridleways and canal banks. Allotments may provide physical exercise and other health benefits;
- havens and habitats for flora and fauna – sites may also have potential to be corridors or stepping stones from one habitat to another and may contribute towards achieving objectives set out in the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy;
- as a community resource – a place for congregating and for holding community events; and

- as a visual amenity – even without public access, people enjoy having open space near to them to provide an outlook, variety in the urban scene, or as a positive element in the landscape.

Fields in Trust is an independent charity, formerly the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) that champions the value of parks and green spaces and to achieve better protection for their future.

The NPFA recommends a minimum standard for 'outdoor playing space' of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. This is commonly referred to as the '6 Acre Standard'. The NPFA does not regard 'outdoor playing space' to be the same as public open space, rather it is space that is safely accessible and available to the general public, and of a suitable size and nature, for sport, active recreation or children's play. Accordingly it is a significant component, but not the only form, of open space.

'Outdoor playing space' is made up of two main components. The first of these is land provided for outdoor sport, principally for adults and youths. The second is playing space for children.

The NPFA maintains that its recommended levels for the allocation of 'outdoor playing space' are justified. Furthermore it confirms that these are minimum standards and advises that they should be exceeded whenever possible. The NPFA commends these standards to all local authorities throughout the United Kingdom.

The following facilities are excluded from the definition of 'outdoor playing space', although the NPFA recognises that there are circumstances where some of them can make a valuable contribution to the total recreational provision of communities. They are not however regarded as substitutes for elements of the NPFA standard:

- outdoor sports facilities which are not as a matter of policy and practice available for public use, such as professional sports stadia;
- grounds of Her Majesty's Services, unless as a matter of policy and practice and by formal agreement they are made available for public use;
- verges, woodlands, commons, the seashore, nature conservation areas, allotments, ornamental gardens and parks (except for clearly defined areas within them for sports, games, practice and play);
- golf facilities;
- water used for recreation, except where it forms an interactive feature of an outdoor play area;
- sports halls or leisure centres;
- commercial entertainment complexes and theme parks; and
- car parks for non-recreational use.

The total NPFA standard should be met by ensuring land is available for outdoor sport and children's play in the manner set out below.

(A) Outdoor Sport: 1.6 hectares

(i) Facilities such as pitches, greens, courts, athletic tracks and miscellaneous sites such as training areas in the ownership of councils;

(ii) Facilities as described in (i) above within the educational sector which are available for public use by written agreement; and

(iii) Facilities as described in (i) above within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors, which serve the leisure time needs for outdoor recreation of their members, or the public.

Note: - Included within the standard for outdoor sport is a specific allocation of 1.2 hectares per 1000 people for pitch sports.

(B) Children's Playing Space: 0.8 hectares

(i) Designated areas for children and young people containing a range of facilities and an environment that has been designed to provide focussed opportunities for outdoor play; and

(ii) Casual or informal playing space within housing areas.

Further information and guidance is available at www.fieldsintrust.org

E: A Green Place – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic and Natural Environment

Alteration, Extension and Maintenance of Listed Buildings

These guidelines are primarily for the consideration of owners and their agents in the preparation of applications for listed building consent and planning applications for change of use, extensions or alterations to listed buildings. In view of the considerable variety in the character and type of listed buildings these guidelines cannot be comprehensive. Nevertheless they do summarise the characteristics and features which make up the special interest of most listed buildings and will therefore be given full weight in the process of judging listed building consent applications alongside other considerations and in assessing grant applications. Every listed building has its own characteristics which are usually related to an original or subsequent function and these should as far as possible be respected when proposals for alteration are put forward. It must also be remembered that marks of special interest appropriate to a particular type of building are not restricted to external elements.

General Considerations

It is always important to differentiate between statutory requirements, recommendations and the corporate policies of owners, insurers and others as the boundaries are often confused. Listed buildings are bound by the same statutory rules as is any other building unless the particular statute provides for an exemption or a waiver. For example, the Council has the power to relax certain requirements of the Building Regulations where their strict application would be unreasonable in a particular case. The Council would similarly encourage the Fire Authority for Northern Ireland to adopt a sympathetic approach when exercising their responsibilities under fire safety legislation in respect of listed buildings. While British Standards are not statutory the Council would commend the advice and guidance set out in BS 7913:2013 'The Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings'. It will often be possible therefore for proposals to meet the requirements of statutory regulations and other standards in a way which does little or no damage to the character of listed buildings and the Council will expect applicants for listed building consent to have fully investigated these matters.

The Guiding Principles for Conserving Historic Buildings

There are three main guiding principles that will ensure that the character of the listed building is safeguarded when changes to its fabric are being proposed:

The first principle is that of minimum interference and every scheme should therefore aim to conserve a maximum of the original fabric of the listed building, whether or not it will be seen. An historic building is like a coded book and every inch of it speaks to us about its past, its owners, its builders, fashions, customs, times of plenty and times of scarcity. Each piece of its fabric lost is like tearing a page out of this history book. A certain amount of replacement is inevitable, but the practicalities of repair must always be weighed in the balance before that decision is finally made.

The second principle is that the listed building in its original form should remain the dominant feature in relation to any additions or extensions proposed to it. There are certain historic buildings where any extension would be damaging and such works will therefore not normally be acceptable.

The third principle relates to architectural styles when altering or adding to the listed building. Sometimes it will be essential for new work to match the existing architectural style. This would certainly be true where a relatively minor alteration, for example making a window into a door, was to be made to a building of one definite architectural style. However when more extensive changes are being considered, for example the addition of a substantial wing, then it may be acceptable for the new work to make its own architectural statement which could contrast, but must never compete, with the original building. Where an extension

wishes to copy the original building it is critical that it does so accurately. A poor copy will always be unsatisfactory and can never exist in harmony with the original building. Whichever stylistic path is chosen, if the new work will finally form part of the architectural perception of the listed building then the most important factor in the design is that the quality of the new work is a match for the old.

Building Elements

The following paragraphs will look at each building element in turn and examine the general criteria that will be applied in assessing proposals for works to listed buildings. It is impossible to describe every situation and problem that can arise and the guidance does not purport to be a manual of good conservation practice and should not be used as such. Those seeking more detailed information about any aspect of conservation work referred to briefly in this guidance should contact the Department's Historic Environment Division where further advice will be available.

Roofs

The roof is nearly always a dominant feature of a building and the retention of its original structure, shape, pitch, cladding and ornament is important. Natural slate and lead are the most common materials to be found on the roofs of listed buildings in Northern Ireland. Other roofing materials include thatch, tiles and copper. These traditional roof coverings should be retained wherever possible and their replacement with modern substitute materials will not normally be acceptable. The relationship of the roof to the supporting walls at verges, eaves and parapets are also important features and part of the historic character of most listed buildings. Such details should not be altered during renovations. Where original timber or metal framing remains in a roof this too can contribute greatly to the historic interest of the building as a whole.

The provision of roof ventilation will normally require listed building consent as it is likely to alter the appearance of the building. Where such work is proposed it should be undertaken without disfigurement to the roof, so thought will be required before deciding on a suitable method. There is a wide range of manufactured items to choose from. If it is the intention to use a standard item then it will be helpful if a section of trade literature is submitted with the listed building consent application in order that the precise item type, material, colour etc. can be established. An alternative is to copy the design of traditional ventilators.

Dormers and Rooflights

Original dormer windows should be retained and carefully repaired. If beyond repair they should be reconstructed with all details reproduced. Enlargement of existing dormers on principal elevations should normally be avoided. Any decision as to whether new dormers or roof lights can be added to a roof must be approached carefully. Historic roof structures must not be damaged by their insertion. This can be difficult to achieve as original ties and braces can get in the way and where alterations would result in large scale loss of original fabric they will not be acceptable. New dormers should not upset a symmetrical design of an historic building, while in terraces their introduction may be inappropriate in townscape terms. New roof lights may provide an alternative in such cases, although they should be in flush fittings and not located on prominent roof slopes.

Chimneys

These are essential elements for most listed buildings and are important to their silhouette and three dimensional character. In some instances they will be part of the formal architectural composition. In terraces and groups the exact form and detailing can be critical to the overall architectural concept. In many cases chimneys also perform a vital structural function and they should generally be kept whether or not they continue to have a functional use. When it is necessary to build a new chimney it must be considered as a positive part of the listed building. A stainless steel tube bracketed to the wall can only detract from the character and quality of the parent building. Chimney pots, especially in

groups and terraces, are often an important architectural element in their own right and a traditional roofscape may be damaged if they are removed.

Rainwater Goods

Rainwater goods should not interfere with any mouldings or decorative features. The profile of guttering and the positioning of downpipes are often part of the formal architecture of a listed building and are to be respected in any scheme of work. Where the contribution of the guttering is less formal it will still be important to keep to original profiles and to use traditional materials.

External Wall Finishes

Most listed buildings are stone, brick or rendered, a few are faced in faience or terracotta or are half timbered. Of these finishes, render is the one most prone to inappropriate changes. The character of an historic building can be considerably altered by choosing a render that has not been based on a proper study of historic mixes. To render over stone and brick finishes will not normally be acceptable because of the resulting change to the building's character. Equally it will be wrong to strip render to expose stonework if it is clear that the building was historically rendered. When considering a new render particular attention should be given to the choice of sand and aggregate in the mix, as this choice will affect both colouring and texture. Modern rendering techniques such as dry dashing are rarely appropriate.

Inscriptions and Other Features

Inscriptions, date stones, coats of arms etc. are all an important part of the history of a building and such features should be retained in situ wherever possible. Signs and advertisements will require listed building consent. Where considered acceptable in principle they should be carefully designed and positioned with appropriate fixings that will not damage the building.

Windows

As a rule, windows in historic buildings should be repaired, or if beyond repair should be replaced 'like for like'. In considering listed building consent applications for additional windows it is important that their design, scale and proportion should be sympathetic to the character of the building. The fact that owners so often wish to alter windows demonstrates that windows attract the attention of practically anyone who objectively looks at a building. They are the eyes of the building and they catch the eye. The finish, the material from which they are made, the method of opening, the subdivisions of the glass, the characteristics of the glass, the interplay of panes, the profiles of each component, the relation of sills, architraves, encasements, shutters etc. all play their part in the overall character of the window. The window plays a vital role in the overall appearance and character of the building internally as well as externally.

Old windows were generally made of sturdy materials, they may look shabby and rundown and they may fit badly and admit drafts but nevertheless it is possible, more often than not, to repair and restore the original units. Repair rather than replacement should be the first aim in any scheme for a listed building. Original timber sliding box sash windows and casement windows can be fitted with seals, gaskets and improved ironmongery to provide a performance that will match any modern window type.

Within the broad window types such as sash or casement there is a wide variation of detail according to date, function and region. Standardisation to one pattern should be avoided. The thickness and moulding of glazing bars, the size and arrangement of panes and other details should be appropriate to the date of the building or to the date when the aperture was made.

Replacement Windows

The insertion of factory made standard windows of all kinds, whether in timber, aluminium, galvanised steel or plastic is almost always damaging

to the character and appearance of historic buildings. In particular, for reasons of strength the thickness of frame members tends to be greater in plastic or aluminium windows than in traditional timber ones. Modern casements with top-opening or louvered lights or asymmetrically spaced lights are generally unsuitable as replacements for windows in historic buildings. Such alterations will not therefore be permitted be allowed. Architects' drawings and specifications should make clear the manner in which new windows are intended to open.

It is usually impossible to install double-glazed units in existing frames without altering the character or appearance of a listed building. Listed building consent is quite likely to be refused for such an alteration because the form and detailing of windows is so often a key architectural element of historic buildings. The more complicated the glazing pattern the more difficult it will be to double glaze and for the installation to meet acceptable conservation standards. Conversely, where there is a simple undivided single sheet of glass in each frame double glazing can usually be fitted without any appreciable change to the appearance and character of the window.

Where there are difficulties, the first step is to discover, by calculation, whether or not double glazing would provide a material benefit in controlling heat loss. Traditional internal timber shutters and good quality curtains will give an equal performance during the hours of darkness. However, heat may be lost through other routes. Commonly this is via the air gaps around badly fitting frames. The installation of draft strips and weather seals is a simple and very effective procedure. Reglazing with thicker single sheet glass or the installation of secondary glazing are other options that will not normally require listed building consent. Plastic strips simulating glazing bars and sandwiched into the cavity of the double glazed unit are not an acceptable conservation option.

In certain circumstances trickle ventilation will be a statutory requirement. There are a variety of ways to modify the designs of traditional windows to make this provision and there are ventilators available that have been specially designed to meet conservation criteria. Where difficulties arise it is as well to remember that the purpose of the ventilator is simply to ventilate the room; it is not a requirement that it be provided through the window. Other locations should therefore be assessed in difficult circumstances.

Doors

Original doors, both external and internal, and their encasements are important elements in listed buildings and wherever possible they should be retained. Their replacement or defacement is often entirely unnecessary. The main features that characterise doors are their size, shape, proportions, the method of construction and individual details such as fanlights or knockers. Timber doors may be sheeted or panelled. The panels may be flush, recessed, fielded and may be decorated with mouldings. Finishes are important as are ironmongery and fittings. Replacement doors should copy the original in the materials, the detail of design and the paint finish. Modern off-the-peg doors are not generally acceptable for use in listed buildings, nor are doors with incongruous design features such as integral fanlights, or furniture such as knockers, letter boxes or moulded details should not be removed or mutilated but retained even if the doorway is redundant.

A modern threat to original doors is protection against fire. Consideration should always be given to ways of retaining original doors. These may include fitting a second door to create a lobby, providing additional escape routes, or investigating a fire engineering approach. Sometimes work to original doors cannot be avoided, but there are techniques that provide the required fire ratings with only minor loss of character. It should also be noted that it is now possible to obtain a waiver for listed buildings from the requirement under fire safety legislation to raise door heights to modern standard heights.

Changing Openings

Door and window openings establish the character of an elevation and should not generally be altered in their proportion or details. Alterations

will only be considered where all reasonable alternatives for continued use have been carefully examined. Sometimes such alteration is unavoidable, but it should be noted in load bearing masonry walls this will almost always create a structural weakness for all time. Where it is proposed to close existing openings it will be important that evidence of that opening is featured in the new work. Sometimes this will entail the retention of the window or door and blocking in behind. This is particularly important in terraces for the sake of the overall design of the terrace. On other occasions it may be acceptable to simply recess the blocking to maintain the outline of the old opening or to conserve a sill or an architrave as evidence of the change. In this way the pattern of change can add to the historic interest of the building.

Shop Fronts

Old shop fronts are already very rare. Wherever shop fronts of merit survive they should be retained and any alterations will require the greatest care and attention. Features of value such as blinds in blind boxes, shutters in shutter boxes against an upright and stall-risers should be retained. Often such features are concealed behind later alterations and premises where works to shop fronts are proposed should be checked for the possible survival of such features. The major threats to old shop fronts are security, fashion, advertising and the corporate image. However, there are almost always ways to meet reasonable working needs without resorting to wholesale change and increasingly, in the commercial world, it is now being recognised that individualism, when it is of good quality, is often better for business than thoughtless standardisation.

Shop Blinds and Security Grilles

Retractable apron blinds covered in canvas are often characteristic features of historic shopfronts and should be retained. Modern plastic canopies are not acceptable. External steel roller shutters are not suitable for historic shopfronts. Acceptable alternatives include laminated glass and internal shutters.

New Shop Fronts

New shop fronts should be designed in sympathy with the rest of the elevation and incorporate any ground floor details of interest. Large inserted plate-glass shop fronts without any visual support for the upper part of the premises can have an unfortunate effect, and shop fronts should not extend into the storey above or alter the proportion of first floor windows. Modern materials such as plastics are to be avoided as facings. The fascia board should not be out of scale with the building as a whole and should usually be finished at the top with console brackets and a cornice or other capping. Not only is this the traditional treatment for shop fronts but the cornice provides an architectural division between the modern shop front and the old upper floors.

Depending on the nature of a proposed commercial or office use, it is very often unnecessary to provide display windows and thus alter an intact ground floor. Existing openings should be retained wherever possible, and if alteration is necessary it should only be to the minimum extent required. Standard corporate shop fronts are seldom appropriate for historic buildings, nor are internally illuminated fascia boxes or signs. The prestige value of listed building premises and their distinctive detailing can be emphasised instead.

Ironwork

Where original ironwork exists it is often an important feature sometimes giving unity to a group or terrace of historic buildings. Local foundries and blacksmiths developed individualism in their work and this local flavour can give a particular character to an area or locality. Broken cast iron can be repaired and damage should not be regarded as an excuse for removal. In some areas there is pressure to convert gardens and yards to parking but if this means loss of ironwork or other important features or if the proposal intrudes into a unified landscape, proposals are likely to be refused.

Conservatories

A new conservatory is a new extension and the same criteria for a successful listed building consent application pertain as for any other extension. The first consideration is the relationship of the proposed new structure to existing architectural features. The second is the intrinsic quality of the new design and the third is the sympathetic choice of materials and finishes. The design can be thoroughly traditional or thoroughly up to date. Whichever is chosen it must have a quality that will equal the qualities of the parent building.

Parapets and Other Features

Parapets (solid or balustrade), pediments, parapeted or coped gables and saddlestones, eaves, cornices and moulded cappings are essential terminal features in the articulation of an elevation of an historic building. If they have to be replaced, it should be in facsimile and in the same materials.

Porches

Porches are sometimes the dominant feature of an elevation; their detailing should always be respected. Open columned porches of the classical type should not normally be enclosed (e.g. with glazed sides and doors to the front), but should be left open. In those instances where new porches are considered acceptable, their design should be undemonstrative and should not challenge the integrity of the facade.

Balconies and Verandas

Balconies and verandas are very often formal components in the design of an elevation. They should be maintained and repaired wherever possible; and if they have to be replaced, facsimiles should be erected using matching materials. As with porches they should not normally be enclosed with glazing.

Interiors

Doors have been discussed separately at E19 above. Equally important to the special interest of many historic buildings are other internal features such as original floorboards, stairways, dadoes, balustrades, panelling, skirting, chimneypieces, chimneybreasts, decorative plasterwork and in some of the more important interiors the paintwork, gilding, gesso etc.

Very often important early features may be brought to light during refurbishment works. Fittings too are often of considerable historic and/or architectural importance; for example curtain fittings, early light fittings, sanitary and kitchen fittings, mirrors and built in paintings. While it is more difficult to generalise about interiors than the external elements of an historic building, all internal features and fittings of interest should be respected and left unaltered as far as possible.

Minor Additions to Listed Buildings

There are also some external fixtures that require listed building consent when they affect the character of a listed building. These include satellite dishes and aerials, burglar alarms, sensors, exit signs, security and other floodlighting. Only non-damaging and visually unobtrusive positions for such fixtures will normally be permitted. The principle when proposing such fixtures will be to put the building first and maximum use should be made of existing cavities and clearways such as disused flues, roof spaces and cellars. Where it is unavoidable that such features will be seen, they should be designed to integrate with the older features of the building by the careful choice of fitting, location and colour. Acceptable alternative locations for satellite dishes include outbuildings, yard and garden walls and separate and detached purpose built low level mounting cradles.

Escape Stairs in Case of Fire

The requirement for escape stairs may originate in a change of use or the need for a fire certificate. If additional stairs have to be provided then listed building consent will be required. The preferred option will always be to provide escape stairs in a new extension to the building where this is acceptable in principle. The next best option will be to locate them discretely inside the envelope of the listed building while the least satisfactory solution will be to provide a staircase externally. Any external staircase comprises an extension to a listed building and a location and

design that is sympathetic to the character of the listed building will be required. The use of appropriate materials and finishes as well as a positive relationship to existing architectural features will be critical considerations. A well designed staircase can be a positive enhancement, but a cheap, basic steel ladder will never be appropriate.

Ramps and Access for People with Disabilities

It is often essential for the continuing use of historic buildings that people have access to them. In many cases provision of access for people with disabilities is mandatory. Alterations to a listed building to provide such access will normally require listed building consent.

Many listed buildings have been designed to have elevated processional entrances. Often these are the most impressive elements of the entire architectural composition. In these instances the greatest care must be taken in the design of the new works. Where there is symmetry it is essential that this is maintained. Where there is a natural slope across a site it may be possible to take advantage of this in the design process. In some cases permanent ramps to optimal standards are just not practically or aesthetically acceptable and in these instances alternatives will have to be investigated. Such alternatives include, the use of a temporary ramp, a hydraulic platform lift, a chairlift, assisted access or access by way of another entrance.

Cable Services

If the installer holds a licence granted under the Telecommunications Act 1984 then the installer is bound to notify the Department's Historic Environment Division in advance of any proposed works that may alter the appearance of a listed building. If the installer does not hold such a licence then listed building consent will normally be required. The design for such an installation should be formulated with the aim that it will have a minimal impact on the appearance of the listed building. There will however be the occasional instance when the prospective impact will be so great that the installation cannot be approved.

External Cleaning

Cleaning a building normally requires listed building consent. This is not only because cleaning can have a marked effect on the character of buildings, but also because cleaning processes can affect the historic fabric. The cleaning of a building within a homogeneous terrace would obviously affect the appearance of the terrace as a whole. Certain efforts to clean historic buildings have created long term problems of discoloration and decay. It is equally true that some historic buildings have been enhanced by good quality cleaning. The pros and cons for cleaning buildings are therefore the basis for an ongoing debate. The keyword is care; care in assessing the work at the start, care in specifying methods and materials and care in execution and supervision.

Protection of Listed Buildings during Building Works

Protection is always necessary to a greater or lesser extent when work to a listed building is underway. This may be as little as providing a few dust sheets and sealing communicating doors to prevent dust and dirt from invading the whole building. Especially vulnerable features will need greater protection. Stairs are one element commonly damaged and abused during building work. If work is so extensive that the user has to leave the building empty then security measures against vandalism and theft must be considered; this may entail the removal of important and valuable fittings to safe storage elsewhere. Due consideration should always be given to the wording of the Building Contract to protect fittings and features during the works.

Development in Designated Conservation Areas, Areas of Townscape Character (ATC) or Areas of Village Character (AVC)

General Criteria

General issues to be taken into account in assessing development proposals in designated areas include the appropriateness of the overall massing of the development, its scale (the expression of size indicated by the windows, doors, floor heights, and other identifiable units), its proportions and its relationship with its context i.e. whether it sits comfortably. Development should be in harmony with, or complementary to, its neighbours having regard to the adjoining architectural styles. The use of materials generally matching those which are historically dominant in the area is important, as is the need for the development not to have a visually disruptive impact on the existing townscape. It should also, as far as possible, fit into the 'grain' of the area, for example, by respecting historic layout, street patterns or existing land form. It is also important where new uses are proposed that these respect the unique character and general ambience of an area, for example certain developments may adversely affect the character of a designated area through noise, nuisance and general disturbance.

New Buildings

The development of new buildings in a designated area should be a stimulus to imaginative, high quality design, and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area. What is important is not that new buildings should directly imitate earlier styles, rather that they should be designed with respect for their context, as part of a larger whole which has a well-established character and appearance of its own. Therefore while development of a gap site in a traditional terrace may require a very sensitive design approach to maintain the overall integrity of the area in other cases modern designs sympathetic and complementary to the existing character of the area may be acceptable.

Alterations and Extensions

Proposals for the alteration or extension of properties in a designated area will normally be acceptable where they are sensitive to the existing building, in keeping with the character and appearance of the particular area and will not prejudice the amenities of adjacent properties. Extensions should be subsidiary to the building, of an appropriate scale, use appropriate materials and should normally be located on the rear elevations of a property. Very careful consideration will be required for alterations and extensions affecting the roof of a property as these may be particularly detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.

Change of Use

In assessing applications for the change of use of a property within a designated area consideration will be given to both the general land use policies of the Council and the impact of the proposed use on the character and appearance of the area. New uses will normally only be acceptable where any associated external alterations, for example new shopfronts, are sympathetic to their setting and relate in scale, proportions and materials to the remainder of the building and the local street scene.

Trees

Trees often make an important contribution to the appearance and character of designated areas. In assessing development proposals affecting a designated area the Council will therefore take into account their potential impact on existing trees. Where such trees make an important visual, historic or amenity contribution to the area and should be retained the Council will seek appropriate protection measures through the imposition of planning conditions or may consider making a tree preservation order. In some instances development may be acceptable subject to conditions requiring new tree planting or re-planting.

Natural Heritage Statutory Framework

International

The United Kingdom has transposed into UK law the terms of the European Commission (EC) Birds and Habitats Directives13, and both the Water Framework and Marine Strategy Framework Directives. It is also a signatory to the Ramsar Convention in relation to the protection of wetlands.

Special Protection Areas: The Birds Directive provides for the selection of sites for their importance as areas for breeding, over wintering and migrating birds known as Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Directive also requires Member States to strive to avoid the deterioration of habitats for wild birds outside designated sites.

Special Areas of Conservation: The Habitats Directive requires the protection of certain natural habitats through the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). It also requires the establishment of a system of strict protection for a list of species (other than birds) whose resting and breeding places and whose habitats must be protected to secure their survival, wherever they occur in the member state's territory.

The protection and management of these European sites and their habitats and species (known collectively as 'Natura 2000' sites) is transposed under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) ['the Habitats Regulations'].

Regulation 3(3) of the Habitats Regulations requires all competent authorities (including Planning Authorities), in the exercise of functions generally, to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directive.

Ramsar sites are wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention to protect those of international importance. It requires signatories to formulate and implement their planning for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. As a matter of policy, the UK Government has chosen to apply the procedures under the Habitats Regulations in respect of Ramsar sites. This position is the stated policy within this Plan Strategy.

The Water Framework Directive is transposed into law through the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 (Statutory Rule 2003 No. 544). The aim of the Water Framework Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of all surface waters and groundwater with the aim to reach good ecological and chemical status in all waters as a rule by 2015. Both the Habitats and Birds Directives and the Water Framework Directive aim at ensuring healthy aquatic ecosystems while at the same time ensuring a balance between water/nature protection and the sustainable use of nature's natural resources.

In addition, the measures implemented under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive through the Marine Policy Statement (MPS)16 adopted in March 2011 (under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009) can make an important contribution to achieving the wider objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives.

The European Landscape Convention17 (ELC) promotes the protection, management and planning of landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The ELC defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. One of the major innovations of the ELC is the definition of 'landscape quality objectives', meaning, for a specific landscape, the formulation by the competent authorities of the aspirations of the public with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings.

National

The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) ['the Wildlife Order'] prohibits the intentional and reckless killing, taking, injuring or disturbance of all wild birds and of certain animals and any person who

knowingly causes or permits this to be done shall be guilty of an offence. It also prohibits the intentional and reckless destruction, uprooting or picking of certain wild plants.

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (NI) Act 2011 in addition places a statutory duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity when exercising any functions.

Nature conservation sites selected as European sites under the Birds and Habitats Directives may also be underpinned, either wholly or in part, by sites selected at national level.

Areas of Special Scientific Interest are given legal protection under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (as amended) which provides powers to designate, protect and manage them. These sites are of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological and/or physiographical features and are designated under part IV of the Order.

Under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, other statutory designations include:

- Nature Reserves and National Nature Reserves – nature reserves can be of national (and sometimes international) importance. They are usually managed by the Department18 or by agreement with another Department, a District Council or a voluntary conservation body;
- Marine Nature Reserves – inter-tidal or sub-littoral areas designated by the Secretary of State. They are established for the conservation or study of areas of marine flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features of special interest;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – designated by the Department primarily for their high landscape quality, wildlife importance and rich cultural and architectural heritage. The Department can also designate a National Park under this legislation.

Local

Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Refuges – Local Nature Reserves can be provided by District Councils for nature conservation under powers conferred to them under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985. They are particularly appropriate for educational, recreational or public information services. The Department can also provide a Wildlife Refuge under the Wildlife Order.

Trees and Woodland – Trees can be protected through Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) under the Planning (Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 and the Planning (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. A TPO provides protection for trees considered to be of special value in terms of amenity, history or rarity. It makes it an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy a protected tree, or to permit these actions, without first seeking the Council's consent to do so.

Sustainable forest management, as set out by the Forestry Standard, is a fundamental part of forest policy in the north of Ireland. One of the purposes of the Forestry Act (NI) 2010 is to manage forests to help protect the environment and biodiversity. Unless otherwise exempt, the Forestry Act and associated subordinate legislation, regulates the felling of trees in private woodland.

Other Key Legislation

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Many projects which are likely to affect designated sites will be covered by the EIA Directive, which is transposed into domestic law in Northern Ireland through the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017. These regulations ensure that the likely effects of new development on the environment are fully understood and taken into account before planning permission is given for a proposed development to proceed. As such its purpose is to improve the quality of decision making by identifying potential environmental issues early in the project process.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): European Directive 2001/42/EC, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, commonly referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, is transposed into Northern Ireland law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (NI) 2004. The objective of SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental consideration into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The common principle of both directives (EIA and SEA) is to ensure that plans, programmes and projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are made subject to an environmental assessment, prior to their approval or authorisation. Consultation with the public is a key feature of environmental assessment procedures.

The Environmental Liability Directive and Regulations20 establish a framework for environmental liability based on the 'polluter pays' principle, with a view to preventing and remedying environmental damage.

Tree Preservation Orders

This advice is intended to provide advice for tree owners, conservation groups and the general public on protected trees. It has been prepared for guidance only and should not be taken as an authoritative statement of the law. If you have any concerns regarding legal issues relating to trees you should contact a solicitor.

What is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)?

A TPO is a statutory protection afforded to trees under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. More detailed information on the relevant legislation and associated regulations can be found at www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning/trees-in-the-council-area

What is a tree?

For the purposes of TPOs the Council uses the following definition 'A tree may be defined as a woody, perennial plant which can attain a stature of 6m or more on a single stem. The stem may divide low down, but it must do so above ground level'. (Collins Field Guide, Trees of Britain and Europe by Alan Mitchell).

Why Protect Trees?

Trees can have a high amenity value and can make an important contribution to the environment, creating a varied, interesting and attractive landscape. They can help define the character of an area and create a sense of place. Trees can help to screen and integrate development. Trees provide wildlife habitat and contribute to the health and well-being of humans. TPOs are imposed in order to protect selected trees or woodland if their removal is likely to have a significant impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public.

The Council has specific duty in relation to trees under Part 4, Chapter 3 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

What type of trees can be covered by a TPO?

All types of tree can be protected. The Order can cover anything from a single tree to woodlands. Normally, unless a Woodland TPO is proposed, only trees over 3.5m in height are considered for a TPO. Hedges, bushes and shrubs will not be protected.

What is a Woodland TPO?

A Woodland TPO protects all trees within the defined area, including natural regeneration – seedlings and saplings i.e. trees less than 3.5m in height are not excluded.

How are TPOs initiated?

All requests for a TPO, from an elected representative, a member of the public or an interest group, should be sent to the Council's Planning

Department for consideration. Additionally the Department for Infrastructure, after consultation with the Council, may initiate TPOs.

How does the Council decide which trees to protect?

The Council may make Tree Preservation Orders for the purpose of:

- Protecting trees considered to be of special value in terms of amenity, history or rarity, which may or may not be under threat.
- Ensuring the continuance of a woodland area which may be felled with Departmental consent, by securing the replanting of trees, where this is considered necessary.

To be considered for a TPO trees must be of high amenity value and in reasonable condition. The following criteria will be used when assessing the merits of a potential TPO;

Potential Threat: Priority will be given to the protection of those trees deemed to be at immediate risk from active felling or damage from development on site. All other requests will be assessed and prioritised accordingly.

Visibility: The extent to which the trees or woodlands can be seen by the general public will inform the assessment of whether the impact on the local environment is significant.

Individual Impact: The mere fact that a tree is publicly visible will not itself be sufficient to warrant a TPO. The tree's particular importance will be assessed by reference to its size and form, its future potential as an amenity should also be assessed taking into account any special factors such as its screening value or contribution to the character or appearance of an area. In relation to a group of trees or woodland, an assessment will be made of the collective impact.

Wider Impact: The significance of the trees in their local surroundings will also be assessed, taking into account how suitable they area to their particular setting, as well as the presence of other trees in the vicinity.

Historical Importance: Certain trees because of their age, association with the setting of listed buildings or the contribution they make to the special character of a conservation area may require consideration for TPO protection.

Rarity: There may be occasions where a tree(s) may be considered for TPO protection solely on the grounds of its rarity. The priority of the consideration will reflect the rarity of the species.

How are TPOs processed?

In most cases the Council will impose a Provisional TPO, which takes effect immediately on the date specified in the notice sent to the owner, and provides protection for the trees for a period of six months. During this six month period a detailed assessment of the trees is carried out by the Council's arboriculturists and a decision is made as to which trees, if any, should be protected. The Provisional Tree Preservation Order will then be confirmed on those trees which are deemed worthy within the six months or allowed to lapse if it is considered, as a result of the detailed assessment, that they are not worthy of protection.

Alternatively a Full TPO may be served in circumstances where the Council considers it unlikely that there is any significant risk to the trees. The Council may give notice to the owner and occupiers of the land that it proposes to make a TPO within a 28 day notice and representation period. Within this period a detailed assessment of the trees is carried out by the Council's arboriculturists and a decision is made as to which trees, if any, should be protected. The Full Tree Preservation Order will then be imposed on those trees which are deemed worthy, within the 28 day period, or not proceeded with if it is considered, as a result of the detailed assessment, that they are not worthy of protection.

At the time a TPO is served on the owner a copy of the order will be attached to a protected tree in an obvious location and neighbours will also be notified by letter.

Are trees in a Conservation Area protected?

Trees in a Conservation Area are also subject to protection as if a TPO is in place. In a Conservation Area anyone proposing to carry out works to trees must apply to the Council which has 6 weeks to consider the proposal and respond. Work cannot proceed until the Council has responded or the 6 week period has expired. If the Council considers that the proposed works should not be carried out it will impose a formal TPO to cover the specific trees. In exceptional circumstances, where there is imminent danger, the applicant may proceed, at risk, with works immediately but must satisfy the Council by submitting evidence in the form of a report and photographs.

Can I object to or comment on the imposition of a TPO?

Comments and representations may be made by anyone within 28 days from the date of a Provisional TPO or from the date of issue of the letter of notification for a Full TPO. Representations will be taken into account by the Council before deciding whether or not the TPO is to be confirmed. All representations will be acknowledged in writing.

How can I find out if a tree is protected by a TPO?

The Council holds details of all Orders in its district, these can be made available for inspection by contacting the Tree Officer in the Council's Planning Department. Alternatively TPOs within the Council district can be viewed at www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning/trees-in- the-council-area

An official search of the local land charges register can be made before you purchase a property and this should reveal if there are any TPOs affecting the property.

This search will also indicate if the property is in a Conservation Area.

Can works to protected trees be carried out?

Any person wishing to carry out works to protected trees must first seek the Council's consent to do so by contacting the Tree Officer. You must clearly specify the trees involved, identify their locations, the extent of the work you wish to carry out and the reasons why you wish to carry out the work. The Council will consider the application and may grant approval, grant approval subject to condition or refuse consent. Should an application for consent be refused or granted subject to conditions applicants have the right to appeal in writing to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) within 4 months of the decision stating the grounds on which your appeal is based. The PAC then decides on a date for a hearing and requests written representations in the form of a statement of case.

Please note that anyone can apply to carry out works, even if you are not the owner. If approval is granted you would, however, require the owner's consent prior to entering his land or carrying out works on or from his property.

What happens if I carry out works to protected trees without consent?

It is a criminal offence to cut down, lop, top, uproot or wilfully damage a protected tree in a manner likely to destroy it, without the consent of the Council and on summary conviction you could be fined up to £100, 000 (and on conviction on indictment, to an unlimited fine).

What if a tree is dead or dangerous?

Currently consent is not required for the removal of dead or dangerous trees. The Council has the right, however, to require the replanting of trees of an appropriate size and species in the same location as soon as is reasonable. The owner must ensure that he has proof that the tree is dead or dangerous. It is recommended that the Council is made aware of the proposed works prior to them being carried out. Anyone who is unsure as to the condition of a tree is advised to obtain the advice of a qualified arboriculturist.

Can prior consent be obtained from the Council for certain routine and anticipated works to protected trees?

The Council encourages you to enter into a Tree Management Agreement which may provide you with prior consent for anticipated and agreed tasks over a 5 – 10 year period. To do this you should contact your local Tree Officer.

Does a TPO prevent the carrying out of normal garden maintenance on the land?

No. Normal garden maintenance can continue to be carried out and can include hedge trimming, weeding beds and the removal of geminated tree seeds (seedlings) and saplings less than 3.5m in height from any location unless the TPO imposed is a Woodland TPO which protects the woodland's natural regeneration.

If a TPO is imposed does the Council become responsible for the trees?

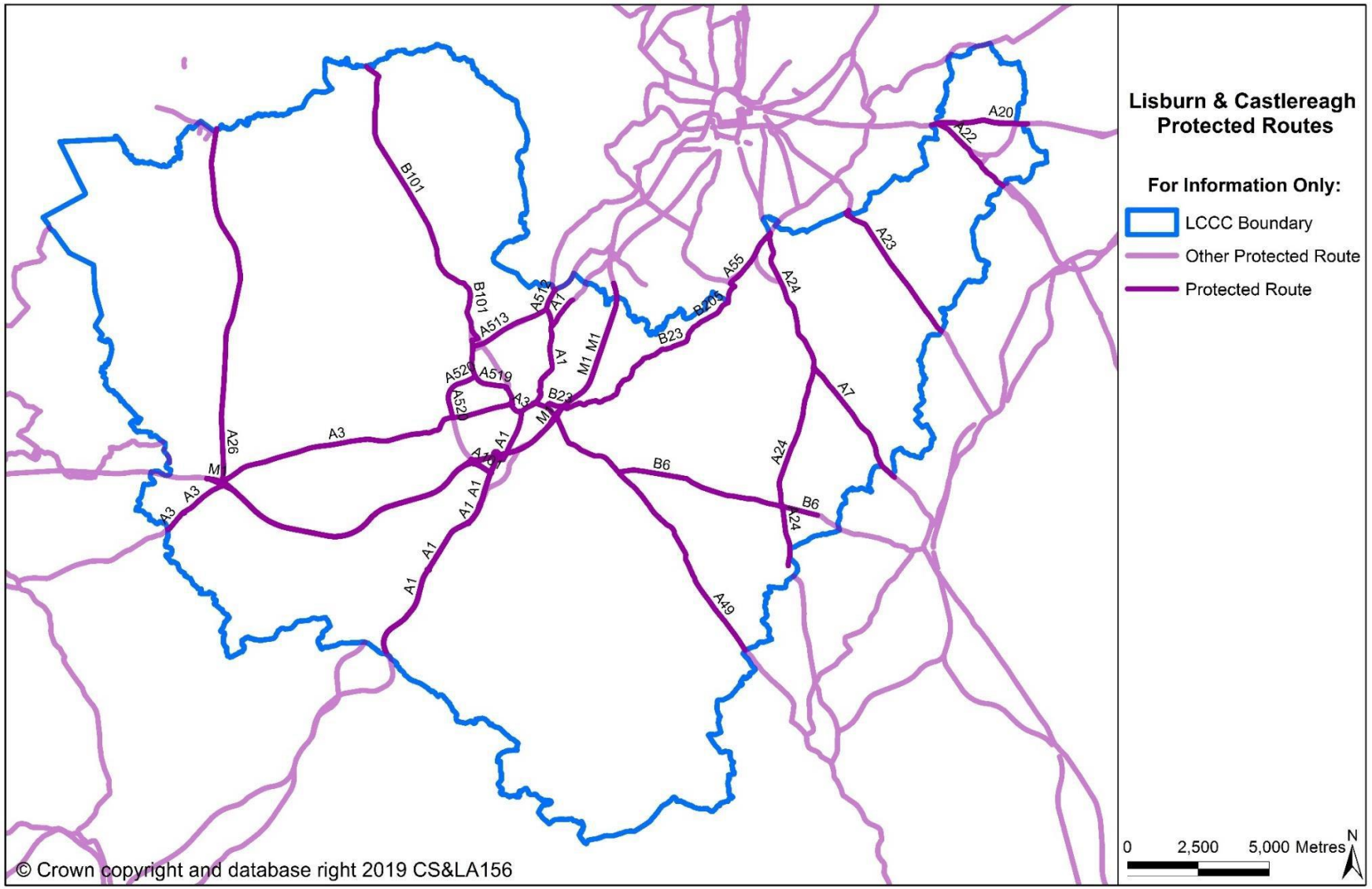
No. The landowner remains responsible for the trees, their condition and any liability in relation to damage they may cause.

Where can I get more information?

Further information can be obtained by contacting your local Tree Officer or on the Council's website www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning/trees-in-the-council-area

F: A Connected Place – Supporting Sustainable Transport and Other Infrastructure

Access and Transport



Renewable Energy

Supplementary Planning Guidance for renewable energy proposals are contained in the following publications:

Best Practice Guidance to Planning Policy Statement 18 'Renewable Energy' (2009) published by the Department

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance to PPS 18 'Renewable Energy' –

Anaerobic Digestion (2013) published by the Department

Accommodating Telecommunications Infrastructure in New Development

The Council wishes to ensure, as far as is practicable, that telecommunication needs are accommodated in an appropriate fashion in the design and layout of new development.

Prospective developers of new housing areas, retail and office developments, community buildings and industrial areas should therefore consider at initial design stage with telecommunications operators how the future needs of occupiers will be met. Developers should provide adequate ducting for telecommunications cables (and for other services where appropriate) to be installed at the outset both underground and in the structure of the buildings proposed, sufficient to meet foreseeable demand for competitive services likely to be provided to those developments. This will help to minimise the disruption and expense if provision has to be made later.

The development or alteration of tall buildings may provide the opportunity to incorporate antennas as an integral feature of the design of their building and developers are encouraged to consult on this matter with the telecommunications operators.

Telecommunications Systems

The following paragraphs describe the principal telecommunications systems and the physical developments associated with them. Each system has different antenna types, siting needs and other characteristics which need to be taken into account in assessing proposals.

Fixed-link Systems

Fixed-link systems operate through cable connections (copper wire or optical fibre), and radio signals transmitted through line-of-sight antennas or satellites.

The trunk networks may use fixed radio links as well as underground or above ground cables. These radio links require the provision of radio relay stations. A station usually consists of a small building to accommodate the radio equipment and a tower normally of up to 60 metres in height supporting a number of antennas. Antennas can also be located on buildings or other structures. Fixed radio link antennas are round 'dishes', with typical diameters of 0.3, 0.6 and 1.2 metres, although reflectors may be of other shapes and sizes.

Fixed radio links operate at frequencies which require direct line of site, with range diminishing as frequency increases. The radio links must be free from obstruction, such as hills, buildings, trees or large moving objects. These factors, together with the need to take account of the curvature of the earth and differing atmospheric conditions, affect the siting and height requirements of antennas. To cover long distances, or to circumvent obstacles, intermediate repeater radio stations are often necessary. They require at least two antennas, one to receive and the other to relay the signal; other antennas may be required for additional capacity or for fallback use.

The antennas used for transmitting and receiving radio signals via satellite should not be confused with satellite television antennas. Television broadcasters use fixed links to distribute programmes and to link to studios and some businesses also use them for private commercial

networks. Another example of a fixed-link system is the local cable network which is installed underground and requires the erection of usually small junction boxes at intervals.

Third and Fourth Generation Mobile ('GSM' Global System for Mobile)

Digital Cellular GSM systems are provided on the current mobile networks to cater for mobile telephone users. Fifth generation (5G) mobile systems are evolving and their rollout is commencing. With this rollout the Council would encourage operators to continue to re-use existing sites, wherever practicable, in order to minimise the need for new base stations.

Coverage for each cellular system is provided by a network of radio base stations. A base station is a facility that provides transmission and reception for radio systems and each covers a certain area known as a cell.

- Macrocells provide the main structure for the base station network. The base stations for macrocells have power outputs of tens of watts and communicate with phones up to about 35 kilometres (22 miles) distant.
- Microcells are used to infill and improve the main network, especially where the volume of calls is high. They are sited in places such as airports, railway stations and shopping malls. The microcell base stations emit less power than those for macrocells and their range is a few hundred metres.
- Picocell base stations have a lower power output than those of microcells (a few watts) and are generally sited inside buildings.

These systems are demand-led. Increase in the use of mobile phones has meant that operators are continually expanding their networks to accommodate customer requirements of service and quality. The greatest need for base station sites is usually in built-up areas where there is the greatest density of mobile users, and within a mile or two of the main roads, where the demands on network capacity are greatest.

The size of each cell is planned by the network operators. It is determined by a number of factors, but particularly the number of subscribers expected to require access to the system during the peak usage period. In areas where usage exceeds the limits of the network, capacity can be expanded either by introducing new base stations (macrocells or microcells), or by splitting existing cells, thus effectively doubling capacity. Cell splitting requires the erection of additional antennas at an existing base station.

The location of transmitter antennas is important, as signals from one cell will interfere with nearby cells on the same frequency. To avoid blind spots from buildings and hills, antennas must usually be placed high up. In urban areas antennas are often best placed on existing buildings.

Cellular operators typically use vertical multiple pole type antennas about 1-3m in length, some with reflectors attached, mounted on a mast or other supporting structure. In addition, a number of small terrestrial microwave antennas (0.3m-1.2m) may be required, for example to provide links from the base station to the exchange. Associated equipment housing is usually between 4 and 35 cubic metres in volume.

Terrestrial Trunk Radio System (TETRA)

TETRA is an advanced digital technology standard, promoted by Europe. It is a digital standard used by the Emergency Services and ideal for Public Access Mobile Radio or for private network users needing multichannel operation (such as road breakdown services, use at airports or for large construction sites). TETRA base stations operate in a similar way to mobile phone base stations, in that they can be configured in cellular patterns.

Other National and Local Networks

In addition to those mentioned above there are national public networks for data and paging, national networks for maritime, aeronautical, defence, police and a number of other official services. There are also public interest national networks for rail, road breakdown, utility support,

and regional networks for local health authorities, local government and many private networks (e.g. for road haulage, retail, security, taxis and couriers, agriculture and so on).

Radio is also used for hobby and leisure purposes. Amateurs have to pass examinations to be licensed to operate, but may then install fixed antenna subject to planning rules. Because many want to use low short-wave frequencies, these need long wire type antenna.

Satellite Television Broadcasting

Television signals are beamed direct-to-home from the satellite to individual receiving antennas, the more common ones known as satellite dishes. Antennas have to be in direct line-of-sight of the geostationary satellite, and almost always have to be mounted outdoors.

The location of a satellite dish on a building will depend on the direction of the satellite. The size of the dish will depend on the technology used and the strength of the broadcast signal. New developments in antenna technology bring to the market new kinds of antennas with different visual characteristics.

Terrestrial Broadcasting

Digital terrestrial broadcasting uses existing TV rooftop aerials for domestic reception. Rooftop aerials need to be in range of the transmitter to ensure good quality reception. The construction of new buildings or other structures, such as wind turbines, can interfere with broadcast and other telecommunications services, and the possibility of such interference can be a material planning consideration.

Wirescape

Wirescape is a term within Policy UT1 that refers to pylons and poles carrying overhead wires for telephone or electricity services. Such wirescape can be visually obtrusive.

In areas of landscape or townscape sensitivity, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservation Areas, the Council will seek to ensure proposals assessed against Policy UT1 will enhance the visual amenity by encouraging the removal of all unnecessary wirescape, either overhead or on building elevations. For example, when new paving and footpaths are being laid, consideration should be given to undergrounding existing services with new proposals.

Further guidance is provided in the following Departmental Guidance Documents;

Creating Places – achieving quality in residential developments, Provision of Services, page 99 – 101; Living Places – An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland, Serviceability, page 51; and, The electricity transmission system operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) Guidance Document; Transmission Development Plan Northern Ireland 2021 – 2030.

Waste Management

Glossary of Terms

Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) – the portion of the municipal waste stream [see definition of municipal] that is capable of undergoing anaerobic or aerobic decomposition, such as food and garden waste, and paper and paperboard.

Civic Amenity Site – site for the collection of recyclable materials and bulky household waste.

Commercial Waste – waste from premises used for the purpose of trade or business, sport, recreation or entertainment.

Compost – organic matter decomposed aerobically or anaerobically and used as a fertiliser or soil conditioner.

Construction/Demolition Waste – masonry and rubble wastes arising from the demolition or construction of buildings or other civil engineering structures.

Contaminated Land – land which has been subject to the addition of a material or materials to such a degree as to render it unfit for its intended purpose.

Controlled Waste – refers to household/municipal, industrial and commercial waste.

Environmental Impact – the total effect of any operation on the surrounding environment.

Essential Interim Landfill Capacity – the Waste Management Strategy provides for the development of additional landfill capacity to meet essential capacity needs identified by councils prior to the establishment of an integrated network of waste management facilities.

Groundwater – water held in water-bearing rocks.

Hazardous Waste – a waste that, by virtue of its composition, carries the risk of death, injury or impairment of health, to humans or animals, the pollution of waters, or could have an unacceptable environmental impact if improperly handled, treated or disposed of. The term should not be used for waste that merely contains a hazardous material or materials. It should be used only to describe wastes that contain sufficient of these materials to render the waste as a whole hazardous within the definition given above.

Household Waste – waste from a domestic property, caravan, residential home or from premises forming part of a university or school or other educational establishment; premises forming part of a hospital or nursing home.

Hydrogeology – the study of water in rocks.

Incineration – the burning of waste at high temperatures. This results in a reduction in bulk and may involve energy reclamation.

Industrial Waste – wastes from any factory, transportation apparatus, from scientific research, dredging, sewage and scrap metal.

Inert Waste – waste material that does not undergo any significant physical, chemical or biological transformations when deposited in landfill. Inert waste will not dissolve, burn or otherwise physically or chemically react, biodegrade or adversely affect other matter with which it comes into contact in a way likely to give rise to environmental pollution or harm human health. The total leachability and pollutant content of the waste and the leachate must be insignificant, and in particular not endanger the quality of surface water and/or groundwater.

IPPC – Regulations to transpose the requirements of EC Directive 96/61 on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC). The Regulations are designed to protect the environment through the prevention of or reduction in pollution of air, water and land caused by emissions from industrial installations. Under the Directive Specified Waste Management Activities which includes most landfill sites and certain types of hazardous waste treatment will require permits.

Landfill Gas – a gas produced by the decomposition of biodegradable waste. It consists primarily of a mixture of methane and carbon dioxide.

Land Improvement – the deposition of inert waste on land for the purposes of improving agricultural land, for example where steep gradients are reduced and the land re-graded with an adequate surface layer of topsoil; land reclamation for necessary development; preparing other land for necessary development, or landscaping, screening or re-grading other land.

Landfill Site – the controlled deposit of waste to land generally involving the infilling of voids following mineral extraction.

Land Raising – involves the deposit of waste above ground, e.g. in naturally occurring depressions or as part of reclamation schemes.

Land Spreading – the application of waste or sludges to the land and thereby facilitating their degradation and incorporation into the top layer of soil. Fertiliser is usually added to assist aerobic breakdown.

Leachate – liquid that seeps through a landfill site and by so doing extracts substances from the deposited waste.

Municipal Waste - household waste and any other waste under the control of councils or their agents acting on their behalf.

Proximity Principle – highlights a need to treat and/or dispose of waste in reasonable proximity to the point at which it is generated.

Putrescible – liable to decompose or rot with an offensive smell.

Recovery – the reclamation, collection and separation of waste materials from the waste stream.

Recycling – the recovery and re-use of materials from the waste stream.

Re-use – the repeated utilisation of an item/material for its original (or other) purpose.

Self-sufficiency – is a central tenet of EC legislation which requires all member states to apply this principle in their waste management practices at national level and, as far as is practicable, also at regional and sub-regional levels.

Special Waste – waste which contains substances deemed to be dangerous to life as defined by the Special Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998.

Waste – the unwanted by-product of industrial, commercial and domestic activities or anything otherwise discarded.

Waste Disposal – the process of getting rid of unwanted, broken, worn out, contaminated or spoiled materials in an orderly, regulated fashion.

Waste Management Hierarchy – is at the centre of European waste management policy. The hierarchy indicates the relative priority of different methods of managing waste, and provides instruction to waste management policy and planning initiatives on how to progress towards sustainable waste management policies.

Waste Management Strategy – published on 20th March 2000, this document's main purpose is to provide a framework for the development of regional waste management facilities in Northern Ireland.

Waste Management Plans (WMPs) – the principle mechanism for implementation of the Waste Management Strategy that requires councils to prepare WMPs in line with the timetable contained within the Strategy. Article 23 of the Waste & Contaminated Land Order 1997 imposed a duty on councils to prepare WMPs detailing what arrangements were appropriate for dealing with the recovery, treatment and disposal of controlled waste arising in their districts.

Waste Management Licence (WML) – a licence granted by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency under the Waste & Contaminated Land Order (Northern Ireland) 1997.

Waste Management Planning Conditions

When planning permission is given for waste management, the Council will often impose conditions or negotiate agreements in respect of matters that include, as appropriate, the following:

- transport modes, access and routing arrangements, and the volume of traffic generated
- the hours of operation where these may have an impact on neighbouring land-use
- the level of noise
- the physical nature of waste acceptable or excluded, insofar as this might affect local amenity or neighbouring land-use
- landscaping
- plant and buildings
- ancillary development
- the timescale of the operations and any phasing of uses on a site
- minimising nuisance from dust, birds, vermin, or litter
- the historic environment, industrial heritage and archaeological remains
- the protection of surface and underground water
- removal, handling and preservation of topsoil and subsoil, and their replacement at the restoration stage
- precautionary measures against the risks of sites suffering from or causing land instability
- landscaping of operational areas and facilities
- the area to be filled
- restoration and aftercare
- parking and servicing arrangements
- any other significant impact on the environment or human health.

Waste Minimisation in New Development

Waste minimisation is concerned with reducing the quantity of waste that is produced and which would otherwise require treatment or disposal by one of the other options in the waste hierarchy. The main benefits of waste minimisation are the lower environmental and economic costs associated with production and waste disposal. The Council wishes to ensure, as far as is practicable, that waste minimisation is incorporated in an appropriate fashion in the design and layout of new development.

Prospective developers of new housing areas, retail and office developments, community buildings and industrial areas should therefore consider at initial design stage the waste implications and requirements of future occupiers of such development.

The extent to which the Council can influence waste minimisation is limited. Nevertheless good design can ensure that communal and large scale developments occupied or used frequently by people may provide the opportunity to incorporate recycling facilities such as Bring Banks and to separate, recycle and recover as many waste outputs as possible.

Waste Legislation

A number of European Community Directives are relevant to land-use planning policy on waste management. In particular:

The Framework Directive on Waste

The statutory framework necessary to implement the Waste Framework Directive 75/442/EEC (as amended by 91/156/EEC and 91/692/EEC) is contained in the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and its 2011 amendments. The Directive requires Member States to prepare waste management strategies to ensure the development of an integrated network of regional waste facilities. The Directive also introduces the polluter pays principle and the need for licences and registration of carriers.

Waste Management Plans prepared by the councils provide a basis to implement this Directive. The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, which implements the Directive in Northern Ireland, includes the requirement for a waste management strategy and integrated network of regional facilities, together with the introduction of a duty of care, registration of carriers and comprehensive provisions for new waste management licences. The Controlled Waste (Registration of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 establish a system for registration of carriers of controlled waste. These controls make it a criminal offence for any person who is not registered as a carrier to transport controlled waste, and enable the seizure and disposal of vehicles used for illegal waste disposal. The Controlled Waste (Duty of Care) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 came into force on 1st October 2002 and non-compliance will be a criminal offence.

The Landfill Directive

The EC Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC aims to harmonise controls on the landfill of waste throughout the European Union. It came into force in July 2001. It contains two main elements:

- three progressive targets for Member States to reduce the amount of biodegradeable municipal waste (BMW) going to landfill. These are aimed at reducing the amount of methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) emitted from landfill sites. They also reflect the UK's wider and legally binding target for the reduction of greenhouse gases agreed at Kyoto in December 1997; and
- the introduction of more stringent operational and technical regulatory requirements on waste and landfills.

The Directive also places restrictions on the co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste. The Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland provides the basis for meeting the BMW targets.

The Hazardous Waste Directive

The Directive on Hazardous Waste (91/689/EEC) requires that hazardous wastes be included within the scope of waste management strategies and plans. Its requirements are implemented by the Special Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 which introduce a new definition of special waste and require a tracking system to control the movement of hazardous waste from its point of production to its final destination for disposal or recovery.

The Groundwater Directive

The Groundwater Directive (80/68/EEC) seeks to protect groundwater against pollution caused by specified dangerous substances. This Directive is implemented by the Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 that control discharges of List I (Substances which possess carcinogenic, mutagenic or teratogenic properties in or via the aquatic environment) and List II (Substances which have a deleterious effect on the taste or odour of groundwater, and compounds liable to cause the formation of such substances in such water and to render it unfit for human consumption) substances to groundwater.

The Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment

This Directive (the EIA Directive 85/337 EEC as amended by Directive 97/11/EC) requires formal consideration of the environmental effects of certain projects and is implemented by the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.

Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC)

Council Directive 96/61/EC on integrated pollution prevention and control lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from certain listed activities including some waste management facilities. Transposing legislation is currently being prepared and this will replace the current arrangements in the Industrial Pollution Control (NI) Order 1997.

The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive

The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) defines treatment standards and monitoring requirements for urban waste water. It is implemented by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Council Directive 2000/76/EC sets out stringent requirements and operational controls for waste incinerators and co-incinerators. It includes standards of management, control and monitoring and determination of emission limits.

Waste and Agricultural Permitted Development

Under the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, a planning application is not required for the carrying out, on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit, of engineering operations reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

Agricultural land improvement can fall into this category provided the Council is satisfied that the following conditions are met:

- The development is on an agricultural land holding of at least 0.5 hectares in area
- No part of the development is within 24 metres from the nearest part of a special road, or within 24 metres of the middle of a trunk or second-class road or 9 metres from the middle of other classes of road.

In deciding whether or not such land improvement is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture or amounts to a separate land use activity in its own right the Council will take the following considerations into account:

- whether the amount of material brought onto the site is the minimum required to achieve the needed improvement
- the nature of the material being deposited
- the extent, scale and duration of the operations involved

- the quality of the agricultural land being filled
- whether the landowner is a farmer actively engaged in farming operations on the holding.

The Council will consider the circumstances of each case very carefully to ensure that the proposed development is required for genuine agricultural purposes. The introduction of Landfill tax has led to a number of applications to deposit waste on agricultural land to avoid payment of the tax. Farmers should confirm with HM Customs and Excise whether or not landfill tax is payable or should register with the Council as an exempt activity.

Flooding

Glossary of Terms

Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) – The annual probability of a flood exceeding the peak floodwater level.

Culvert – a structure with integral sides, soffit and invert, including a pipe that contains a watercourse as it passes through a beneath a road, railway, building, embankment etc., or below ground.

Catchment – the area drained, either naturally or with artificial assistance, by a watercourse, including all drainage channels, tributaries, floodplains, estuaries and areas of water storage

Coastal Flooding – flooding from sea water, often arising through storm surge

Drainage Assessment – a statement of the drainage issues relevant to a development proposal and the measures to provide the appropriate standard of drainage. The detail of the assessment will be proportionate to the nature of the proposal. (It may also be called a Drainage Impact Assessment).

Drainage Infrastructure – equipment such as culverts, weirs and sluices provided to facilitate drainage

Flood Defence – a structure or works designed to prevent the inundation of land and property from watercourses and/or the sea. Such defences may take the form of floodwalls or embankments or the management of water levels through drainage works.

Flood Hazard – the features of flooding which have harmful impacts on people, property or the environment (such as the depth of water, speed of flow, rate of onset, duration, water quality etc.).

Floodplain – the generally flat areas adjacent to a watercourse or the sea where water flows in time of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences. The limits of the floodplain are defined by the peak water level of an appropriate return period event.

Flood Risk – the statistical probability of an event occurring combined with the scale of the potential consequences of that event.

Flood Risk/Inundation Areas – areas susceptible to flooding from the 4 main sources, i.e. rivers, the sea, surface water and reservoirs.

Flood Storage – an area, usually within floodplain where water is stored in time of flood.

Fluvial Flooding – flooding from a river or other watercourse.

Freeboard – a height added to the predicted level of flood to take account of waves or turbulence and the uncertainty in estimating the probability of flooding.

Groundwater – water below the surface of the ground in the saturation zone and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil.

Minor Development;

Non-residential extensions (Industrial/Commercial/Leisure etc.) – with a footprint less than 150 sq. metres

Alterations – development that does not increase the size of buildings, e.g. alterations to external finishes.

'Householder' development – e.g. sheds, garages, games rooms etc. within the curtilage of the existing dwelling in addition to extensions to the existing dwelling. This excludes any proposed development that would create a separate dwelling within the curtilage of the existing dwelling e.g. subdivision of a dwelling house into flats.

Precautionary Approach – the approach to be used in the assessment of flood risk which requires that lack of full scientific certainty, shall not be used to assume flood hazard or risk does not exist, or as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to avoid or manage flood risk.

Pluvial Flooding – usually associated with convective summer thunderstorms or high intensity rainfall cells within longer duration events, pluvial flooding is a result of rainfall-generated overland flows which arise before run-off enters any watercourse or sewer. The intensity of rainfall can be such that the run-off totally overwhelms surface water and underground drainage systems.

Reservoir – reservoirs, dams and other impounding structures, to be defined by the forthcoming Reservoirs legislation.

Residual Risk – the risk which remains after all risk avoidance, substitution and mitigation measures have been implemented, on the basis that such measures can only reduce risk, not eliminate it.

Resilience – sometimes known as 'wet-proofing', resilience relates to how a building is constructed in such a way that, although flood water may enter the building, its impact is minimised, structural integrity is maintained, and repair, drying & cleaning and subsequent re-occupation are facilitated.

Resistance – sometimes known as 'dry-proofing', this relates to how a building is constructed to prevent flood water entering the building or damaging its fabric.

River Basin – see catchment.

Run-off – that proportion of rainfall which is not absorbed into the ground and finds its way, by surface water drainage systems or overland flow, into watercourses and eventually discharges into the sea.

Storm surge – the increase in sea level caused by the combined effects of low atmospheric pressure, wind and a high tide.

Stormwater – Surface water in abnormal quantities resulting from heavy falls of rain or snow. Stormwater that does not infiltrate into the ground becomes surface runoff.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) – a form of drainage that aims to control run-off as close to its source as possible using a sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques such as stormwater networks.

Watercourse – a river, stream, canal, ditch, culvert and surface water drainage systems. (Water mains and sewers are not included in this definition).

Impacts of Climate Change

The most recent climate change predictions up to 2100 date from 2018 and have been estimated by the United Kingdom Climate Projections (UKCP 18). These predictions are based on anticipated change to climate variables such as precipitation, temperature, wind speed and sea level rise and take account of different scenarios concerning varying levels of greenhouse gas emissions over the period. UKCP 18 projections suggest hotter drier summers and warmer wetter winters, coupled with increased frequency of extreme weather occurrences.

Whilst flood risk is generally expected to increase in response to climate change, there is uncertainty surrounding the flood risks that particular areas of Northern Ireland face both today and in the future.

Flood risk is also driven by non-climate change factors. In this context the ongoing expansion of urban areas will increase flood risk as the loss of natural permeable ground and its replacement with impermeable surfaces leads to faster surface run-off into watercourses in the event of heavy rainfall.

The key challenge for flood risk management is that the effect of these drivers (and more specifically changes in these) on the risk of flooding is not certain, with no clear evidence linking changes in these factors to given changes in flooding levels in particular areas. As a result, there are many potential future levels of flood risk that could be realised, with no clear consensus over which levels of flood risk are more likely than others.

Climate change adaptation is about dealing sustainably with the consequences of a changing climate, adapting to those impacts and reducing exposure to the risk of damage. It is also about developing the capacity to cope with unavoidable damage and taking advantage of any new opportunities that arise. Sustainable adaptation with regard to flood risk will include a combination of a number of the following measures:

(a) updating climate change flood maps to inform future development proposals.

(b) strengthening planning policy so as to minimise development in flood prone areas.

(c) improving the resilience of existing flood defence/drainage infrastructure.

(d) upgrading of storm and drainage culverts and managing exceedance.

(e) introducing SuDS solutions to complement traditional drainage solutions.

(f) better preparation and flood proofing for those properties that are at increased flood risk including those which may have had no previous flood history.

(g) improved flood warning systems and emergency call out procedures.

Further information is available online:

https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/protect-environment/climate-change

Impact of Flooding on People and Property

The effects of flooding can impact on a wide range of human activities and interests, the most obvious being the health and well-being of people directly caught up in flood events and the damage caused to property by inundation of flood water.

Related socio-economic impacts can also affect the well-being of the wider community. These may range from loss of homes and personal possessions, to the disruption of key infrastructure and services and the local economy, the loss of business confidence and damage to cultural heritage and the environment. Additionally, repeated flooding of properties is likely to impact on property prices, the ability to get mortgage agreements and affordable property insurance.

When considering new development in flood risk areas it is important to understand all the impacts that the flooding may bring.

The Impact on Health and Well Being

Loss of life or physical injury arising from floodwater is very rare in Northern Ireland. However, there is growing concern about the potential adverse health effects associated with the trauma of a flood event. Living in a damp and dirty environment that such events cause and the anxiety that living in an area liable to flooding can create are increasingly recognized. Table 1 highlights the possible health implications flooding can have.

Table 1: Health Implications of Flooding

Direct Effects

Causes	Health Implications
Stream flow velocity; topographic land features; absence of warning; rapid speed of flood onset; deep floodwaters; landslides; risk behaviour; fast flowing waters carrying debris.	Drowning Injuries
Contact with water	Respiratory diseases; shock; hypothermia; cardiac arrest.
Contact with polluted waters	Wound infections; dermatitis; conjunctivitis; gastrointestinal illnesses; ear, nose and throat infections; possible serious waterborne disease.
Increase in physical and emotional stress	Increase of susceptibility to psychosocial disturbances and cardiovascular incidences

Indirect Effects

Causes	Health Implications
Damage to water supply systems; sewage and sewage disposal damage; insufficient water supply	Possible waterborne infections (e.g. enterogenic E coli, shigella; hepatitis A; leptosperiosis)
Disruption to transport systems	Food shortages; disruption of emergency services.
Underground services disruption; contamination from waste sites; release of chemicals, oil, petrol storage etc.	Potential acute or chronic effects from chemical pollution.
Standing waters; heavy rainfall, expanded range of vector (disease carrying organism – especially insects) habitats	Vector borne diseases.
Rodent migration	Possible diseases caused by rodents.
Disruption of social networks; loss of property, jobs and family members/ friends	Possible psychosocial disturbance
Post flood clean up activities	Electrocutions; other injuries
Damage to or disruption of health services	Decreases in standard of or insufficient access to health care

Source: Floods: Climate Change and Adaptation Strategies for Human Health (WHO 2002)

The Impact on Property

The severity of damage to buildings is often dependent on the depth and duration of the flood event. Table 2 illustrates flood damage to a typical residential property.

Table 2: Flood Damage to a Typical Residential Property

Depth of Flood	Damage to Building	Damage to Services/ fittings	Loss of Personal Possessions
Below ground level	Minimal damage to main building. Flood water enters basements, cellars and under floor voids. Possible erosion under foundations.	Damage to electrical sockets and other services. Carpets in basements and cellars may need replaced	Possessions and furniture in basements and cellars damaged.
Up to half a metre above ground floor level (GFL)	Damages to internal finishes, plaster, wall coverings etc. Floors and walls become saturated requiring cleaning and drying. Flooring may require replacement. Damage to external and internal doors, skirting, etc.	Damage to electricity meter and fuse-box. Damage to gas meter, low level boilers and telephone services. Carpets and floor covering may need replaced. Kitchen units and electrical appliances may need replaced	Damage to furniture and electrical goods. Damage to small personal possessions. Food in low cupboards contaminated
More than half a metre above GFL.	Increased damage to walls. Possible structural damage	Damage to higher units, electrical services and appliances	Damage to personal possessions

Source: Preparing for Floods (DTLR, 2002)

Impact on the Environment

River and coastal flood plains are valuable ecological resources which provide habitat for a wide range of plants and animals, many of which are rare. A number of the priority habitats identified in the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy are associated with floodplains. Flood plains are often important landscape assets and the location of features of the archaeological and built heritage. Flood events can damage ecosystems, habitats, archaeological / built heritage assets and landscape features, and development can exacerbate such damage. The natural regulation of

floodwater limits ecological damage caused by flooding, while pondage areas provide for the trapping and deposition of sediments and recycling of the nutrients from run-off.

Human activity can therefore have a significant impact in increasing flood risk and new development that is constructed without regard to flood risk may serve only to endanger life, increase property and environmental damage and require wasteful expenditure on remedial works.

Development and Drainage

Development inevitably results in hard, impermeable surfaces such as roofs, roads, footpaths and parking areas which traditionally drain surface water to pipes and sewers and thence to rivers. With development, the area of green space decreases and the volume and velocity of drainage water from the development site increases. Our existing engineered drainage network serving Northern Ireland is under considerable capacity pressures. Sustainable drainage offers a solution to support future development while avoiding increased pressure on the existing infrastructure. The use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), particularly for new developments, will provide drainage solutions while not adding more pressure to the existing drainage network.

Sustainable drainage is a key element in future climate change adaptation planning. Traditional piped drainage systems can become overwhelmed during prolonged periods of high intensity rainfall and water quality problems will occur where surface water and sewage are transported in the same pipes and flooding occurs.

When accompanied by ongoing urban development and the projected changes to rainfall patterns resulting from climate change, the climate change predictions, if realised, will significantly increase both the volume and flow rate of storm water, thus increasing the risk of flooding in the future. An alternative approach widely used in other parts of the United Kingdom and European Union to address these problems involves the embedding of sustainable drainage measures into new development through the planning system. The current uptake of sustainable drainage solutions for new development within Northern Ireland is estimated to be below 5%.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

Careful design and incorporation of SuDS into new development or redevelopment schemes will deliver effective drainage while at the same time avoiding increased flood risk downstream. Sustainable drainage effectively delivers on the three 'pillars' that define the concept, i.e. water quantity, water quality and amenity / biodiversity, as depicted below:

Water Quantity

Manage rainfall to mimic natural drainage

- reduce run-off rates
- reduce additional run-off volumes and frequencies
- encourage natural groundwater recharge
- reduce the impact of short duration intense storm events, in particular helping to reduce the impact of 'out of sewer' flood / pollution events

Water Quality

Minimise adverse impacts on water quality

- reduce pollution and protect the quality of receiving waters
- prevent direct discharge of spillage -, SuDS used at the construction stage for a development is considered as 'best practice'
- reduce the volume of surface waste runoff to sewers and so reduce storm overflows

Amenity and Biodiversity

- contribute to the amenity and aesthetic value of the development and the wider environs
- provide habitat for wildlife and enhance biodiversity

Sustainable Stormwater Management Techniques

There is a wide range of sustainable drainage techniques available to developers[5], which can be applied, individually or in combination. A combination of techniques will deliver the best results – for example, a housing development where downpipes are fitted with water butts, the driveways use permeable paving, all connecting to conveyance swales, which in turn are linked to a pond or wetland area. This combination of drainage techniques is known as a 'treatment train'.

Benefits of Sustainable Drainage

Sustainable drainage offers a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits.

Flood Risk Management Benefits

With climate change predictions for more extreme rainfall events, sustainable drainage systems will provide more drainage capacity and will incorporate a design capacity considerably greater than traditional pipes. Accordingly, they offer greater flood protection. The main flood risk management benefits are outlined below:

- SuDS reduce peak flows through the use of appropriate sustainable drainage techniques and will reduce the impact of localised surface water flooding;
- the reduction of peak flows from new development sites incorporating SuDS means that less stormwater will discharge to downstream drainage networks or watercourses, thereby reducing flood risk;
- effective sustainable drainage systems can reduce the demand for and cost of flood emergency response and preparedness procedures;

Sustainable drainage promotes a joined up approach to flood risk management as it requires input from a range of responsible bodies (e.g. the flood risk management authority, the Council and statutory undertakers).

Environmental Benefits

While flood risk, disposal of surface water and the impact on human health and safety is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications; environmental considerations such as amenity, ecology and water resource issues have historically had limited influence on drainage system design and planning decisions. Continuing to drain built up areas without taking due account of wider environmental impacts, particularly on water quality, is no longer acceptable.

Sustainable drainage provides opportunity for the realisation of a number of environmental benefits. These include:

- improved water quality. This can be delivered in a number of ways, including: (a) natural treatment provided within the SuDS component; (b) absorbing of nutrients by plants growing within the SuDS system; and (c) reduced volumes within the combined piped sewerage systems will mean fewer spills of storm sewage to watercourses.
- increased capacity for water storage through retention of storm water, for example in basins, ponds and water butts provides opportunities for this water to be reused;
- conservation of biodiversity and ecology will be supported through the incorporation of SuDS features such as ponds and wetlands;
- a well-designed SuDS system can connect into and support the existing drains and waterways located beyond the development site, thus extending biodiversity via new nature corridors.

[5] British Standards Institution Publication BS 8582:2013
Code of practice for surface water management for development sites

Economic Benefits

Economic benefits likely to accrue from sustainable drainage include the following:

- the increased application of on-site sustainable drainage solutions will mean that less investment will be required in the provision and maintenance of traditional piped infrastructure;
- the removal of storm water from combined sewerage systems will reduce the running costs of sewage treatment works and costs associated with pollution of watercourses;
- Developer savings can accrue through the combination and integration of sustainable drainage with open space provision, particularly on residential sites where the latter is usually required for amenity reasons;
- Developer costs associated with designing and installing a sustainable drainage system are invariably less than with a traditional piped system;
- the retention of stormwater as a consequence of sustainable drainage may offer scope for rainwater harvesting and the reuse of this water can result in economic benefits;
- Buildings overlooking water features generally command higher than average premiums.

Social/Amenity Benefits

Sustainable drainage also offers scope for the realisation of significant social, recreational and health / quality of life benefits. Examples include the following:

- the potential of some elements, such as swales, basins, ponds and wetlands to contribute to the provision and integration of 'green infrastructure' within the urban fabric;
- the potential use of some elements, such as ponds, for active and passive recreational purposes and educational purposes;
- improved water quality generally will benefit public health and enhance the enjoyment of water based recreational activities;

Sustainable Drainage and the Planning Process

Development proposals that facilitate sustainable drainage while meeting broader planning objectives or requirements will usually be considered favourably by the Council. The Council encourages early engagement with the developer and also between the developer and other relevant agencies and disciplines. This will inform the planning and design of a sustainable drainage system that is suitable for the particular characteristics of the site and its surroundings. It will also influence the layout of the site and identify the potential for the drainage system to deliver planning and environmental benefits. Other considerations such as safety issues and long term operation and maintenance arrangements are also best addressed at an early stage.

Assessing Flood Risk and Drainage Impact

In accordance with Operational Policies FLD1 to FLD5 a proposal must be accompanied, depending on the sources of flooding, by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and/or a Drainage Assessment (DA). The detail of the Assessment should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development and the risks involved. The applicant should appoint a suitable qualified and competent professional to carry out the assessment.

A FRA must consider the flood risk from all sources of flooding where the proposed development is located within or in proximity to the fluvial (river) flood plain, the coastal flood plain or the flood inundation area of a reservoir. It should then identify measures that can be adopted to control and mitigate the flooding to the development or elsewhere as a result of

the development. The main sources of flooding[6] (under the implementation of the EU Floods Directive in Northern Ireland) are:

- **Fluvial** – flooding from watercourses, either natural or man-made and either open or culverted. Such flooding is normally caused when channel or culvert capacity is exceeded and water flows out-of-bank onto the natural flood plain.
- **Coastal** – flooding from the sea when water levels exceed the normal tidal range and flood onto low lying areas along the coastline.
- **Pluvial** – flooding which results from excessive rainfall, generating overland flow that overwhelms existing drainage systems and / or collects in low lying areas.
- **Reservoirs** – flooding which occurs to the surrounding area as a result of reservoir failure, overtopping or the controlled release of water via spillways during periods of high flows.

A Drainage Assessment should consider the flood risk mainly from pluvial flooding where the proposed development is located beyond the fluvial and / or coastal flood plain or a reservoir flood inundation area. It should then identify measures that can be adopted to control and mitigate the risk of flooding to the development or elsewhere as a result of it and include for the safe disposal of surface water runoff from the site.

When is a Flood Risk Assessment required?

When a more accurate definition of the Flood Plain and Extents is needed

Due to the nature of the Strategic Flood Map for Northern Ireland the geographical extent of predicted flood areas cannot be precisely defined. In some cases reservoir inundation maps may not be available. A FRA to determine a more accurate extent of flooding is therefore necessary for development proposals located in proximity to the margins of the predicted flood plain, irrespective of whether the site lies just outside or just inside (wholly or partially) the extent as depicted on the Strategic Flood Map. In these circumstances it is sufficient for the FRA to identify the sources of flooding and the resulting flood extents. For some sites the applicant may be able to demonstrate through a combination of local knowledge, photographs of historic flood events or a level survey that the site or part of the site lies outside the flood plain and would be suitable for development from a flood risk aspect. For other sites, a more detailed river model may be required. Preliminary discussion with DfI Rivers is advisable to ascertain the type of information required. Should the outcome of this exercise confirm that the development site or part thereof lies within the flood plain, then the applicant should consider a more suitable alternative location.

When the proposed development is within the (fluvial/coastal flood plain/reservoir flood inundation area) and is otherwise acceptable under the policy

In circumstances where the proposed development is acceptable in principle under the policy, for example where it constitutes an exception to policy FLD1; a FRA must still be submitted to the Council as part of the planning application, so as to ensure the identification of all sources of flooding, the resulting flood extents and the means by which flooding is to be controlled and mitigated. A FRA should not be undertaken when a proposal is clearly unacceptable in principle under the policy as this will invariably result in nugatory work and expense on the part of the developer.

[6] Infrastructure failure should also be considered as a potential source of flooding, which may occur as a result of a blockage or collapse within a watermain, culvert or sewer system.

What information should be in a Flood Risk Assessment?

When a more accurate definition of the Flood Plain and Extents is needed

For this purpose, the FRA will typically be required to contain the following information:

- a location plan to a suitable scale, which clearly illustrates geographical features and identifies the catchment, watercourses in the vicinity and the built development;
- a site plan (and where appropriate, cross sections) showing existing levels related to Ordnance Datum Belfast), existing structures, watercourses in or bounding the site, internal site drainage and drainage outfalls;
- data on historical flooding events, including photographs and media reports, supported by information on rainfall, flood return periods and the probability of storm surge occurrences, where appropriate. Evidence on trends in flood occurrences and changes in the local environment since the last event is particularly valuable;
- a plan of the site showing the extent of the predicted Q100 / Q200 flood plain, and / or in the case of a reservoir, the extent of the predicted flood inundation area. This may require a local hydraulic model based on the topographical information, historical flood events and the assessment of design flow discharges at the site using industry standard methodologies.

When the proposed development is within the fluvial/coastal flood plain

The FRA in these circumstances will typically be required to contain the following information relating to the Assessment of the Flood Risk:

- a location plan;
- a site plan (and where appropriate, cross sections) showing pre-development and post-development levels related to Ordnance Datum Belfast, existing structures, development proposals, watercourses in or bounding the site, internal site drainage and drainage outfalls;
- details of any existing or proposed flood alleviation measures or flood defence structures that may influence the site including information on their structural condition, level of protection and maintenance regime;
- the identification of all sources of flooding pre and post- development;
- an assessment of the hydraulic capacity and structural integrity of all drains and sewers within or bounding the site. The methodologies for assessment must be clearly identified;
- data on historical flooding events accompanied by supporting information;
- a plan of the site showing the extent of the predicted Q100 / Q200 flood plain and / or in the case of a reservoir, the extent of the predicted flood inundation area. This will involve the production of hydraulic models requiring longitudinal / cross sections of the watercourse and the site, assessment of flood discharges using industry standard methodologies, and the inclusion of information such as finished floor levels, access road and car park levels, estimated flood water levels, flood depths and velocities and associated probability of flooding;
- a plan and description of features which may influence local hydraulics. For example, bridges, pipes or ducts crossing watercourses, culverts, embankments and walls;
- an assessment of the likely speed of potential flooding, the sequence in which various parts of the site may flood, the likely duration of a flood event, the potential consequences of a flood event, the depth and velocity of flood water;
- where appropriate, the likely impact of any displaced water or increased run-off from the development site should be estimated and the consequences for neighbouring or other locations assessed.

Where the proposed development is located within the fluvial/coastal flood plain (or reservoir flood inundation area), the FRA will also be required to provide details of flood control and mitigation measures as

well as safety procedures that will address the flood risks identified. The following considerations may be relevant:

Flood Control Measures

- Infrastructure and drainage design where it may be possible to limit the flow and duration of flood water to the proposed development by diversion of flow paths, culvert upgrading and introduction of control structures such as sluices, weirs and sealed manholes;
- Management of residual flood risk through keeping development a safe distance away from flood defence structures and introducing sacrificial flood storage areas at the rear of defences;
- Suitable maintenance and management procedures;
- Ground water control and pumping.

Flood Mitigation Measures

- Site design and layout such as siting built development so as to avoid areas of the site liable to flooding and flood flowpaths;
- Raising finished floor levels of new buildings;
- Coastal infilling / land raising;
- Flood resistant and resilient construction

Safety Procedures

- Flood and weather warning systems;
- Clear communication lines between those at flood risk and those with flood risk responsibilities;
- Emergency evacuation plans and procedures including safe access and egress for emergency rescue services;
- Capacity and procedures for the rapid movement of furniture and goods to locations outwith of the flood risk area;
- Safe shutdown of electrical supply for domestic and industrial use;
- Pollution control procedures.

Flood Risk Assessment – General Considerations

While it will be necessary to consider all the factors identified above, the detail necessary is likely to vary from case to case, depending on local conditions and the scale and type of development proposed.

Because of the uncertainties inherent in flood estimation and expected climate change impacts, the application of the precautionary approach to hydrological analysis of flood flows and the determination of flood event return periods requires any assessment of flood risk to incorporate the necessary allowances for increased rainfall, storminess and sea level rise specified in current UK research and guidance.

All FRAs should acknowledge that there are no circumstances in which the risk of flooding can be removed entirely. In defended areas therefore consideration should always be given to the potential impacts of extreme events on defences, the residual risks and the minimising of risks to life and property in such events.

When is a Drainage Assessment required?

Policy FLD 3 requires a Drainage Assessment to be submitted to the Council along with the planning application, for development proposals located outside the fluvial and / or coastal flood plain, in any of the following circumstances:

- Where the proposed development exceeds the thresholds specified in the policy (FLD3 a), b) or c)), for example 10 or more new dwellings;
- Where run-off from the development may adversely impact upon other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or the historic environment;
- Where there is evidence of a history of surface water flooding.

The Drainage Assessment, as well as addressing surface water flooding, may also need to identify control measures for storm water discharge from the site. The use of sustainable drainage systems to manage and limit site discharges to pre-development run-off rates is encouraged.

What information should be in a Drainage Assessment?

A Drainage Assessment will typically be required to contain the following information relating to the assessment of surface water flood risk:

- A location plan;
- A site plan;
- Confirmation as to whether the proposed development is to be located on previously developed land (that may have minimal impact on the existing drainage network);
- Indication as to whether the local area has past flooding problems, which may limit site discharge to the local drainage and watercourses to pre-development run-off rates;
- Identification of likely overland flow paths including depth, velocities, timing and sequence of inundation;
- An assessment of hydraulic capacity and structural integrity of all drains and sewers within or bounding the site, which may result in out of sewer flooding. The methodologies for assessment must be clearly identified;
- Data on historical flood events accompanied by supporting information;
- The likely impact of any displaced water or increased run-off from the development site should be estimated and the consequences for neighbouring or other locations assessed.

Flood Control Measures

- Internal drainage design, including rehabilitation of existing sewers and suitable discharge points to the local drainage and watercourse system that will encourage the safe disposal of storm water run-off away from the site and other neighbouring areas.
- On site SuDS solutions such as flood infiltration and storage that will alleviate the flooding and encourage the slow release of storm water to the local drainage and watercourse system.
- Where the upgrading / use of local drainage networks for additional extreme flows is not possible, designing for exceedance by including sacrificial flood storage areas, such as amenity areas, car parks, roads and pathways into the drainage design.
- Suitable maintenance and management procedures.

Flood Mitigation Measures

- Site design and layout to include infilling, ground re-profiling, raising of finished floor levels and landscaping.
- Flood resistance and resilience construction where raising the building is not possible.
- Ground water control and waterproofing for basement areas.

Safety Procedures

- Safe emergency access and egress routes to safe areas.

Supplementary Information in regard to site discharge to the local drainage network and/or watercourses

In addition to planning requirements, developers will also need to ensure that the following requirements are met:

- An initial application should be made to the local DfI Rivers office for consent to discharge storm water under Schedule 6 of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973.

  If it is proposed to discharge storm water into an NI Water system then a Pre-Development Enquiry should be made and if a simple solution cannot be identified then a Network Capacity Check should be carried out.

- Details of how runoff from the site will be controlled and safely disposed of supported by relevant correspondence from DfI Rivers and/or Northern Ireland Water.
- It is the responsibility of the developer to satisfy the appropriate authorities that the internal site drainage complies with the appropriate legislation and includes for exceedance.

Flood Proofing - Resistance & Resilience Construction

The primary aim of planning policy on flood risk is to avoid new development in areas known to be at risk of flooding. However in certain cases, development within areas of flood risk may still proceed, for example where a proposal is deemed to be of overriding regional importance or is accepted as an exception to the policy for development in flood plains. Outside of flood plains, development within areas of surface water flood risk may be permitted subject to a satisfactory drainage assessment. In all such cases, consideration should be given to assessing and managing the flood risk through the adaptation of suitable flood proofing measures. For new development, permanent solutions which incorporate flood proofing into the structure of the building, such as by raised floor levels and impermeable walls will be preferred to other temporary measures. Below ground occupancy and basements should be avoided.

Advertisements

This guidance is intended to advise applicants and commercial companies involved in promoting outdoor advertising how such advertising, if appropriately designed and sited, can contribute towards a quality environment.

Poster Panel Displays

Poster panel displays do not generally relate directly to the land or premises on which they are located. They comprise the more traditional paper posters on panels or hoardings, either freestanding or attached to buildings, modern displays, including moving prismatic panels, and internally illuminated PVC faced panels.

Poster panel displays are a common feature of urban advertising and rely on size and siting for their impact. As a result they have the potential to be over dominant and obtrusive in the street scene. There is a need therefore to ensure that such displays respect the scale of their surroundings. Equally there is a need to prevent clutter and the undue dominance of such advertisements over other uses of land.

The Countryside

Poster panel displays are out of place in the countryside and will generally be unacceptable. An exception may be made where the display advertises a particular event, such as a local agricultural show or fair, and is restricted to a specified time period.

Villages and Small Settlements

Large scale poster panel displays are generally out of place in villages and small settlements because of their potential to detrimentally impact on the visual amenity of these locations. Smaller poster panels may be acceptable depending on their size and on the scale and character of the village. The position and siting of such signage should respect the size, scale and character of surrounding buildings and features.

Residential Areas

Poster panel displays are out of place in any predominantly residential locality. The priority in residential areas is to maintain local character and environmental quality and to protect the amenity of residents. The size, scale and intrusive nature of poster panel displays therefore make them generally unacceptable. An exception may be made for the display of a poster panel on bus shelters in residential areas where there will be no significant impact on the amenity of adjacent residents.

Predominantly Commercial Areas

In commercial areas the scale of buildings may be sufficiently large to accommodate poster panel displays without adverse effect on visual amenity. The scale of commercial and industrial surroundings in our cities and towns can however vary greatly, often within short distances. It will be expected therefore that the scale of advertisement displays should respect the scale of adjacent buildings and the wider area.

Where an area is in mixed use, with shops and offices interspersed with residential properties, poster panel displays may on occasion be acceptable. They should be carefully related to the size and scale of surrounding buildings and designed in a manner that will not damage visual amenity or prejudice public safety.

Freestanding Advertisement Displays

Large freestanding panels (generally 48 sheet displays or greater) are commonly used to screen derelict and untidy land. These sites can be a potential eyesore and in many cases a carefully designed scheme for screening that integrates advertisement panels can often prevent fly tipping, vandalism and help ensure security. Such schemes need to be well maintained and will generally only be acceptable on a temporary basis.

Freestanding displays are also often found at airports, ports and other gateway locations where they generally provide information on the locality, local events and services.

Design Guidelines:

- **the number, scale, proportions and design of freestanding advertisement panels should respect the site and its surrounding area. In particular where these are situated at the back edge of the pavement, or in other prominent locations, care will be needed to ensure that their effect on pedestrians is not overwhelming;**
- **panel displays should be integrated into a well designed scheme of good quality screening which allows for visual breaks between each panel. Areas to the sides of and around the hoardings should be considered with as much care as the display itself;**
- **wherever possible, good quality hard and soft landscaping should form part of the proposal and should be of sufficient scale to assist integration of the panel by reducing the visual impact of the overall display; and**
- **where the rear of the advertising panel is visible from surrounding roads or properties it should be appropriately treated.**

Gable Mounted Advertisement Displays

Large scale poster panels (generally 48 sheet displays) located on gables are a common feature in the predominantly commercial parts of our towns and cities and may offer benefits, such as screening an untidy gable. Care however needs to be taken with such proposals to ensure they are not over dominant, and relate well to the building on which they are proposed to be positioned.

Design Guidelines:

- **the form, design, size, proportions and siting of a wall mounted poster panel should be sympathetic to the building to which it is to be attached;**
- **the panel should generally be above ground floor level on the gable and be symmetrical with the wall on which it is to be positioned;**
- **interesting features, for example architectural details, should not be obscured or destroyed; and**
- **windows should not be covered and the normal functioning of the building should not be adversely affected.**

Tiers of advertisement poster panels affecting the gable or flank wall of a building should be avoided as they can have a significant detrimental impact over long distance views, whilst more local views can appear cluttered.

The guidance above also applies to large electronic screen displays and to freestanding panels in front of a gable or flank wall of a building.

Shroud Advertisement Displays

Shroud advertisement displays are known by a variety of names such as meshes, wraparounds or blow–up signs. They range in size, but are generally large-scale and can cover the whole of an elevation of a building. They can even be used to present an image of what a building will look like when alterations, renovations or building works have been completed.

In view of their scale and size, shroud advertisements have the potential to seriously conflict with the visual amenity of the buildings upon which the display is situated and the area in which buildings are sited.
Accordingly, proposals for this type of advertisement are only likely to be acceptable in commercial areas, where they are to be attached to

scaffolding surrounding a building or development site and where a contract has been drawn up for the building or renovation works.

To prevent clutter, account will be taken of the number of similar proposals located within the vicinity of the site and others that have the benefit of advertisement consent.

Signs on Commercial Premises

Signs and advertisements on commercial premises are important in announcing the presence of a business in the street and in directing customers to that location, and can assist the vibrancy of our city and town centres and other commercial areas. When sympathetically sited and designed they can contribute positively to the distinctive visual amenity of an area by giving a sense of quality and permanence.

The most common signs on commercial premises are fascia signs and projecting signs, either box or hanging. Their design should always complement the design of the shopfront and building and respect the wider locality. An excessive number of signs or those which are too large can dramatically affect the premises on which they are sited and have an adverse impact on the general character of the area.

Fascia Signs

Design Guidelines:

- **fascia signs should be of an appropriate size, and sited and designed to harmonise with the shop front, the façade of the building and any detailing thereon;**
- **where there is an original fascia, the sign should make use of this with generally no advertising at sub-fascia level or on pilasters or columns;**
- **where a new commercial building is proposed, the location of fascia signage should be integrated into the overall design.**
- **on older and more traditionally styled buildings, painted signs or non-illuminated letters are preferable to panels or other types of display;**
- **internal illumination should preferably be in the form of individually backlit letters; and**
- **where external illumination is proposed, trough lighting is preferred. The trough should extend over the whole fascia and be painted to integrate it into the whole display.**

Projecting Signs

Design Guidelines:

- **projecting signs should be sympathetic to the design of the building where they are to be displayed and respect fascia signage;**
- **box signs should be located at fascia level and are generally best situated at the end of the fascia;**
- **hanging signs may be acceptable at first floor level and are generally best situated in a central position between windows;**
- **to reduce visual clutter a projecting sign will generally only be acceptable where there is no other projecting advertisement such as a canopy, awning, flag or horizontal banner;**
- **internal illumination should preferably be in the form of individually backlit letters;**
- **where external illumination is proposed trough lighting is preferred with the trough painted out;**
- **projecting signs should generally project no more than 1 metre including fixings, with a maximum end width of no more than 0.1m in the case of a box sign;**
- **projecting signs should be a minimum of 2.25m above ground level in the interests of public safety; and**
- **illuminated projecting signs are generally unacceptable immediately adjacent to a neighbouring residential property.**

Blinds and Awnings

Originally the function of blinds was to protect perishable goods from deterioration due to strong sunlight. Today however blinds, awnings and canopies are increasingly used as a means to provide additional advertising.

Blinds that are well designed can improve the attractiveness of a building or street. Poorly designed or prominently located blinds or canopies displaying advertising can however detract from the appearance of buildings, the surrounding neighbourhood, and can result in clutter. They

are particularly obtrusive when located above windows on upper floors and should be avoided.

Design Guidelines:

- **blinds and awnings should be retractable, made from non-reflective material and be designed to integrate with the appearance and construction of the shopfront as a whole; and**
- **such blinds should be a minimum of 2.25m above ground level in the interests of public safety.**

Advertisements on Upper Floors

Where commercial premises occupy the upper floors of buildings the need to advertise their whereabouts can be important to their viability. Great care needs to be taken in considering how this can be achieved without the exterior of the building appearing cluttered.

Fascia signs, panel style signs, canopies, flags and banners are generally out of place on upper floors.

Design Guidelines:

- **advertising on upper floors should be printed or etched onto the glass or on to internal window blinds. As an alternative, individual letters rather than an advertisement panel may be suspended behind the glass.**

These guidelines also apply to commercial premises on ground floors wishing to advertise on upper floors.

High Level Signs

High level signs generally relate to those vertical or horizontal signs on the walls of tall, single use buildings such as hotels. If not treated with great sensitivity they have the potential to give the appearance of clutter within the local street scene and be obtrusive and dominant over long distances particularly when located on roofs.

Design Guidelines:

- **high level signs will generally only be appropriate where they relate to the scale and primary use of the host building;**
- **they should be designed to be read as part of the building and should not detract from any architectural feature;**
- **they should not project above the eaves or parapet of the host building; and**
- **they should have only the lettering illuminated.**

Offices in Former Residential Properties

In predominantly residential areas, where offices occupy part or all of a former residential property, it is essential that advertising remains unobtrusive in order that the residential amenity of the area is not prejudiced. Even in situations where offices occupy a row of former residential properties it will generally still be important to retain the overall residential appearance of the area. A more flexible approach will however be considered in those areas where, through ongoing change, surroundings have become mainly commercial.

Design Guidelines

- **the advertisement of offices in former residential properties should be by means of nameplates made of metal or other suitable materials and should be fixed to the doorway pilaster, or if there is no pilaster, they may be fixed to the masonry beside the front door; and**
- **painted or etched lettering on a front window will also generally be acceptable.**

Signs at Retail and Business Parks

In retail parks and business parks the uncoordinated display of advance advertisements or ad hoc directional signs to individual businesses, which bears no direct relationship to the building, land or structure upon which

it is displayed is often confusing, untidy and detrimental to the appearance of an area.

There is great potential for all advertising associated with retail or business parks to be undertaken in a planned and coordinated manner. Ideally the fascia signs for individual premises should form an integral part of the building, while a single carefully designed directory board located at the entrance to the park or in other acceptable locations can avoid a proliferation of advance signs.

Design Guidelines:

- **all new buildings in a retail or business park should incorporate a signing zone as part of the design;**
- **fascia and projecting signs should be in scale with the host building and surrounding buildings and be consistent across the whole unit; and**
- **advance signage should be provided in the form of a combined directory board within a proposed or existing landscaped area designed and integrated as one scheme.**

Signs at Filling Stations and on Forecourts

Signage at filling stations usually comprises a combination of a canopy, a pole/pylon, and shop fascia signage together with a number of smaller forecourt signs. In view of the range of signs involved there is often potential for their cumulative effect to result in clutter. To help prevent this a coordinated approach should be taken when bringing forward proposals, particularly where existing signage is being replaced.

Particular care is needed in assessing proposals for illuminated advertisements at filling stations located adjacent to or near residential properties.

Design Guidelines:

- **all signs should be in scale with their surroundings and not detract from the amenity of the surrounding area;**
- **illumination should generally be restricted to the sign lettering and logo; and**
- **freestanding signs should be located so as not to interfere with or obstruct sightlines.**

Pylon and Pole Mounted Signs

Pylon and pole mounted signs are a common feature at petrol filling stations. Increasingly they are found in association with drive-through restaurants, supermarkets, retail warehousing, retail parks and car showrooms.

The height, size and levels of illumination of these signs may result in visual intrusion within the locality where they are situated. They can be extremely dominant over long distances and detract not only from the character and appearance of the area in which they are sited but also that of the area from which they are viewed. In addition where they are proposed close to residential properties they can be detrimental to amenities enjoyed by local residents.

Design Guidelines:

- **pylon and pole mounted signs should be in scale with their surroundings and they should not significantly exceed surrounding building heights;**
- **they should not detract from the visual amenity or character of the surrounding area;**
- **they should not be sited adjacent to, and wherever possible should not directly face residential properties; and**
- **illumination should generally be restricted to the sign lettering and logo.**

Mobile Advertisements

The display of an advertisement stationed on a trailer or other mobile equipment, which is principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements, without the express consent of the Council is a breach of advertisement control.

Such unauthorised mobile advertising is often sited close to the roadside and can have serious implications for road safety. It can cause distraction to drivers and impede visibility. In addition it is generally visually intrusive and can significantly detract from amenity.

The Council has encountered problems in taking effective action against such signage. There is generally nothing that can assist the Council in identifying the person, business or company responsible for the trailer, equipment or apparatus used for displaying the advertisement. Additionally, because these can quickly be moved to an alternative location, in an attempt to evade enforcement action, this can hinder effective enforcement action against landowners.

Accordingly, in the case of unauthorised mobile advertisements, the Council intends to focus enforcement action on the person, business or company being given publicity by the advertisement.

A warning letter will normally be served on the person, business or company being advertised. In addition to its normal contents, the letter shall advise that the Council will take the view that should the advertisement be moved to another location, without the requisite consent, the person, business or company will subsequently be liable to court action on this matter without further warning/notification by the Council.

The Council's approach to the enforcement of mobile advertisements will apply equally in circumstances where the wheels may have been removed from a trailer or other mobile equipment where the advertisement is displayed.

In addition to planning legislation, there are separate provisions within roads legislation for the control of advertisements. Where an advertisement is displayed in breach of the roads legislation the Department for Infrastructure Roads may also instigate the appropriate enforcement action.