

NOVEMBER 2009

## **POOTS REINFORCES POLICY TO PREVENT TOWN CRAMMING**

Environment Minister, Edwin Poots today launched for consultation a new draft planning policy statement to safeguard the character of established residential areas.

The draft policies set out as an Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS 7) will help towards the better management of proposals for the redevelopment of existing buildings; proposals for the infilling of vacant sites (including extended garden areas), and proposals for the conversion or subdivision of existing buildings to flats or apartments (including those for multiple occupancy).

Speaking today the Minister said: **“These additional operational planning policies are designed to ensure that the character of established residential areas is not unduly impacted upon by future residential development proposals.**

**“These draft policies retain sufficient flexibility to allow for higher density housing schemes through imaginative and innovative design which can deliver significant benefits, while continuing to ensure that new residential schemes are sensitive in design terms to people living in existing neighbourhoods, and are in harmony with the local character of established residential areas.”**

The Minister added: **“In order to help reduce flash flooding in urban areas I am also issuing a draft planning policy to encourage greater use of permeable paving within new residential developments.”**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

1. The Department's new draft policy is contained within an Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7 on Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas.
2. Planning Policy Statement 7 'Quality Residential Environments' was published in June 2001 and aims to promote quality in the design of new residential development.
3. The consultation period for the new draft addendum starts now and runs until 5 March 2010.
4. The Draft Addendum may be regarded as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
5. The draft Addendum and the Minister's Statement can be viewed online at [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk) or obtained from the Draft Addendum to PPS 7 Consultation, Planning and Environmental Policy Group, Calvert House, 23 Castle Place, Belfast, BT1 1FY, Tel: 028 90 254916.
6. For media queries please contact DOE Press Office 028 9054 0014 or out of office hours, contact the EIS Duty Press Officer on pager 07699 715 440 and your call will be returned.