



**Public Consultation**

**Draft  
Planning Policy Statement 24**

**Economic Considerations**

**January 2011**

Public consultation: give us your views

**You are invited to send your views on this draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 24 'Economic Considerations, and the accompanying Section 75 Equality of Opportunity Screening Analysis Form attached as Annex 1.**

**Comments should reflect the structure of the documents as far as possible with references to paragraph numbers where relevant.**

**All responses should be made in writing and emailed to:**

**[planning.policy@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@doeni.gov.uk) or sent by post to:**

**Planning Policy Division  
Draft PPS 24 'Economic Considerations'  
Public Consultation  
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Millennium House  
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BT2 7BA**

**The consultation period will end on Friday 6 May 2011.**

**This document is available on the Planning Service website: [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk) or can be obtained by telephoning (028) 9025 6569, textphone at (028) 9054 0642, e-mail from [planning.policy@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@doeni.gov.uk) or by writing to the above address.**

**The document is available in alternative formats, please contact us to discuss your requirements.**

**In keeping with our policy on openness, the Department may make responses to this consultation document publicly available upon request.**

**At the end of the consultation period the Department will consider all comments received. Following this, the draft document will be amended as necessary and, having referred the revised document to the Northern Ireland Executive Committee for consideration; it will be published in final form.**

## Contents

Preamble .....	4
1.0 Introduction .....	5
2.0 Planning Policies .....	6
Policy EC 1 – Economic Considerations .....	7
ANNEX 1 - DOE Section 75 Equality Of Opportunity Screening Analysis Form ....	8

## Preamble

The Department of the Environment (the Department) has a statutory duty, laid down in Article 3 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991, to formulate and co-ordinate policy for securing the orderly and consistent development of land and the planning of that development. The Department is required to ensure such policy is in general conformity with the Regional Development Strategy (RDS).

The Department's planning policies are normally issued through Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and PPS 1 'General Principles' advises that:

*"Planning Policy Statements set out the policies of the Department on particular aspects of land-use planning and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. Their contents will be taken into account in preparing development plans and are also material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals."*

**This Draft Planning Policy Statement, PPS 24, provides guidance on the weight to be accorded to economic considerations in the making of planning decisions. However, no weight will be given to draft PPS 24 in the determination of individual planning applications until such times as it is published in final form.**

The PPS has been subjected to an equality impact screening exercise in line with statutory obligations contained in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The outcome of this exercise indicates that the PPS is unlikely to have any significant adverse implications for equality of opportunity or community relations.

Nothing in this document should be read as a commitment that public resources will be provided for any specific project. All proposals for expenditure by the Department are subject to economic appraisal and will also have to be considered having regard to the overall availability of resources.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Executive's Programme for Government makes economic growth and wealth creation a top priority, to be taken forward in a fair and sustainable manner. This strategic priority is echoed as a key theme that underlies the planning system, which seeks to deliver economic development while protecting and enhancing the environment.
- 1.2 In the current economic climate it is important that the planning system adapts flexibly and quickly to the many challenges facing the local economy. It is vital that proposals that may bring investment are processed as quickly as possible.
- 1.3 The Department's guiding principle to development management is set out in Paragraph 59 of Planning Policy Statement 1 'General Principles':

*"in determining planning applications...development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance."*
- 1.4 The purpose of this draft PPS 24 is to provide guidance on the weight that should be accorded to economic considerations in the making of planning decisions.

## **2.0 Planning Policies**

**In exercise of its responsibility for development management in Northern Ireland, the Planning Authority assesses development proposals against all planning policies and other material considerations.**

**The planning policies of this statement must therefore be read together with the relevant contents of development plans and other planning policy publications, including the Regional Development Strategy. The Planning Authority will also have regard to the contents of published supplementary planning guidance documents.**

## **Policy EC 1 – Economic Considerations**

**Full account shall be taken of the economic implications of a planning proposal, including the wider implications to the regional and local economy, alongside social and environmental aspects in so far as they are material considerations in the determination of the planning application to which they relate.**

**Where the economic implications of a proposal are significant, substantial weight shall be afforded to them in the determination of that planning application. In such cases, substantial weight can mean determinative weight.**

To allow the planning authority to make an informed decision on an individual development proposal, it is essential in submitting planning applications, that sufficient information about the economic implications (positive and negative) is provided. This information should be proportionate to the scale and significance of the relevant development proposal.

## ANNEX 1 - DOE Section 75 Equality of Opportunity Screening Analysis Form

<b>1.1 Please insert below a brief description of the policy/legislation, including the title and <u>all</u> the main aims and objectives</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Draft Planning Policy Statement 24 (PPS 24) 'Economic Considerations.
<b>Aims</b>	Draft PPS 24 clarifies the weight that should be accorded to economic aspects in the making of planning decisions.

<b>1.2 On whom will the policies/legislation impact? Please specify</b>	
	PPS 24 will have direct implications for developers and applicants seeking planning permission. It is intended to benefit the whole community at a regional, sub regional and local context.

<b>1.3 Who is responsible for (a) devising and (b) delivering the policy, eg is it DOE, a Whitehall Department or EU? What is the relationship and have they considered this issue and any equality issues?</b>	
<b>(a)</b>	DoE Planning Policy Division has responsibility for formulating operational planning policy. However, responsibility for implementing policy rest with the Planning Authority.
<b>(b)</b>	The policy will be implemented through the development management process by those with responsibility for making planning decisions, normally the DoE Planning Service, but also the Planning Appeals Commission.

<b>1.4 What linkages are there to other NI Departments/NDPBs in relation to this policy/legislation?</b>	
	Draft PPS 24 has been prepared within the strategic context provided by the Programme for Government and Budget and the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025.

<b>1.5 What data are available to facilitate the screening of this policy/legislation?</b>	
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There are a variety of information sources that can be drawn upon on the section 75 groups from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

**1.6 Is additional data required to facilitate screening? If so, give details of how and when it will be obtained.**

As part of the public consultation exercise the Department will forward the draft consultation document to relevant S75 groups for comment. Subject to the views received from these groups the Department may re-assess the Draft PPS 24 policy for equality of opportunity and undertake an analysis of the data referred to at paragraph 2.5

## **Section 2 - Screening Analysis**

### **2.1 Is there any indication or evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by the following Section 75 groups?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Religious belief		✓
Political opinion		✓
Racial group		✓
Age		✓
Marital status		✓
Sexual orientation		✓
Gender		✓
Disability		✓
Dependants		✓

#### **Please give details**

As the policy is devised in order to derive planning gain to all sections of society the Department considers that draft PPS 24 will not have any differential impact on any of the Section 75 groups in relation to lower participation or take up.

### **2.2 Is there any indication or evidence that any of the following Section 75 groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Religious belief		✓
Political opinion		✓
Racial group		✓
Age		✓
Marital status		✓
Sexual orientation		✓
Gender		✓
Disability		✓
Dependants		✓

#### **Please give details**

The policy will have direct implications for all developers and applicants seeking planning permission. It is considered that as the policy is devised to derive planning gain for all section of society it have positive effects overall.

**2.3 Have consultations with the relevant representative organisations or individuals within any of the Section 75 categories, indicated that policies of this type create problems specific to them?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Religious belief		✓
Political opinion		✓
Racial group		✓
Age		✓
Marital status		✓
Sexual orientation		✓
Gender		✓
Disability		✓
Dependants		✓

**Please give details of any consultations carried out, and any problems identified.**

As part of the public consultation exercise the Department will forward the draft consultation document to relevant S75 groups for comment. Any problems will be identified following receipt of the views expressed.

**2.4 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or community relations by altering the policy, or by working with others, in Government, or in the larger community in the context of this policy?**

**YES**

**NO** ✓

**Please give details:**

Policy EC 1 has been devised to derive planning gain to all section of society. All responses received at the end of the four month public consultation period will help determine the final version of this planning policy statement.

**2.5 It may be that a policy/legislation has a differential impact on a certain Section 75 group, as the policy has been developed to address an existing or historical inequality or disadvantage. If this is the case, please give details below:**

**Please give details:**

Not applicable

**2.6 Please consider if there is any way of adapting the policy to promote better equality of opportunity or good relations.**

<b>Please give details:</b>
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The Policy is devised to derive planning gain to all sections of society.
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**2.7 In relation to Departmental obligations under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), please consider if there is any way of adapting the policy to show due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and/or encourage participation by disabled people in public life.**

<b>Please give details:</b>
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Policy devised to derive planning gain to all sections of society.
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### Section 3 - EQIA Recommendation

**3.1 Full EQIA procedures should be carried out on policies considered to have significant implications for equality of opportunity. Please fill in the following grid in relation to the policy/legislation.**

<b>Prioritisation Factors</b>	<b>Significant Impact</b>	<b>Moderate Impact</b>	<b>Low Impact</b>
Social Need.			✓
Effect on people's daily lives.			✓
Effect on economic, social and human rights.			✓
Strategic significance		✓	
Financial significance			✓

#### **Please give details**

Draft PPS 24 seeks to clarify the weight to be accorded to economic benefits in the making of planning decisions. As the policy seeks to derive planning gain for all section of society it will respond positively to the different needs, issues and priorities experienced by people within these Section 75 Groups. Draft PPS 24 will apply to all development proposals where there are economic benefits and its introduction may speed up the processing of proposals that could bring investment and potential employment opportunities.

**3.2 In view of the considerations in Section 3 and 4 do you consider that this policy/legislation should be subject to a full EQIA? Please give reasons for your considerations. If you are unsure, please consult with affected groups and revisit the screening analysis accordingly. Yes/No/Unsure**

No. The draft policy is not considered to have significant adverse impact. It seeks to derive planning gain for all sections of society, including Section 75 groups.

**3.3 If an EQIA is considered necessary please comment on the priority and timing in light of the factors in table 4.1.**

Not applicable

**3.4 If an EQIA is considered necessary is any data required to carry it out/ensure effective monitoring?**

**Please give details**

Not applicable

<b>Main Groups Relevant to the Section 75 Categories</b>	
<b><u>Category</u></b>	<b><u>Main Groups</u></b>
Religious belief	Protestants; Catholics; people of non-Christian faiths; people of no religious belief
Political opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party
Racial Group	White people; Chinese; Irish Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Bangladeshis; Black Africans; Black Caribbean people; people with mixed ethnic group
Gender	Men (including boys); women (including girls); trans-gendered people
Marital status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are: children under 18, people aged between 18-65, and people over 65. However, the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration
“Persons with a disability”	Disability is defined as: A physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
“Persons with dependants”	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person
Sexual orientation	Heterosexuals; bi-sexuals; gays; lesbians