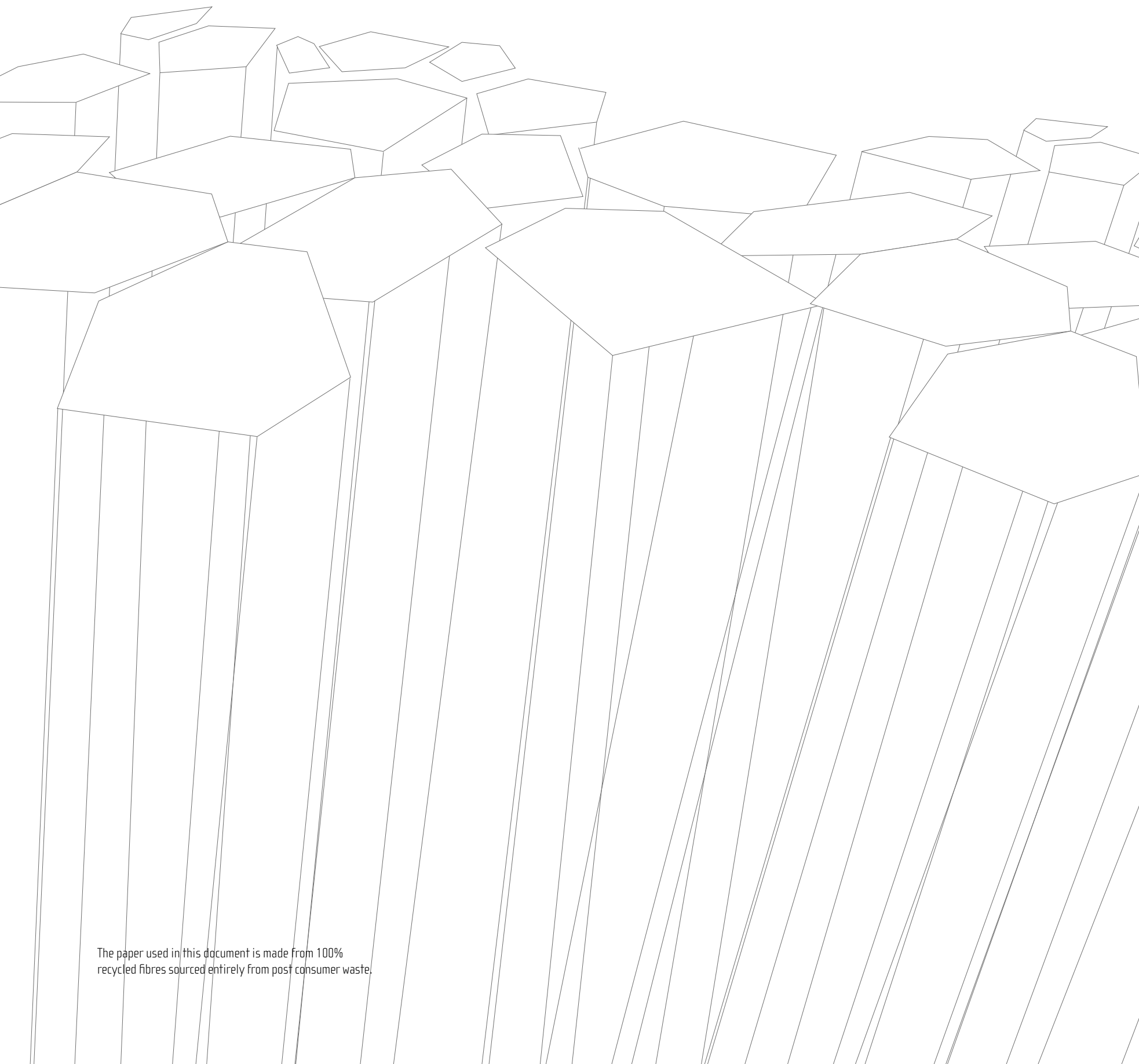
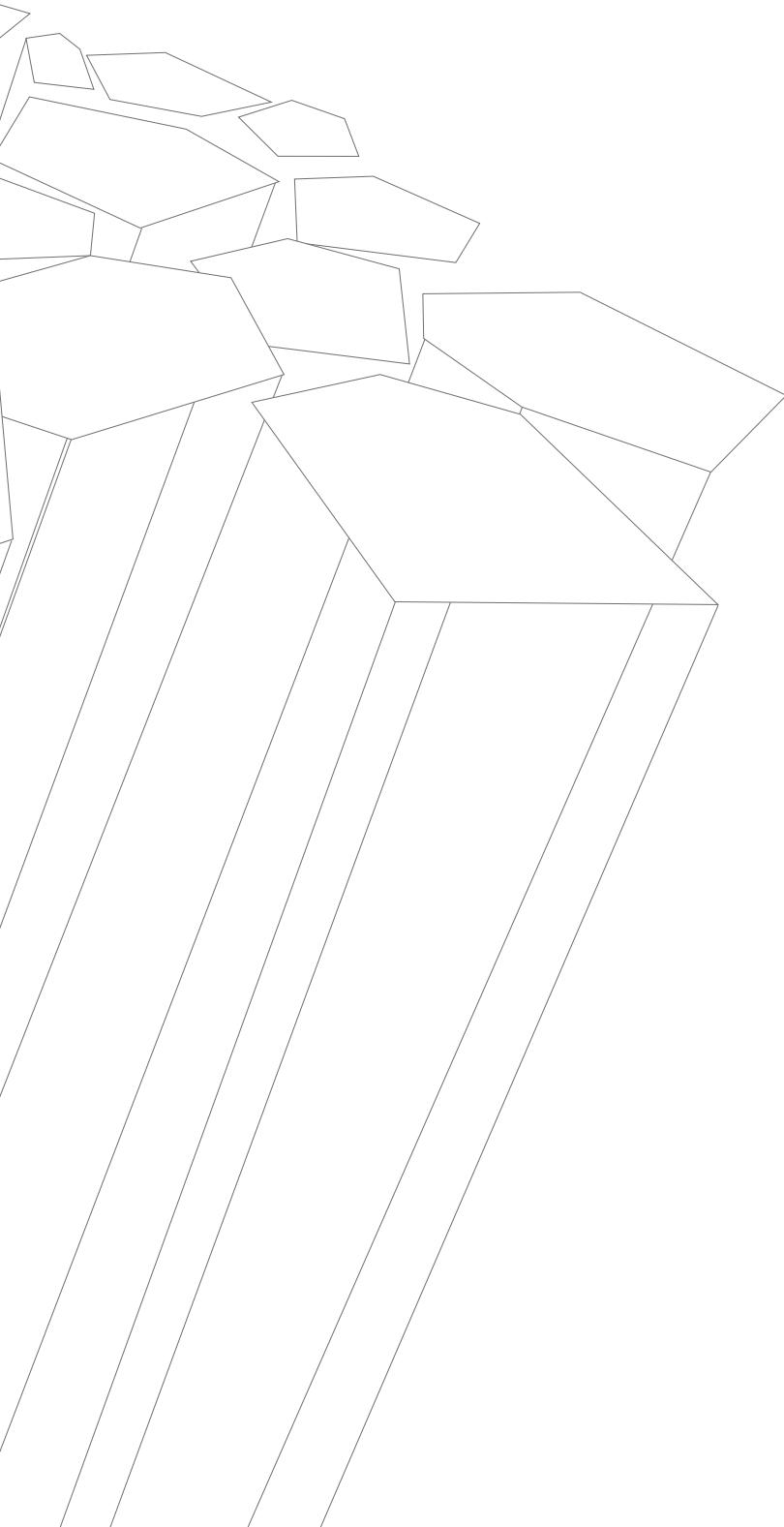




Architecture and the  
Built Environment  
for Northern Ireland



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Maria Eagle MP

## Foreword

Northern Ireland has extraordinary natural beauty. Enchanted glens, beguiling lakes and magical mountains have inspired composers, painters, poets and writers. More than a century and a half ago, Thackeray described the Antrim coast road as ‘one of the most noble and gallant works of art that is to be seen in any country’.<sup>1</sup>

From Lough Foyle and the Sperrin Mountains to Belfast Lough, Strangford Lough and the Ards Peninsula to Carlingford Lough, from the Mountains of Mourne to the Lakes of Fermanagh and from Lough Neagh to the Glens of Antrim, attractive towns and villages, and isolated farmsteads fit perfectly into this unique landscape.

In ‘Travels around Northern Ireland’<sup>2</sup> Fletcher wrote about the co-existence of beauty and ugliness. This is true of many fine buildings and places, both new and old, which sit side by side with others that are grim and mediocre. Decline of industry and insensitive development, compounded by ‘The Troubles’, have left their scars.

It is right that we aspire to buildings and places that are attractive because they can be uplifting and raise our self-esteem. Surroundings that are unattractive are dispiriting. Poor design cannot be tolerated because it affects those people most who are least able to avoid its consequences.

The aim of this comprehensive policy statement on architecture and the built environment is to help the people of Northern Ireland build an environment that is sustainable and life-enhancing for the whole population including our children, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities. This will ensure that the built legacy we leave for future generations will be one that they will be proud of and wish to cherish.

This document demonstrates the strength of Government’s commitment to good design and is, I believe, a very significant step forward in our drive to improve standards of design in architecture and the built environment.

*Maria Eagle*

<sup>1</sup> Thackeray, William Makepeace, ‘The Irish Sketchbook’, [1842].  
The Blackstaff Press. 1985 Edition

<sup>2</sup> Fletcher, Martin, ‘Silver Linings, Travels Around Northern Ireland’.  
Little, Brown and Co. 2000

## Background

This Northern Ireland policy initiative follows similar developments elsewhere in the British Isles and Europe. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) was created in 1999 to champion good architecture and urban design in England. Three years later the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) was established by the Welsh Assembly Government. In 2001 the Scottish Executive published 'A Policy on Architecture for Scotland'<sup>3</sup> and last year launched Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS). In 1997 the Irish Government committed to a policy statement on architecture and in 2002 published 'Action on Architecture'<sup>4</sup>.

The current Northern Ireland initiative was stimulated by the publication in 2003 of 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland, Policies, Strategies and Actions'<sup>5</sup> by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI). This led, in April 2004, to the appointment of a steering committee of representatives from Government departments and ACNI to develop a formal architecture and built environment policy for Northern Ireland.

At the heart of the 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' policy is a demand for a step change in the quality of design, construction and performance of publicly funded development, an objective which aligns closely with the 'Achieving Excellence in Construction' initiative for Northern Ireland. † Through advocacy, exemplar public sector projects and collaboration with key stakeholders Government aims to challenge and inspire higher standards in the private sector.

Comments received during the 12-week public consultation, launched in April 2005, confirmed

**strong support for the policy and demonstrated considerable willingness to work with Government departments in achieving their objectives.**

A challenging vision is at the core of this policy. Three guiding principles, five broad objectives and a series of specific actions have been agreed to realise this vision.

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Executive, 'A Policy on Architecture for Scotland', 2001

<sup>4</sup> Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, The Irish Government, 'Action on Architecture' 2002-2005

<sup>5</sup> Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 'Architecture and the Built Environment, Policies, Strategies and Actions'

† 'Achieving Excellence in Construction' initiative, refer to the Glossary



Policy Vision

An attractive, healthy, safe and sustainable built environment which functions efficiently and enriches the experience of living for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Through good architecture, landscape and urban planning our cities, towns and neighbourhoods can be made more inspiring and welcoming. Evidence shows that we respond positively to buildings and places which are visually attractive and efficient in use. In all areas social, economic and environmental benefit result from investment in good design.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 'The Value of Good Design'



**Amenity** Urban parks and landscaped spaces between buildings which are safe and well maintained can contribute to physical health and emotional well-being.

**Community** In planning neighbourhoods, good design, respect for peoples' needs and sensitivity to local character can encourage community spirit, confidence, ownership, pride and self-esteem.

**Crime Prevention** Design features that facilitate natural surveillance and create a sense of ownership and responsibility for shared areas can deter criminal and anti-social behaviour within the grounds of an estate.<sup>†</sup>

**Education** Design of classrooms can help pupils concentrate, minimise disruption and improve academic performance.

**Healthcare** environments can be designed to have a calming effect that will assist patient recovery, reduce stress and improve staff morale. Good design can reduce hospital acquired infections, injuries and medical errors.

**Housing** Good housing is the key to healthy and sustainable communities. Statistics show that poorly designed housing estates are often associated with ill-health, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and crime.

**Libraries** Buildings can attract visitors, through good exterior design. Good interior design encourages the use of facilities within.

**Offices** Personnel will be more productive and less likely to be absent due to sickness in offices which have natural ventilation and windows that provide natural light and views, particularly of green spaces.

**Investment in Good Design** in the early stages of development can achieve disproportionate and substantial savings in total running costs when measured over the whole-life of the project.

<sup>†</sup> 'Secured by Design', refer to the Glossary

The background features a series of overlapping, thin black lines that form various geometric shapes, including rectangles and trapezoids. These lines are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some shapes appearing to recede into the distance while others are in the foreground. The overall effect is a minimalist, architectural composition.

# Guiding Principles



**1** Creativity and  
Innovation

**2** Heritage

**3** Sustainable  
Development



Guiding Principle

Creativity and  
Innovation




## Creativity and Innovation

Government is committed to: The nurture of aesthetic values, creativity and innovation in design and construction and an ethos which promotes beauty, innovation and sustainability.

Commercial advantage, enhanced performance and value for money are often the key drivers of innovation. It is also true that design processes driven by creativity can produce innovative environments that bring enjoyment and satisfaction to those people who use them.

At strategic planning level creative thinking can produce unconventional environments that are visually attractive, distinctive and sustainable by challenging accepted patterns of development, urban structures and the way we live.

Innovation can deliver considerable benefits but misguided application can do more harm than good. Innovative design solutions should be tested to avoid this. They should respond with sensitivity to distinctive local character and architectural features which are worth preserving.



Guiding Principle  
Heritage

2

## Heritage

Government has a duty to: Stimulate a wider public appreciation of the value of the architectural, cultural and natural heritage and promote its conservation and enhancement in a way which is sustainable.

An appreciation of the ways in which our towns and villages, buildings and public spaces have evolved will help us understand more clearly their social structures, needs and aspirations.

Government recognises that buildings and their cultural associations contribute to the sense of place, local identity, ownership and pride but many of our historic and architecturally important buildings and places lie derelict and are deteriorating.

The coastline, countryside, flora and fauna that make Northern Ireland so attractive are vitally important to our quality of life. Trees and green spaces improve air quality; enhance the appearance of the built environment; help to reduce stress; and aid recovery from illness. Access to the natural environment provides opportunities for leisure and sports and ultimately contributes to the health and emotional well-being of people. However, fields, woodland and wildlife habitats are too frequently being lost to construction development.

We have a duty to this and future generations to protect a valuable and irreplaceable heritage which enriches the character of the places in which we live and helps sustain them. When developing new buildings and places we must understand that what we build today can have a profound and long lasting effect. As Sir Winston Churchill commented: 'We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.'<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Sir Winston Churchill, speaking in the House of Lords on 28 October 1943 on the rebuilding of the House of Commons which had been destroyed in the air raid of May 1941

Guiding Principle

Sustainable  
Development

**ES**



Sustainable Development  
Government is  
committed to: Building  
an environment which  
meets the needs of  
the present without  
compromising the  
ability of future  
generations to meet  
their own needs.

'Sustainable Development is the achievement of a better quality of life through the efficient use of resources, which realise continued social progress while maintaining stable economic growth and caring for the environment'.<sup>8</sup>

Effective and decisive action is needed urgently because richer developed countries, including Northern Ireland, are living beyond the capacity which the planet can sustain. This lifestyle is contributing to climate change and depletion of finite natural resources.

<sup>8</sup> 'Achieving Excellence in Construction, Procurement Guide 11, Sustainability'

## Conclusion

The integration of all three Guiding Principles is essential to the building of a better environment and the regeneration of declining areas. A creative and sensitive approach to our heritage can act as a catalyst to the creation of attractive and distinctive environments where high quality new and existing buildings and places co-exist in harmony. By applying architectural aesthetics and planning principles and by integrating landscape, we can create buildings and places which are attractive, sustainable and uplifting. Climate change and overdependence on private transport are two major issues which challenge the way we live. We need innovative planning and design solutions which employ new and emerging technologies to respond to such challenges.



# Objectives

## Objective 1

Government is committed to: Become an exemplary client in the delivery of good design and thereby encourage the private sector to raise its standards.

A design process that gives priority to good design is much more likely to result in buildings and places which:

Enhance the visual quality of the local environment;

Enhance user satisfaction;

Facilitate ease of construction and maintenance;

Improve operational performance;

Minimise health and safety risks; and

Minimise the harmful effects of construction on the environment.

### Commentary

Good design has three attributes: Delight, Firmness and Commodity as defined by the Roman architect Vitruvius. Delight is the pleasure that a building or place can give to those people who use it or are affected by it. Delight is associated with the creation of a sense of place. Architecture which is attractive has aesthetic qualities that are governed by composition, form, scale and texture. Firmness is the durability and integrity of the structure, its components and

finishes. Commodity is the capacity of the building, structure or place to accommodate the needs of the user. Excellence in design is the outcome of the best of all three attributes.

### End-User Engagement

Consultation at community level is important because it gives local people the opportunity to comment on what is planned and to express their aspirations for the project. Members of the design team can also explain the issues governing design and express the aesthetic qualities of the options that are proposed. Through productive engagement it is more likely that good design, which addresses the concerns of local people, will result. When completed they will identify more closely with the project and take ownership of it.

### Application

Government is committed to good design in all publicly funded construction. This includes capital expenditure by Government departments and their agencies, non-departmental public bodies and other public bodies for which they are accountable and includes grant aided work.

## Objective 2

Government is committed to:  
Facilitating the achievement  
of good design by promoting  
planning policies which are  
focused on architectural  
quality, good urban and rural  
design, appropriateness  
to locality and sustainability.

The aim is to manage development in ways which facilitate good design in the environment for the social, economic, and environmental benefit of present and future generations.

# 2

## Objective 3

Government is committed to:  
Developing knowledge and skills  
amongst developers, practitioners  
and public sector clients, consistent  
with their duties and responsibilities  
concerning architecture and the  
built environment.

Expertise in architectural aesthetics, conservation, construction technologies, both traditional and innovative, landscape, rural and urban design is essential to the building of environments which are attractive, healthy, safe and sustainable, function efficiently and enrich the experience of living for everyone.

# 3

# 4

## Objective 4

Government is committed to: Developing a greater public awareness and appreciation of the characteristics of good design in the built environment, and a greater understanding of their value and benefit. Encouraging public debate, interest and involvement.

A better informed society will be more discerning and demanding and is likely to be more responsive to initiatives, and to accept greater responsibility for the environment.

## Objective 5

# 5

Government is committed to: Promoting collaboration between artists, design professionals and clients thereby encouraging the integration of art in the design of public buildings and public places.

Art can play a vital and inspirational role in transforming spaces. Through multidisciplinary and collaborative practice, artists can help architects and designers create imaginative environments that reflect local identity, meet communities' needs and enhance their functionality.

Integration of art in the planning, design and construction of buildings and their surroundings can produce a number of beneficial outcomes, including:

- Attractive and functional places in which to live and work or visit;
- Enhanced local identity, sense of place, ownership and pride;
- Therapeutic benefit.

# Implementation Strategy

Northern Ireland Government departments aspire to excellence in the design of buildings, landscapes, urban spaces and infrastructure. We believe that our shared vision of a better quality of life will be achieved by making design quality a priority.

Over the next 10 years the scale of strategic investment provides a significant opportunity to raise design standards in educational and healthcare environments, as well as transport and water infrastructure.

Declaration of commitment to good design by itself is not enough.

Three things are essential:

- a design orientated culture;
- an implementation strategy; and
- the necessary investment in time and resources to make it happen.

Through advocacy and exemplar publicly funded projects we aim to achieve excellence in design.

The first element of Government implementation strategy is the publication of 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' and the second the development of an ambitious Action Plan.

## Action Plan

The Action Plan (Annex A) identifies key actions, such as the implementation of the 'Sustainability Action Plan',<sup>†</sup> by Government departments. The Action Plan will develop and evolve as policy implementation unfolds and its effectiveness is assessed.

Implementation of the Action Plan and achievement of policy objectives will demonstrate Government's commitment to better design in the built environment.

A considerable number of measures have already commenced and progress is being made in key areas of construction procurement and planning processes.

The aim is not only to secure best value from public expenditure, but also to target capital investment towards enhancing the visual landscape and improving the lives of all our citizens now and for future generations.

## Ministerial Advisory Group

Another key element of our implementation strategy is the creation of appropriate institutional arrangements for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

We considered models such as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, the Design Commission for Wales and Architecture and Design Scotland. These bodies were created to champion good architecture and planning in England, Wales and Scotland respectively. Although sponsored by Government, they are otherwise independent and free to challenge accepted protocol.

For Northern Ireland, Government has agreed to develop a Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG), led by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. This will advise the Minister, who will assume the role of Ministerial Design Champion, on the implementation and development of policy on 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland'. MAG will meet regularly to review progress and to advise Government on policy implementation.

By appointing prominent individuals, who have a clear vision and are respected for their expertise and ambition to improve design in the built environment, our aim is to make MAG an influential group which will enjoy the confidence of the industry and public.

MAG will be assisted in its work by experts with specialist skills including academics and practitioners. They will be nominated from a call-off list and will contribute in the areas of advocacy, communication, design review and education.

MAG will work to establish its reputation as a respected source of advice on architecture, landscape and built environment for Northern Ireland. Those appointed to the call-off list will bring ideas and also ensure that local conflicts of interest and deference between professionals will not stifle progress.

Task groups appointed from the call-off list will advise MAG on specific initiatives relating, for example, to urban regeneration or housing. In areas such as sustainable development, where key stakeholder groups are already working, selected MAG team members will also participate to ensure cross alignment of policies and where necessary raise aspirations.

A key role of MAG will be to appoint Design Review Panels to review design aspects of significant projects, including projects referred by the Planning Service. It is anticipated that Design Review Panels would be chaired by MAG and comprise experts with relevant experience drawn from the call-off list.

<sup>†</sup> 'Sustainability Action Plan', refer to the Glossary

## Working Together

Our aspirations and objectives for 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' can be achieved only with the support and shared commitment of public and private sector stakeholders.

Joint public /private initiatives and working together is a further key element of our implementation strategy.

## Government's Role

Government aims to demonstrate commitment to 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' policy objectives through the delivery of exemplar publicly-funded projects.

**In terms of a broad strategy Government departments collectively or individually will:**

- Align policy on 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' across all Government departments;
- Act as an exemplary construction client and make good design central to publicly funded construction projects;
- Ensure that good design and aesthetic requirements do not suffer because of an over emphasis on cost or time;
- Work with key stakeholders within the private and voluntary sectors in support of 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland' and to develop joint initiatives;
- Engage with end-users and the local community during the conceptual and early stages of design development;
- Ensure that personnel have the necessary skills and training required to fulfil the key roles and responsibilities †;
- Use publicly-funded projects to promote the social, economic and environmental benefits of good design, thereby helping to raise public awareness of and strong demand for good design;
- Support research and the sharing of knowledge;
- Manage statutory decision-making processes to achieve good rural and urban design;
- Develop appropriate statutory policies and guidance in support of good rural and urban design;
- Champion the development of buildings and places which people in local communities will cherish;
- Appoint artists, where appropriate, to project teams at an early stage; and
- Introduce transport proofing for all new policies in order to promote sustainable development.

† refer to Glossary

## The Role of Private Sector Stakeholders

Government recognises the essential role of key stakeholders in helping to achieve the aspirations and objectives of our policy on 'Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland'.

Key private sector stakeholders include:

- bodies that represent the Northern Ireland public interest;
- developers, contractors and manufacturers;
- education providers; and
- professional bodies.

Private sector, stakeholders may challenge Government to demonstrate commitment by demanding excellence in the design of publicly funded projects and by themselves producing exemplary private development.

Exemplary projects are those that are attractive, enhance the locality, respect the needs of the end-users, functional, sustainable and use whole-life costs to determine design and construction standards.

Working together public and private sector stakeholders can improve the understanding and application of good design, creativity and innovation, the natural and built heritage and sustainable urban and rural development.

Design consultants, professional bodies and educators have a role in championing design quality and initiatives, developing and promoting best practice design guidance and developing knowledge and skills. They can contribute to research initiatives, engage with the end-users and the local community and participate in local decision making and advisory processes.

By working collaboratively with Government and the local community, developers and investors will ensure that good design is a priority.

By developing and leading community action projects community representatives will help local people contribute to the care and maintenance of their environments. Community representatives can help raise awareness of the value of the built and natural heritage and create a demand for development which is attractive, safe and sustainable.

### Conclusion

The policy on 'Architecture and the Built Environment' proposes an integrated process in which private and public sector construction clients, developers and design professionals participate to help raise the quality of design and construction in architecture, landscapes, urban and rural development and infrastructure in Northern Ireland. Momentum to deliver on the policy will be generated by a clear political lead, and championed by an authoritative and respected Ministerial Advisory Group drawn from acknowledged experts in related disciplines.

# Annex A

# Action Plan



## Guiding Principle

Action	Creativity and Innovation	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	At an early project stage and in accordance with 'Achieving Excellence in Construction' † Procurement Guidance, appoint a design champion to articulate the client's aspirations and amongst the project design team promote creative thinking and innovative design solutions.						Commenced
2	Provide officers responsible for investment decisions and the appointment of project teams with guidance on the benefits of good design, innovation and collaborative design and how these processes can be encouraged and managed effectively.						Commence by April 2007
3	Provide officers responsible for verifying standards with guidance on how these can be varied to achieve better results.						Commence by April 2007
4	Promote the benefits of good design, innovation and collaborative design, especially during the conceptual design stage, to those officers preparing project briefing documents and the terms of engagement for consultants.						Commence by April 2007
5	Encourage innovation in design and construction through competition and reward.						On-going by Planning Service
6	Share knowledge and expertise gained in the best large projects with those schemes of a more modest nature.						Commence by April 2007
7	Encourage education authorities to use architecture in the school curriculum to explain creative and innovative design.				DE DEL		Pilot projects completed with ACNI

† refer to Glossary



# Guiding Principle 2

Action	Guiding Principle 2 - Heritage	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Raise awareness of the social, economic and environmental value of the built and natural heritage.				DOE EHS		Commenced through PPS6, PPS2 conservation area guidance etc.
2	Work with key stakeholders, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI), the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and others in the private and voluntary sectors, to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue good urban and rural design, targeting the creative re-use of existing and historic buildings at risk, as well as public open spaces and regeneration.</li> <li>Raise awareness of the value of our architectural and natural heritage through the school curriculum and higher education.</li> <li>Provide best-practice guidance and case studies on how conservation and regeneration can contribute to sustainable development.</li> </ol>				DOE EHS		Commenced through PPS6, conservation area guidance, etc.
					DOE EHS		Commence by April 2008. EHS, DE, DEL
					DOE EHS		On-going through EHS
3	Make it easier for the public to visit places of architectural, historical or landscape interest.				EHS		On-going through EHS
4	Use publicly-funded construction projects to create new attractively designed green spaces. Link existing green spaces to new development.						On-going
5	Provide guidance and best practice case studies to developers and others on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation best-practice, traditional materials and building technology.</li> <li>How buildings can be sensitively integrated into natural landscapes.</li> <li>How to use development to enhance the architectural and natural heritage.</li> </ol>				DOE EHS		On-going
6	Sponsor competitions and awards for the best examples of good design, conservation and regeneration. (Consider new award for ten year old projects).				DOE EHS		Planning Service sponsors an annual design award with RSUA & CIF
7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use planning policy to encourage conservation of the built and natural heritage.</li> <li>Make penalties and enforcement effective in deterring planning control breaches.</li> </ol>				DOE		1. Commence by April 2008. 2. Included at Objective 2-8
8	Recruit conservation officers or train existing staff in the Planning Service.						On-going

# Guiding Principle 3

Action	Sustainable Development	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Implement fully the 'Sustainability Action Plan' † in all publicly funded construction projects and ensure harmonisation with the 'Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy' †				DFP DOE		Commenced
2	Set BREEAM † and CEEQUAL † for civil engineering projects as the benchmarks against which sustainable design is measured on publicly funded projects.						Done
3	Develop new targets and initiatives with all key stakeholders including the Carbon Trust for Northern Ireland, Sustainable Development Commission, World Wildlife Fund for Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and the University of Ulster (UU).				DFP DOE		Commenced
4	Require construction clients to demonstrate effective sustainability policy and application including transportation impacts.						Commenced
5	Make whole-life cost analysis † and achievement of sustainability targets an essential requirement for capital funding.						Commenced
6	Develop Building Regulations to achieve sustainability objectives.				DFP DOE		Commenced
7	Exploit opportunities to adapt existing buildings including historic and listed buildings in a way which is sustainable.				DOE EHS		Commenced
8	Promote and encourage the 'EcoHomes' † standard in all public sector housing.				DSO		Commence by April 2007
9	Raise awareness of the impact of climate change upon the quality of life and promote sustainable objectives.						
10	Provide guidance on how construction clients, developers and the public can achieve sustainable development targets.				DFP DOE		Commenced
11	Support training and research on sustainable technologies through QUB and UU.				DFP DOE		Commenced

† refer to Glossary

# Objective 1

Action	Delivery of Good Design	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Develop guidance on the appointment of project design champions. Appoint a Ministerial Design Champion. Appoint senior and project design champions within departments.						On-going
2	Implement 'Achieving Excellence in Construction' <sup>†</sup> procurement guidance and methodology for all publicly-funded construction projects. Adopt and promote guidance on the "Design Quality Indicator" toolkit. <sup>†</sup> Implement "Gateway Review" at key stages in qualifying projects. <sup>†</sup>						On-going
3	Promote best practice guidance on good design including aesthetic quality and how to achieve it. Promote good design in private sector developments.						Commence by April 2007
4	Make guidance and support from professional advisers available to officers in the public service, including departmental agencies, non-departmental public bodies and local councils, who directly or indirectly fund projects, or have responsibility for investment decisions and the appointment of project teams.						On-going
5	Use whole-life costs to evaluate procurement options, ensuring that design quality and aesthetic qualities do not suffer from an over-emphasis on cost and time targets.						On-going
6	For D&B, PFI /PPP and Prime Contracting <sup>†</sup> , ensure that aesthetics and design quality are clearly defined in output specs and given suitable weightings in assessments.						On-going
7	In all publicly-funded projects ensure: 1 Project teams have the full range of skills needed to achieve good design. 2 Effective team working especially at conceptual design stage. 3 Integrated Project Teams <sup>†</sup> are used to achieve good results. 4 Appoint senior design champions in larger projects. 5 Train key personnel in the Roles and Responsibilities <sup>†</sup> of Design Champion, Investment Decision Maker, Senior Responsible Owner and Project Sponsor. 6 Appoint Project Managers and Independent Client Advisors where appropriate.						Commenced
8	Consult with end-users and other stakeholders on the design brief and early design options. Promote guidance on effective consultation. Provide regular progress reports.						Commence by April 2007

<sup>†</sup> refer to Glossary

# Objective 2

Action	Planning Policies	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Take forward in conjunction with key stakeholders a major reform process through the 'Modernising Planning Processes' initiative. <sup>†</sup>						On-going since 2002
2	Embed sustainability, architectural aesthetics, good urban and rural design and efficient infrastructure in planning policy.						Commenced
3	Establish an in-house design team. Develop training to expand the Planning Service role in design issues. Strengthen in-house skills in new development and conservation and support the Quality Initiative on Housing <sup>†</sup> through training.						Design Team established Jan 06 On-going Training
4	Establish a stakeholder group and prepare a PPS on design.						Commence by April 2007
5	Develop design principles for large sites identified through the Area Plan Process.						On-going
6	Consider a requirement that applications, where appropriate, include: 1 A statement of design principles and concepts, beyond that already required by the Quality Initiative on Housing. 2 A statement on how access complies with the Disability Discrimination Act. 3 Models or computer-generated models and video sequences to show the proposed development options in the context of existing surroundings.						2-6.1 & 2 are included in Planning Reform NI Order 2006
7	Work with QUB and UU to strengthen the teaching of architecture and planning for urban and rural development. Through them encourage research on design principles.						Commenced by Planning Service
8	Improve measures for counteracting breaches of planning control.						Included in Planning Reform NI Order 2006
9	Provide best practice guidance in urban and rural design, conservation and sustainable development.				EHS DOE CPD		Commence by April 2008
10	Provide volume house builders with guidance on and examples of innovative housing design.				DSD NIHE		Commence by April 2007

<sup>†</sup> refer to Glossary

# Objective 3

Action	Knowledge and Skills	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Provide training and/or support continual professional development for project teams.						On-going
2	Encourage research by QUB and UU into key aspects of urban and rural design. Encourage the sharing of knowledge gained from current and historical examples.						On-going
3	Establish a task group to assess the urban design issues in Northern Ireland, including the interface areas. Define criteria for good urban design.						MAG will lead
4	Encourage the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) through the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland, to review regularly the skills and training needs to support the policy objectives and to ensure their inclusion in education and training programmes.				DFP CPD		Commence by April 2008
5	Together with the Landscape Institute of Northern Ireland and Cabe Space support development of landscape education and training in QUB and UU.						On-going
6	Include an educational role for the proposed Ministerial Advisory Group.						Commence by April 2007
7	Share knowledge gained from showpiece projects developed through design competitions and other acclaimed current or past projects.						Commence by April 2007

# 4

## Objective

Action	Awareness	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Promote publicly funded developments and construction initiatives through PLACE †. Share examples of good design through the network of architecture centres.						Commenced
2	Work with ACNI, DE, DEL, QUB and UU to raise awareness of architecture and good urban design through education, public debate and community participation.				DE DEL		On-going
3	With the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment, QUB and UU encourage use of architecture and urban design as a cross-curricular subject and support design projects which engage pupils at primary and secondary levels.				DE DEL		DE, DEL Commence by April 2008
4	Through the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) promote the use of the built heritage as an educational resource.				EHS		On-going
5	Develop departmental web and intranet sites for sharing information across Government departments and make it more accessible to the wider public.						On-going
6	Use exhibitions, lectures, building visits and 'Architecture Week' to promote creativity and innovation, heritage-led projects and sustainable development.				EHS		On-going
7	Promote greater interest in key policy initiatives by sponsoring awards for the best publicly-funded projects. (Consider an award for ten year old projects).						
8	Review the archival, conservation, consultation and display facilities for the records of Northern Ireland's architectural heritage.				DCAL EHS		PRONI, EHS Commence April 2007
9	Through Invest Northern Ireland, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and ACNI, promote architecture as integral to the creative industries strategy.				DCAL DETI		DCAL, DETI Commence by April 2007
10	Maintain and strengthen links with the European Forum for Architecture Policies to develop and promote joint initiatives in rural and urban design.						On-going
11	Encourage local councils to promote quality in architecture in their areas.						Commence by April 2007
12	Encourage local cultural and community groups to include architecture in their programmes.						Commence by April 2007

† refer to Glossary

# Objective 5

Action	Integration of Art	Ministerial Advisory Group	Planning Service	All Government Departments	Named Government Departments	Centres of Procurement Expertise	Comment
1	Integrate art in publicly funded projects from the start in a way which is empathetic to the concept of the building and its environment where appropriate. Apply the 'Percent for Art' † Principle to new development and where appropriate to work to existing buildings.						
2	Embed the 'Percent for Art' principle in Health Estates procurement policy.				DHSS		Done
3	Embed the 'Percent for Art' principle in Capital Programme Awards made to new build projects through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.						Actioned through ACNI
4	Through ACNI promote artistic collaboration and the benefits of 'integrated art'.				ACNI		
5	Consider other mechanisms to integrate art in public buildings and places.				ACNI		
6	Invite ACNI to be a panel member for sponsoring groups involved in selecting/procuring art in the public realm.						
7	Promote the use of art in public buildings and places through MAG.				ACNI		

† refer to Glossary

# Glossary

**Achieving Excellence in Construction** was launched in March 1999 to improve the performance of central government departments, their executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies as clients of the construction industry. It put in place a strategy for sustained improvement in construction procurement performance and in the value for money achieved by Government on construction projects, including those involving maintenance and refurbishment. [www.ogc.gov.uk](http://www.ogc.gov.uk)

**Architecture Week** is the national public celebration of contemporary architecture. In Northern Ireland it is sponsored by PLACE in association with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) and is held annually in June. [www.architectureweek.org.uk](http://www.architectureweek.org.uk)

**BREEAM** The Building Research Establishment's (BRE) Environmental Assessment Method. It is used to assess the environmental performance of both new and existing buildings in the areas of management, energy use, health and well-being, pollution, transport, land use, ecology, materials, and water consumption. [www.Breeam.org](http://www.Breeam.org)

**CEEQUAL** A Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment and Award

Scheme. It is used to assess the environmental quality of civil engineering projects - a civil engineering equivalent to BREEAM for buildings. The assessment includes water, energy and land-use as well as ecology, landscape, nuisance to neighbours, archaeology, waste minimisation and management, and community amenity. [ceequal@crane-environmental.co.uk](mailto:ceequal@crane-environmental.co.uk)

**Design and Build (D&B)** Form of Contract - The Design and Build procurement route for construction appoints a single contractor to act as the sole point of responsibility to a public sector client for the design, management and delivery of a construction projects on time, within budget (taking account of whole-life costs) and in accordance with a pre-defined output specification using reasonable skill and care. (Achieving Excellence in Construction, Procurement Guide 06, Procurement and Contract Strategies).

**Design Quality Indicator (DQI)** The Design Quality Indicator Toolkit is an on-line tool that allows quality to be evaluated at all stages of the construction process from inception through to post occupancy analysis. Using an on-line questionnaire, DQIs allow everyone involved in a project including construction and design professionals, users and visitors, to give an opinion on design quality. [www.dqi.org.uk](http://www.dqi.org.uk)

**Design Review** The function of Design Review is to facilitate the achievement of good design through assessment by an expert design review panel.

**EcoHomes** is the residential version of BREEAM. It provides an authoritative rating for new, converted or renovated homes, and covers both houses and apartments.

**Gateway Review** is a process developed by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) in pursuit of the Achieving Excellence Initiative. A Gateway Review of an acquisition programme or procurement project is carried out at a key decision point by a team of experienced people independent of the project team. The purpose of the Gateway Review is to provide assurance to the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) that the programme/project can progress successfully to the next stage. In Northern Ireland, the Assembly Executive and the Procurement Board endorsed the recommendation of the Procurement Review Implementation Team that Gateway Reviews should be carried out on all major capital projects, including PFI/PPP projects. (Achieving Excellence in Construction, Procurement Lifecycle).

**Integrated Project Teams** bring together client and supply teams including constructors and manufacturers. In principle, the client and the supply team working together can reduce waste, improve quality, innovate and deliver a project more effectively than if the parties are in a fragmented relationship that may be adversarial.

**Modernising Planning Processes** The Modernising Planning Processes Consultation Paper, published in February 2002, represented the first comprehensive review of Northern Ireland's planning system in nearly 30 years. The outcome was an implementation plan launched in February 2003 by the then Minister, Angela Smith MP, as part of an overall "Planning to Deliver" (P2D) programme aimed at modernising the Planning Service. [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk)).

**Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy** Published in May 2006 this strategy provides a framework for Northern Ireland to address the challenges of sustainable development and to pursue the economic and social ambitions while protecting and enhancing the physical environment.

**Percent for Art** in construction projects refers to the allocation of a percentage of a capital



budget, usually 1%, for the commissioning of art works. ACNI encourages the adoption of Percent for Art in all public sector construction projects. [www.artscouncil-ni.org/publicart](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/publicart).

**PLACE** (Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Community and Environment) is the Built Environment Centre for Northern Ireland. It aims to act as a focus for education, information sharing and debate, for both the general public and those who have a role in developing the built environment.

**PFI** (Private Finance Initiative) Form of Contract - The public sector contracts to purchase quality services, with defined outputs from the private sector on a long-term basis, and including maintaining or constructing the necessary infrastructure so as to take advantage of private sector management skills incentivised by having private finance at risk.

**Prime Contracting** A single contractor acts as the sole point of responsibility to a public sector client for the management and delivery of a construction project on time, within budget (defined over the lifetime of the project) and fit for the purpose for which it is intended, including demonstrating during the initial period of operation that operating

cost and performance parameters can be met in accordance with a pre-agreed cost model.

#### **Public Private Partnership**

Any collaboration between public bodies or Government departments and private companies tends to be referred to a public-private partnership (PPP). PPPs are also providing a major boost to the UK construction industry. Combined with the Government's Achieving Excellence Initiative, the wider improvements to the construction industry through the Movement for Innovation, PPPs can help to ensure that the money spent on public sector construction is used more effectively, leading to a major enhancement in this country's infrastructure.

#### **Quality Initiative on Housing**

The Quality Initiative was developed by Planning Service to improve the quality of housing layouts. In support of the Initiative Planning Service produced a Planning Policy Statement - Quality Residential Environments - PPS7 and the Blue Book - official title: Creating Places - achieving quality in residential developments. The intention was to move away from the 80s housing layouts of cul-de-sac upon cul-de-sac, to better layouts respecting local vernacular, the site itself and its vegetation, and to create

places, including community facilities where required. It has been backed by extensive training for key personnel in Planning Service, Roads Service and Landscape Architects Branch. The Blue Book was published in May 2000 and it continues to be promoted amongst developers. [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk)

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Achieving Excellence in Construction, Procurement Guide 02, Project Organisation, defines the key roles and responsibilities required to achieve successful delivery.

#### **The Investment Decision**

**Maker (IDM)** is the role in the client organisation that decides whether or not a proposed investment in a project should be made.

#### **The Senior Responsible Owner**

(SRO) is a senior manager, in the business unit that requires the project. The SRO defines the scope of the project, is personally responsible for its delivery and should be accessible to stakeholders. The SRO is appointed by the IDM and reports directly to them.

**The Project Sponsor (PS)** is the client's representative, acting as a single focal point for day-to-day management of the client's interest in a project,

securing its development and delivery and leading its post implementation review.

**The Project Manager (PM)** is the named individual (often from the private sector) responsible for the day-to-day detailed management of the project and the interface between the project sponsor and the supplier members of the project team.

**Secured by Design** is a police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment. [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

#### **Sustainability Action Plan**

The Sustainability Action Plan adopted by the Government Clients Construction Group (GCCG) under the Achieving Excellence Initiative for Northern Ireland defines ten Themes for Action intended to make publicly funded construction sustainable. [www.cpdni.gov.uk](http://www.cpdni.gov.uk)

**Whole-Life Costing** The whole-life costs of a facility are the costs of acquiring it, the cost of operating it, and maintaining it over its whole life through to disposal.

A copy of this document is also available in an accessible format if required i.e. Braille, large print, audio cassette or in a minority ethnic language



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