

# DOE SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

## Section 1

### Introduction

This form is intended to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise and will be referenced in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission. Copies of completed forms should be retained on file within business areas (**and a copy sent to the Equality Unit**) and reference should be made to the outcome of the screening exercise and subsequent consultation in any submission made to the Minister.

### Background

#### The Legal Background

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

The main groups within each of the nine categories, highlighted above, are identified at Appendix 1.

In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Department is also required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial group.

It is important that the screening form is completed carefully and thoughtfully. Your Divisional or Agency Equality Officer and the Department's Equality Unit in room 413A Clarence Court (ext 40855/40813) will be happy to assist with all aspects of the screening process and will help with the completion of the form, if required.

Further advice on the screening process can be accessed at Section 4 of the Equality Commission's Guide to the Statutory Duties.

## **Policies included for EQIA**

If, after screening, it is decided that a policy will require a full EQIA, a decision will be required on the priority and timing of the assessment. The screening form should be noted accordingly, signed off and copied to the Equality Unit for inclusion in the EQIA programme.

## **Policies excluded for EQIA**

If a decision is taken to screen out the policy or where there is ambiguity about the equality implication of the proposal, the screening form should be signed off by a senior officer responsible for the policy and a copy sent to the Equality Unit. Copies of all screening out forms will be placed on the Department's website.

## **Section 2 – Policy to be Screened**

### **Definition of Policy**

There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of Section 75. To be on the safe side it is recommended that you consider changes to or any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies. The policies covered in the Equality Scheme EQIA programme are a reasonable guide both to the nature of external departmental policies and the level at which they should be considered.

The revised Guidance from The Equality Commission emphasises that the Statutory duties apply to **internal** policies (relating to people who work for the organisation) as well as **external** policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the organisations).

It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in respect of an “overarching” policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if a further EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

OFMDFM Guidance on Legislative Procedures (Primary and Subordinate) sets out clearly the stages at which equality of opportunity considerations should be taken into consideration in the development of legislation.

### **Overview of Policy Proposals**

The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and well defined. You must take into account any available data or evidence that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the S75 categories. Evidence may be qualitative and or quantitative and may include research or internal information and or experience in relation to service and customer monitoring exercises. Where appropriate, arrangements should be made to obtain any data necessary to assist screening. The Equality Unit or Central Statistics & Research Branch (Stephanie Harcourt ext 40878) are available to provide advice on data requirements.

**2.1 Please insert below a brief description of the policy/legislation, including the title and all the main aims and objectives**

<b>Title</b>	Draft Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations
<b>Aims</b>	<hr/> <p>The key objectives of the Draft Addendum to PPS 7 are to ensure that an extension or alteration to a residential property does not harm residential amenity; is sympathetic with the original property; respects the existing character and appearance of neighbouring properties and the surrounding area; and contributes towards a quality environment.</p> <hr/>

It is essential that all the aims/objectives of the policy be clearly and fully defined.

**2.2 On whom will the policies/legislation impact? Please specify**

The policy will have direct implications for developers and applicants seeking planning permission to extend or alter dwellings or flats, including those in multiple occupancy. The provisions of the policy will also apply to proposals for a domestic garage or outbuilding, or other built development ancillary to a residential property.

**2.3 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?**

(a) DoE Planning Service

(b) 

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The policy will be implemented through the development control process by those with responsibility for making planning decisions, normally the DoE Planning Service, but also the Planning Appeals Commission.

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**2.4 What linkages are there to other NI Departments/NDPBs in relation to this policy/legislation?**

The Draft Addendum to PPS 7 has been prepared within the strategic context provided by the Sustainable Development Strategy (responsibility of Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister) and the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 (responsibility of the Department of Regional Development).

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**2.5 What data are available to facilitate the screening of this policy/ legislation?**

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) and the Planning Service database of development decisions. No detailed analysis of this data has been carried out at this stage as there are no anticipated adverse effects on equality.

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

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This is not anticipated at this stage.

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**See Appendix 4 of the Equality Commission Practical Guidance on EQIA which provides a list of Sources of S75 data or speak to Central Statistics and Research Branch (Stephanie Harcourt, ext 40878) or Equality Unit (Alex Boyle, ext 41194, or Una Downey, ext 40855).**

### Section 3 – Screening Analysis

In cases where there is no available quantitative evidence, you will need to take a pragmatic, common sense judgement as to whether the policy/legislation you are screening may have a particular/differential impact on any of the groups. Discussions with Equality Unit, Statistics Branch and organisations representing the Section 75 Groups will be important and helpful at this stage in obtaining qualitative evidence of impacts. Every effort should be made to ensure that assessments are evidence based.

The following criteria must be considered when screening.

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

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

#### **Please give details**

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland estimates that about 20% of the population has some form of permanent or temporary disability. An analysis of the Department's database of planning applications for domestic extensions and alterations, between 2002 and 2005, has indicated that approximately 8% of such proposals are for people with disabilities. While this figure is less than the ECNI estimate it should be noted that (a) a range of extensions or alterations to residential properties can often be undertaken without the need for an express planning permission; and (b) not everyone with a disability would require specific alterations or extensions to their homes.

Overall, the Department does not therefore consider that the policy will have any differential impact on any of the groups within the Section 75 groups in relation to participation or take up. The policy will be implemented through the development control process by those with responsibility for making planning decisions, normally the DoE Planning Service but also the Planning Appeals Commission.

#### **3.2 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?**

	Yes	No
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 to extend or alter dwellings or flats, including those in multiple occupancy.

The Department recognises that specific proposals for extensions or alterations may be brought forward to meet the particular needs of those with a disability, those with dependants or the elderly. In relation to such proposals the Draft Addendum indicates that it should be possible to achieve satisfactory solutions if imaginative and innovative design approaches are fully explored. The Draft Addendum therefore seeks to positively respond to the different needs, issues and priorities experienced by people within these Section 75 groups.

**3.3 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?**

	Yes	No
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.**

It has not been considered necessary to date to consult with any of the Section 75 groups on this matter. However, as part of the public consultation exercise the document will be forwarded to relevant key groups in the Department's Equality Scheme.

- 3.4 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?**

**NO**

**Please give details**

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Not applicable.

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- 3.5 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:**

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Not applicable.

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

**Please give details**

Not applicable.

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## Section 4

### EQIA Recommendation

You should consider carefully in this section whether full EQIA is necessary, particularly where answers to any questions in Section 3 are affirmative.

- 4.1 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**

It is considered that the Draft Addendum will have a moderate effect on people's daily lives as an extension or alteration is one of the most common changes to homes or other residential property. It can help cater for changing domestic circumstances and for the individual homeowner can often offer the desirable option of providing accommodation to meet the needs of their family. The Department recognises the value of improving residential properties as this can assist in the modernisation and revitalisation of older stock, help meet the needs of changing family or domestic circumstances and can also reduce demand for more land for new homes.

All other impacts are considered low and overall it is not considered that the draft policy has any significant implications for equality of opportunity.

- 4.2 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**

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The draft policy is not considered to have significant adverse impact. It seeks to positively address the needs of people with disabilities, those with dependants and the elderly. As a result, the Department has concluded it does not have a significant adverse impact on any Section 75 groups.

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

Not applicable.

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

**Please give details**

Not applicable.

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**Section 5**

**Endorsement**

I can confirm that the proposed policy has been screened for equality of opportunity and good relations implications and has been screened out for equality impact assessment/requires a full equality impact assessment.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Boyle', written over a horizontal line.

Agency/Division: Policy Section, DoE Planning Service

Date:

8<sup>th</sup> January 2007

**PLEASE FORWARD A COPY OF THE COMPLETED FORM TO:**

**DOE EQUALITY UNIT  
ROOM 413A  
CLARENCE COURT  
10-18 ADELAIDE STREET  
BELFAST  
BT2 8GB**

**QUERIES TO: ALEX BOYLE, EXT 41194  
[alex.boyle@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:alex.boyle@doeni.gov.uk)**

**UNA DOWNEY, EXT 40855  
[una.downey@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:una.downey@doeni.gov.uk)**

**Section 6**

**For Completion by Equality Unit**

**Date**

**Screening result recorded:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Placed on website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Screening out completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Screening to be reconsidered:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Give reasons:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Agency/Division notified date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<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); transgendered 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