

To: PPS14 Team  
Department for Regional Development  
Regional Planning & Transportation Division  
Room 3-01 Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8GB

(From :)

April 2006

Ref Draft Planning Policy Statement 14 – Sustainable Development in the Countryside

Dear Sirs

With reference to the above proposed legislation please record and act upon this formal written objection. I call for PPS14 to be withdrawn, reconsidered and substantially amended. I object to the use of statistics to justify the legislation which reflect the recent artificial stimulation of outline planning applications caused by the anticipation of the legislation.

Whilst I fully support the ‘principles’ of achieving greater sustainability and improving the design and location of new houses in the countryside, I believe that the ‘practice’ as currently proposed in PPS14 will damage the very environment which it sets out to protect. Despite frequent references to ‘sustainability’ PPS14 makes no reference to specific measures to achieve it, such as the introduction of sustainable building guidelines as now exist in the rest of the UK. Other positive steps such as community land trusts also supported by the UK Government do not appear to have been considered.

The current proposals are too sweeping, too restrictive and take no account of their impact on the rural economy, on house prices generally nor the history and social life of rural dwellers. Comprehensive impact studies on these three issues should be a prerequisite of any amended legislation.

Furthermore, any legislation of this nature should be balanced, at the very least, by an increase in the release of alternative building land within and around existing towns and settlements and a substantial easing in the restrictions on Permitted Development. Such increases to be based upon proper impact studies.

I am generally in favour of designating areas which require special protection such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Countryside Policy Areas where development should remain restricted.

Whilst I welcome the proposals contained within CTY 5 which will encourage the retention and re-use of rural vernacular buildings, consultation should take place with local councils and Building Control to provide relaxations in regard to the ability of such buildings to meet the new Building Regulations on ‘U’ values which are due to be introduced this summer.

Any new legislation should promote the highest quality in the design of new buildings to reflect modern living requirements in sympathy with the surroundings, whilst taking into account the availability and suitability of modern materials. It should not be overly prescriptive, should allow for the appropriate expression of twenty first century architecture and assess every design in the context of its particular setting.

Yours faithfully