

Planning Reform Consultation
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Sent via email: planning.reform@doeni.gov.uk

Friday 2nd October 2009

Dear Sir / Madam

The Quarry Products Association NI (QPANI) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Consultation Paper regarding the Reform of the Planning System in Northern Ireland.

QPANI is the principal trade association for the quarrying and quarry products industry in Northern Ireland affiliated to the Minerals Products Association (MPA) in the UK. Members of the QPANI produce over 90% of the Northern Ireland's primary aggregates, as well as the major proportion of other construction materials such as asphalt, ready mixed concrete, recycled and secondary aggregates, lime and silica sand.

Quarrying is an essential part of modern society and aggregates are a vital resource for economic growth and development, making a significant contribution to Northern Ireland's prosperity and quality of life not least in helping to create and develop sustainable communities. It is importance that there is an adequate supply of raw materials to provide the infrastructure, buildings and goods that society, industry and the economy needs. This is emphasised in the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 acknowledging that *"today's society requires construction aggregates and without such minerals there would be very little development"*

Planning permissions are the principle element of the "Permit to Work" of quarry operations. They are vital to our industry; no planning means no business (for a legitimate operator anyway). Obtaining and maintaining those permissions represents a significant part of operating cost to the extractives industry. Our members therefore have a strong interest in the outcome of this Reform. We acknowledge our industry also needs to play its part in helping deliver this reform

by engaging meaningfully in development plan preparation and submitting high quality applications informed by community views.

QPANI welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Reform of the Planning System and trust that you find the above response useful and informative. We would also be willing to meet with you and discuss this Consultation further if required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gordon Best".

Gordon Best
QPANI Regional Director