

**PLANNING AMENDMENT  
(NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2003**

**S.I. 2003 No. 430 (N.I. 8)**

---

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9. The bulk of the provisions in the Order replicate those relating to planning enforcement and the primacy of development plans in development control introduced in Great Britain by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. The Government has included further provisions to strengthen and improve the planning system in Northern Ireland. These include the introduction of building preservation notices, a power to fund bodies, including building preservation trusts, and reforms to the way in which the Planning Appeals Commission operates.
  
10. The provisions amending the Strategic Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 arose from concerns that the statutory requirement for development plans to be “consistent with” the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) would inhibit the Department of the Environment in securing the orderly and consistent development of land and its ability to respond to changing circumstances unforeseen in the RDS. Following senior counsel’s opinion, it was determined that the change to require development plans to be “*in general conformity with*” the RDS, provided the flexibility to address those concerns. As a result, a statement of conformity procedure and a transitional arrangement for the three development plans were proposed.