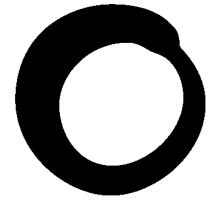


Briefing



**Friends of
the Earth**

Northern
Ireland

How to win at BMAP!

A guide to the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan for
concerned citizens, campaigners and community
groups

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What is BMAP?

BMAP stands for the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, a land use plan being prepared by the Planning Service to guide all planning decisions over the next 13 years in the council areas of Belfast City, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down. Consultation started on BMAP in December 2001 and is likely to run through to 2004/5, when the plan will be finalised. Once adopted, BMAP will become a legal document, replacing the existing plans for these six council areas.

BMAP is concerned with land use: it is essentially about what new development will be allowed in different parts of the Belfast area. Some of the key issues are therefore likely to involve:

- The location of new housing to meet growing demand, for example should these be on Greenfield sites or on derelict sites previously used by industry?
- Ensuring any new developments of houses or shops are directed to areas that will minimise an increase in car use and maximise the use of public transport.
- The identification of environmentally-sensitive sites, so that they can be given special protection.
- Deciding whether land should be set aside for future road building or other infrastructure projects.

It will however, include hundreds of other local and city-wide issues and it will be important that as many people as possible make their views known during the preparation of the plan. Friends of the Earth (Northern Ireland) has produced this guide to encourage and help people make their mark on the planning system and ensure that it is the citizens of Belfast who win at BMAP, not the developers.

Why get involved with BMAP?

Planning can appear to be a complicated process, full of technical jargon and confusing procedures that tend to put people off getting involved. It is, however, also a political process where all types of individuals and organisations are given an opportunity to have their say, so that a plan can reflect the full range of public opinion. For most people, the only time they may engage in the planning system is when they want to comment on a development proposal in their neighbourhood, or make a planning application themselves. These are important ways of shaping the built environment, but arguably the most critical input can be when a plan is being prepared for a local area, such as BMAP.

Unfortunately, many people prefer not to make their views known when a plan is being drawn up, because they see it as an abstract and bureaucratic process, with little direct relevance to their lives. In many cases this may be true, but it is also *the* key process in shaping a local area and while local people may not want to get involved, you can be sure that developers and industrial interests will spend a great deal of money to ensure that the plan reflects their preferred outcome. It is vital therefore, that anybody with an interest in the sustainable development of Belfast makes their views known during the preparation of the plan. This is particularly important as BMAP is of much greater significance than previous plans for the Belfast area because:

- The plan covers a much larger area than earlier plans and includes six different council areas, so that any policies adopted will influence a larger number of development proposals.
- Legal amendments expected in late 2002 will give Area Plans, such as BMAP, a

much greater significance when deciding planning applications. At the moment, such plans are just one factor that have to be taken into consideration; after these legal amendments it is expected that they will become *the prime factor* in deciding any planning application. Therefore, if your views are not represented in BMAP, it will be difficult to influence any planning application in the next 15 years.

It is also possible that in the next few years, the Planning Service may introduce third party planning appeals, so that *anyone* will be able to appeal *any* decision made on *any* planning application. At the moment, only those who made a planning application can appeal a refusal, but the right of third party appeal means that other people could make an appeal when permission is awarded. This will be an important step in making the planning system more accountable, but the success of any planning appeal will depend on how well your views are reflected in planning policy and BMAP is your main chance to do that.

In getting involved in the BMAP process, however, you should also take into account:

- The plan-making process is a long drawn out process and you may not see the results of your efforts until 2005, so you need a great deal of stamina to see it through!
- Your views may be in conflict with those of other interests, such as developers, so you need to be very well organised and may not ultimately see your views represented in their entirety.
- The plan only covers land use matters and some other issues that you are concerned about, such as the poor quality of public transport (see page 10), road maintenance or litter, will not be included. Existing environmental problems such as air pollution or traffic congestion may not be *directly* covered in the plan, but may be relevant if they can be linked to future development in an area, such as industrial sites or new housing estates that will accentuate road congestion.
- You should use the plan preparation process to make positive suggestions about the plan, such as the best location for some forms of development and not just negative comments about preventing all development in certain areas.
- BMAP cannot guarantee that the proposed development will ever take place and in some circumstances development may be allowed that contravenes the plan - so you should continue to be vigilant about planning issues once the plan has been adopted.

The plan-making process

The process of preparing BMAP is a long one, intended to be completed in 2005. This is a formal statutory process, set out in legislation (see page 10) and is fully described in Planning Service documentation. It is, however, important to note that following devolution of government responsibilities to the Northern Ireland Assembly, all the key decisions relating to BMAP are subject to political influence and therefore can be subject to campaigning activity directed towards the Minister of the Environment and members of the Assembly. The formulation of the plan is therefore both a technical and a political process and these parallel procedures are shown on the diagram below. The Planning Service deals only with the technical aspects of planning, so its documentation tends not to highlight the political opportunities for influencing BMAP. The different stages of the plan are also shown in the diagram, but are more fully explained below:

Schedule	Statutory Process	Political Process
		Minister and "political panel" consider Issues Paper
December 2001	Issues Paper published	
Jan/Feb 2002	Series of public meetings to discuss the Issues Paper	District Councils and MLAs to provide comments on Issues Paper
22nd March 2002	Deadline for comments on the Issues Paper	
End 2002	Publication of Draft Plan	Political Panel oversee formulation of Draft Plan
Early 2003	Consultation period for Draft Plan	District Councils and MLAs to provide comments on Draft Plan
Six weeks after plan published	Deadline for comments on the Draft Plan	Political Panel consider any proposed changes to Draft Plan
2003/2004	Public Inquiry to consider objections to Draft Plan	District Councils and MLAs could make the case of constituents at inquiry
2004	Submission of report of inquiry to the Minister of the Environment	
		Minister to consider report and discuss with Assembly
2004/2005	Minister publishes response to report of inquiry and adopts final plan	
2004/2005	Plan becomes main guiding principle for all planning applications	

Issues Paper (December 2001 - 22nd March 2002)

The first stage in the BMAP process is the publication of a document known as an *Issues Paper*. This outlines the main topics the Planning Service thinks will be included in the final plan and sets out a number of questions that will help it address the issues in an appropriate way (for example, on p.53 it asks "*In what ways could the Plan help promote the prudent and efficient use of energy and natural resources?*"). It is also important to note that the *Issues Paper* is only a platform for discussion and at this stage you can raise any issue you think should be covered by BMAP. Although many of the questions included in the *Issues Paper* are rather vague, it is important to comment on those that are important to you as once an issue is included in the *Draft Plan*, it becomes more difficult to challenge (although still possible). Because it may be difficult to initially understand some of the issues raised, the Planning Service has engaged a consortium of PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the Urban Institute and Queen's University to run a series of public meetings through January, February and March 2002. Although all the comments made at these meetings will be recorded and relayed to the Planning Service, it is highly recommended that you also send your written comments directly to the Planning Service. The closing date for comments is 22nd March 2002 and while you should try and make this

tight deadline, it will probably be worth submitting your comments up to the end of June 2002.

Draft Plan (late 2002)

Following consideration of the comments made on the *Issues Paper*, the Planning Service will issue a *Draft Plan*, probably at the end of 2002. If you made comments on the *Issues Paper*, the Planning Service will write to you informing you that the *Draft Plan* has been published, but you should also watch out for public advertisements announcing its publication, or regularly check the Planning Service web site. Unlike the *Issues Paper*, the *Draft Plan* will include very specific proposals for the Belfast area and will indicate precise boundaries for many policies, such as the green belt. The Planning Service will probably facilitate public consultation during this period by running public exhibitions and meetings throughout the Belfast area. There will then be a period of only six weeks after the closure of the exhibition for people to make objections to the plan and these will have to be made formally in writing to the Planning Service. The *Draft Plan* will also be accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) and an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). You should consider these as a central part of the plan and object to anything that concerns you in these documents.

The content of the *Draft Plan* is highly significant as in some circumstances it may be taken into account in deciding planning applications, for example where it includes a policy on an issue that was not included in the earlier plan. The *Draft Plan* also represents a significant stage for anyone wishing to object to the plan, as anybody making a comment will have the right to appear at the next stage of the plan, the *Public Inquiry*. Conversely, if you do not lodge a formal objection at this stage you cannot be heard at the *Public Inquiry*. When you make an objection, it will be considered by the Planning Service, who will see if your views could be incorporated in the *Final Plan*. If it can, you may be asked to agree a form of words with them and if acceptable, asked to withdraw your objection so that the *Public Inquiry* will be able to focus on the areas where there is outstanding disagreement. The Planning Service will be very keen to limit the number of issues that go to the *Public Inquiry*, so you should try and see if you can use this to your advantage and get a negotiated agreement. If you are happy with the revised policy make sure you inform the Planning Service, but do not withdraw your objection as this may still be helpful to the Commissioner in the *Public Inquiry* and will enable you to counteract any other objections made to the same policy. You should also consider making supportive comments of any policy you particularly agree with, as this will then allow you to give evidence against any other objections, for example from developers. If you have an outstanding objection, the Planning Service will provide a rebuttal statement and this will be considered by the Commissioner alongside your comments.

Public Inquiry (2003/04)

Any outstanding objections to the plan will be heard at a *Public Inquiry*, which is conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). The PAC is an independent body and the inquiry will be presided over by experienced Planning Commissioners who will be able to take an impartial view of the issues raised by both objectors and the Planning Service. The *Public Inquiry* is run rather like a court, with the Commissioner as judge and although attempts are made to make it as informal as possible, many participants choose to be represented by a barrister or other advocate. The Commissioner will, however, make every attempt to facilitate the views of even the most novice of objectors. In some cases, your views may coincide with the Planning Service and against other objectors, in others, all objectors may be in agreement against the Planning Service. At the end of the *Public Inquiry* the Commissioners will prepare a report for the Minister of the Environment on what

How to win at BMAP!

it sees are the changes that should be made to the *Draft Plan* before it is finalised.

The *Public Inquiry* into BMAP is likely to involve complex procedures and will probably be the longest planning inquiry ever held in Northern Ireland, so be prepared for a long haul!

Consideration by the Minister of the Environment (2005)

On receiving the report from the PAC, the civil servants working for the Minister of the Environment will advise him whether the plan should be changed in accordance with their recommendations or whether he should take another course of action. It is important to note that this will be completely at the discretion of the Minister, although he should make it clear why he has decided not to go along with the PAC views. When the Minister has considered all the points raised by the PAC, he will have to present his response to the Assembly's Environment Committee and after considering its views, will publish the *Final Plan*. This stage in the process highlights the importance of the political process to the plan, as it may be possible, although difficult, to make changes right at the end of the plan-making process by convincing the Minister or Environment Committee to take on your views.

Final Plan (2005)

On publication of the *Final Plan*, it will become a legal document of relevance to every planning application made within the Belfast area up to 2015. Although the plan will be the result of a long drawn out process, it will not stop on publication of the plan, as it will be subject to review throughout its lifetime. The plan will therefore be monitored for its success and if it is seen to be failing, can be amended on any matter, but would again be subject to full public consultation.

It is important to also remember that BMAP is not being prepared on a blank sheet and that the policies will be constrained by existing policy (see page 10).

There may be some changes made to the timing and procedures of the plan-making process over the coming years, so it will be important to keep up to date with BMAP process by regularly checking the web site: www.doeni.gov.uk/planning. If you make comments during the early part of the process, the Planning Service should also write to you to keep you informed of the plan's progress.

At the end of the process, if you consider that the Planning Service or Commissioner has not fulfilled their full legal duty, you can seek a *Judicial Review*. This allows a judge to consider whether the law has been correctly followed and take action accordingly. A *Judicial Review* considers procedural matters only and cannot revisit any of the technical or policy debates conducted as part of the plan-making process. A *Judicial Review* can result in major legal costs and you will need access to expert legal advice, so consider the implications of this carefully and speak to a lawyer at the earliest opportunity.

How to win at BMAP

To help you make your case, Friends of the Earth has put together a few simple principles you should try and follow to help you influence the plan-making process. These are aimed at helping you at the earlier stages of the *Issues Paper* and *Draft Plan* - Friends of the Earth hopes to provide further assistance specifically for the *Public Inquiry*, so get in touch with them again at that stage.

General points:

Make representations on the plan as early in the process as possible, ideally at the *Issues Paper* stage, as once a policy is included in the *Draft Plan*, it becomes much more difficult to change.

- Think clearly about what you are trying to achieve and judge how this will relate to the aims of the Planning Service and the interests of other participants in the plan-making process. Support your objectives by developing a well-argued and justifiable case, using local knowledge and research if necessary.
- Make sure you identify and support those policies that you want, as well as those you oppose.
- Try and become familiar with the planning process. If you feel confused by this and think you need more help, contact the organisations listed in Annex A.
- Look at existing policy documents and consider what they say about the issues you are concerned about. It will be worth drawing attention to any apparent inconsistencies in these documents and what is proposed in BMAP. (The key documents are listed on pages 10/11).
- Remember that the local community contains an infinite source of skills that can be used in developing a case. Local residents will know more about the area than the planners, so try and use this to your advantage.
- Remember that the political input into the plan is just as important as the technical consultation process, so try and get your councillors, MLAs and MPs to support your case, ideally by including your views in their written responses to the Planning Service.
- Some government agencies, such as the Environment and Heritage Service or the Water Service may also share your concerns, so exchange information with them and get them to support your cause.
- Identify allies with whom you can join forces. This will be particularly useful at the Public *Inquiry* as it prevents a string of residents repeating the same facts, which is unlikely to impress the Commissioner. This may also enable you to pool resources and even collectively employ a professional to represent you.
- If possible, build these alliances into a well-organised local campaign, run to a tight timetable and delegate action to all those involved.
- Do some research on the other participants in the plan-making process. If you identify any participants that have conflicting objectives (such as developers) try and monitor their activities and counteract their arguments in your submissions.
- Contact the Planning Service and identify which officers will be dealing with the issues that most concern you. Try and find out when they will be making any key decisions on these matters and what information you could provide that would help your case.
- Gather information on key issues related to your concerns, such as traffic congestion, pollution, footpath use or the number of species in a threatened site. Take photographs of important sites, such as nature reserves, when they look their best and of local environmental problems, such as congestion, when they are worst (such as at peak hours). Systematic collection of data will help build a more professional case later. If you think more extensive research may be needed, try and persuade the District Council to pay for it.
- Use the media by arguing your case in local newspapers (i.e. letters pages) and radio (i.e. phone-ins). If there are a large number of people involved in the campaign you should write press releases in the run up to key decisions and aim to get TV coverage - this may be particularly important for influencing the Minister and MLAs at the end of the process.
- Include comments on the process of making the plan if you feel that it is unfair or puts you at any disadvantage.

When responding to the Planning Service:

- Put all comments in writing and try to submit them by the given deadline.
- If you are stretched to submit a full response by any of the deadlines, put in a summary and follow it as soon as possible with a more detailed case.
- Try and be clear, concise, courteous and accurate in your writing style. Use plain language, avoid jargon, and, if possible, type the letter.
- Check that your comments were received by following them up with a telephone call to the BMAP team (see Annex A for contact details).
- Be sure of your facts and do not repeat hearsay statements.
- It is particularly important at the *Draft Plan* stage to clearly state those policies that you support and the changes that you require in any other policies.
- Comment on any policies that you think are missing, not just the ones included.
- Do not confine your comments to negatively criticising what the plan proposes, but make positive suggestions for particular policies or areas of land, for example identifying sites for nature reserves or open space.
- Try and support your comments by referring to other documents that you think may strengthen your case (some of these are listed on pages 10/11), but may also include research or pronouncements by Government Ministers in press releases or speeches.
- Isolate your comments to planning matters, avoiding issues that have no direct bearing on land use. For example, try to avoid supporting your arguments by referring to land values, personal circumstances, land ownership or purely social issues such as crime rates.
- Send a copy of your letter to your local councillors and/or MLAs. Do not assume that they will read all your comments, so follow up the letter with a telephone call or meeting to discuss the issue.
- If you are unsure how you should structure your letter on the *Issues Paper*, refer to the sample letter attached. Friends of the Earth hope to provide template letters for each stage of the plan-making process, so get in touch with us again at a later date.

As a further guide, we have listed below some of the key actions you should consider at each stage of the plan-making process.

Action you can take at each stage of the plan-making process

Issues Paper

- Get to know what the plan is all about and how it fits in with other policy initiatives.
- Consider what the *Issues Paper* says about your area and what you would ideally like the plan to cover.
- Write to the Planning Service by 22/3/02 with your answers to the questions raised in the *Issues Paper* and include any other matters you think are relevant. If you cannot meet this deadline, it may be worth sending in comments until the end of June 2002.
- Gather information and support for the issues you feel most strongly about.
- Identify potential allies and discuss with them how you could work together at later stages of the plan.
- Copy your letter to your political representatives.

Draft Plan

- Check the details of the *Draft Plan* and consider if your comments on the *Issues Paper* have been taken into account.
- If your concerns have not been adequately addressed, consider starting a local campaign.
- Be particularly careful when wording your letter objecting to the *Draft Plan*, as it will be used as the basis of your case at the *Public Inquiry*, if you decide to take it further.
- Remember to also state your support for any policies you feel strongly about, as this will enable you to appear at the inquiry against any interests who would like to see them changed.
- The Planning Service may contact you to negotiate a change to the plan before the *Public Inquiry*. Try and secure a positive outcome, but do not withdraw your objection in case others will be making counter arguments at the inquiry.
- Monitor all the proposed changes in the run up to the inquiry and take appropriate action where necessary.
- Meet with your political representatives and get them to support your case.

Public Inquiry

- If you intend to appear at the *Public Inquiry*, consider if it is worthwhile engaging a professional advisor to help you with your case.
- Prepare your evidence very carefully as you will be answerable for it in the inquiry.
- Monitor the activities of other objectors and try not to contradict the evidence given by those who share your views.
- Present your evidence confidently, remembering that your views are as valid as anyone else's and you are exercising your rights as a citizen of Belfast.

Consideration by the Minister of the Environment

- Get hold of a copy of the PAC's report and check how your concerns have been taken into account.
- Write to the Minister supporting or objecting to the way the PAC have dealt with your concerns.
- Copy any correspondence to your MLA and/or members of the Environment Committee.
- Consider using high profile media tactics to underline the importance of your case.

Final Plan and after

- If you think that the Planning Service, Planning Appeals Commissioner or Minister have acted outside their legal responsibilities during the preparation of the plan, talk to a lawyer about applying for a judicial review.
- Use any positive provisions in the plan to object to or support a planning application and/or third party appeals (if the latter have been established).
- Do not give up if you do not get your way in the plan - the development may still never happen!

What to do once the final plan is published

Once finalised, the plan can be used as a powerful tool in any campaigns against inappropriate development. If third party planning appeals are introduced, you could also use the plan to fight those proposals to which the Planning Service award planning permission. As it is likely that Northern Ireland will adopt a plan-led system (i.e. the plan becoming the most important consideration in a planning application) it will become even more important to quote the policies in BMAP when you object to any development proposal. If you think a planning application contravenes any aspect of the policies included in the final BMAP, you should write to the Minister of the Environment, requesting a so-called "Article 31" judgement. This would mean that the application will be considered at a *Public Inquiry* before a decision could be made on it, thus allowing a more open exchange of views on the merits of the development.

Relevant legislation and policy

The BMAP is being prepared within the context of existing policy and legislation and you will be able to make a more effective case if you are aware of how the plan relates to this framework. There are three main types of document that define this context:

Legislation

The Planning Service is given powers to make plans and decide planning applications in planning legislation. Although this is a complicated area of law, the main legal issues that relate to BMAP can be found in *The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991* (Part III, Articles 4-10) and the *Planning (Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1991*, which set out the procedures the Planning Service has to follow when making the plan. You should be able to consult this legislation at local libraries. It is important to note, however, that the Planning Service intends to introduce new planning legislation to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2002, which may come into force in during the preparation of BMAP.

Policy produced by the Department of Regional Development

BMAP is being produced in line with a plan for the whole of Northern Ireland, known as the Regional Development Strategy (Shaping Our Future or the RDS), produced by the Department of Regional Development (DRD) in September 2001. You can view this document at www.drdni.gov.uk/shapingourfuture/. The DRD is also preparing a series of Regional Planning Policy Statements (RPPSs), which will provide general guidance on how issues such as transport and housing should be implemented through local plans. The first of these (*Housing in Settlements*) will be published as a draft in early 2002. These documents should be available from the DRD web site at: www.drdni.gov.uk.

The DRD is also responsible for transport policy in Northern Ireland and BMAP is supposed to take full account of this. The department issued a draft Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) in January 2002, which will be open to consultation until 16th April 2002, and hopes to be finalised by the summer of 2002. This can be viewed at: www.drdni.gov.uk/rts. A more detailed transport policy for Belfast is also being prepared in parallel with BMAP, known as the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP), which will help co-ordinate land use and transport matters. If you have any comments on BMAP that concern transport, you should copy them to the team responsible for the BMTP. Issues raised in the preparation of the BMTP may also be scrutinised at the Public Inquiry for BMAP. The BMTP can be accessed at: www.drdni.gov.uk/bmtp

Policy produced by the Planning Service

The Planning Service also has a number of policy documents that will influence how BMAP should be prepared and what policies should be included. The most important of these are Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), which set out policies on particular aspects of land use planning and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. These include:

PPS1: General Planning Principles	PPS 2: Planning and Nature Conservation
PPS 3: Development Control: Roads Considerations	PPS 4: Industrial Development
PPS 5: Retailing and Town Centres	PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and Built Heritage
PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments	PPS 9: The Enforcement of Planning Control

The Planning Service has also commissioned a series of studies directly related to informing the BMAP process covering the following issues:

- Urban Capacity (being undertaken by the Planning Service to examine where new development can be accommodated within the existing built up area)
- Built Heritage (conservation areas and areas of townscape character)
- Office Sector Study (existing stock, future demand and existing location policy)
- Urban Design Study (to produce an urban design strategy)
- Tourism Study (review of the existing tourist activity and future trends)
- Retail Study (future demand and assessment of viability of town centres)
- Housing Study (assessment of housing output)

All the Planning Service documents should be available on the Planning Service web site (www.doeni.gov.uk/planning) or from the Planning Service direct, at the address given below. Many of these documents are in a process of review and you should regularly check to see if any revision or additional guidance has been issued.

It may also be worth reading Planning Green Paper *Modernising Planning*, (February 2002), which sets out a number of proposals of reform for the Northern Ireland planning system. This is available from the Planning Service web site (www.doeni.gov.uk/planning) or from the Planning Service direct, at the address given below. This was issued in February 2002 and is open to consultation until 14th June 2002.

If you do not have access to the Internet, all these documents should be available from your local library or can be purchased from the Department that produced them, at the addresses given in the annex.

Annex A

You may obtain additional information to help make your case from the following organisations:

Government and Other Public Bodies

How to win at BMAP!

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan Team

Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street., Belfast BT2 8GB. Tel: 028 9054 0540

E-mail: belfast.ma.plan@doe.gov.uk. Web site: www.doeni.gov.uk/planning/bmap.htm

Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan Team

Hydebank, 4, Hospital Road., Belfast BT8 8JL. Tel: 028 9025 3165

E-mail: bmtpl@drdni.gov.uk. Web site: www.drdni.gov.uk/bmtpl

Department of Regional Development

Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast BT2 8GB. Tel: 028 9054 0540

Web site: www.drdni.gov.uk

Planning Appeals Commission

The Public Inquiry for BMAP will be conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission. They will be able to give you advice about how the inquiry will be organised and what you will be expected to produce to support your case. The PAC can be contacted at:

Park House, 87/91 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7AG. Tel: 028 9024 4710

Web site: www.pacni.gov.uk

Voluntary Organisations

There are also a number of voluntary organisations, in addition to **Friends of the Earth**, who may be able to give you advice in submitting your comments to BMAP or even help you make your case to the Public Inquiry. The two main organisations are:

Community Technical Aid (Free advice for disadvantaged groups)

445-449 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 3GQ. Tel: 028 9064 2227

E-mail: info@communitytechnicalaid.org. Web site: www.commtechaid.clara.co.uk

Planning Aid for Northern Ireland (Free advice for individuals on low incomes)

P.O.Box 97, Belfast BT4 2WL. Tel: 028 9076 0464.

E-mail: niplanaid@rtpi.org.uk

Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)

The CPRE have produced a number of useful guides for influencing the planning system, including a “*Campaigners Guide to Local Plans*” and a “*Campaigners Guide to Public Inquiries and Planning Appeals*”, as well as other leaflets covering planning applications and judicial reviews. Although primarily concerned with planning matters in England (and therefore may vary on the legal issues covered), they do provide detailed advice on how to prepare your case and submit comments. The documents can be obtained (at a small fee) from CPRE, at: Warwick House, 25, Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PP. Tel: 020 7976 6433.

Private Companies

If you have a large number of people involved in a campaign and could raise some funds, you may wish to engage a professional advisor to make your case and even appear at the Public Inquiry for you. A list of such companies can be found in the Yellow pages under “Planning Consultants” or can be provided by Planning Aid, at the number given above. If you do approach any of these companies,

it will be worth getting a quote from at least three of them, so that you can get the best deal. The quality of their work may also vary, so ask for a list of previous clients and contact them to see if they were happy with the service provided.

Annex B

Key members of the Northern Ireland Assembly

In making your case on BMAP, it will be important to ensure that your political representatives (the MLAs) are aware of your concerns and will be able to make your case in any debates on BMAP in the Assembly. Each council area has representatives in the Assembly and it will be worth ensuring that each of the ones elected for your area is aware of local feeling. The contact details for your MLA can be obtained from the Assembly's web site at: www.ni-assembly.gov.uk or by calling the Assembly on 028 9052 1333.

The MLAs directly involved in the plan-making process will be the Minister and those that sit on the Assembly's Environment Committee, which has responsibilities for scrutinising the activities of the Department of the Environment, of which the Planning Service is part. Members of the Environment Committee (at February 2002) are:

MLA	Political Party	Contact Details
Rev Dr William McCrea (Chair)	Democratic Unionist Party	10 Highfield Road, Magherafelt, Co. Londonderry BT45 5JD. Tel: 028 7963 1965 or 028 7963 2664
Ms Patricia Lewsley (Deputy Chair)	Social Democratic and Labour Party	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1333 / 9029
Mr David Ford	Alliance	9 Carnmoney Road, Newtownabbey Co. Antrim BT36 6HL. Tel: 028 9084 0930
Mr Francie Molloy	Sinn Fein	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1333
Mr Mick Murphy	Sinn Fein	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1333
Mr Edwin Poots	Democratic Unionist Party	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1333
Mr Arthur Doherty	Social Democratic and Labour Party	59 Catherine Street, Limavady, Co. Derry Tel: 028 7776 9790
Mrs Joan Carson	Ulster Unionist Party	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1557
Mr James Leslie	Ulster Unionist Party	30a Ballymoney Street, Ballymena, Co. Antrim BT43 6AL. Tel: 028 2564 2262
Mr David McClarty	Ulster Unionist Party	12 Dunmore Street, Coleraine, Co. Londonderry BT52. Tel: 028 7032 7294
Mr Denis Watson	United Unionist Assembly Party	Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 028 9052 1333

At the end of the plan-making process it may be worth writing directly to the Minister expressing any

concerns that have arisen during the process and highlighting any issues that you feel have not been addressed. The current Minister is Dermot Nesbitt MLA and he can be contacted at:

Department of the Environment, Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast BT1 2GB
Tel: 028 9054 0540

Annex C

Friends of the Earth (Northern Ireland)

Members of the BMAP Local Government Political Group

To enable a greater degree of political input into the plan preparation, the Planning Service has formed a political advisory group composed of representatives of each of the District Councils covered by the plan. If there is a key issue that you are campaigning on, it may be worthwhile sending copies of your letters to the Planning Service to your local councillors and the members of the council that sit on this Local Government Political Group. The contact details of your local councillors can be obtained from your local town hall (address given below), but those that sit on the political group (at February 2002) are:

Belfast City Council	City Hall, Belfast BT1 5GS Tel: 028 9032 0202 Web site: www.belfastcity.gov.uk Contact for BMAP consultation: Development Department
Cllr. J. Rodgers	c/o Members' Room City Hall Belfast BT1 5GS. Tel: 028 9042 4478
Cllr. C. McCauley	147 Andersonstown Rd, Belfast BT11 9BW. Tel: 028 9080 8404
Cllr. D. Lavery	291 Antrim Rd, Belfast BT15 2GZ. Tel: 028 9022 0520
Carrickfergus Borough Council	Town Hall, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim BT38 7DL. Tel: 028 93 351604 Contact for BMAP consultation: John McIntyre
Alderman R. Beggs	16, Carnduff Rd, Larne BT40 3NJ. Tel: 028 2826 0463
Alderman Ash	15, Windermere Rd, Carrickfergus BT38 7JR. Tel: 028 9336 9753
Cllr. S.C. Dickson	6, Farm Lodge Park, Greenisland, Carrickfergus BT38 8BA. Tel: 028 9086 8330
Castlereagh Borough Council	Bradford Court, Upper Galway, Castlereagh. Tel: 028 9049 4500 Web site: www.castlereagh.gov.uk Contact for BMAP consultation: Ask at switchboard
Cllr. K. Morton	c/o Castlereagh Borough Council, Bradford Court, Upper Galway, Castlereagh. Tel: 028 9070 3870

Alderman M. Henderson	c/o Castlereagh Borough Council, Bradford Court, Upper Galway, Castlereagh. Tel: 028 9081 5883
Cllr. M. Robinson	215a Lisburn Rd, Belfast BT9 7EJ. Tel: 028 9022 5969
Lisburn Borough Council	Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn BT27 4RL. Tel: 028 9250 9250 Web site: www.lisburn.gov.uk Contact for BMAP consultation: Director of Environmental Services
Cllr. W.E. Falloon	"Eglantine Lodge", 276 Hillsborough Rd, Carnbane, Hillsborough BT26 6HN. Tel: 028 9266 3396
Cllr. W. J. Dillon	"Ballyknock House", 64, Ballyknock Rd, Ballyknock, Craigavon BT67 0PT. Tel: 028 9261 1339
Cllr. E.C. Poots	"Glangard Lodge", 22 Gardners Rd, Lisnatreem, Lisburn BT27 5PD. Tel: 028 9260 3003
Newtownabbey Borough Council	Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey BT36 5QA. Tel: 028 9034 0000. Web site: www.newtownabbey.gov.uk Contact for BMAP consultation: Chief Executive
Alderman V. McWilliam	"Cleenish", 122 Hillhead Rd, Ballyclare BT39 9LN. Tel: 028 9334 0106
Alderman W.P. Girvan	30, Lismenary Rd, Ballynure, Ballyclare BT39 9UE. Tel: 028 9334 2727
Cllr. J. Bingham	Glendale, 158, Monkstown Rd, Newtownabbey BT37 0LF. Tel: 028 9085 4157
North Down Borough Council	Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor BT20 4BT. Tel: 028 9127 0371 Web site: www.northdown.gov.uk Contact for BMAP consultation: John Thomson
Cllr. I. Henry	20, Thornleigh Gardens, Bangor BT20 4NW. Tel: 028 9145 2045
Cllr. C. Dunne	6, Glenview Rd, Holywood BT18 0PU. Tel: 028 9042 3046
Cllr. B. Wilson	1, Innisfayle Drive, Bangor BT19 1DN. Tel: 028 9145 5189

Annex D

Sample Letter

[Insert your address and date; should be before 22/3/02 if possible]

How to win at BMAP!

Send to: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan Team, Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide St, Belfast BT2 8GB

Dear Sir/Madam,

BMAP Issues Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Issues Paper for the proposed Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP).

I have read the Issues Paper with interest and would like to offer the following comments, which I hope you will take into account when drawing up the Draft Plan:

[Insert page no. here][Insert paragraph no. here][Include the wording of the text or question that you wish to comment on here] Include your commentary on each issue that is important to you. In making your comments try and address the following: Why is the issue important to you? Are you supporting, opposing or clarifying what is said in the Issues Paper? Does the Issue Paper ask the right question, include misleading assumptions or has it framed the issue appropriately? How would you like to see this matter addressed in the Draft Plan and can you suggest an appropriate wording that could be used? Is there any additional information, such as local knowledge, research or policy documents that supports your view?

I am however, concerned that the Issues Paper does not comment or suggest that any guidance will be provided on the following issues:

[Describe each missing issue, state why it is important and suggest how it should be treated in the Draft Plan]

Finally, I would be grateful if you could assist in clarifying ... *[include any other queries such as any problems with the plan-making process or any unclear wording]*.

I hope you find these comments helpful and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further clarification. I would be grateful if you would keep me informed of the progress of the plan by sending me your response to the consultation on the Issues Paper and letting me know in writing when the Draft Plan is due to be published.

Yours faithfully,

[state name here]