Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template – Accessible Version

SECTION 1 – Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department of Justice (DoJ)

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Consultation on the draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	○ Policy	○ Strategy	○ Plan
Adopting a	○ Policy	○ Strategy	○ Plan
Implementing a	○ Policy	○ Strategy	○ Plan
Revising a	◉ Policy	○ Strategy	○ Plan
	○ Designing a Public Service		
	○ Delivering a Public Service		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

The draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

To amend the fees prescribed in The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications

and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

- (•) Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).
- ( ) Other definition (Provide details and the rationale below).
- ( ) A definition of 'rural is not applicable'

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

◉ Yes ○ No

If the response is NO GO TO Section 2E.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The proposals will change the fees prescribed in the Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 which may affect planning applications in both rural and urban areas.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

N/A

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

☐ Rural Businesses

☐ Rural Tourism

☐ Rural Housing

☐ Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas

☐ Education or Training in Rural Areas

☐ Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas

☐ Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas

☐ Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas

☐ Poverty in Rural Areas

☐ Deprivation in Rural Areas

☐ Rural Crime or Community Safety

☐ Rural Development

☐ Agri-Environment

☐ Other (Please state)

Click or tap here to enter text.

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

There is no differential impact on people in rural areas compared with people in urban areas.

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

○ Yes ◉ No

If the response is NO GO TO Section 3E.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

☐ Consultation with Rural Stakeholders

☐ Consultation with Other Organisations

☐ Surveys or Questionnaires

☐ Published Statistics

☐ Research Papers

☐ Other Publications

☐ Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

Click or tap here to enter text.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

The Department has not identified any potential differential impact on the social or economic needs of rural communities as the proposals are technical in nature and apply to an uplift in the fees to the charges for the planning appeals and deemed planning applications. A consultation on the draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will be taken forward with relevant councils and interested parties.

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

○ Yes ◉ No

If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Click or tap here to enter text.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Not applicable as no rural needs have been identified.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

☒ I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:

Ed Henry

Position/Grade:

DP

Division/Branch:

Civil Justice and Civil Policy Division

Signature:

Ed Henry

Date:

28/09/2026

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:

Laura Davison

Position/Grade:

Grade 7

Division/Branch:

Civil Justice and Judicial Policy Division

Signature:

Laura Davison

Date:

30/09/26