Annex 5
A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal People and Place Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

DSD Equality Scheme
DSD is whole-heartedly committed to complying with the statutory equality obligations. In its Equality Scheme, DSD has set out how it proposes to fulfill its obligations. A copy of the Equality Scheme is available at:

Hard copies are also available from Mary Graham of DSD’s Corporate Policy and Planning Division, 5th Floor, Churchill House, Victoria Square, Belfast, BT1 4SD (telephone 9056 9188).

In the Equality Scheme, DSD undertook to carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) on urban regeneration policies relating to Belfast, Londonderry and the Regional Towns and Cities. After the Equality Scheme was published, DSD embarked on a fundamental review of urban regeneration in Northern Ireland that resulted in the development of proposals for a Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

This Strategy will be a main focus of DSD’s urban regeneration activities over the next 7 to 10 years. It will be supported by 3 strategy implementation plans for Neighbourhood Renewal in Belfast, Londonderry and Regional Towns and Cities. These will closely reflect the analysis, aims, objectives and structures set out in the Strategy and are all part of the same instrument of government policy. Since they will not contain any different or additional information on which to assess equality implications from that found in A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, DSD considered that it was necessary to carry out a single EQIA that assessed the equality implications for Neighbourhood Renewal across Northern Ireland.

Neighbourhood Renewal EQIA
Public consultation in relation to equality issues for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for Northern Ireland was carried out in two distinct phases. Firstly, as an integral part of consultation on the draft strategy proposals for Neighbourhood Renewal held in late Summer/Autumn 2001. Secondly, in early 2003, by way of formal consultation on the basis of an Equality Impact Assessment.

Phase 1
The consultation process undertaken in late 2001 involved a number of elements. A consultation document was developed and disseminated widely, seven regional conferences were held involving 327 persons, and 48 written responses were received. Consultation with the Social Development Committee of the Northern Ireland Executive was also carried out and DSD consulted with a working group of academics and practitioners in urban regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal established to advise on the development of this Strategy.

A report of the consultation process has been prepared setting down in detail the outcomes. The report is presented as a key working document underpinning the rationale for this Strategy and is available on DSD’s website www.dsdni.gov.uk

The main messages that emerged from the initial consultation have been incorporated into the development of this Strategy.
Annex 5 continued
A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal People and Place Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Phase 2

A formal Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was carried out and consulted upon in early 2003. The EQIA was made on the Section 75 groups contained within the top 10% deprived urban wards at 2 levels. The first looked at the differential impact on those wards identified for initial inclusion within the Strategy and others not included. The second looked at the impact of the policy on Section 75 groups within the wards.

The EQIA, together with the pertinent available ward level statistics on Section 75 groups, can be accessed on the DSD’s website www.dsdni.gov.uk. The EQIA was issued to approximately 250 individuals and organisations on the DSD’s Equality Scheme consultation list and those who subsequently expressed an interest. Publication of the EQIA document was advertised in the Belfast Telegraph, Irish News and News Letter. The document was also published on the DSD’s website. A total of three written responses were received, two of which were concerned at the absence of detailed statistical data for the actual Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. However, DSD takes the view that a detailed assessment of the equality implications for the target Neighbourhood Renewal Areas cannot be defined until, firstly, the Area boundaries are agreed and, secondly, definitive programmes are determined within the context of the Neighbourhood Vision Framework or Neighbourhood Action Plans. In recognition of this difficulty and as part of the implementation process, equality screening exercises will be applied as part of the action planning process in all Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.