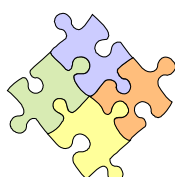


## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Northern Ireland

#### Cluster 19: Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry

Location	Bridgewater House, Banbridge, BT32 4AX.
Original Proposal	To withdraw from Bridgewater House and relocate staff to other HMRC offices within reasonable daily travel.
Decision	HMRC does not expect to fully vacate Bridgewater House before spring 2010. Staff are expected to relocate, where applicable, to Beaufort House and Custom House in Belfast, Marlborough House, Craigavon and Custom House, Newry.
Risks/Issues	<p>Risk to customer service.</p> <p>Travel times for some staff may exceed or be at the limit of reasonable daily travel if relocating to Beaufort House and Custom House in Belfast, Marlborough House, Craigavon and Custom House, Newry.</p> <p>Risk to HMRC meeting its efficiency targets if decision not implemented.</p>
Mitigating Action	<p>Enquiry centre services will continue to be provided from Bridgewater House or from an alternative location nearby.</p> <p>Further examination of individual circumstances and available options will be undertaken through one to one discussions between managers and staff. No staff will be required to relocate beyond reasonable daily travel.</p>



Issued by Workforce Change  
4 December 2008

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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## **1 SUMMARY**

### **1.1. Background**

HMRC proposes to rationalise its estate in Northern Ireland with the aim of making more effective and efficient use of office space and to integrate teams within and across business units. As part of this proposal HMRC has reviewed its business requirement to remain at office buildings in Cluster 19. This cluster contains the office buildings in Banbridge, Craigavon and Newry. The review has identified that there is no long term requirement to retain Bridgewater House, Banbridge.

### **1.2. Enquiry Centre Customers**

Enquiry centre services will continue to be provided from Bridgewater House or from an alternative location nearby. The impact on customers is expected to be minimal.

### **1.3. Socio-economic**

The Bridgewater House office is situated within the district council of Banbridge. The unemployment rate for Banbridge is 1.3%, against the average for Northern Ireland of 2.4%. There are around 1,775 VAT registered businesses in Banbridge and approximately 11,015 employee jobs in total. There are 12 HMRC employees located at Bridgewater House, which is less than 1% of those employed within the district council. It is therefore reasonable to infer that the local economy is not dependent on the HMRC presence at this office.

### **1.4. Staff**

Bridgewater House accommodates a total of 12 staff. During consultation, concerns around additional travelling for staff have been raised. Further examination of individual circumstances will be undertaken through one to one discussions between managers and staff. Where a staff member is unable to relocate to the proposed HMRC office within reasonable daily travel managers will discuss other available options with them. No staff will be required to relocate beyond reasonable daily travel.

### **1.5. Staff Diversity**

The gender ratio of staff is 71% female to 29% male. 57% of staff work part-time, 10% are recorded as having a disability and no staff are recorded as being from an ethnic minority group. 37% of staff are from a Catholic community background and 63% are from a Protestant community background.

Workforce Change has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the proposals for Northern Ireland cluster and individual locations, inviting members of the public, HMRC staff and unions to contribute their views at an early stage in HMRC's planning process, prior to any final decisions being taken. This invitation has included HMRC staff based at Bridgewater House. Staff will also have an opportunity to raise any particular concerns with their manager during the one to one discussions.

The Equality Impact Assessment for Consultation, outlining the proposals for the cluster and individual locations, and a summary report of the consultation responses received have been published on the HMRC intranet and internet sites.

### 1.6. Business Units

The **Customer Operations** business unit will relocate to Beaufort House, Belfast and Custom House, Newry.

The **Estates & Support Services (ESS)** business unit does not intend to retain a long term presence in this location and will be in discussion with staff about their options.

The **Local Compliance** business unit will relocate to Custom House, Belfast and Marlborough House, Craigavon.

**Customer Contact** will continue to provide enquiry centre services at Bridgewater House or from an alternative location nearby.

### 1.7. Finance

The vacation of this office will contribute to estimated estate savings of £3.8m in Northern Ireland between 2007 and 2012.

## 2 OFFICE PROPOSAL AND BUSINESS PLANS

### 2.1. Office Proposal

HMRC proposes to rationalise its estate in Northern Ireland Region with the aim of making more effective and efficient use of office space and bringing teams closer together within and across business units. It is proposed to withdraw from Bridgewater House and relocate staff to Beaufort House and Custom House in Belfast, Marlborough House, Craigavon and Custom House, Newry. Enquiry centre services will remain at Bridgewater House or relocate to an alternative location nearby.

### 2.2. Business Plans

Bridgewater House is occupied by staff from the **Customer Contact, Customer Operations, ESS** and **Local Compliance** business units.

**Customer Operations** plans to relocate to Beaufort House, Belfast and Custom House, Newry.

**ESS** does not intend to retain a long term presence in this location and will be in discussion with staff about their options.

**Local Compliance** plans to relocate to Custom House, Belfast and Marlborough House, Craigavon.

For most staff this will present an opportunity to co-locate with teams already there or who will also move there from other buildings.

**Customer Contact** will continue to provide enquiry centre services at Bridgewater House or from an alternative location nearby.

### **3 ENQUIRY CENTRE CUSTOMER IMPACT**

#### **3.1. Enquiry Centre Summary**

During 2007/2008 the Enquiry Centre at Bridgewater House received 3,067 callers.

Enquiry centre services will continue to be provided from Bridgewater House or from an alternative location nearby. The impact on customers is expected to be minimal.

### **4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**

#### **4.1. Member of Parliament and Constituency**

Bridgewater House is within the parliamentary constituency of Upper Bann. The Member of Parliament is David Simpson (Democratic Unionist)<sup>1</sup>.

David Simpson wrote to HMRC to raise concerns about the proposals, particularly the potential impact on staff. This MP attended a Westminster Hall Debate and also met with HMRC officials to express concerns about the potential loss of public sector jobs and the potential impact on the local economy.

#### **4.2. Local Economy**

Bridgewater House is situated within the district council of Banbridge. The unemployment rate for Banbridge is 1.3%, against the average for Northern Ireland of 2.4%. The table below shows the relative job density for Banbridge, Northern Ireland and the UK as a whole. Job density is a ratio of total jobs to working-age population and provides a measure of the economic health of an area. Total jobs includes employees, self-employed, government supported trainees and HM Forces<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1 - Job Density**

<b>Banbridge</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>UK</b>
0.51	0.79	0.84

There are around 1,775 VAT registered businesses in Banbridge and approximately 11,015 employee jobs in total<sup>3</sup>. There are 12 HMRC employees located at Bridgewater House, which is less than 1% of those employed within the district council area. It is therefore reasonable to infer that the local economy is not dependent on the HMRC presence at this office.

<sup>1</sup> Source: [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Dept of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Monthly Labour Market Report July 2008. Unemployment rates are based on June 2008 JSA claimant count as a percentage of resident working age population.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service. VAT registered businesses are as at 2004, employee jobs are at 2005.

There may be some impact on local businesses which at present benefit from the custom of HMRC staff based at Bridgewater House. Any negative impact that may be caused by HMRC withdrawal from this location is expected to be temporary, lasting until such time as the building is reoccupied by another employer.

#### **4.3. Sustainable Development**

The intention to vacate Bridgewater House assists HMRC in meeting its Sustainable Development Action Plan objective to provide office space of the right size and quality to meet long term business needs. Through the Sustainable Development Action Plan HMRC has also committed to improving the energy efficiency of all retained offices and the Corporate Responsibility Unit will work with Estates and Support Services and IMS to meet this objective.

#### **4.4. Media Activity**

There have been local and regional press articles around the proposed closure of Bridgewater House, the potential impact on staff and the potential loss of jobs in the area.

#### **4.5. External Engagement**

On 11 and 13 June 2008 Workforce Change wrote to four local authorities and two town councils in Northern Ireland about the proposals for the cluster and individual locations. A six week period for responses was provided. Comments were sought on subjects including local/regional economic factors, regeneration plans, wider employer activity and plans for new or improved transport links. Six responses were received from Limavady Borough Council, Fermanagh District Council, Banbridge District Council, Ballymoney Borough Council, Coleraine Borough Council and Derry City Council. In addition, meetings were held with Craigavon Borough Council and Ballymena Borough Council. Responses received included comments on the impact of the proposals on local economies in towns which have already suffered substantial losses of jobs in recent years. All concerns raised have been taken into account in making our recommendations to Ministers.

### **5 STAFF & STAFF DIVERSITY IMPACT**

#### **5.1. Business Unit Headcount**

The table below shows the business units occupying Bridgewater House<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Latest headcount data provided by HMRC business units

Table 2 - Staff in post by business unit

Business Unit	Staff numbers
Customer Operations	6
ESS	1
Local Compliance	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	12

## 5.2. Staff Diversity

The following diversity data has been provided by background HR systems and staff completion is not mandatory. The information is therefore incomplete for ethnicity and disability<sup>5</sup>.

Table 3 - Staff diversity

Ethnicity	%	Disability	%	Age Group	%
White	67	Disabled	10	15 - 24	0
Ethnic Minority	0	Not disabled	38	25 - 34	10
Chosen not to declare	0	Chosen not to declare	0	35 - 49	71
Not known	33	Not known	52	50 - 59	14
				60+	5
Gender	%	Working Pattern	%	Part Time Gender	%
Male	29	Full Time	43	Male	8
Female	71	Part Time	57	Female	92
Community Background %					
Catholic	37	Protestant	63	Non-determined	0

## 5.3. Equality Impact Assessment

Workforce Change has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the proposals for Northern Ireland cluster and individual locations, inviting members of the public, HMRC staff and unions to contribute their views at an early stage in HMRC's planning process, prior to any final decisions being taken. This invitation has included HMRC staff based at Bridgewater House. Staff will also have an opportunity to raise any particular concerns with their manager during the one to one discussions.

<sup>5</sup> Source: HR data at 01/07/08

The Equality Impact Assessment for Consultation, outlining the proposals for the cluster and individual locations, and a summary report of the consultation responses received have been published on the HMRC intranet and internet sites.

#### **5.4. Staff Consultation**

HMRC undertook a 10 week period of consultation between June 2008 and August 2008, inviting staff and unions to comment on the proposal to reshape HMRC within Cluster 19. During this period 155 responses were received, representing the views of the majority of staff in Banbridge, Craigavon and Newry.

The Summary Report of the Consultation Responses for Cluster 19 was published on the staff intranet site on 15 October 2008.

Comments were constructive and covered a range of topics, the main themes being diversity, travelling related matters accommodation and health and safety issues.

The majority of comments focused on the impact of increased travel on work/life balance, in particular for female members of staff who are part-time, with caring responsibilities. Many respondents expressed concerns over extended travel times to other HMRC locations, increased travel costs and poor public transport services especially from Craigavon to Newry. Many staff commented on the proposed retention of Custom House and Downshire House in Newry and raised concerns about possible health and safety issues, in particular radon levels and the presence of asbestos in Downshire House. Many respondents said that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 should be considered before any decisions are made to ensure a more even distribution of jobs for staff in this cluster.

Business managers will meet with every individual affected by changes and discuss the implications for them and their options. Some staff may need to move to another HMRC location depending on personal circumstances.

## **6 RELOCATION OPTIONS FOR STAFF**

This section considers the impact of relocating staff to alternative HMRC offices.

Where a staff member is unable to relocate to the proposed HMRC office within reasonable daily travel managers will discuss other available options with them. No staff will be required to relocate beyond reasonable daily travel.

Customer Operations, currently a total of six staff, will relocate to Beaufort House, Belfast and Custom House, Newry.

The distance between Bridgewater House and Beaufort House is 24.3 miles (39.1km), the journey by car takes approximately 31 minutes<sup>6</sup>.

The distance between Bridgewater House and Custom House is 12.7 miles (20.4km), the journey by car takes approximately 18 minutes<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day

ESS does not intend to retain a long term presence in this location and will be in discussion with staff about their options.

Local Compliance, currently a total of five staff, will relocate to Custom House, Belfast and Marlborough House, Craigavon.

The distance between Bridgewater House and Custom House is 25.3 miles (40.7km), the journey by car takes approximately 32 minutes<sup>7</sup>.

The distance between Bridgewater House and Marlborough House is 11 miles (17.6km), the journey by car takes approximately 22 minutes<sup>7</sup>.

## **6.1. Beaufort House, Belfast**

### **6.1.1. Overview**

The map at Appendix B shows the position of Bridgewater House in relation to Beaufort House, Belfast.

Beaufort House is an ex-IR office. HMRC occupies a space sufficient to accommodate an estimated 301 staff before desk sharing and shift patterns are taken into account. The building currently houses 241 staff. The majority of staff work in Customer Operations<sup>8</sup>.

### **6.1.2. Travel by Car**

An analysis of drive time data, detailing travelling times by car between staff home postcodes and Beaufort House, indicates that for Customer Operations staff currently based at Bridgewater House potentially<sup>9</sup>:

- 82% of staff would face an increase in travel time following relocation to Beaufort House
- 27% of staff would be able to reach Beaufort House in 30 minutes or less
- Of those staff facing an increase in travel time, none would fall outside of reasonable daily travel.

Beaufort House has seven on-site parking spaces. There are no commuter spaces; all spaces are either for official use only or allocated as designated disabled bays. Public car parking is available within 500m (545 yards) of the office<sup>10</sup>.

### **6.1.3. Travel by Public Transport**

Public transport data for Northern Ireland is not available from usual sources and a reliable alternative source could not be identified. During one to one discussions staff and managers will explore the feasibility of relocation to Beaufort House by public transport and alternative arrangements may be considered.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day

<sup>8</sup> Source: HR data at 01/07/08

<sup>9</sup> Source: HR known postcodes at 01/07/08. Travelling data obtained via www.multimap.com. Journey times do not take account of time of day.

<sup>10</sup> Source: www.multimap.com

The nearest railway station is Great Victoria Street located 0.1 miles (0.2km) from the office<sup>11</sup>.

## **6.2. Custom House, Belfast**

### **6.2.1. Overview**

The map at Appendix B shows the position of Bridgewater House in relation to Custom House, Belfast.

Custom House is an ex-CE office. HMRC occupies a space sufficient to accommodate an estimated 366 staff before desk sharing and shift patterns are taken into account. The building currently houses 292 staff. The majority of staff work in Local Compliance<sup>12</sup>.

### **6.2.2. Travel by Car**

An analysis of drive time data, detailing travelling times by car between staff home postcodes and Custom House, indicates that for Local Compliance staff currently based at Bridgewater House potentially<sup>13</sup>:

- 100% of staff would face an increase in travel time following relocation to Custom House
- 17% of staff would be able to reach Custom House in 30 minutes or less
- Of those staff facing an increase in travel time, none would fall outside of reasonable daily travel.

Custom House has 99 on-site parking spaces. There are no commuter spaces; all spaces are either for official use only or allocated as designated disabled bays. Public car parking is available within 1 mile (1.6km) of the office<sup>11</sup>.

### **6.2.3. Travel by Public Transport**

Public transport data for Northern Ireland is not available from usual sources and a reliable alternative source could not be identified. During one to one discussions staff and managers will explore the feasibility of relocation to Custom House by public transport and alternative arrangements may be considered.

The nearest railway station is Central located 0.7 miles (1.1km) from the office<sup>11</sup>.

## **6.3. Marlborough House, Craigavon**

### **6.3.1. Overview**

The map at Appendix B shows the position of Bridgewater House in relation to Marlborough House, Craigavon.

Marlborough House is an ex-IR office. HMRC occupies a space sufficient to accommodate an estimated 155 staff before desk sharing and shift patterns are

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<sup>11</sup> Source: [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com)

<sup>12</sup> Source: HR data at 01/07/08

<sup>13</sup> Source: HR known postcodes at 01/07/08. Travelling data obtained via [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com). Journey times do not take account of time of day.

taken into account. The building currently houses 113 staff. The majority of staff work in Customer Operations<sup>14</sup>.

### **6.3.2. Travel by Car**

An analysis of drive time data, detailing travelling times by car between staff home postcodes and Marlborough House, indicates that for Local Compliance staff currently based at Bridgewater House potentially<sup>15</sup>:

- 67% of staff would face an increase in travel time following relocation to Marlborough House
- 67% of staff would be able to reach Marlborough House in 30 minutes or less
- Of those staff facing an increase in travel time, none would fall outside of reasonable daily travel.

Marlborough House has 354 on-site parking spaces, with an additional nine designated disabled bays. The nearest public car parking is more than 2 miles (3.2km) from the office<sup>16</sup>.

### **6.3.3. Travel by Public Transport**

Public transport data for Northern Ireland is not available from usual sources and a reliable alternative source could not be identified. During one to one discussions staff and managers will explore the feasibility of relocation to Marlborough House by public transport and alternative arrangements may be considered.

The nearest railway station is more than 2 miles (3.2km) from the office<sup>16</sup>.

## **6.4. Custom House, Newry**

### **6.4.1. Overview**

The map at Appendix B shows the position of Bridgewater House in relation to Custom House, Newry.

Custom House is an ex-CE office. HMRC occupies a space sufficient to accommodate an estimated 206 staff before desk sharing and shift patterns are taken into account. The building currently houses 105 staff. The majority of staff work in Customer Operations<sup>14</sup>.

### **6.4.2. Travel by Car**

An analysis of drive time data, detailing travelling times by car between staff home postcodes and Custom House, indicates that for Customer Operations staff currently based at Bridgewater House potentially<sup>15</sup>:

- 82% of staff would face an increase in travel time following relocation to Custom House

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<sup>14</sup> Source: Latest headcount data provided by HMRC business units

<sup>15</sup> Source: HR known postcodes at 01/07/08. Travelling data obtained via [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com). Journey times do not take account of time of day.

<sup>16</sup> Source: [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com)

- 27% of staff would be able to reach Custom House in 30 minutes or less
- Of those staff facing an increase in travel time, none would fall outside of reasonable daily travel.

Custom House has 92 on-site parking spaces, with an additional four designated disabled bays. The nearest public car parking is more than 2 miles (3.2km) from the office<sup>17</sup>.

#### **6.4.3. Travel by Public Transport**

Public transport data for Northern Ireland is not available from usual sources and a reliable alternative source could not be identified. During one to one discussions staff and managers will explore the feasibility of relocation to Custom House by public transport and alternative arrangements may be considered.

The nearest railway station is Newry and Mourne located approximately 1.3 miles (2.1km) from the office<sup>17</sup>.

#### **6.5. Daily Travel Assistance**

A calculation based upon three Customer Operations staff travelling between Bridgewater House and Beaufort House, a return journey of 48.6 miles (78.2km), produces a maximum Daily Travel Assistance cost of £28k over three years<sup>18</sup>.

A calculation based upon three Customer Operations staff travelling between Bridgewater House and Custom House (Newry), a return journey of 25.4 miles (40.8km), produces a maximum Daily Travel Assistance cost of £15k over three years<sup>18</sup>.

A calculation based upon two Local Compliance staff travelling between Bridgewater House and Custom House (Belfast), a return journey of 50.6 miles (81.4km), produces a maximum Daily Travel Assistance cost of £30k over three years<sup>18</sup>.

A calculation based upon three Local Compliance staff travelling between Bridgewater House and Marlborough House, a return journey of 22 miles (35.2km), produces a maximum Daily Travel Assistance cost of £13k over three years<sup>18</sup>.

Because Daily Travel Assistance forms part of a person's taxable income, any individuals receiving Working Tax Credit and claiming Daily Travel Assistance should be aware that their Working Tax Credit entitlement could be reduced as a result.

#### **6.6. Other Government Departments**

The expectation is that staff will relocate within HMRC. However opportunities may exist to transfer to other Government Departments and HMRC has a support package of measures, both financial and personal, to facilitate such transfers. Other Government Departments located in the area include:

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<sup>17</sup> Source: [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com)

<sup>18</sup> Formula: staff x return mileage x basic mileage rate x 260 days x 3 years

- Department for Employment and Learning<sup>19</sup>
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive<sup>20</sup>.

## **7 ESTATES & FINANCE**

### **7.1. Estate Information**

HMRC occupies Bridgewater House under the contract with Mapeley. Bridgewater House has no on-site car parking.

### **7.2. Finance**

The vacation of this office will contribute to estimated estate savings of £3.8m in Northern Ireland between 2007 and 2012.

### **7.3. Information Management Services (IMS)**

IMS has been engaged in the detailed consideration of the proposal for Bridgewater House. IMS will work closely with Estates and Support Services and business unit managers to provide the IT and telephony requirements for staff relocating to Beaufort House, Custom House (Belfast), Custom House (Newry) and Marlborough House.

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<sup>19</sup> Source: [www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)

<sup>20</sup> Source: [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk)

**APPENDIX A – MAP OF OFFICES**

