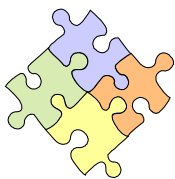


# Equality Impact Assessment for Consultation

“What will be the impact of HMRC’s proposals to reshape its use of office buildings in Northern Ireland outside of Belfast Urban Centre?”



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## **SUMMARY**

### **Why we are consulting**

In November 2006, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) announced a nationwide programme of reviews designed to help modernise its operations by restructuring its office accommodation in line with future business needs.

On 23 April this year we announced decisions on the review of the Belfast urban centre, which included Antrim and Lisburn. The programme is now focusing proposals for HMRC office buildings in towns in Northern Ireland outside the Belfast area.

As part of the review, we have made our own assessment of the likely impact of those proposals on a range of groups within our workforce, our customers and the local community, in terms of equality and diversity. In accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, we are opening up to public consultation, our assessment along with details of the actions which will offset potential adverse impacts arising from the proposals.

### **What we are proposing**

Outside the Belfast urban centre, HMRC currently occupies ten office buildings in Northern Ireland. Together they house approximately 700 employees.

By 2011, we expect the number of staff we need in towns in Northern Ireland to reduce to around 430. We therefore propose to withdraw from five office buildings and retain five. Regardless of the review outcomes, we will be retaining all enquiry centre services (at or nearby their current locations).

Full addresses for the buildings included in this review appear in [Appendix C](#).

### **Equality impacts we have identified**

We think there will be minimal impact on persons of different racial groups, sexual orientation, age (employees only), marital status, religion and beliefs, political opinion and those with dependants (customers only).

However, we anticipate possible adverse impacts on employees with a disability or with dependants and female employees (linked to part-time working and caring responsibilities). Elderly customers and those with a disability could also be affected where enquiry centre services are relocated.

### **Mitigating action which we will take**

HMRC has a number of policies and arrangements in place which will assist in mitigating potential adverse equality impacts arising to staff as a result of estate changes.

For employees these include:

- Flexible working hours and alternative working patterns (see [Appendix H](#))
- Provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled staff
- HMRC Childcare Voucher Scheme
- Specialist and confidential counselling and support for staff from specialist teams in HMRC such as Business People Support Team
- Staff to be relocated to offices within reasonable daily travel (see [Appendix G](#))

- Daily Travel Allowance
- Discussions between managers and staff to identify any personal issues arising and establish reasonable solutions where appropriate, with assistance and support of HR specialists.
- A programme of relocation support initiatives for staff who are unable to relocate with their current team. These include job moves to other business areas, CV and interview skills support, relocation to other Government Departments, early and flexible retirement schemes.

For customers, in particular disabled or elderly people, we will ensure enquiry centre services are retained in their current location or nearby.

### **Our main recommendations**

- HMRC to continue to monitor the quality of its employee diversity data and consider improvements required
- Senior managers to support Team Leaders in identifying reasonable solutions for employees
- Managers should consider and discuss options for employee working patterns to change, if required, as a result of increased travelling
- Further consideration to be given to equality impacts if a replacement Enquiry Centre facility is required.

### **How the consultation will work**

We have sought guidance and taken advice on this Equality Impact Assessment and the related consultation process from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Our proposals, our impact assessment and suggested mitigating actions are all contained in this document. The final chapter carries more detail on how the consultation process will work and how to register your views.

At key points, you will find questions which we think are particularly important. However, we welcome comments on any related topic. Please be aware, that you should use the email address provided for comments only and not for anything else, such as requests for information. At the end of the consultation period we will publish a summary of the comments we have received.

Printed copies can be obtained from any HMRC Enquiry Centre.

You can also download a copy from

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/better-regulation/regional-reviews.htm>

or you can contact

Christine Diver  
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Custom House  
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Email [christine.diver@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:christine.diver@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

(Please quote **EQIA Feedback** in the subject title box)

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR CONSULTATION**

“What will be the impact of HMRC’s proposals to reshape its use of office buildings in Northern Ireland outside Belfast Urban Centre?”

### **1. HMRC and its Change Programme**

- 1.1 HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) was formed on 18 April 2005, following the integration of two former departments Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise. It administers the UK’s tax and customs systems with the aim of ensuring society’s financial well being. See [Appendix A](#) for a full list of the Department’s duties.
- 1.2 The creation of the new Department means it is possible to free up a substantial amount of existing office space. In addition, HMRC’s business units plan to deliver major improvements in performance across the full range of our responsibilities over the next five years. They are looking to integrate teams and co-locate them in an office network more suited to introducing business processes that will meet the expectations of today’s customers.
- 1.3 In November 2006, HMRC announced an office review programme. The programme is being taken forward on a regional basis and began by looking at the urban centres, which is where around 75% of our employees are already based. Reviews on urban centres in each region, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have now been completed. The programme has now moved on to reviewing offices in smaller towns throughout the UK.

### **2. How reviews work**

- 2.1 An initial diagnostic stage results in an outline proposal for an area, as set out in this consultation document. HMRC is keen to ensure that such proposals are properly thought through and, in particular, that the degree of disruption for its employees and customers is minimised. For that reason, we invite all those affected to make their contributions at an early stage in the planning process.
- 2.2 Over the following three to four months, the proposal is tested in detail through feasibility studies and by listening to the views of employees, trade unions and others. A decision is then taken on the changes we intend to make to our estate. Implementation, however, is likely to be spread over a number of years, depending on such factors as leasing agreements coming up for renewal, and will always be subject to changing business needs.
- 2.3 Employees’ individual circumstances are again considered, this time formally through one-to-one discussions with managers, at the point where intentions to withdraw from, or retain, offices are known. We look at how reasonable it would be to ask people to travel to a different building. For a summary of HMRC’s “Reasonable Daily Travel” Policy see [Appendix G](#).
- 2.4 Potential relocation options for staff are shown in [Appendix D](#).
- 2.5 Managers will look for mitigating action to reduce adverse impacts and HMRC has a number of policies available that will help in this process, for example, flexible working patterns, as detailed in [Appendix H](#). It also employs specialists, for example, occupational health doctors and nurses, HR professionals and IT

specialists, and consults with external organisations, for example, Access to Work.

2.6 The outcome of manager and employee discussions is confidential. The information is not attributable and any useful generic outcomes will be incorporated into the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process.

2.7 Each set of decisions is supported by an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) document for each building to be vacated or, where applicable, a full EQIA on the wider consultation exercise. Building specific Impact Assessments are also carried out and published for each building we intend to withdraw from. These take into account factors such as:

- running costs and other financial considerations
- contractual obligations to partners like Mapeley (buildings) and ASPIRE (IT)
- potential social and economic impacts
- alignment where possible with business plans for work and employees.

2.8 Reviews are underway throughout the UK and decisions have already been reached and published on urban centres in each Government Office Region in England, as well as the urban centres in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Further information on the review process can be found on our website.

### 3. The Northern Ireland proposals

3.1 HMRC has more office space than it needs in Northern Ireland. In addition, while today approximately 700 people work for us in offices outside Belfast, by 2011, HMRC's current business plans predict that we will require around 430. HMRC aims to achieve these reductions through natural attrition, early retirement schemes and restricted recruitment. No one will lose their job as a direct result of this proposal.

3.2 It is proposed to reduce the ten existing office buildings to five withdrawing from:

- Kilpatrick House, Ballymena
- Bridgewater House, Banbridge
- Mill House, Coleraine
- Marlborough House, Craigavon
- Custom House, Enniskillen.

We are proposing to retain:

- Fern House, Coleraine
- Abbey House, Enniskillen
- Foyle House, Londonderry
- Custom House, Newry
- Downshire House, Newry.

3.3 For the map of HMRC offices included in the proposal see [Appendix B](#); for a list of the buildings, including addresses see [Appendix C](#); for potential relocation options for employees see [Appendix D](#).

3.4 We would also retain all existing Enquiry Centres within their current locality. The seven existing Enquiry Centres are identified in [Appendix F](#). **HMRC is committed to maintaining enquiry centre services close to their existing locations. Should HMRC withdraw from any building containing an Enquiry Centre, an enquiry centre service will be provided from an alternative location nearby.**

3.5 The current proposal is for consultation only. **No firm decisions have been made at this stage** on whether buildings will be retained or vacated. Decisions will be informed and influenced by all relevant information including that provided as a result of this EQIA and consultation.

3.6 Work on identifying the best options for where to locate has taken into account factors such as where business units would like their employees situated, the impact on employees of moving, how much each building costs to run and its capacity to accommodate employees, as well as contractual obligations.

3.7 The buildings we propose to retain offer longer term, more flexible accommodation, which would enable business units to co-locate their teams, as well as increasing the variety of job opportunities available to our employees. Some reorganisation would be needed to make the best use of space.

3.8 Consultation on the proposal for offices in Northern Ireland has now started and will last until 20 August 2008. In addition to employees and unions, we have also written to Northern Ireland MPs and MLAs with affected constituencies, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, all affected local authorities, the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Permanent Secretary in the Northern Ireland Office.

#### **4. HMRC's statutory obligations to consult on the impact of its proposals on equality in Northern Ireland**

- 4.1 HMRC acknowledges its need to meet additional legal requirements in Northern Ireland and has therefore expanded the review process conducted elsewhere in the UK to include a full Equality Impact Assessment on its proposals for offices in Northern Ireland, which is to open it to public consultation.
- 4.2 Under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 all public bodies in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religion and beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
  - between men and women generally
  - between persons with a disability and persons without and
  - between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 4.3 In addition in Great Britain, under separate Race, Disability and Gender Duties, public authorities need to have due regard to the need to:
- promote equality of opportunity between people of different racial groups, with and without a disability, and men and women generally
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination between different racial groups, those with and without a disability and men and women generally (including transsexuals/transgender)
  - promote good relations for people of different racial groups
  - encourage participation in public life by disabled people
  - promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and
  - eliminate harassment, which is related to disability or gender (including transsexual/transgender).
- 4.4 HMRC considers that its approach to Equality Impact Assessments meets the statutory requirements set out above.

## 5. The Northern Ireland Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA):
- defines the aims of the proposals for the reduction of the HMRC estate in Northern Ireland, excluding offices reviewed within the Belfast urban centre.
  - considers related data and research
  - assesses the impacts of the proposals
  - considers measures which might mitigate any adverse impact or alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity
  - invites comments from the public as part of a formal consultation process.
- 5.2 As part of the EQIA process HMRC will:
- ensure that responses received during the formal consultation and any information or data that becomes available or is drawn to our attention will be used to inform and influence the decisions. A report of those responses will be published
  - monitor potentially adverse impacts in the future, taking appropriate action to mitigate impacts and publish the results of such monitoring as appropriate
  - publish the findings of the consultation process on our EQIA on the HMRC website.
- 5.3 HMRC has undertaken a high-level Equality Screen on the proposals for offices in Northern Ireland, in accordance with our equality scheme and statutory obligations. Data was obtained from a variety of sources, both internal and external.
- 5.4 Internally, HMRC collects, monitors and evaluates equality data relating to its employees in four specific areas: gender, race/ethnic origin, disability and for Northern Ireland only, community background. HMRC employee diversity data can be found at [Appendix E](#).
- 5.5 This data is provided by employees on a voluntary basis. HMRC encourages employees to submit their diversity data on our electronic HR systems.
- 5.6 At the equality screening stage we considered all issues including HMRC's legislative obligations in Northern Ireland and decided that a full Equality Impact Assessment was required to establish fully how the proposal might affect employees and others.
- 5.7 Externally, HMRC collects data on customer numbers attending Enquiry Centres. This data has also been considered and can be found at [Appendix F](#).
- 5.8 Further external data used is listed below:

- HMRC reports in 2005 on customer diversity within core and secondary catchment areas for our Enquiry Centres, commissioned from Experian Ltd
- Census 2001 data
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency data
- Northern Ireland Life and Times Surveys 2005 and 2006.

5.9 We have sought guidance and taken advice on this Equality Impact Assessment and the related consultation process from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

## 6. Details of impacts we have assessed, our recommendations and questions for consultation

### 6.1 Racial Groups

Ethnicity Data considered				
Location	White	Ethnic Minority	Chose not to declare	Not known
	%	%	%	%
HMRC employees in Ballymena <sup>1</sup>	80.00	0.00	4.00	16.00
Ballymena core catchment population <sup>2</sup>	99.15	0.85	-	-
HMRC employees in Banbridge	67.00	0.00	0.00	33.00
Banbridge core catchment population	99.50	0.50	-	-
HMRC employees in Coleraine	51.00	0.00	0.00	49.00
Coleraine core catchment population	98.78	1.22	-	-
HMRC employees in Craigavon	83.00	0.00	2.00	15.00
Craigavon core catchment population	99.14	0.86	-	-
HMRC employees in Enniskillen	67.00	0.00	0.00	33.00
Enniskillen core catchment population	99.27	0.73	-	-
HMRC employees in Londonderry	78.00	0.00	0.00	22.00
Londonderry core catchment population	99.23	0.77	-	-
HMRC employees in Newry	73.00	0.00	1.00	26.00
Newry core catchment population	99.19	0.81	-	-
Northern Ireland population <sup>3</sup>	99.20	0.80	-	-

<sup>1</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

<sup>2</sup> Experian Data

<sup>3</sup> Census 2001 data, KS02

- 6.1.1 The figures above indicate that HMRC should continue to encourage employees to volunteer information on race via HMRC's internal HR systems. However, of those who have provided this information, approximately 100% are white, and this is broadly in line with the general population of Northern Ireland.
- 6.1.2 Feedback from "HMRC's Equality Impact Assessment on Relocation and Restructure" indicated that increasing numbers of Eastern European migrants moving to Northern Ireland are using the enquiry centre services.
- 6.1.3 Employees of different racial groups may experience a change in support networks and facilities available if relocated to an alternative building. However, no jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. The impact on employees from different racial groups is expected to be minimal.
- 6.1.4 The current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location, or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. Any impact on customers of different racial groups is expected to be minimal.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1.5 HMRC should continue to monitor the completion rate of the employee diversity data and consider alternative strategies, if required.

#### **QUESTION**

- 6.1.6 Have the impacts to persons of different racial groups been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.2 Those with or without a disability

Disability Data considered				
Location	Disabled %	Not Disabled %	Chose not to declare %	Not known %
HMRC employees in Ballymena <sup>4</sup>	14.00	53.00	3.00	30.00
Ballymena core catchment population <sup>5</sup>	8.69	91.31	-	-
HMRC employees in Banbridge	10.00	38.00	0.00	52.00
Banbridge core catchment population	9.21	90.79	-	-
HMRC employees in Coleraine	5.00	39.00	0.00	56.00
Coleraine core catchment population	8.90	91.10	-	-
HMRC employees in Craigavon	1.00	55.00	2.00	42.00
Craigavon core catchment population	11.59	88.41	-	-
HMRC employees in Enniskillen	7.00	52.00	4.00	37.00
Enniskillen core catchment population	9.07	90.93	-	-
HMRC employees in Londonderry	7.00	49.00	0.00	44.00
Londonderry core catchment population	10.75	89.25	-	-
HMRC employees in Newry	8.00	47.00	0.00	45.00
Newry core catchment population	10.65	89.35	-	-
Northern Ireland population <sup>6</sup>	37.50	62.50	-	-

6.2.1 The figures above indicate that HMRC should continue to encourage employees to volunteer information on disability via HMRC's electronic HR systems. However, of those staff who have provided this information in Northern Ireland outside the Belfast area, 12% are disabled and 88% are non-disabled.

<sup>4</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

<sup>5</sup> Experian Data - Not Good Health

<sup>6</sup> Census 2001 data, KS02

- 6.2.3 No jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. However, we recognise that there may be some adverse impacts to employees with a disability as a result of relocating to other offices in Northern Ireland.
- 6.2.3 Impacts on those with a disability will be dependent on personal circumstances. Known impacts to this group arising from previous relocations are as follows:
- Employees relocating to a new building may experience changes to their home to work journeys. There may be an adverse impact on employees with a disability who travel to work by public transport if the public transport services available at the new location are inadequate.
  - Employees with a disability travelling to work by car may be adversely impacted upon if their current location provides disabled parking facilities and these are not available at the new location.
  - Employees requiring specialist IT equipment or reasonable adjustment adaptations may need to discuss their requirements with their manager to ensure these continue to be provided at the new location.
  - Employees requiring specialist IT software may be unable to relocate into other business units within HMRC due to limitations in the compatibility of HMRC software with specialist IT software.
  - Employees who transfer into another business unit and require training may be unable to travel to training courses or stay overnight at residential courses.
- 6.2.4 Managers should understand the need to handle these issues sensitively and work closely with employees and HR specialists to identify reasonable solutions to any issues that arise. Employees will not be expected to travel outside of reasonable daily travel and HMRC believes it has adequate HR policies and specialist support in place to mitigate any adverse impacts arising to individuals.
- 6.2.5 Under the proposals, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location, or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. If any new location is not sufficiently near public transport services or does not have disabled car parking facilities, customers with mobility impairment may be adversely impacted. The impact on the needs of customers with a disability will inform and influence the decision regarding the relocation of any enquiry centre services. Any such relocation of enquiry centre services will be carried out so as to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.2.6 HMRC should continue to monitor the completion rate of the employee diversity data and consider alternative strategies to encourage completion, if required.

**RECOMMENDATION**

6.2.7 Senior managers should ensure Team Leaders are able to handle issues arising in a sensitive manner and that they receive sufficient support to identify reasonable solutions to resolve issues and mitigate adverse impacts.

**RECOMMENDATION**

6.2.8 If a replacement facility is required for the Enquiry Centres in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon, further consideration should be given to the impacts arising on those customers with a disability. The impact on the needs of customers with a disability will inform and influence the decision regarding the location of the replacement Enquiry Centres.

**QUESTION**

6.2.9 Have the impacts to persons with or without a disability been correctly identified?

What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

### 6.3 Gender (including transsexual/transgender)

Gender Data considered		
Location	Male %	Female %
HMRC employees in Ballymena <sup>7</sup>	24.00	76.00
Ballymena core catchment population <sup>8</sup>	48.49	51.51
HMRC employees in Banbridge	29.00	71.00
Banbridge core catchment population	49.80	50.20
HMRC employees in Coleraine	37.00	63.00
Coleraine core catchment population	47.35	52.65
HMRC employees in Craigavon	30.00	70.00
Craigavon core catchment population	48.99	51.01
HMRC employees in Enniskillen	38.00	62.00
Enniskillen core catchment population	49.11	50.89
HMRC employees in Londonderry	40.00	60.00
Londonderry core catchment population	49.34	50.66
HMRC employees in Newry	27.00	73.00
Newry core catchment population	49.49	50.51
Northern Ireland population <sup>9</sup>	48.70	51.30

6.3.1 HMRC employs a higher proportion of female employees than male.. Of the employees in Northern Ireland outside Belfast area, we employ 34% on a part-time contract and 97% of these employees are female. It is expected that some of these employees will have care responsibilities and the potential impacts on those with dependants is reported later in this document.

<sup>7</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

<sup>8</sup> Experian Data

<sup>9</sup> Census 2001 data: KS01

- 6.3.2 No jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. However, we acknowledge that there may be some adverse impacts on employees relocating to other offices within Northern Ireland and this may be greater for those currently working on a part-time contract, who may have to travel further to work as a result of relocation. HMRC will not expect employees to travel outside reasonable daily travel (see [Appendix G](#)) and, for those experiencing increased travel times, it is important that HMRC provides reasonable options for changing working patterns (see [Appendix H](#)).
- 6.3.3 Transgender employees may experience changes in support networks/facilities as a result of relocation, but employees will not be expected to travel outside reasonable daily travel, when relocated to an alternative building.
- 6.3.4 The impact on employees of different gender is expected to be minimal.
- 6.3.5 Under the proposal the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from the current location or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. The impact on customers of different gender is, therefore, expected to be minimal.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.3.6 HMRC managers should consider reasonable options for employees to change working patterns should this be required as a result of increased travelling to an alternative building.

#### **QUESTION**

- 6.3.7 Have the impacts to persons of different gender (including transsexual/transgender) been correctly identified?

What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.4 Age

Age Data considered			
Location	0 – 19 %	20 - 59 %	60+ %
HMRC employees in Ballymena <sup>10</sup>	0.00	98.60	1.40
Ballymena population	27.49	53.17	19.34
HMRC employees in Banbridge	0.00	95.20	4.80
Banbridge population	29.30	53.89	16.81
HMRC employees in Coleraine	0.00	97.50	2.50
Coleraine population	28.21	52.63	19.16
HMRC employees in Craigavon	1.70	96.60	1.70
Craigavon population	30.47	52.45	17.08
HMRC employees in Enniskillen	0.00	97.30	2.70
County Fermanagh (Enniskillen) population	30.5	51.4	18.10
HMRC employees in Londonderry	0.60	96.40	3.00
County Derry (Londonderry) population	33.93	52.48	13.59
HMRC employees in Newry	0.60	95.20	4.20
Newry and Mourne population	33.09	51.19	15.72
Northern Ireland population <sup>11</sup>	29.68	52.70	17.62

- 6.4.1 Should approved early retirement schemes be available to employees in the offices in Northern Ireland, these will be voluntary. Take up of these schemes may impact on the age demographics in the area.
- 6.4.2 No jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. The impact on employees of different ages is expected to be minimal.

<sup>10</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

<sup>11</sup> Census 2001 data: KS02

- 6.4.3 Under the proposal, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from the current location or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place.
- 6.4.4 Elderly customers may be adversely impacted if the new location is not near public transport services or does not have car parking facilities. The impact of enquiry centre services on the needs of elderly customers will inform and influence the decision regarding any relocation of enquiry centre services.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.4.5 If a replacement facility is required for the Enquiry Centres currently provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon, further consideration will need to be given to the impacts arising on elderly customers. The impact on the needs of elderly customers will inform and influence the decision regarding the location of the replacement Enquiry Centres.

#### **QUESTION**

- 6.4.6 Have the impacts to persons of different age been correctly identified?
- What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.5 Marital Status

Marital Status Data considered				
Location	Single %	Married <sup>12</sup> %	Ex-married <sup>13</sup> %	Unknown %
HMRC employees in Ballymena <sup>14</sup>	15.70	81.4015	1.40	1.50
Ballymena core catchment population <sup>16</sup>	29.42	58.21	12.37	-
HMRC employees in Banbridge	23.80	76.20	0.00	0.00
Banbridge core catchment population	27.86	60.34	11.80	-
HMRC employees in Coleraine	17.70	77.20	5.10	0.00
Coleraine core catchment population	31.26	55.28	13.46	-
HMRC employees in Craigavon	18.50	77.30	4.20	0.00
Craigavon core catchment population	31.15	56.67	12.18	-
HMRC employees in Enniskillen	15.10	82.20	2.70	0.00
Enniskillen core catchment population	35.28	53.22	11.50	-
HMRC employees in Londonderry	24.40	68.90	3.00	3.70
Londonderry core catchment population	36.88	53.90	9.22	-
HMRC employees in Newry	28.10	67.10	4.20	0.60
Newry core catchment population	34.71	55.22	10.07	-
Northern Ireland population <sup>17</sup>	33.10	55.00	11.90	-

6.5.1 No jobs would be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. The impact on employees of different marital status is expected to be minimal.

<sup>12</sup> Married includes those have re-married and those who may be separated, but still legally married

<sup>13</sup> Ex-married includes divorced, widowed

<sup>14</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

<sup>15</sup> Figure includes Civil Partnerships

<sup>16</sup> Experian Data

<sup>17</sup> Census 2001 data: KS04

- 6.5.2 Under the proposal, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location or from an alternative location nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. The impact on customers of different marital status is expected to be minimal.

**QUESTION**

- 6.5.3 Have the impacts to persons of different marital status been correctly identified?

What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.6 Those with or without Dependants

Dependants Data considered			
Location	With dependants %	Without dependants %	Chose not to declare %
All HMRC employees <sup>18</sup>	40.00	54.00	6.00
Northern Ireland population <sup>19</sup>	36.50	63.50	-
Ballymena population	35.00	65.00	-
Banbridge population	37.00	63.00	-
Coleraine population	34.50	65.50	-
Craigavon population	37.50	62.50	-
County Fermanagh (Enniskillen) population	37.50	62.50	-
County Derry (Londonderry) population	44.00	56.00	-
Newry and Mourne population	42.00	58.00	-

6.6.1 HMRC collects data on employees with dependants via the HMRC Staff Survey. The latest National Staff Survey, completed by 120,062 employees, was undertaken during November and December 2007.

6.6.2 No jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. However, we recognise that there may be some adverse impacts to employees with dependants as a result of relocating to another office. Of the employees in Northern Ireland outside Belfast, 34% work on part-time contracts, which may be an indication of the numbers of employees who have care responsibilities and who may be adversely impacted through relocation.

<sup>18</sup> Figures from National Staff Survey Winter 2007

<sup>19</sup> Census 2001 Table KS 20 - Figures comprise homes with dependent children, but no details held on elder care

- 6.6.3 Impacts on those with dependants will be individual and dependent on personal circumstances. Potential impacts may include:
- increased travelling times. This may require employees to incur additional care costs or require changes to working patterns to balance work/life commitments
  - a change of duties. Employees with dependants may be required to change working patterns or hours to suit business needs
  - additional travel costs. Daily Travel Assistance, paid to assist employees with additional travel costs, is taxable and impacts on tax credit entitlement.
- 6.6.4 When relocating employees to another building, HMRC will assist employees by reimbursing additional travelling costs for a period of up to three years under the Daily Travel Assistance rules.
- 6.6.5 Under the proposal, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. The impact on the accessibility for those customers with dependants, particularly those with young children, will inform and influence the decision regarding any relocation of enquiry centre services. The impact on customers with dependants is expected to be minimal.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.6.6 HMRC managers should consider reasonable options for staff with dependants to change working patterns should this be required as a result of increased travelling to an alternative office.

#### **QUESTION**

- 6.6.7 Have the impacts to persons with or without dependants been correctly identified?

What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.7 Sexual Orientation

- 6.7.1 HMRC does not currently collect data on sexual orientation.
- 6.7.2 The Northern Ireland Life and Times Surveys 2005 and 2006 (see table below) questioned 1,200 and 1,230 people respectively on their sexual orientation. The responses were from a small section of the population and the lesbian, gay and bi-sexual populations are likely to be higher than the figures suggest.

<b>Sexual Orientation Data Considered</b>		
<b>Responses</b>	<b>2005 Survey %</b>	<b>2006 Survey %</b>
I am "gay" or "lesbian" (homosexual)	1	0
I am heterosexual	97	98
I am bi-sexual	1	0
I do not wish to answer this question	1	2

- 6.7.3 HMRC recognises that employees of different sexual orientation may experience a change in support networks and facilities available if relocated to a different building. No jobs will be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that employees will relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. The impact on employees of different sexual orientation is expected to be minimal.
- 6.7.4 Under the proposal, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain where they are and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location, or from alternative premises nearby. If enquiry centre services are relocated, HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. The impact on customers of different sexual orientation is expected to be minimal.

### **QUESTION**

- 6.7.5 Have the impacts to persons of different sexual orientation been correctly identified?

What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

## 6.8 Religion and Beliefs

6.8.1 HMRC does not collect data on religion and beliefs. However, we do collect data on community background for Northern Ireland employees. Current details are as follows.

Community Background Data considered				
Location (excluding Belfast)	Protestant %	Catholic %	Other Faiths and Philosophies %	Not determined %
Ferne House, Coleraine <sup>20</sup>	47.17	43.40	-	9.43
Mill House, Coleraine	46.15	42.31	-	11.54
<b>Total HMRC Coleraine</b>	<b>46.84</b>	<b>43.04</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10.12</b>
Abbey House, Enniskillen	38.18	56.36	-	5.46
Custom House, Enniskillen	33.33	52.38	-	14.29
<b>Total HMRC Enniskillen</b>	<b>36.84</b>	<b>55.26</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7.90</b>
Custom House, Newry	10.09	85.32	-	4.59
Downshire House, Newry	21.88	71.88	-	6.24
<b>Total HMRC Newry</b>	<b>14.45</b>	<b>80.35</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5.20</b>
Kilpatrick House, Ballymena	58.57	34.29	-	7.14
Bridgewater House, Banbridge	62.50	37.50	-	0
Marlborough House, Craigavon	41.18	52.94	-	5.88
Foyle House, Londonderry	23.57	72.14	-	4.29
<b>Northern Ireland population<sup>21</sup></b>	<b>53.10</b>	<b>43.80</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>2.70</b>

<sup>20</sup> HMRC HR data as at 01/01/08

<sup>21</sup> Census 2001 data KS07b

6.8.2 Details on religion and beliefs in Northern Ireland taken from the Census 2001 are as follows.

Religion and Beliefs Data considered							
Location	Catholic %	Presbyterian Church in Ireland %	Church of Ireland %	Methodist Church in Ireland %	Other Christian %	Other Faiths and Philosophies %	No Religion or not stated %
Ballymena core catchment population <sup>22</sup>	15.49	45.66	13.21	2.94	8.64	0.30	13.76
Banbridge core catchment population	29.82	26.84	19.90	2.24	8.20	0.15	12.85
Coleraine core catchment population	18.66	29.02	26.38	1.81	6.81	0.45	16.87
Craigavon core catchment population	44.94	10.87	21.86	4.66	7.39	0.27	10.01
Enniskillen core catchment population	60.17	3.54	20.59	3.84	3.28	0.29	8.29
Londonderry core catchment population	73.54	9.31	7.12	0.59	1.65	0.26	7.53
Newry core catchment population	81.66	5.88	2.71	0.52	1.56	0.13	7.54
Northern Ireland population <sup>23</sup>	40.30	20.70	15.30	3.50	6.10	0.30	13.80

<sup>22</sup> Experian Data

<sup>23</sup> Census 2001 data KS07a

- 6.8.3 HMRC recognises that employees of different religion and beliefs may experience a change in support networks and facilities available if relocated to an alternative building. However, HMRC policy is to provide a room for “all faiths” use on request.
- 6.8.3 HMRC acknowledges the variation in the community background figures in offices proposed for retention and vacation.
- 6.8.6 No jobs would be lost directly as a result of this proposal and it is expected that, where possible, employees would relocate within reasonable daily travel of their home. Consideration will be given to accessibility of locations as well as to travel time.
- 6.8.7 Under the proposal, the current enquiry centre services provided in Fern House, Coleraine, Abbey House, Enniskillen, Foyle House, Londonderry and Downshire House, Newry will remain and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current location or from alternative premises nearby. Consideration will be given to accessibility of locations of enquiry centre services. If enquiry centre services are relocated HMRC will ensure that this is advertised to the wider community well in advance of the changes taking place. The impact on customers of different religion and beliefs is expected to be minimal.

**QUESTION**

- 6.8.8 Have the impacts to persons of different religion and beliefs been correctly identified?
- What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?

**6.9 Political Opinion**

- 6.9.1 HMRC does not collect data on political opinion. No impacts in addition to those referred to in section 6.8 Religion and Beliefs have been identified.

**QUESTION**

- 6.9.2 Are there any additional impacts arising to persons of different political opinions?
- What are they and how can related risks be reduced?

## 7. The Equality Consultation Process

- 7.1 The proposals for Northern Ireland outside the Belfast area reflects a great deal of research and HMRC is confident that it provides a good basis for detailed planning. We acknowledge however that we may not have captured all of the equality impacts. Local and specialist knowledge and experience of the potential equality impacts will be especially important in informing HMRC's final plans and helping to ensure they can be implemented effectively.
- 7.2 As part of the detailed feasibility stage of planning, HMRC therefore considers it essential that everyone affected is consulted on equality aspects of the proposed restructuring of HMRC offices in Northern Ireland, in order to:
- be aware of their views and opinions
  - identify potential risks and issues
  - identify potential opportunities that have not yet been recognised
  - gather ideas and suggestions for how best to implement the changes.
- 7.3 By engaging people at an early stage in the planning process HMRC also aims to help people develop an understanding of the issues surrounding reorganisation, which should help make implementation easier for everyone involved.
- 7.4 In conducting this consultation exercise, HMRC is building on the experience of consulting with a range of stakeholders on proposals for earlier reviews on urban centres and would welcome further feedback about the consultation process itself and how it might be improved.

### Timeframe

- 7.5 The consultation will take place over 10 weeks from 11 June 2008 to 20 August 2008 with detailed feasibility work completed after a further four to six weeks. The responses received during this consultation and any information or data that becomes available or is drawn to HMRC's attention will be used to inform the decisions on the offices in Northern Ireland.
- 7.6 Following consultation and feasibility work, recommendations will be made to HMRC's Executive Committee. Initial decisions can be expected in autumn 2008 and implementation of office moves is expected to begin in early 2009 and continue through to 2011.

### How we will give you feedback on your responses

- 7.7 A HMRC project team will log and read all responses. An analysis of the responses received and any information or data that becomes available or is drawn to HMRC's attention will be used during the feasibility stage to inform the decisions. **Please note that it will not be possible to answer questions as part of the process or to deal with issues relating to particular individuals.**
- 7.8 A report and summary of responses received will be published and made available on the HMRC website.

### HOW TO TAKE PART IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

7.9 A dedicated e-mail Inbox has been set up to receive feedback on this Equality Impact Assessment: [consultation.EQIA-NI@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.EQIA-NI@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

Feedback can also be posted to

Christine Diver
HMRC
Custom House
Custom House Square
Belfast
BT1 3ET

### QUESTION

7.10 Please let us know of any other concerns you have in relation to the proposal in this document, including how you think the consultation and communication process could be improved.

## **Appendix A: Additional information on HM Revenue and Customs**

HMRC is one of the largest and most complex organisations in the UK handling around £450 billion per annum in revenue and dealing with over 40 million individual and corporate customers.

We collect and administer the following taxes.

**Direct taxes** – paid by the public and businesses on money earned or capital gained.

- Capital Gains Tax
- Corporation Tax
- Income Tax
- Inheritance Tax
- National Insurance Contributions

**Indirect taxes** – paid by the public and businesses on money spent on goods or services.

- Excise Duties
- Insurance Premium Tax
- Petroleum Revenue Tax
- Stamp Duty Land Tax
- VAT

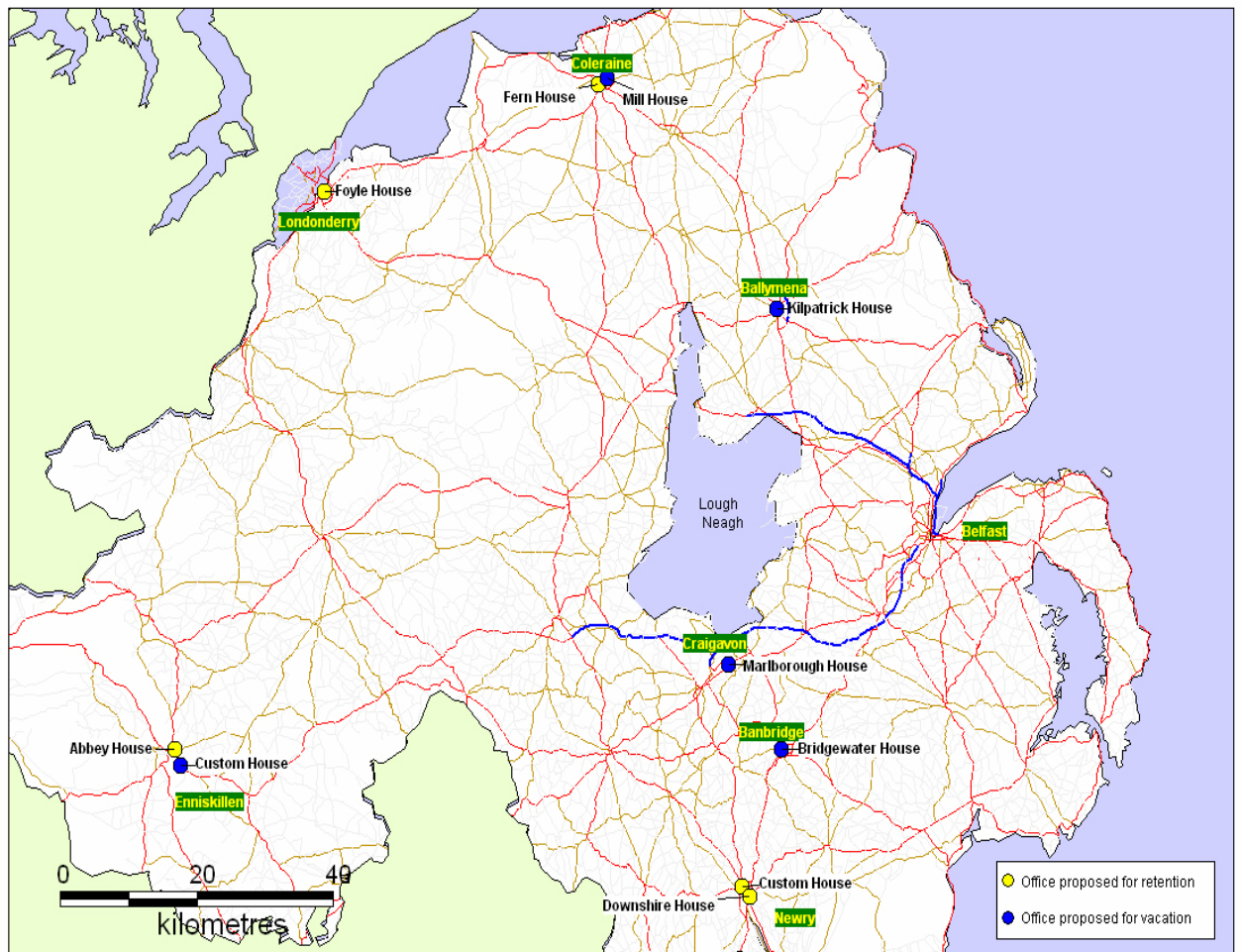
We pay and administer:

- Child Benefit
- Child Trust Fund
- Tax Credits

We protect society by enforcing and administering:

- Border and Frontier Protection
- Environmental Taxes
- National Minimum Wage Enforcement
- Recovery of Student Loans

## Appendix B: Map of Northern Ireland Offices outside the Belfast Area



The above map illustrates HMRC offices in Northern Ireland outside the Belfast area and major transport links.

## **Appendix C: List of Northern Ireland Buildings and HMRC Staff Numbers**

Location	HMRC Office	HMRC staff in post March 2008 <sup>24</sup>	Enquiry Centre services provided?
<b>Possible sites to be retained</b>			
Coleraine	Fern House 1a Adelaide Avenue Coleraine BT52 1AJ	53	Yes
Enniskillen	Abbey House Head Street Enniskillen BT74 7JL	52	Yes
Londonderry	Foyle House Duncreggan Road Londonderry BT48 0AH	164	Yes
Newry	Custom House Carnebane Way Damolly Newry BT35 6QG	108	No
Newry	Downshire House 22 Merchants Quay Newry BT35 6HS	59	Yes
<b>Potential sites for vacation</b>			
Ballymena	Kilpatrick House 38-54 High Street Ballymena Bt43 6DR	70	Yes
Banbridge	Bridgewater House 23a Castlewellan Road Banbridge BT32 4AX	21	Yes
Coleraine	Mill House 24 Railway Road Coleraine BT52 1PE	26	No
Craigavon	Marlborough House Central Way Craigavon BT64 1AH	119	Yes
Enniskillen	Custom House Killyhevlin Industrial Estate Enniskillen BT74 4EJ	21	No

### **Note to table**

HMRC business units have provided their staffing forecasts to 2008 and 2011 by location and will be asked during the feasibility phase to confirm their strategic business and location needs in Northern Ireland.

<sup>24</sup> HMRC HR data as at 1/03/08

## Appendix D: Proposed Relocation Options for Employees

The proposed rationalisation of ten office buildings to five is expected to impact on the travelling times of some staff. Where relocation is within the same town the impact is not expected to be significant. Where there is expected to be an impact, the business units will consider whether the new travelling distance and time is reasonable.

The following tables show indicative travelling times (by car) from the buildings included in the review which are potentially within reasonable daily travel of other HMRC offices. These times will not be used to decide whether a journey to a new building is within reasonable daily travel for individual members of staff.

### **Ballymena: Travelling distances and times**

From (office) to (office) miles / km <sup>25</sup>		Beaufort House, Belfast (retention – N Ireland: Belfast UC)	Carne House, Belfast (retention – N Ireland: Belfast UC)	Custom House, Belfast (retention – N Ireland: Belfast UC)	Dorchester House, Belfast (retention – N Ireland: Belfast UC)	Millennium House, Belfast (retention – N Ireland: Belfast UC)
<b>Kilpatrick House, Ballymena</b>	Distance	28.3m / 45.5km	26.9m / 43.3km	27.3m / 43.9km	28.5m / 45.9km	28.8m / 46.3km
	Time	38 mins	34 mins	36 mins	39 mins	38 mins

<sup>25</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day.

**Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry: Travelling distances and times**

From (office) to (office) miles / km <sup>26</sup>		Bridgewater House, Banbridge	Custom House, Newry	Downshire House, Newry	Marlborough House, Craigavon
<b>Bridgewater House, Banbridge</b>	Distance		12.7m / 20.4km	13.5m / 21.8km	11.0m / 17.6km
	Time		18 mins	20 mins	22 mins
<b>Custom House, Newry</b>	Distance	12.7m / 20.4km		2.5m / 4km	22.3m / 35.9km
	Time	18 mins		6 mins	37 mins
<b>Downshire House, Newry</b>	Distance	13.5m / 21.8km	2.5m / 4km		22.8m / 36.6km
	Time	20 mins	6 mins		38 mins
<b>Marlborough House, Craigavon</b>	Distance	11.0m / 17.6km	22.3m / 35.9km	22.8m / 36.6km	
	Time	22 mins	37 mins	38 mins	

<sup>26</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day.

**Coleraine: Travelling distances and times**

From (office) to (office) miles / km <sup>27</sup>		Fern House, Coleraine	Mill House, Coleraine	Foyle House, Londonderry
Fern House, Coleraine	Distance		0.7m / 1.1km	32.2m / 51.8km
	Time		3 mins	51 mins
Mill House, Coleraine	Distance	1.8m / 2.9km		31.5m / 50.7km
	Time	7 mins		47 mins

**Enniskillen: Travelling distances and times**

From (office) to (office) miles / km <sup>29</sup>		Abbey House, Enniskillen	Custom House, Enniskillen
Abbey House, Enniskillen	Distance		1.6m / 2.6km
	Time		4 mins
Custom House, Enniskillen	Distance	1.7m / 2.7km	
	Time	4 mins	

<sup>27</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day.

**Londonderry: Travelling distances and times**

From (office) to (office) miles / km <sup>28</sup>		Fern House, Coleraine	Mill House, Coleraine
Foyle House, Londonderry	Distance	30.1m / 48.4km	30.0m / 48.3km
	Time	49 mins	47 mins

<sup>28</sup> Source: Microsoft MapPoint 2006. Journey times do not take account of time of day.

## Appendix E: HMRC Employee Diversity Data

The data regarding ethnicity and disability has been provided from background HR systems and completion by employees is not mandatory. The information may therefore be incomplete. Diversity data<sup>29</sup> in the table below is as at 1 March 2008.

Location	Office	Proposal	All Staff												Part-Time Gender Ratio	
			Gender		Ethnicity				Disability Status				Working Pattern		Female %	Male %
			Female %	Male %	White %	Ethnic Minority %	% Declare	Chose Not To Declare	Not Known %	Disabled %	Not Disabled %	% Declare	Chose Not To Declare	Not Known %		
Ballymena	Kilpatrick House	Vacate	76	24	80	0	4	16	14	53	3	30	64	36	100	0
Banbridge	Bridgewater House	Vacate	71	29	67	0	0	33	10	38	0	52	52	48	100	0
Coleraine	Fern House	Retain	70	30	60	0	0	40	8	43	0	49	60	40	95	5
Coleraine	Mill House	Vacate	50	50	31	0	0	69	0	31	0	69	81	19	100	0
Craigavon	Marlborough House	Vacate	70	30	83	0	2	15	1	55	2	42	58	42	100	0
Enniskillen	Abbey House	Retain	69	31	77	0	0	23	10	62	4	24	71	29	93	7
Enniskillen	Custom House	Vacate	43	57	43	0	0	57	0	29	5	66	95	5	100	0
Londonderry	Foyle House	Retain	60	40	78	0	0	22	7	49	0	44	71	29	91	9
Newry	Custom House	Retain	73	27	72	0	1	27	7	47	0	46	63	37	95	5
Newry	Downshire House	Retain	73	27	75	0	0	25	10	47	0	43	64	36	100	0

<sup>29</sup> Figures omitted in accordance with Code of Practice on ethnicity and disability monitoring.

## **Appendix F: HMRC Enquiry Centre Summary**

The table below summarises 2006/07 Enquiry Centre figures for each location in Northern Ireland outside Belfast providing face to face services.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Office Name</b>	<b>Total Callers</b>
Ballymena	Kilpatrick House	12,408
Banbridge	Bridgewater House	2,394
Craigavon	Marlborough House	15,643
Coleraine	Fern House	8,174
Enniskillen	Abbey House	9,281
Londonderry	Foyle House	13,799
Newry	Downshire House	14,275

Under the proposal, the enquiry centre services currently provided at:

- Fern House, Coleraine
- Abbey House, Enniskillen
- Foyle House in Londonderry and
- Downshire House in Newry

will remain where they are and the enquiry centre services provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon will continue to be provided from their current locations or be relocated to alternative premises nearby.

## **Appendix G: Summary of HMRC Reasonable Daily Travel Policy**

### **6.10 Reasonable daily travel**

Reasonable daily travelling time is normally about 1 hour each way. However:

- for London the travelling time can be longer
- in cases where personal circumstances affect the ability to travel, the reasonable period could be less than one hour
- where the travel is already more than an hour, it could still be increased if this was proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances. This would particularly apply in London and in cases where the individual has chosen to live a long distance from the office.

How the time is measured will depend on what is reasonable having regard to individual circumstances and the Department's business needs. In some cases, this may be by public transport but, if the individual normally travels to work by car, it may be reasonable to work out their new travelling time on that basis. All cases will be dealt with on their merits and personal circumstances taken into account in the way described above.

## **Appendix H: Summary of HMRC Alternative Working Patterns**

HMRC offers various options to staff considering changing their working patterns. These are:

- part-time working (including job sharing and job splitting)
- part-year working (including term time)
- distance working and home working.

HMRC also offers flexible working hours schemes in various business areas subject to business needs. Flexible working hours may allow staff to re-arrange working hours into a more suitable pattern. There is a national framework for flexible working hours schemes but there may be local variations.

### **6.11 Part-time working (including job sharing and job splitting)**

There is no set pattern, or number of hours to a part-time working pattern. Staff and managers agree an arrangement that suits both the needs of the individual and the business. Part-time working can be permanent or temporary. Options available include:

- working fewer hours in the day
- working fewer days
- working a mixture of the above
- job sharing or job splitting.

### **6.12 Job Sharing**

Job sharing is where, usually, two people are responsible for the whole job. Job sharing requires good communication between the staff involved. It may involve sharing a desk and terminal or PC. A job can be time shared or task shared.

### **6.13 Job Splitting**

Job splitting means that the hours of people who work part-time are matched so that between them they provide the full cover the office needs.

### **6.14 Part year working**

**6.15 Part year working allows staff to work full or part-time hours for part of the year and have a non-working period (not special leave) for the remainder of the year.**

### **6.16 Distance working**

Distance working means working flexibly in terms of location to achieve benefits for the Department and for distance workers making it easier for people to do jobs which involve them travelling to different locations. Distance working includes:

- home working
- mobile working
- working at more than one location
- hot desking
- guest working and hosting guest workers

## **Appendix I: Summary of Questions**

The following questions are asked in this consultation document:

- 6.1.6 Have the impacts to persons of different racial groups been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.2.9 Have the impacts to persons with or without a disability been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.3.7 Have the impacts to persons of different gender (including transsexual/transgender) been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.4.6 Have the impacts to persons of different age been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.5.3 Have the impacts to persons of different marital status been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.6.7 Have the impacts to persons with or without dependants been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.7.5 Have the impacts to persons of different sexual orientation been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.8.8 Have the impacts to persons of different religion and beliefs been correctly identified?  
What additional impacts arise as a result of the proposal and how can related risks be reduced?
- 6.9.2 Are there any additional impacts arising to persons of different political opinions?  
What are they and how can related risks be reduced?
- 7.10 Please let us know of any other concerns you have in relation to the proposal in this document including how you think the consultation and communication process could be improved.

Responses to the above questions should be sent by email to [consultation.EQIA-NI@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.EQIA-NI@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk) to arrive no later than 20 August 2008, please quote **EQIA Feedback** in subject title box. Alternatively, please post your response to:

Christine Diver, HMRC Custom House, Custom House Square, Belfast BT1 3ET

## **Appendix J: Summary of Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in this consultation document and many cut across equality grounds:

- 6.1.5 HMRC should continue to monitor the completion rate of the employee diversity data and consider alternative strategies, as required.
- 6.2.6 HMRC should continue to monitor the completion rate of the employee diversity data and consider alternative strategies to encourage completion, if required.
- 6.2.7 Senior managers should ensure Team Leaders are able to deal with issues arising in a sensitive manner and receive sufficient support to identify reasonable solutions to resolve issues and mitigate adverse impacts.
- 6.2.8 If a replacement facility is required for the Enquiry Centres in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon, further consideration should be given to the impacts arising on those customers with a disability. The impact on the needs of customers with a disability will inform and influence the decision regarding the location of the replacement Enquiry Centres.
- 6.3.6 HMRC managers should consider reasonable options for employees to change working patterns should this be required as a result of increased travelling to an alternative building.
- 6.4.5 If a replacement facility is required for the Enquiry Centre currently provided in Ballymena, Banbridge and Craigavon, further consideration will need to be given to the impacts arising on elderly customers. The impact on the needs of elderly customers will inform and influence the decision regarding the location of the replacement Enquiry Centres.
- 6.6.6 HMRC managers should consider reasonable options for staff with dependants to change working patterns should this be required as a result of increased travelling to an alternative office.

## **Appendix K: Code of Practice on Consultation**

This consultation is to be conducted for a period of 10 weeks. This consultation has been conducted in accordance with the consultation criteria in the Cabinet Office Code of Practice. If you wish to access the full version of the Code including the consultation criteria, you can obtain it at

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/code/index.asp>

If you feel that the consultation does not satisfy these criteria, or if you have any concerns about the process, please contact –

Duncan Calloway  
Better Regulation Unit  
020 7147 2389 or [duncan.calloway1@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:duncan.calloway1@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

### **The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004**

From 6 April 2005, employees in larger organisations have had the right to request their employer to inform them of, and consult with them about, business matters which affect their employment. The regulations apply to organisations that are classified as *undertakings* i.e. carrying out an economic activity, whether or not operating for gain.

Although very few government bodies are ‘undertakings’ in the strict sense, all government departments, including HMRC, are encouraged to have regard to the general principles of the Regulation. In taking this forward, we will put in place mechanisms to foster two-way communications and facilitate feedback from employees. Our communication arrangements will include such elements as use of the Departmental intranet site with provision for feedback, direct access to the Chairman and Directors via e-mail, phone-ins with senior employees, information circulars, and team briefings by line managers. Whilst not an exhaustive list, it illustrates the steps we are taking as a consequence of the Information and Consultation Directive.

### **Confidentiality Disclosure**

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.