



**NORTHERN IRELAND
ASSEMBLY**

Committee for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs

Mr Michael Potter
Clerk to the Committee for Infrastructure
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12 November 2025

Dear Michael

Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Management Bill

The Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs met on 6 November 2025 and considered correspondence seeking views on the above Bill. The Committee agreed to respond with the following comments:

1. While the Bill establishes a framework that could enable the future mandatory use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), the Committee seeks clarification on why SuDS are not made mandatory for new developments from the outset. Is there a specific rationale for this phased approach?
2. The Committee notes that the Bill does not clearly address retrofitting of SuDS. Given that many severe flooding incidents occur in long-established streets and neighbourhoods, the Committee is interested to know whether retrofitting might be a critical tool in mitigating existing flood risks.
3. The Committee is also interested in what consideration the Department is giving to developments where SuDS alone may be insufficient. What additional measures or contingency plans are under consideration to address such scenarios?

Yours sincerely

James Gilsenan, Acting Clerk to the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

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