

ULSTER FARMERS' UNION NEWS RELEASE**Date: 7 November 2012****Cyclo No: 134/2012****UFU welcomes Minister Attwood's proposals to ease agricultural planning rules**

The Ulster Farmers' Union has welcomed Environment Minister Alex Attwood's proposals to ease planning rules for farmers. The Minister has published proposals to increase the allowable maximum size for agricultural new buildings or extensions per farm in any 2 year period, which does not require planning permission, from 300 square metres to 500 square metres.

UFU President Harry Sinclair said; "Minister Attwood's proposals to increase the maximum size of an agricultural building to ease planning rules for farmers is something the UFU have been lobbying towards for some time. Farmers will welcome these proposals as they will constitute a reduction in red tape and cost for many farm businesses. The change in rules could potentially mean that farmers can construct an agricultural farm building up to 500 square metres in size without the need for a costly planning application. This is an example of good Government, with the Minister taking steps to ensure the agricultural industry is able to expand without being unnecessarily restricted by planning rules and planning fees."

"Any removal of restrictions on the development of on-farm renewable energy technology will also be welcomed by the farming industry. This may include the potential for the development of Anaerobic Digesters for on-farm use."

The UFU says it will be submitting a response to the consultation which is now underway in full support of the Ministers proposals.

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