



Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Gníomhaireacht Comhshaoil Thuaisceart Éireann
Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Your reference:
Our reference: AE2-24-151085

Department of Infrastructure Planning Group
DFIPlanninggroup@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

19 November 2024

NIEA Lisburn
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Dear DfI,

DAERA NIEA Acknowledgement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Statement of Cases for Dalradian Gold Mine (Minerals Planning Application LA10/2017/1249/F) and Curraghinalt 33kV Connection Project

I refer to the issuing of the recent Statement of Cases with regards to the above.

We are pleased to provide comments and advice on the key environmental considerations for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) within DAERA.

For your convenience we have provided our comments under the following topic heading:

- Natural Environment Division – Countryside, Coast & Landscapes
- Natural Environment Division – Conservation Designation & Protection and Biodiversity & Wildlife Unit

Yours sincerely,

Planning Response Team

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DAERA NIEA Natural Environment Division (NED) – Countryside, Coast & Landscapes (CC&L)

CC&L Acknowledgement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Statement of Case for Dalradian Gold Mine

Statement Number:	77. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council SOC FODC SOC supplementary documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96. FODC SOC - Ecology Statement of Case • 119. FODC SOC - Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat Statement of Case
Date of Acknowledgement:	15/11/2024
Acknowledgement Author:	CC&L
SME Input:	N/A

1. NED acknowledges receipt of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Statement of Case, reference number 77, and the supporting documents 96: Ecology Statement of Case September 2024 and 119: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat Statement of Case in relation to Curraghinalt Project (Dalradian) planning application LA10/2017/1249/F.
2. Supporting evidence in relation to NIEA NED Countryside, Coast and Landscape Planning Branch, NIEA NED Biodiversity and Wildlife Unit & Conservation Designation and Protection Branch and NIEA NED Connecting People to Nature Team is provided in NIEA Statement of Case input for Department of Infrastructure (Dfi) to the planning process for applications LA10/2017/1249/F.

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CC&L Acknowledgement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Statement of Case for Curraghinalt 33kV Connection Project

Statement Number:	PL12. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Statement of Case October 2024: LA10/2019/1386/F and LA11/2019/1000/F (2021/C006 and 2021/C007)
Date of Acknowledgement:	15/11/2024
Acknowledgement Author:	CC&L
SME Input:	N/A

1. NED acknowledges receipt of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Statement of Case October 2024: LA10/2019/1386/F and LA11/2019/1000/F (2021/C006 and 2021/C007), reference number PL12, in relation to Curraghinalt 33kV Connection Project planning applications LA10/2019/1386/F (2021/C006) and LA11/2019/1000/F (2021/C007).
2. Supporting evidence in relation to NIEA NED Countryside, Coast and Landscape Planning Branch, NIEA NED Biodiversity and Wildlife Unit & Conservation Designation and Protection Branch and NIEA NED Connecting People to Nature Team is provided in NIEA Statement of Case input for Department of Infrastructure (DfI) to the planning process for applications LA10/2019/1386/F and LA11/2019/1000/F.

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DAERA Natural Environment Division (NED) – Conservation Designation and Protection (CDP) & Biodiversity and Wildlife Units (BWU)

CDP / BWU Acknowledgement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Statement of Case for Dalradian Gold Mine

Planning Reference No: LA10/2017/1249/F

NED have reviewed the statements of case submitted by Fermanagh Omagh District Council.

1. Designated Site Considerations

- 1.1. The position clearly laid out by FODC and their consultant subject matter experts, is based on their extensive knowledge of Planning Policy and a fulsome review of the evidence submitted by the applicant in support of their proposal.
- 1.2. With regards to the issues raised in relation to potential impacts on designated site selection features and compliance with Local, National and International Policy and Legislation, including the Habitats directive, NED CDP/BWU are content that the issues raised by FODC have been addressed through its 2021 Planning response, Oct 2024 Statement of Case and Nov 2024 rebuttal statement to the applicants SoC.
- 1.3. NED acknowledge issues raised around the range of potential for impacts on the designated site selection features arising from water abstractions and discharges, which will be dealt with in greater detail through the NIEA AIL and Water Order consenting processes.
- 1.4. NED have placed particular emphasis on the water quality discharge standards required for both of the functionally linked Pollanroe and Curraghinalt Burns, deemed necessary to prevent negative impacts on both the River Foyle and Tributaries and Owenkillew River SAC site selection features, namely Atlantic Salmon and Freshwater Pearl Mussel.
- 1.5. Furthermore, NED CDP/BWU are of the opinion that this position aligns with the position of FODC and the interpretation of the Habitats Regulations, that in its current format the proposed mine and associated infrastructure would result in unacceptable impacts on the Owenkillew River SAC and River Foyle and Tributaries SAC site selection features.

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CDP / BWU Acknowledgement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Statement of Case for Curraghinalt 33kV Connection Project

Planning Reference No: LA10/2019/1386/F & LA11/2019/1000/F

NED have reviewed the statements of case submitted by Fermanagh Omagh District Council.

1. Designated Site Considerations

- 1.6. The position clearly laid out by FODC and their consultant subject matter experts, is based on their extensive knowledge of Planning Policy and a fulsome review of the evidence submitted by the applicant in support of their proposal.
- 1.7. With regards to the issues raised in relation to potential impacts on designated site selection features and compliance with Local, National and International Policy and Legislation, including the Habitats directive, NED CDP/BWU are content that the issues raised by FODC have been addressed through its 2021 Planning response, Oct 2024 Statement of Case and Nov 2024 rebuttal statement to the applicants SoC.
- 1.8. NED CDP BWU acknowledge issues raised around the range of potential for impacts on the designated site selection features arising from water abstractions and discharges, which will be dealt with in greater detail through the NIEA AIL and Water Order consenting processes.
- 1.9. NED CDP/BWU have placed particular emphasis on the water quality discharge standards required for both of the functionally linked Pollanroe and Curraghinalt Burns, deemed necessary to prevent negative impacts on both the River Foyle and Tributaries and Owenkillew River SAC site selection features, namely Atlantic Salmon and Freshwater Pearl Mussel.
- 1.10. Furthermore, NED CDP/BWU are of the opinion that this position aligns with the position of FODC and the NED interpretation of the Habitats Regulations, that in its current format the proposed mine and associated infrastructure would result in unacceptable impacts on the Owenkillew River SAC and River Foyle and Tributaries SAC site selection features.

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