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### **Historic Environment Division**

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### **DFC: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DIVISION COMMENTS RE:**

#### **SCREENING REPORT FOR SEA DETERMINATION ON NORTHERN IRELAND DRAFT PEATLAND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**


DfC Historic Environment Division (HED) operate via a Service Level Agreement with colleagues in DAERA in relation to SEA, whereby we provide authoritative comment and advice in relation to matters of Cultural Heritage including archaeological and architectural heritage. We make the following comments in respect of the documentation received by our office on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

HED agree with the findings of the screening report and welcome the acknowledgement of the potential for effects and the need to protect archaeology and cultural heritage, including archaeological assets which have not yet been identified. For the purposes of further scoping we highlight our evidence bases at [historic-environment-digital-datasets](#). Northern Ireland's historic and natural environment have a strong inter-relationship, each influencing the characteristics of the other, as well as influencing intangible heritage characteristics like placenames. This inter-relationship extends on a transboundary basis where several cultural heritage assets transcend the border and others in either jurisdiction share interweaving settings and landscapes with their cross border counterparts.

Progressing on to the further stages of SEA we highlight our [Guidance-on-Sustainability-Appraisal-and-Strategic-Environmental-Assessment-for-the-Historic-Environment](#) When it comes to framing objectives around cultural heritage we advise on the value of using the word conserve which allows for informed and positive change management "i.e. "protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance", as per the Regional Development Strategy 2035. We also point toward the recently published [Conservation Principles guidance | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#) as a relevant evidence base for consideration.

If you have any queries around the content of our response we can be contacted via email or

at the address above

  
Senior Archaeologist

  
Senior Architect

HERITAGE RECORDS AND DESIGNATIONS BRANCH