

**Environment Marine And Fisheries
Group**
Natural Environment Policy Division



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: DAERA/26-23

[REDACTED]

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02 March 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Environmental Information Request

I am writing in response to your email received by the Department on 14th January that sought the following information:

1. Any SEA screening determinations, screening reports, or internal assessments carried out in relation to the Peatland Strategy prior to or during the initial public consultation on the Strategy.
2. All internal correspondence, briefing papers, or legal advice discussing whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment was required at the Peatland Strategy stage, including any decision to defer SEA to the Delivery Plan.
3. Any documents explaining the rationale for undertaking SEA only at the Delivery Plan stage, rather than at the Strategy stage.
4. Any assessments, analyses, or discussions considering cumulative impacts between the Peatland Strategy and other policies or plans, including (but not limited to):
 - o renewable energy and wind farm policy,

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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard

- electricity grid infrastructure plans,
- mining and mineral development,
- large energy users such as data centres.

5. Any records identifying radiological or geochemical risks (including Cs-137 or radon) associated with peatland disturbance considered during development of the Peatland Strategy or Delivery Plan.

I can advise that the Department has completed its search and it holds some of the information you requested which is attached.

1. SEA screening determinations, screening reports, or internal assessments relating to the Peatland Strategy prior to or during the initial public consultation.

There are no screening determinations, screening reports or internal assessments relating to the draft Peatland Strategy that was consulted on in 2021.

2. Internal correspondence, briefing papers, or legal advice on whether an SEA was required at the Strategy stage, including any decision to defer SEA to the Delivery Plan

I can advise that Under Regulation 12(4)(a) the Department is excepted from the duty to disclose the information on the grounds that the information sought is not held.

3. Documents explaining the rationale for undertaking SEA at the Delivery Plan stage rather than at the Strategy stage

There are no records concerning the rationale for undertaking SEA at the Delivery Plan stage rather than at the Strategy stage. As part of policy development, the Department reviews screening needs as appropriate throughout the process. A review of assessments occurred in 2023, which initiated a SEA screening related to the Peatland Strategy. At this time, as the strategy had been consulted, it was deemed appropriate to carry out the SEA on the Delivery Plan Actions. Documents enclosed are the records of SEA screening.

4. Any assessments or analyses considering cumulative impacts between the Peatland Strategy and other policies or plans.

No assessments or analyses were carried out.

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5. Any records identifying radiological or geochemical risks (including Cs-137 or radon) associated with peatland disturbance considered during development of the Strategy or Delivery Plan

I can advise that Under Regulation 12(4)(a) the Department is excepted from the duty to disclose the information on the grounds that the information sought is not held.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,

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Enc – A – SEA screening document on Delivery Plan
B – HED response to SEA Screening
C – NIEA response to SEA Screening

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