

**Consultation on the  
Designation of Lagan Meadows  
as a Quiet Area pursuant to the  
Environmental Noise  
Regulations (Northern Ireland)  
2006**

**June 2026**

You can get a copy of this document in other formats, including:

- Paper copy
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages

To request an alternative format, please contact the Air and Environmental Quality Branch

- Email: [aeqteam@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:aeqteam@daera-ni.gov.uk)
- Write to:

Air & Environmental Quality Unit  
Natural Environment Policy Division  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  
Northern Ireland  
1st Floor  
Clare House  
303 Airport Road West  
Belfast  
BT3 9ED

### **Impact assessments**

An Equality and Disability Duties screening exercise has been carried out, along with a Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

### **How to respond**

This consultation runs for 8 weeks from 01 June 2026 closing on 27 July 2026.

Please forward your comments on the proposed Quiet Area to:

Air & Environmental Quality Unit  
Natural Environment Policy Division  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Northern Ireland  
1st Floor  
Clare House  
303 Airport Road West  
Belfast  
BT3 9ED  
Email: [aeqteam@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:aeqteam@daera-ni.gov.uk)

Alternatively, respond via Citizen Space at  
<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/consultation-on-the-designation-of-lagan-meadows-a>

Responses should be returned by 11.59pm on **27 July 2026**.

A summary of the responses received will be issued after the consultation has closed and will be published on the DAERA website.

We will not respond individually to points raised nor will we acknowledge receipt of individual responses unless requested. When responding please state whether you are doing so as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

The consultation is available at:

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/designation-of-lagan-meadows-as-quiet-area](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/designation-of-lagan-meadows-as-quiet-area)

### **Further information**

Further information on noise policy can be found here <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/noise> on the DAERA website. Please use link <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/belfast-agglomeration-map-showing-three-quiet-areas> to view a map of the three, currently designated, Quiet Areas. The DAERA Policy Guidance on the Identification, Designation and Management of Quiet Areas published in 2016 can be found here

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-quiet-areas> . DAERA's recently published interactive noise maps for Round 4 noise mapping under the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 are at this location <https://gis.daera-ni.gov.uk/arcgis/apps/storymaps/collections/4965ad9d9ec042049fd206001ee63b02> .

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – confidentiality of consultations**

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraph below with respect to the confidentiality of consultation, as they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made or treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to this consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:-

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not be otherwise provided.
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature; and

- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office or see the website at: Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

## Contents

1. Overview.....	1
2. Background.....	1
3. Identifying Quiet Areas.....	3
4. The proposed site – Lagan Meadows.....	4
5. Questions to answer in your consultation response.....	5

### List of Figures

Figure 1 Map of Belfast Agglomeration showing the location of Lagan Meadows...	4
Figure 2 Map of Lagan Meadows.....	5

## 1. Overview

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) welcomes your views on this consultation, which proposes the designation of Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area. The identification and designation of a Quiet Area is a requirement under Regulation 40 of the Environmental Noise (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006<sup>(1)</sup> (“the Regulations”).

## 2. Background

The European Parliament and Council Directive relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise (the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC<sup>(2)</sup> (END)) was transposed in Northern Ireland through the Regulations.

The three main objectives of the Directive are:

- To determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping every five years;
- To make information on environmental noise available to the public; and
- To develop action plans based on the mapping results, to reduce noise levels where necessary, and to preserve environmental noise quality where it is good (Quiet Areas).

Quiet Areas are defined in the Directive as “an area, delimited by a competent authority, for instance, which is not exposed to a value of Lden<sup>(3)</sup> or another appropriate noise indicator greater than a certain value set by the Member State, from any noise source”. A Quiet Area is not one that is silent, but rather one that is undisturbed by unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities from any source, not just those referred to in the Regulations. In 2016 DAERA’s predecessor, the Department of the

---

<sup>(1)</sup> The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2006/387/contents/made>

<sup>(2)</sup> Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2002/49/oj/eng>

<sup>(3)</sup> The day-evening-night noise level. An indicator for overall annoyance based upon annual average A-weighted long-term sound over 24 hours. It includes a 5 dB(A) penalty for evening noise (19:00-23:00) and a 10 dB(A) penalty for night-time noise (23:00-07:00)

Environment, published Guidance on the Identification, Designation and Management of Quiet Areas<sup>4</sup> to identify candidate Quiet Areas.

The criteria for identifying Quiet Areas in Northern Ireland, was developed from observations of good practice across Europe and that adopted by other parts of the UK and Ireland. This has resulted in the following selection criteria:

1. Land Type Filter – Publicly available parks and open space within an agglomeration;
2. Noise Level Filter – Noise level less than 55dB Lden; and,
3. Minimum Area Filter – Minimum area of 5 hectares.

The Regulations require that noise sources are identified in accordance with Regulation 3 and that strategic noise maps are to be produced by Competent Authorities for the main sources of environmental noise, namely, roads, railways, airports and industry. In Round 1 noise mapping (2007) this consisted of agglomerations with more than 250,000 persons. In subsequent mapping Rounds, carried out every 5 years after Round 1, an agglomeration consists of more than 100,000 persons.



Lagan Meadows, which is situated within the Belfast agglomeration, is proposed as a Quiet Area on the basis of Round 4 noise mapping results.

Each Competent Authority is required, under the Regulations to draw up a noise action plan every 5 years. These plans have several requirements, one

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-quiet-areas>

of which is to protect Quiet Areas in agglomerations<sup>5</sup> against an increase in noise. The following entities were appointed under the Regulations as the Competent Authorities responsible for preparing the noise maps and action plans for each noise source:

- Road noise – Roads Service, DfI;
- Railway noise – Translink (Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company);
- Belfast City Airport noise - Belfast City Airport;
- Belfast International Airport noise - Belfast International Airport; and
- Industrial noise –DAERA/NIEA.

Once designated, a Quiet Area should be protected from an increase in noise. This is carried out via two existing mechanisms: Noise Action Plans and the existing legislative and policy frameworks under which District Councils work. These include, for example, the statutory nuisance regime, which covers noise emitted from premises (including land) so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and duties which fall to district councils under planning legislation, the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which contains provisions on statutory nuisance (noise) and the Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, which contains provisions relating to noise nuisance and provides district councils with the powers to serve an abatement order.

### **3. Identifying Quiet Areas**

Under the Regulations DAERA shall prepare maps identifying Quiet Areas in agglomerations. In 2016 three Quiet Areas were designated<sup>6</sup>:

1. Connor Park/Stricklands Glen, Bangor West;
2. Bashfordsland, Carrickfergus; and
3. Carnmoney Hill Upper, Newtownabbey.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Belfast Agglomeration comprises the urban areas of Belfast, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, Holywood, Dundonald, Bangor, Carryduff and a small number of small, urbanised areas in North Down

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/belfast-agglomeration-map-showing-three-quiet-areas>

Given the time that has elapsed since these designations and the introduction of a new calculation method for noise mapping, the Common Noise Assessment Methods (CNOSSOS)<sup>7</sup>, it is necessary to review the current Quiet Area designations across Northern Ireland against the Round 4 strategic noise maps<sup>8</sup>, which show modelled environmental noise levels based on 2021 data. This review has shown that these sites continue to meet the criteria and will remain designated Quiet Areas.

In advance of this consultation, DAERA undertook early pre-engagement with District Councils within the Belfast agglomeration, which is the only agglomeration, to discuss potential new sites for Quiet Areas based on the Round 4 noise maps. This consultation has taken into account their views and Lagan Meadows has been put forward as the preferred Candidate Quiet Area for public consultation.

Once the public consultation has closed DAERA will consider all responses and make a final recommendation to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs on the designation of Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area.

#### **4. The Proposed Site - Lagan Meadows**



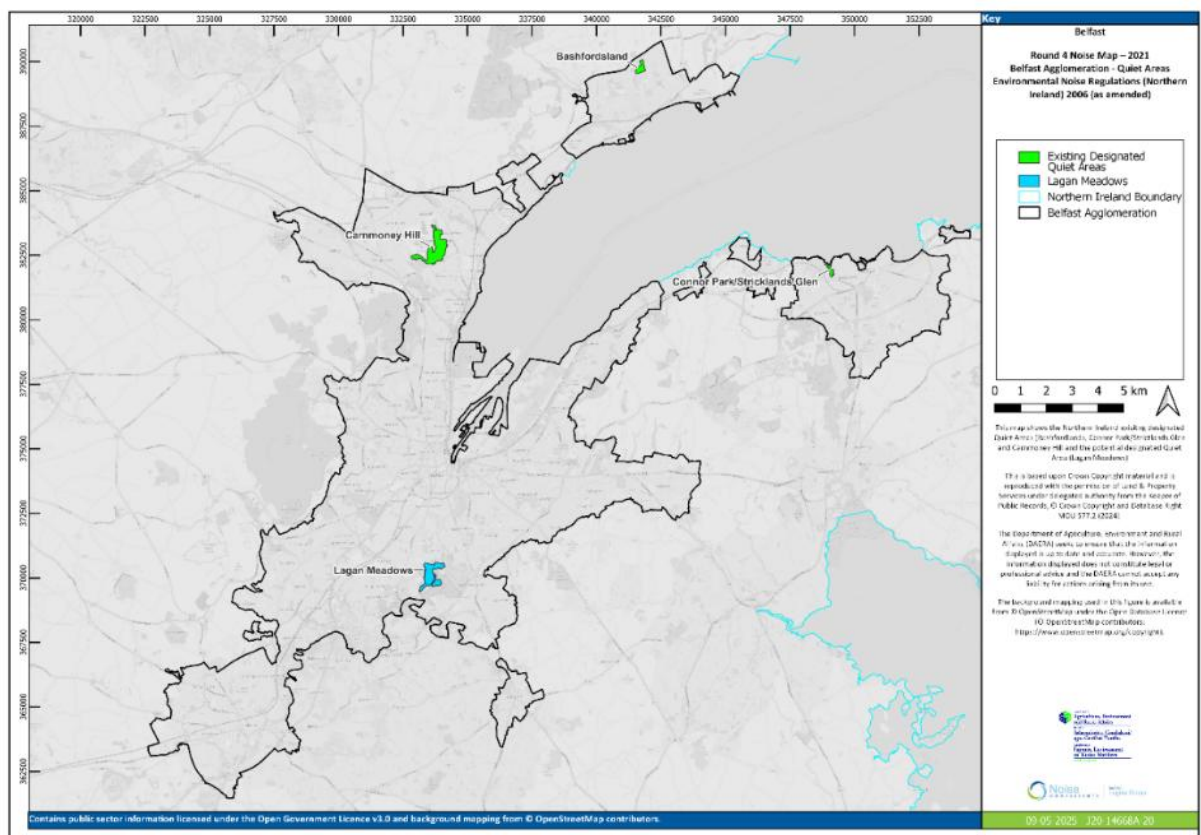
---

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_12\\_961](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_12_961)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/round-4-noise-maps-and-noise-mapping-technical-reports>

This site is located within the wider Lagan Valley Regional Park which was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is also a site of local nature conservation in line with the Belfast Local Development Plan Strategy<sup>9</sup>, which was adopted in May 2023. It is readily accessible by the general public and by public transport.

**Figure 1 Map of Belfast Agglomeration showing the location of Lagan Meadows**



<sup>9</sup> <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/local-development-plan-1>



Non-government organisation

Do you agree that Lagan Meadows should be designated as a Quiet Area for the purpose of the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006?

Yes

No

Please provide information on any matters that would affect the designation of Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area.

