Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group
Marine and Fisheries Division

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe
Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Reference Number: DAERA/26-770

[redacted]
No Gas Caverns Ltd
[redacted]

Marine Licensing Branch
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

Telephone: 02890 569247

E-mail: MarineandAquacultureLicensing@daera-ni.gov.uk

30 October 2026

Dear [redacted]

Environmental Information Regulation 2004

Thank you for your email dated 5 October 2026 requesting information held by the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA), under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI). You requested the following information: -

1. **The EIA Scoping Report submitted by Islandmagee Energy Limited in relation to the Islandmagee Gas Storage Project, prepared by Tetra Tech, dated 9 October 2025, together with any appendices and covering correspondence.**

In considering your request on behalf of the Department, I have determined that the information requested falls under the Environment Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), as opposed to FOI. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information. The EIR provides a right of public access to environmental information held by public authorities.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at: Guide to the Environmental Information Regulations | ICO.

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The Department has now completed its consideration of your request under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.

I can confirm that an EIA scoping request was made to the Department and consultation was undertaken by DAERA Marine Licensing to scope the proposal under the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (Marine Works Regulations). A formal Scoping Opinion was issued to Islandmagee Energy Ltd on 17 September 2026 and contains all consultations and representations to date.

The Opinion is enclosed with this response and is also available on the Marine Licensing Public Register at the following link: MLEIA2026013 - Islandmagee Energy Limited (IMEL) - Scoping Opinion | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/mleia2026013-islandmagee-energy-limited-imel-scoping-opinion)

Information associated with this request is also enclosed and is being released in accordance with the EIR.

In preparing the information for disclosure, the Department considered Regulation 13 of the EIR, which relates to the protection of personal data. Personal information has been redacted where necessary, as disclosure would contravene the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Accordingly, the requested information is released in part. Personal data has been withheld under Regulation 13 of the EIR 2004 and the remainder of the information is disclosed and has been provided with this response.

The Department has considered this element within the test attached at **Annex A** and has determined that no lawful basis for disclosure under EIR exists.

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.

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Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Enc: -

Islandmagee Gas Storage Facility - EIA Scoping Report (RPS TetraTech)
Islandmagee Gas Storage Facility - Location Plans (RPS TetraTech)
Islandmagee Gas Storage Facility - Likely Significant Effects (LSE) Screening Report (RPS TetraTech)
Islandmagee Gas Storage Facility - Marine Coastal Zone (MCZ) Screening Report (RPS TetraTech)
Islandmagee Gas Storage Facility - DAERA Scoping Opinion - Dated 17 September 2026. (DAERA Marine Licensing). Also available on the Marine Licensing Public Register - MLEIA2026013 - Islandmagee Energy Limited (IMEL) - Scoping Opinion | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

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ANNEX A - LAWFULNESS, FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY TEST

DAERA/26-770 - Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)

Request Details:
Copies of the EIA Scoping Report, appendices and covering correspondence submitted by Islandmagee Energy Limited in relation to the Islandmagee Gas Storage Project

Brief description of the Personal Data falling within the scope of the request

The requested information contains personal data, including the names and contact details of individuals involved in the matter under consideration. Data redacted from Appendices 1 to 5 includes personal as opposed to business names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. It also includes the redaction of signatures.

LAWFULNESS

Personal data is processed when it is lawfully disclosed in response to an EIR request.

The lawful basis for processing is set out in Article 6 of the GDPR and the ICO expects at least one of two lawful bases (Consent / Legitimate Interest) to apply before the personal data held can be disclosed.

Consent: This will apply when the data subject(s) clear consent exists that allows you to disclose the personal data falling within the scope of this request.

Legitimate interests: The processing is necessary for the Department's legitimate interests or the legitimate interests of a third party that overrides the data subject(s) rights and freedoms, particularly their right to privacy.

Consideration of Legitimate Interests

1. **PURPOSE**

As the disclosure of personal data under FOIA or EIR is a disclosure to the world at large, doing so on the strength of a requester's private interests alone could constitute a disproportionate and unwarranted level of interference with the data subject(s) rights and freedoms, particularly their right to privacy and family life under the Human Rights Act 1998.

2. **NECESSITY**

The right of access under FOI or EIR does not in itself constitute a **pressing social need**. The Department has considered and not identified any such need for the data subject's right to privacy to be interfered with.

CONCLUSION
Having considered all of the information contained within this test, the Department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third

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party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject. The Department is satisfied that disclosure of the personal data would be unlawful, unfair and not transparent. Accordingly, personal data should be withheld under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, while the remaining information should be disclosed.

Hannah Cobain – Senior Licensing Case Officer
Marine and Aquaculture Licensing Branch – DAERA Marine & Fisheries Division

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