

County House
Lifford
Co Donegal
Ireland
F93 Y622

09 July 2016

Natural Environment Division
Klondyke Building
Cromac Avenue
Gasworks Business Park
Malone Lower
BELFAST
BT7 2JA

Telephone: 028 905 69579

Re: SEA preliminary scoping report of the Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024

Dear Sir / Madam

Thank-you for your email dated 08July 2016 regarding the SEA preliminary scoping report of the Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland (DAERA) Northern Ireland Environment Agency has considered the consultation documents and our opinions are set out below.

General SEA Comments

Where the Republic of Ireland has environmental connections with Northern Ireland, there is the potential for impacts in Northern Ireland. We would anticipate that the transboundary nature of any likely significant adverse effects on the environment of the Republic of Ireland that would remain after measures



envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects are incorporated into the Plan would be of particular relevance to consider in relation to Northern Ireland.

We would like the SEA Environmental Report to contain a clear statement indicating the opinion (and the reasons for it), about whether or not the implementation of the Plan, in combination with any identified measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment, is likely to have a significant effect on Northern Ireland.

Ultimately we would like the SEA process to assess transboundary environmental impacts and identify and incorporate adequate mitigation into the plan to ensure there are no significant environmental effects on Northern Ireland.

For information, a couple of useful information sources that highlight the current state of the environment in Northern Ireland at a regional level are:

Northern Ireland State of the Environment Reports

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013>

State of the Seas Report.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-seas-report>

Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report>

Landscape Character and Seascape Character can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/landscape-character-northern-ireland>

UK National Ecosystems Assessment Chapter 18 Northern Ireland

[http://uknea.unepwcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m%2BvhAV3c9uk%3D&tabid=82,](http://uknea.unepwcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m%2BvhAV3c9uk%3D&tabid=82)

Northern Ireland Countryside Survey

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-countryside-survey-2007-broad-habitat-change-1998-2007>

Specific SEA comments



Air Quality: On p14 - 'Air / Climatic Factors' - there doesn't appear to be any consideration of air quality, only climate change effects. Consideration could be given to local air quality impacts potentially affected by the Plan's strategic issues - for example, infrastructure (vehicle emissions), housing (household emissions).

Climate Change: The EU Adaptation Strategy could be added to the table on Page 8.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna: DAERA welcomes the consideration of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas in Northern Ireland within the SEA process. Please note in Appendix 3, Table 8: 'Northern Ireland: Special Areas of Conservation', that Bann Estuary SAC should be added to the table.

Information about this and other designated sites in Northern Ireland may be found at:

http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/SAC_list.asp?Country=NI

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1404>

Local Development Plans in Northern Ireland: We anticipate that any relevant current or emerging Local Development Plan in Northern Ireland which shares a border with County Donegal (those associated with Derry City and Strabane District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council) will be taken into account in the development of the County Donegal Development Plan and its associated SEA.

Please contact the SEA Team at seateam@daera-ni.gov.uk should you have any queries or require clarification.

Yours sincerely

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