

## STATEMENT OF CASE ON PROPOSED ROAD ABANDONMENT 2021/DR001

I, [REDACTED] on behalf of myself and family wish to strongly object to the abandonment of what we know locally as the Green Road. This road is very important not only to my family but the community of Greencastle. It is of upmost historical and religious importance with many believing it was the route taken by the Flight of the Earls in 1607 as they fled to waiting boats in Donegal. There is a Mass Rock from Penal times watched over by a beautiful statue of our lady: many come here to pray, with annual rosaries every May. This Road Abandonment contravenes with the Fermanagh & Omagh Local Development Plan 2030, The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporating the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the Aarhus Convention therefore should not be approved.

My family use the Green Road (local name for road to be abandoned) daily for walking, [walks in the Omagh district | Omagh District Guide \(myomagh.com\)](#) my wife especially enjoys walking this road as she likes to bird watch; This Spring and summer she has seen nesting curlews, buzzards, cuckoos, hen harriers, Sky larks, Stone chats, Owls, woodpeckers and many more species of bird along its route. [Wildlife & Bird Protection Laws UK \(rspb.org.uk\)](#) There is also red squirrel, badgers, foxes, Irish hares, rabbits, bats, lizards, newts, the list is endless of animals and birds who call this road home. [The Wildlife \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1985 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) Dalradian has quoted in one of their PR posts that they will build new badger dens, put up bat boxes and if need be catch every lizard and newt by hand for rehoming, we do not think this would be possible, animals cannot read so how would they know where they moving to and its illegal to catch or handle lizards, so Dalradian staff catching them by hand and putting them in containers would not be a good idea. [Common lizard | Amphibian and Reptile Conservation \(arc-trust.org\)](#) Dalradian planning application contravenes with Fermanagh & Omagh Council Local Development Plan 2030 policy NE02 – Protected Species and their Habitats European Protected Species.” Habitats Regulations Assessment regulation 43 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) [Local Development Plan \(fermanaghomagh.com\)](#) If this planning application got permission, birds and animals would be severely impacted by habitat loss, ripping out trees and bogland to make way for a new road, waste rock dump, tailings ponds, underground mine and buildings; water pollution from heavy metals, chemicals, Acid drainage mining, diesel and many other pollutants; [Biodiversity | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#) as well as direct disturbances caused by noise, vibration and light pollution. [2021\\_11\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Gold\\_WWF\\_1.pdf](#) This area in recent years is being recognised for its abundant in wildlife, many of which are on the protected list, endangered species are thriving here due to mindful farming and good care- taking of the land by farmers and local landowners; this summer eight pairs of nesting curlews were recorded by my wife, all within a mile of the proposed gold mine, there is many more nesting on farms within a five mile radius of the proposed goldmine which would also be impacted by the mine. The cuckoos return every May, many farms in the surrounding areas having at least one breeding pair. The birds and wildlife have never been properly recorded in this area, surveys have begun the past few years as wildlife organisations realise the importance of this area as a prime breeding place for endangered birds and animals. Farmers of this area know the importance of what lives on their land and protects it like generations before them. It would be a shame for Dalradian to destroy in twenty years what has taken generations of families to protect.

I myself cycle the Green Road either as part of a group called The Sperrin Wheelers or by myself, I also walk it with a group called Sperrin Trails. It is a lovely tranquil place, surrounded by breath-taking scenery, unpolluted fresh air and not much traffic; it is good for my physical and mental health, no better place to be after a bad day. [crockanboy hill greencastle omagh photos - Search Images \(bing.com\)](#) Sometimes as a family, we go and sit by the holy statue and enjoy the wild, rugged mountain views, it is great for the body and mind, better than any doctors tablets. it is a wonderful place to meet friends and neighbours, which in a rural community can be so important as people can feel isolated, with its benches and sitting areas you can sit and chat with others who are using the road. On an average day I could meet numerous walkers, runners, dog walkers, families with young children, cyclists and horse riders, for a peaceful place it can have its busy periods and a half an hour's walk can turn into half a day. This road is important to the people of this area, be it for leisure, bird watching, sports, or praying; it plays an important role in the health and wellbeing of our community and should not be abandoned on the whim of a gold mining company. This road should not have been considered solely, but as part of a whole planning application; project splitting should not be allowed, the road will not need abandoned if any other part of the gold mine application is rejected.

[Aarhus Implementation Guide interactive\\_eng.pdf \(unece.org\)](#)

A court case on the 28<sup>th</sup> of Feb 2022 in Belfast on asserting the road, [IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND \(judiciaryni.uk\)](#) those, on the stand on Dalradian's behalf found themselves reminiscing about walking to school along the Green Road, which proved the road had been and continues to be used by the community for generations, Dalradian needs this road abandoned for it runs straight though their proposed planning application. For years now the community has taken responsibility for some of the upkeep of the Green road, stoning and levelling it when needed for walks such as the Darkness into light, a walk which takes place each year; as a community if we need something we come together to make it happen. Unlike the mining company we realise money does not grow on trees and we cannot demand money at the expense of other projects. The Roads Service do their best maintaining the Green Road with the limited resources they have; so, if we can help by buying stones and manpower we do.

There have been visitors from all over the world walking the Green Road, America, Peru, Brazil, The Amazon, Mexico to name but a few. Not one person who visited could believe our government would allow such a beautiful area to be destroyed by a gold mine. They recognised where the real gold is, and it was not under the ground but all around us in the Bogs, Glens, Hills, Streams and Mountains. [standing\\_advice\\_13\\_priority\\_habitats\\_final\\_2017.pdf \(qub.ac.uk\)](#) On this road was two beautiful stone holiday accommodation ( which funny enough for years on booking sites the address given for this holiday location was 80 Mullydoo road, not Crockanboy Rd) they were always booked out, people loved coming to stay enjoying the peaceful 5 star accommodation with a 100 acres of walks though beautiful rugged countryside; these beautiful buildings, one of which is a 200 year old stone cottage will be knocked to the ground by Dalradian to build their processing plant and 17 storey high waste rock dump [Pollan Rua Cottage & Barn i Greencastle, UK - Lets Book Hotel](#). I still see campers on the road who come for a few days to escape and relax, enjoy the beauty of this wonderful place. It is not only the daytime that is beautiful up the Green Road, but nights as well; the night skies are something to behold, every star is viable on a clear night, parents take their children up the Green Road to point out stars and constellations. This area is renowned for its dark skies which will be destroyed by the light pollution from a gold mine operating 24 hours a day. [Davagh Forest Park Becomes First International Dark Sky Place in Northern Ireland | DarkSky International](#) Instead of a proposed gold mine we should be looking at sustainable industries e.g. tourism.

Promoting this beautiful historic road not allowing a mining company to destroy it for short term gain. Dalradian whose interest is money and profit could never understand the importance of this road to our community, from the oldest to the youngest in our community we have grown up with the history of the Green Road, from a young age we heard the stories of those who lived along its route, the highway man who roamed its length, the last wolves, how our ancestors travelled along it to escape hunger and persecution, this road for many was the last sight they got of Ireland as they made their way to ships which would take them to England or America. A new road could never replace this history, this road is part of our identity as indigenous people, [About Indigenous Peoples and human rights | OHCHR](#) it has stood as a witness of who we were, and who we became. Relatives coming from America and other parts of the world can walk in the steps of their ancestors, this road has played a big part in the history of our community and in Ireland's history, therefore must be protected.

This road abandonment not only contravenes many policies in Fermanagh & Omagh LPD but fundamental Human Rights of communities; [European Convention on Human Rights \(coe.int\)](#) therefore, this application to abandon the Green Road must be rejected.

As a community we were not consulted or participated in any decision making to abandon the Green Road.

Yours faithfully

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\_\_\_\_\_ Crockanboy Road

Greencastle