

Statement of case against Dalradian Gold Ltd Road Abandonment Application (PAC Ref: DR001) (1000 words)

As a local resident of this community and an advocate for our shared well-being, I feel compelled to voice my emphatic opposition to Dalradian Gold Ltd.'s Road Abandonment Application (PAC Ref: DR001). This proposal is not merely about a road; it signifies a troubling shift toward prioritizing corporate interests over the health, happiness, and unity of our community. Therefore, I urgently call for the rejection of planning permission for this proposal.

The Vital Role of Recreational Spaces

The road in question serves as a cornerstone of our local life, providing essential access to recreational activities that enhance physical health and mental well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) stresses that regular physical activity is vital for reducing disease risk and fostering mental resilience (World Health Organization, 2020). Engaging in physical activities has been linked to various benefits, including lower rates of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and mental health challenges like depression and anxiety. Regular engagement in physical activities has also been shown to improve cognitive function and overall health (Warburton et al., 2006). To relinquish access to this road for the sake of a private mining company's profits is to deny us our fundamental right to enjoy the health benefits that this community space offers.

Research published in the Journal of Environmental Psychology emphasizes that accessible green spaces are crucial for physical health and overall well-being (Kaczynski & Henderson, 2007). These spaces enable community members to engage in physical activities while also experiencing the therapeutic advantages of nature. Nature exposure is associated with improved mood, reduced stress, and increased feelings of well-being (Kaplan, 1995). Allowing the closure of this road—driven by profit motives—would be a serious disservice to the community that has nurtured this space for generations, effectively sacrificing our collective health for corporate gain.

The Environmental Implications of Mining

The implications of abandoning this road extend beyond recreational access and personal health; they profoundly affect our local environment. The road provides a critical connection to the natural surroundings that define our community. In recent decades, the detrimental impacts of mining on local ecosystems and public health have become well-documented. Research indicates that mining activities can lead to habitat destruction, increased pollution, and adverse health effects for surrounding communities (Gibson et al., 2015; Hilson, 2002). By prioritizing mining activities over our natural environment, we jeopardize the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink, as well as the biodiversity of our local ecosystems.

Mining involves significant land disturbance and can lead to soil erosion, water contamination, and loss of biodiversity. Studies have shown that heavy metals and toxic chemicals released during mining operations can leach into water systems, affecting both

human and ecological health (McCauley, 2018). This presents an urgent concern, as our community relies on these natural resources for both recreation and sustenance. To close this road in favor of mining operations would disregard the long-term consequences of such decisions on our environment and community health.

Furthermore, we must recognize that closing the road to facilitate mining activities risks compromising our local environment and the health of our ecosystems. The potential for increased pollution and habitat destruction associated with mining activities is well-documented (Gibson et al., 2015). Research has shown that exposure to natural environments can significantly enhance mood and cognitive function (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). This connection to nature is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and stewardship within the community, making it even more imperative that we oppose any plans to abandon this road.

Social Connection and Community Cohesion

In addition to its recreational and environmental significance, the road in question serves as a vital conduit for social interaction and community cohesion. Recreational areas are more than mere spaces for activity; they are gathering spots that strengthen community bonds. For many, this road symbolizes community identity—where families gather, friends connect, and individuals engage in communal experiences. A study in the *Journal of Leisure Research* notes that community recreational spaces are fundamental in promoting social interaction and cohesion, which are essential for building a healthy community (Cohen et al., 2010).

In the age of social media and digital communication, the importance of physical spaces for in-person interaction has become even more significant. As society becomes increasingly urbanized and digitally connected, accessible outdoor space for recreation and socialization is invaluable. Community leaders must take proactive steps to preserve these spaces that foster human connection rather than sacrificing them for short-term corporate interests.

Long-Term Community Value vs. Corporate Profit

It is crucial to highlight that the decision to abandon this road reflects a broader issue concerning the relationship between corporations and local communities. Historically, large corporations often prioritize short-term profits at the expense of local well-being, leading to decisions that can undermine community health and cohesion. This trend must be challenged, especially when the costs to community welfare are significant. The belief that corporate growth should come at the expense of local livelihoods and community integrity is a dangerous precedent.

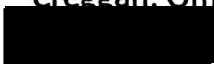
Moreover, community well-being and ecological health should be viewed as long-term investments rather than obstacles to corporate gain. Sustainable development emphasizes the coexistence of economic growth and community health, encouraging practices that are equitable and environmentally friendly. Therefore, it is entirely reasonable to expect that decision-makers prioritize the community's health and future over the interests of a private entity seeking profit.

Conclusion

In light of all these critical points, I urgently call for the rejection of Dalradian Gold Ltd.'s application for planning permission. This decision is not just about maintaining a road; it's about safeguarding our community's health, social connection, and our collective future. As stewards of our community, we must resist this encroachment of corporate interests and reassert the value of communal spaces in supporting an active, healthy, and unified community.

Let us collectively protect our recreational areas and ensure that future generations can enjoy the myriad benefits of access to nature and active living. I implore you to prioritize the well-being of our residents over the unchecked aspirations of private corporations. Together, we can uphold the integrity of our community, safeguard our health and environment, and pave the way for a brighter, healthier future.

Thank you for considering this vital community matter and for acting in the best interests of our residents.


Greggan. Omagh


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