

Conjoined Public Local Inquiries:

Curraghinalt Mine Project:

- Dalradian Gold Ltd LA10/2017/1249/F (PAC Ref: C005)

Curraghinalt 33Kv Project:

- Dalradian Gold Ltd LA10/2019/1386/F - NIE Networks (PAC Ref:C006)
- Dalradian Gold Ltd LA11/2019/1000/F - NIE Networks (PAC Ref: C007)

Consent to discharge:

- Dalradian Gold Ltd TrC 080/20_1 - DAERA (PAC Ref: 2021/WHR01)
- Dalradian Gold Ltd TrC 081/20_1 - DAERA (PAC Ref: 2021/WHR02)

Water Abstraction and Impoundment

- Dalradian Gold Ltd AIL 2024/0008 - NIEA (PAC Ref: 2024/WHR01)
- Dalradian Gold Ltd AIL 2024/0009 - NIEA (PAC Ref: 2024/WHR02)

Dalradian Gold Ltd Road Abandonment Application (PAC Ref:DR001)

Statement of Case - Green Road

Introduction

This statement of case represents 3 generations of the [REDACTED] family Oaghmonicroy.

Support documentation for the application acknowledge, 'This track is known locally as "green road". There is a local tradition that this was the route taken by O'Neill to Rathmullan when fleeing from Ireland in 1607. There is no contemporary record or historical or academic record or evidence to support this.' This area has been celebrated for it's input to the world of Irish folklore, lore and the word of our people and our collective cultural memory is of extreme importance. Without these histories passed down orally so much of our history would be lost. We must acknowledge that it is highly probably that the local tradition is accurate.

Dalradian acknowledge that the route has been shown on various sources and that it was part of a route connecting Newtownstewart to Cookstown. I would question whether the assessments done have researched Irish language sources.

As can be seen from the pictures below from a sports day, the Green Rd has been used locally for generations. It has offered a safe space, free from heavy traffic to run family activities, to go for a walk, a run etc. A member of our family has even been horse riding up there. Since Covid the importance of getting out into fresh air has been highlighted and we need to develop this road further to be used and publicised better.

Unfortunately since Dalradian tried to remove the road from public use it has lead to tension in the community around the use of the road. Community groups and clubs who may want to use the green road are seen to be 'pushing an agenda' leading to less activities or more dangerous routes being used. It is unacceptable that our community would lose this safe accessible route

and be forced to use more dangerous paths with more traffic for the sake of a company whose main aim is profit for their shareholders.



WWF the leading global environmental charity say 'Spending time connecting with nature is brilliant for our mental wellbeing. It can reduce stress and anxiety, lift our mood and help our minds rest.'¹ We are witnessing a mental health crisis in the UK, now is the time to preserve our unspoilt areas of nature, not destroy them and take the chance of environmental damage which will lead to even more mental health issues dealt with mostly by those directly affected by the mine, those living locally and not those set to make a profit from this operation who know nothing about or do not care about this area. Our right to live and grow up in a healthy environment with clean air and water, without conflict, must be considered above the rights of a company whose primary responsibility is to create value for its shareholders and investors. The precautionary principle is necessary to ensure our environment is not damaged irrevocably.

Cultural Heritage

You like to take kids outside when weather good and during summer schemes, this development and the affects on our air make you fearful for taking them outside. Even using the green road has become a contentious issue and it should be an asset to us as it's a lot safer than surrounding roads - less traffic etc, great for nature walks, you remember it being used for the 'train' at the sports and the fun we had on it. Now our children's experience of it is negative due to dalradian's threats and they may lose the reasource alltogether

And maybe something about health and wellbeing of members, negative impact of stress in the family home up to now, will be worse when it's passed. Green areas and walks in nature are seen to be stress relievers but Dalradians plans undo all that for us as can't use the green rd etc

Tourism

¹ <https://www.wwf.org.uk/our-reports/pfn-evidence>

The plans have the potential to undermine plans to develop our area as a tourist amenity. Research shows that landscapes and rich history are one of the key reasons why visitors choose to visit Ireland, we must focus on this by protecting the Green Road from these plans.²

People come to the Sperrins because it isn't a high population or traffic area, for the rugged landscape, the peace, the quiet, the feeling of being in the wilderness. A look at local Airbnb feedback shows people appreciate the area as it is: Beautiful, peaceful surroundings. ; Surroundings of the cabin were gorgeous and the views were lovely; Perfect place for a peaceful recharge; Thoroughly enjoyed our stay in a scenic area.; Incredible surroundings; It is lovely, peaceful. The Green Road offers us this. It lies in an area designated an AONB for over 50 years, more designation in the recent council community plan recognise it's importance and special character. These designations must be defended, Dalradian's plans do not align with the character and beauty of this area.

Tourism NI highlights that visitors want to 'Immerse themselves in landscape and nature - Experiences that offer immersion in the landscape and coast. Unobstructed, unspoilt, breath-taking views then getting off the beaten track for a different perspective of the biodiversity and nature that surrounds them.' and that the 'appeal broadens if walks are not too long and do not cover difficult terrain.'³ The Green road offers this and needs protected.

Spending time exploring the Northern Irish countryside

Relaxed, scenic walking trails with opportunities to learn about the local culture and history. Explore the frequent diversions along the way for example ancient castles and ruins or historical buildings and discover their local stories. Stopping off or staying in quaint towns and villages to find a cosy B&B or farmhouse for the night and share a story or a song or two with the locals in the pub.

Not everyone likes to be too remote, while others are happy to delve into the depth of Northern Ireland's countryside. While the landscape is at the heart of these walks, they need to be enhanced by offers of cultural discovery, with the potential for a theme to add appeal.

Appeal broadens if walks are not too long and do not cover difficult terrain.

While needing to be clearly waymarked, trails should preferably be natural, not overly managed, providing the freedom to explore the natural countryside.

Image - Tourism NI - Outdoors and landscape insights

DAERA Land and Landscapes acknowledge,

'Landscape in itself is difficult to value objectively. Much of what is valued in a landscape is a blend of natural features and social and cultural history, which is highly evocative and therefore important to people. The poignancy of this is outwardly reflected in art, poetry and song and inwardly in a sense of pride, belonging and comfort, all reinforcing this feeling of 'value'. Increasingly this value

² 'Highlighting the economic benefits of AONBs, the Minister said "Research from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board shows that landscapes are one of the key reasons why visitors choose to come to Northern Ireland." 'Of those planning to visit Ireland, beautiful landscapes and scenery are the main attractor across all markets (34% of those interested in visiting), comparatively of highest importance to Europeans (Germany 46%, France 44%, Italy 39%)... Great culture and rich history are further attractors, important particularly to visitors from the US, Canada and Spain....Alice Mansergh, Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland, said: "The sentiment tracker undertaken with RED C highlights strengths that the island of Ireland can play to in order to win visitors – our epic scenery, great culture, history and heritage, and the sense of exploration that we offer."...'

<https://www.tourismireland.com/news-and-press-releases/press-releases/article/tourism-ireland-s-latest-research-reveals-what-compels-overseas-visitors-to-choose-the-island-of-ireland>

³

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://www.tourismni.com/globalassets/industry-in-sights/outdoor--landscapes/outdoors-landscapes-insights-july-2023.pdf>

is also being realised in economic terms with the overt marketing of landscape for tourism and as a pleasant place for recreation or to live in.⁴

We fully agree with this description and feel that it shows why the Green Road must be protected as it adds great value to our area while at the same time being a free green resource for all to use.

Council Policy⁵

The council's 2030 development plan places importance on the protection of open space, Policy OSRO1. This is extremely relevant here especially as this open space offered by the Green Road is a safe area for all generations.

Policy TOU01 relates to the Protection of Tourism Assets and Tourism Development. Getting rid of the Green Road would be destruction of our tourism assets and would reduce any tourism development options locally.

Conclusion

The above submission highlights our concerns. The Green Road is used and has been used for generations, it adds great value to the area and needs protected for the people of the area to use and hopefully as the Sperrins Partnership develops we will be able to add tourism initiatives to it as well.

Keep the Green Road as is.

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<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/land-and-landscapes/landscapes#:~:text=Scenic%20countryside%20The%20mosaic%20of%20prehistoric%20monuments%2C,are%20part%20of%20our%20culture%20and%20heritage.>

⁵ Local Development Plan 2030

<chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.fermanaghmagh.com/app/uploads/2019/04/Fermanagh-and-Omagh-LDP-Strategy.pdf>