

Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST
BT4 3SP
Tel: 028 9038 8462
Fax: 028 9076 5384
E Mail: minerals@economy-ni.gov.uk

Mr David Jackson
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast and Glens Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1EU

Cc Shane Mathers, Principal Planning Officer

9 May 2019

Dear Mr Jackson,

MINERAL PROSPECTING LICENCE APPLICATION NOTIFICATION – DALRADIAN GOLD

I am writing to you about the notification concerning applications for Mineral Prospecting Licences (MPL) from the above company, (note that Dalradian Gold has applied for two separate licences).

The Mineral Development Act (NI) 1969 vested most minerals in Department for the Economy (DfE) and enables it to grant licences for the exploration and development of minerals. Following consideration of the notification responses, and the completion of a public interest test, the Department granted the Mineral Prospecting Licences on 8 May 2019. More information on these can be found on the DfE website.

[Dalradian Gold DG3 and DG4 documents](#)

It is important to clarify that the provisions relating to prospecting for minerals are separate and distinct from those relating to mining or extraction of mineral deposits and that these licences are for prospecting only. The legislation and the licensing process reflect the fact that there is no *automatic* continuity between exploration and extraction work.

The granting of a Mineral Prospecting Licence confers limited rights on the Licensee to search for minerals. However, Licensees are also required to obtain a range of further separate permissions for various prospecting activities from DfE and other regulatory authorities such as Councils, Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) as appropriate.

A Minerals Prospecting Licence can cover an area up to 250km² and permits prospecting for a broad range of metals and minerals (with the exception of gold and silver which are

controlled by the Crown Estate). Activities include correlation of existing data, soil and stream sampling analysis, mapping of rocks and geophysical surveying using handheld instruments and usually leads the company to focus any further exploration activity on more specific areas. More information on this is available in the Common Exploration Methods paper on the Department's website:

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Common-Exploration-Methods-2017-Update.pdf>

You may wish to note that similar mineral prospecting has been ongoing in Northern Ireland for over 40 years, using the same (though now updated) techniques, and is carried out under strict regulatory and environmental controls. Mineral exploration and development takes place within a framework of environmental legislation that is intended to protect the natural heritage and minimise environmental impact.

The Department has produced a report setting out its responses to the issues raised in the notification process which can be found on our website at

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/economy/Dalradian-summary.pdf>

Where appropriate the issues raised have been reflected in the work programme agreed with the applicant companies.

Again thank you for taking the time to respond, if you or colleagues require any further information about the licensing process or about minerals prospecting activity in your area, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mark Wilson

MINERALS AND PETROLEUM BRANCH