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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DIVISION COMMENTS RE: SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT – IRELANDS FOREST STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2022-2030

DfC Historic Environment Division (HED) operate via a Service Level Agreement with colleagues in DAERA in relation to SEA, whereby, we provide authoritative comment and advice in relation to matters of Cultural Heritage including archaeological and architectural heritage. We make the following comments in respect of the documentation received by our office on 20/10/2022.

As outlined in our screening response for the strategy dated 15/09/2022, HED welcomes the aims and objectives of the strategy and implementation plan in principle but reiterate that the potential for transboundary effects on cultural heritage, needs to be adequately taken into account in the SEA environmental report.

Many heritage assets are located near the border area and some, such as historic landscapes and routeways traverse it. Afforestation projects, both large scale new forests with associated infrastructure and smaller agricultural planting schemes, as outlined by the measures under interventions 1 & 2, have the potential to change the landscape character and the setting of heritage assets and how they are seen, enjoyed, and understood. Direct impacts on historic routeways, tree plantings, field boundaries and patterns can also affect the narrative of historic landscape character, which reveals how our ancestors were influenced by and shaped the distinctive character of a place over time.

HED considers that the potential for effects on the setting of heritage assets and historic landscape character have been sufficiently captured in the draft cultural heritage targets, (Table 6.1), and mitigation measures (Table 9.1), but should also be assessed in the context of the potential for transboundary effects on cultural heritage.

To aid this assessment, we include links to our Historic Environment datasets, which include recorded designated and non-designated heritage assets, available at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/historic-environment-digital-datasets>. This data can also be accessed via our Historic Environment Map Viewer <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/historic-environment-map-viewer>.

Relevant Plans and Strategies relating to the historic environment in Northern Ireland are also outlined below for reference:

Legislation

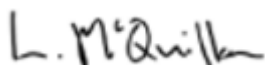
- Fisheries Act 2020
- Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

Regional Strategies and policies

- [Regional Development Strategy 2035 \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk) - Spatial strategy for Northern Ireland
- [Archaeology 2030 - A Strategic Approach for Northern Ireland.pdf \(niheritagedelivers.org\)](https://www.niheritagedelivers.org)
- [The Strategic Planning Policy Statement](#), Paragraphs 6.1-6.30 outlines the strategic planning policy around heritage assets in Northern Ireland

Should you have any queries in regard to the content of our response please contact us at the above address.

Yours sincerely



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HERITAGE RECORDS AND DESIGNATIONS BRANCH