



Subject:	Update on DAERA consultation on the Designation of Quiet Areas
Date:	10 th August 2021
Reporting Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services
Contact Officer:	Valerie Brown, City Services Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The Committee will be aware that on the 21 st September 2016, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) commenced consultation into the designation of an area of the Lagan Meadows as a 'Quiet Area', under the provisions of Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 th June 2002, relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, more commonly referred to as the Environmental Noise Directive or END, and of Regulation 40 of the Environmental Noise (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006, relating to the preparation of noise maps identifying quiet areas in agglomerations. END defines an agglomeration as 'part of a territory, delimited by the Member State, having a population in excess of 100,000 persons and a population density such that the Member State considers it to be an urbanised area'.

<p>1.2</p> <p>1.3</p> <p>1.4</p>	<p>The People and Communities Committee considered this designation at its meeting of 11th October 2016 and subsequently provided a written consultation response to DAERA advising that the Committee welcomed and was supportive of designation of the Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area. Moreover, the Committee advised DAERA that it noted the public health and wider environmental benefits of protecting appropriate Quiet Areas across Belfast and that council officers would continue to engage with the Department to help refine the screening criteria to be applied in subsequent rounds of Quiet Area identification and designation.</p> <p>The DAERA consultation formally concluded on the 19th October 2016 but the Council has been unaware subsequently as to the outworkings of the consultation process and regarding DAERA's intentions and timetable for formally designating the Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area.</p> <p>This report serves therefore to provide an update to the People and Communities Committee on progress by DAERA concerning designation of the Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area.</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>
<p>2.1</p>	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the contents of this report.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main report</p>
<p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Committee is advised that the Environmental Noise Directive (END) has been transposed into Northern Ireland legislation through the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, with three main objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping; (ii) To make information on environmental noise available to the public; and (iii) To develop Noise Action Plans based on the mapping results, to reduce noise levels where necessary, and to preserve environmental noise quality where it is good, including protecting Quiet Areas. <p>The Regulations required that by the 30th September 2007, DAERA was to have prepared noise maps identifying Quiet Areas in agglomerations. The Department was to have then considered whether the noise maps produced continued to be appropriate and if not, by the 30th September in any subsequent 'relevant' year, the Department was to have prepared, if it considered it necessary, updated noise maps identifying Quiet Areas in agglomerations. The 'relevant' years were 2012 and every fifth year thereafter, i.e. 2017, 2022, etc. Certified</p>

	<p>copies of the maps were to be made available for inspection by DAERA on a website or in another manner considered to be appropriate.</p>
3.3	<p>In order to assist in identifying Quiet Areas within agglomerations, DAERA published, 'Draft Guidance on the Identification and Designation of Quiet Areas' in September 2015. Qualifying criteria included that the land to be designated should be publicly available parks or open space within the agglomeration, that the noise level at the location should be less than or equal to 55 dB L_{den}; and that the land should have a minimum area of 5 hectares (circa 12.4 acres). The term L_{den} relates to an averaged noise level, based on modelled Day, Evening and Night noise levels, as denoted in the various technical mapping reports and accompanying DAERA online Noise Map Viewer:</p> <p>https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/noise-maps</p>
3.4	<p>With regard to the protection of Quiet Areas, DAERA guidance advises that district councils are to manage the local noise environment within Quiet Areas to avoid increases in noise from the sources covered by END, i.e. road, railway, aircraft and industrial noise sources. In addition, they are to protect Quiet Areas by bringing forward bespoke policies in their Local Development Plans and managing the noise impact of development through determining planning applications. Accordingly, Policy ENV1 - Environmental Quality of Belfast City Council's Local Development Plan, Draft Plan Strategy document advises that, 'Planning permission will be granted for development that will maintain and, where possible, enhance environmental quality, and protect communities from materially harmful development'. The Policy further advises that the Council will require development to positively address protection of the city's designated Quiet Areas and quiet times of day for businesses (daytime) and residents (night-time).</p>
3.5	<p>In order to obtain an update on the designation of the Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area, council environmental officers contacted their counterparts within DAERA. By way of response, the Department has advised that three Quiet Areas were designated within the Greater Belfast agglomeration on the 20th September 2016, on the basis of round 2 (for the 2012 year) noise mapping results. These were Connor Park / Stricklands Glen in Bangor West; Bashfordsland in Carrickfergus; and Carnmoney Hill Upper in Newtownabbey.</p>
3.6	<p>DAERA has additionally advised that the absence of a DAERA Minister from early 2017 prevented designation of the Lagan Meadows as a Quiet Area from progressing, and that in the intervening time period, round 2 noise mapping data (for the 2012 year), on which the</p>

<p>3.7</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p>	<p>Lagan Meadows Quiet Area consultation was based, has been superseded by round 3 noise mapping data (for the 2017 year) and will be informed further by round 4 noise maps. Referring to the Department's various noise maps for the Lagan Meadows area, it is noted that 2017 year round 3 modelled consolidated L_{den} noise levels have broadly decreased across the Lagan Meadows when compared with the consolidated L_{den} noise levels reported for the 2012 year round 2 noise mapping.</p> <p>Moreover, DAERA has advised that round 4 noise maps are to employ an updated noise mapping methodology as detailed within Commission Directive 2015/996 of the 19th May 2015, establishing common noise assessment methods according to Directive 2002/49/EC, relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, i.e. Common Noise Assessment Methods in Europe for road, railway, aircraft and industrial noise (CNOSSOS-EU).</p> <p>DAERA has therefore advised that further work relating to the designation of Quiet Areas in Northern Ireland will be based on the outcome of round 4 noise mapping which will incorporate the CNOSSOS-EU noise assessment methodology.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications.</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments</u></p> <p>None.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>