

Title of Report:	Correspondence Report
Committee Report Submitted To:	Environmental Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	9th September 2025
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Leader and Champion
Outcome	Establish key relationships with Government, agencies and potential strategic partners
Lead Officer	Director of Environmental Services

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	N/A

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes /No N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes /No N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes /No N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes /No N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes /No N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes /No N/A	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

2.0 The following correspondence has been received:

2.1 Air and Environmental Quality Branch, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, dated 17th June 2025 (copy attached)

Summary

Re. Launch of the Noise Map Viewer

Correspondence from the Air and Environmental Quality Branch, DAERA, dated 17th June 2025, regarding the development of a new noise map viewer to host noise maps from Round 4 onwards.

2.2 Rathlin LIFE Raft Project, received 27th August 2025 (copy attached)

Summary

Correspondence from RSPB NI Area Manager, received on 27th August 2025, regarding a request by LIFE Raft Team and RDCA that Council commits to providing one skip per month for the next six months and thereafter one skip per quarter to meet ongoing biosecurity needs.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Environmental Services Committee consider the correspondence.



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Email: AEQTeam@daera-ni.gov.uk

17 June 2025

Dear Stakeholder,

Launch of the Noise Map Viewer

The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 ('the Regulations') require that strategic noise maps made under the Regulations, are made available to the public.

These strategic noise maps for road, rail, airport and industry noise, once approved or adopted, are published on the Department's website as PDFs. However, to improve accessibility and usability of the maps for stakeholders, the Department has also published noise maps on an interactive noise map viewer.

New regulations, which transposed the Common Noise Assessment Methods Directive (CNOSSOS), came into operation in 2018, and applied to Round 4 (2021) noise mapping onwards. These regulations changed the calculation methods for noise modelling and so Round 4 maps are not directly comparable with previous rounds of

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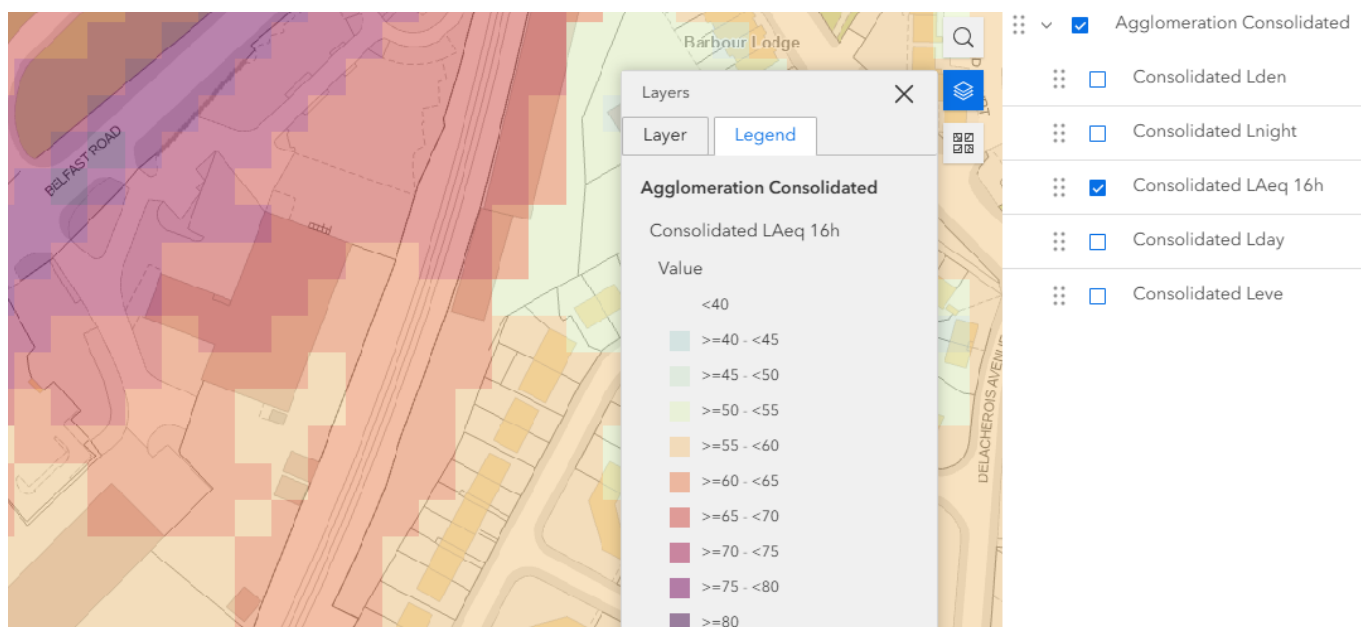
maps. The Department has developed a new noise map viewer to host noise maps from Round 4 onwards.

The noise map viewer has some significant improvements on the previous model and includes features relevant to planning policy. Specifically in identifying the cumulative impact of noise in areas of your chosen interest within the Belfast Agglomeration. The major roads layer extends across all of Northern Ireland, assisting in the identification of modelled road noise levels in a much larger region.

The new features include:

- a. The transparency of maps can be altered to view the basemap underneath;
- b. An address search enables the user to search any address in Northern Ireland;
- c. Ability to turn on and off noise indicator layers across noise sources; and
- d. Ability to select different basemaps underneath the noise maps layer.

The screenshot below provides an example on how the new mapping system is relevant to your policy area. For example, there is a current planning proposal for the proposed development of 75 no. dwelling units, 26 apartments, 48 semi-detached and 1 detached bungalow, at 70 Belfast Road Lisburn, application reference LA05/2025/0384/F. An area of this region is screenshotted below.

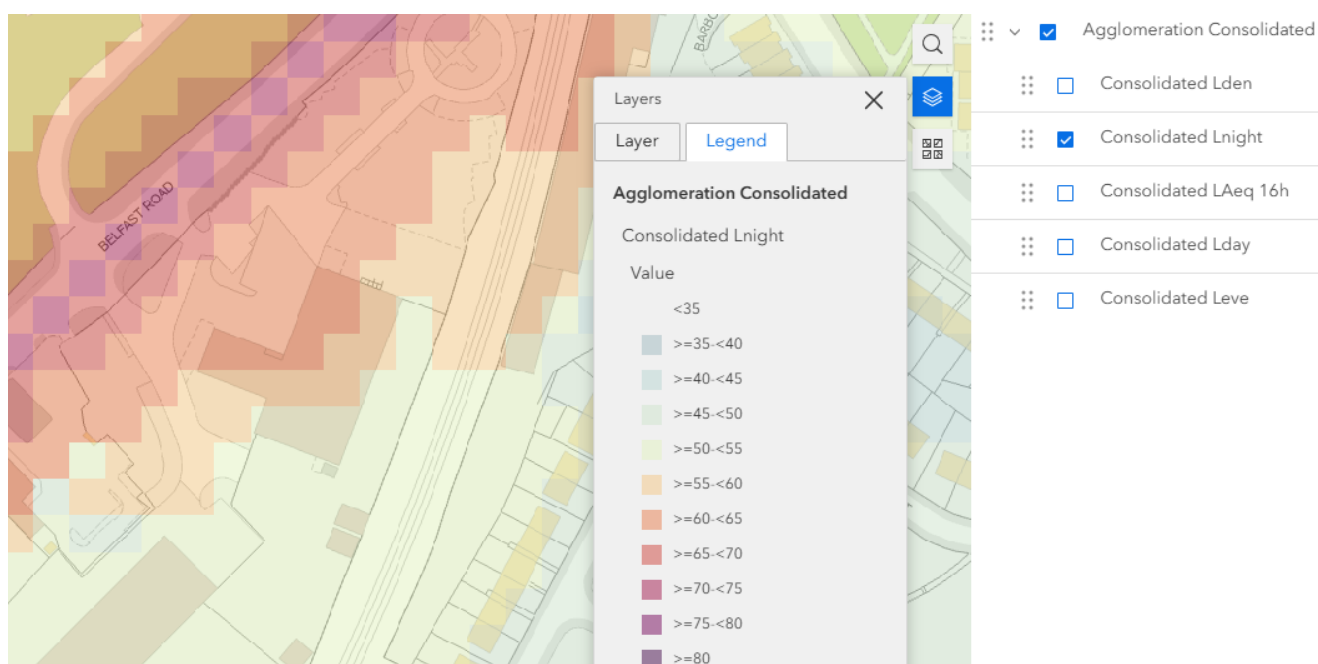


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The transparency on the consolidated map has been increased to assist in viewing the landscape below. As you can see, noise levels using the indicator of $L_{Aeq,16h}$ in the vicinity of the address range from 60dB to 80dB. Using our user guide and glossary section of the map viewer it can be seen that 60dB is akin to the noise levels of an office, however levels at 80dB sit more at that of a modern twin-engine jet at takeoff. Looking at the same image for nighttime noise the following observation is made that whilst levels cover a smaller area, they remain fairly constant.

These observations can assist planners formulating evidenced based decisions in relation to noise abatement technologies to protect citizens from the health impacts of noise.



It should be noted that modelled noise levels are based on modelled data from 2021, a period where Northern Ireland was slowly recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As noise levels are never static it cannot be taken that these represent the current levels, which are likely to have increased as normal life has now resumed. This is likely to be reflected in the next mapping Round.

Please do take the time to view and explore the maps, directing any queries to the AEQ email at AEQTeam@daera-ni.gov.uk

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The map viewer will be available on the Department's website [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Air and Environmental Quality Branch

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Dear Aiden,

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your continued support as a steering group member on the LIFE Raft Project on Rathlin. The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has been an invaluable partner in helping us progress this important work.

The LIFE Raft Project is progressing well, and the project end date remains 31st December 2026. However, following a rat sighting in June, we have taken the decision to carry out a second year of baiting to ensure that we have done everything possible to achieve rat-free status on Rathlin Island. Encouragingly, there has not been a confirmed ferret sighting since October 2023, so, all being well, we will be able to declare ferret-free status in October 2025 (two breeding seasons after the last sighting).

The provision of skips has been instrumental to the success of the project. Removing waste that can act as harbourage for rats is a critical part of both the eradication and long-term biosecurity strategy. The LIFE Raft Team, alongside residents, has already removed a significant volume of waste, but the need is ongoing. As we enter a second winter of baiting, continuing to remove potential harbourage remains essential—not only to maximise the chance of success, but also to maintain best-practice biosecurity, something we know CCGBC is keen to champion both on Rathlin and across its harbour areas.

The LIFE Raft Team and RDCA would therefore like to request that the council commit to providing one skip per month for the next six months. Thereafter, we are confident that one skip per quarter will be sufficient to meet ongoing biosecurity needs.

RDCA Support as outlined below:

The Council's provision of skips is recognised and welcomed within the community as a vital contribution to this major project. The extra support from the LIFE Raft team, many of whom have gone above and beyond what may have been reasonably expected as part of their work, show their own individual commitments to the project and to the community. This is also recognised as invaluable. Many residents involved would not have been able to remove such quantities of potential harbourage without this support, for reasons of physical health, time, or other resources. This practical engagement has encouraged and enabled many community members to trust and collaborate with the project's development more fully than would otherwise have been possible.

All involved, including Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, have reason to be proud of the project's remarkable success so far. It has a growing, positive profile at regional and international levels (e.g. the global restoration initiative for island-ocean ecosystems, [Island Ocean Connection Challenge \(IOCC\)](#)), and the continuation and consolidation of the achievements through an exemplar biosecurity strategy will help ensure its place as a





unique showcase for the island, our partners, and the Causeway Coast and Glens region and its growing visitor profile.

We fully endorse this request for the Council's continued support, in this instance through the provision of skips.

Thank you again for your support and partnership.

Yours sincerely,

RSPB NI Area Manager

