



Decision on Specific Prospecting Activities

The Minister has assessed the exploration project proposed by the company and has determined that the activities are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

PL Area	4032 Co. Wicklow
Company	Blackstairs Lithium Ltd
Activity	Drilling in an area of 0.827km ² in the western portion of PLA 4032.
Environmental Considerations	The drilling area is located approximately 3.05km from the nearest Natura 2000 Site (Slaney River Valley SAC), approximately 31.2km from the nearest Natural Heritage Area (Coan Bogs) and approximately 4.4km from the nearest proposed Natural Heritage Areas (Slaney River Valley). The company is using small volumes of treated water for drilling purposes. All drilling water will be re-circulated. Any drilling additives or greases used will be non-hazardous, non-toxic and biodegradable. The drilling is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.
European Sites	<p>Slaney River Valley SAC (000781) Blackstairs Mountains SAC (000770)</p> <p>A screening determination has been carried out for the project. Particular attention has been paid to the European Site listed above.</p> <p>It has been determined that the project does not have the potential for significant effects on a European Site on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The activity is temporary •There will be no direct discharge of drilling fluids into surface water systems. •The drilling area, at its closest point, is approximately 3.05km from the nearest European Site.
Environmental Information available on DECC website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploration Drilling - Guidance on Discharge to Surface and Groundwater (2019) 2. Guidance for Good Environmental Practice in Mineral Exploration (2019) 3. Environmental Safeguards- The Irish Way (2006) 4. Expert Environmental Guidance R4 – Drilling (2017)
Authority	Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications
Date of Notice	17 August 2023