



## Board Direction

**Ref: PL15.245568**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016. The Board decided by a majority of 2:1 to refuse permission generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, and in accordance with the draft reasons and considerations set out below.

### REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Drumenagh Quarry is designated as a Site of Geological Interest in the Louth County Development Plan 2015 - 2021. The Irish Geological Heritage Programme of the Geological Survey of Ireland is identifying and selecting the very best national geological sites for designation as Natural Heritage Areas. This is reflected in Policy HER8 of the Development Plan, which seeks to promote the designation of qualifying sites of geological interest, including the subject site, as Natural Heritage Areas and County Geological Sites. The audit of County Geological Sites in Louth states that Drumenagh Quarry constitutes the best exposure of the early-stage gabbro in the Carlingford Igneous Complex, and that consideration should be given to extending the boundaries of the proposed Trumpet Hill Natural Heritage Area to include it. It is considered that the documentation on file does not adequately demonstrate that the proposed development would not adversely affect the features that have given rise to the recommendation to designate this quarry, or the reasons for that recommendation. Having regard to its nature and scale, the Board is, therefore, not satisfied that the proposed development would not result in the direct loss of the features of geological interest of a site that is recommended for designation as a geological Natural Heritage Area. It is considered that the proposed development would fail to comply with the provisions of the "Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry" issued by the Geological Survey of Ireland, as they apply to the management of geological heritage sites, and would conflict with Policy HER8 of the Development Plan. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

*Note:*

The Board noted the concerns expressed in relation to the possibility of impacts on a seismic monitoring station in the vicinity, and having regard to the substantive reason for refusal, decided not to seek further information on this matter.

Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016  
Fionna O' Regan