



Environment Information Regulations

Correspondence regarding black rat eradication on the
Shiant Islands

For a Link to the FOI/EIR page visit: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=6077>
For further information about the Joint Nature Conservation Committee visit:
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/>

Number of EIR 201811

Request

'From: Dr David Stroud, Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Agree - there is always a way to work round disturbance, but even if it is significant, it is only short-term: in contrast to non-native predation impacts which are otherwise enduring.'

I am concerned that the (undated) quote above, used as part of the Shiant's EU Life+ bid, would be perceived by EASME as support (whether explicit or tacit) for the project from JNCC (I certainly perceive it as such).

Why was this statement not passed on as part of my Freedom of Information request (JNCC EIR 201718)?

Were there any other comments made by Dr Stroud and/or other JNC committee members that could be perceived as support for the project?

Please could you ask each JNC committee member whether they were in favour of the project going ahead and supply me with their answers.

Reply

Thank you for your letter dated the 10 April 2018, received 12 April, which we have dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

We have answered your questions in order.

With regards to the comments made by Dr David Stroud, the focus of our original response (to JNCC EIR 201718) was on the communications between Dr Ian Mitchell and RSPB, as indicated in our letter of 27 November 2017. Dr Mitchell was part of the team that discussed the potential for projects to reduce seabird predation and, at that time, we were unaware that any other JNCC staff had been involved in any discussions with RSPB on this subject. As was indicated in our letter, JNCC's final known correspondence with RSPB on this matter was on 6 March 2013. JNCC had no subsequent involvement with the EU bid for funding for the Shiant Island Recovery Project (SRP). JNCC were not partners on the bid and we did not provide any letters of support.

The comments made by Dr Stroud were in response to a request from RSPB, in June 2013, for views on the validity of the project approach, rather than eliciting comments specifically to feed into the LIFE bid process. The content of his reply was a response to the comments made by a third party, who was also responding to the RSPB request. The majority of his comment is an observation on the potential disturbance caused by the project, weighed against the long-term impact of predation.

The "Guide for the evaluation of Sub-programme Environment LIFE project proposals 2017", indicates that decisions on the funding of a bid are through a selection and evaluation process that scores against specific criteria. Comments and opinions do not form part of either the submission or evaluation process. Therefore, the comments made by Dr Stroud, were not provided as part of the RSPB submission for EU LIFE funding.

With regards to support provided by JNCC's Joint Committee, they have no formal role – through JNCC – in the LIFE submissions process.

We will not be approaching any previous or existing members of Joint Committee regarding their views on the Shiant's project, as this would be requesting an opinion or judgment that has not previously been recorded.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and attachment. If you require any further detail please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint please contact Kirsty Meadows (kirsty.meadows@jncc.gov.uk).

If you are still not satisfied following this, you can make an appeal to the Information Commissioner who is the statutory regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Telephone: 08456 30 60 60

01625 54 57 45

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Yours sincerely,

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