



CIRAN

CIRAN WP2 Case Study Selection Series

Avalonia Block, Ireland

The case addresses **Lithium exploration activities** undertaken as part of the **Avalonia Block**, a geological region located in the **southeast of Ireland**, which overlaps County Carlow (six areas) and County Wicklow (two areas).

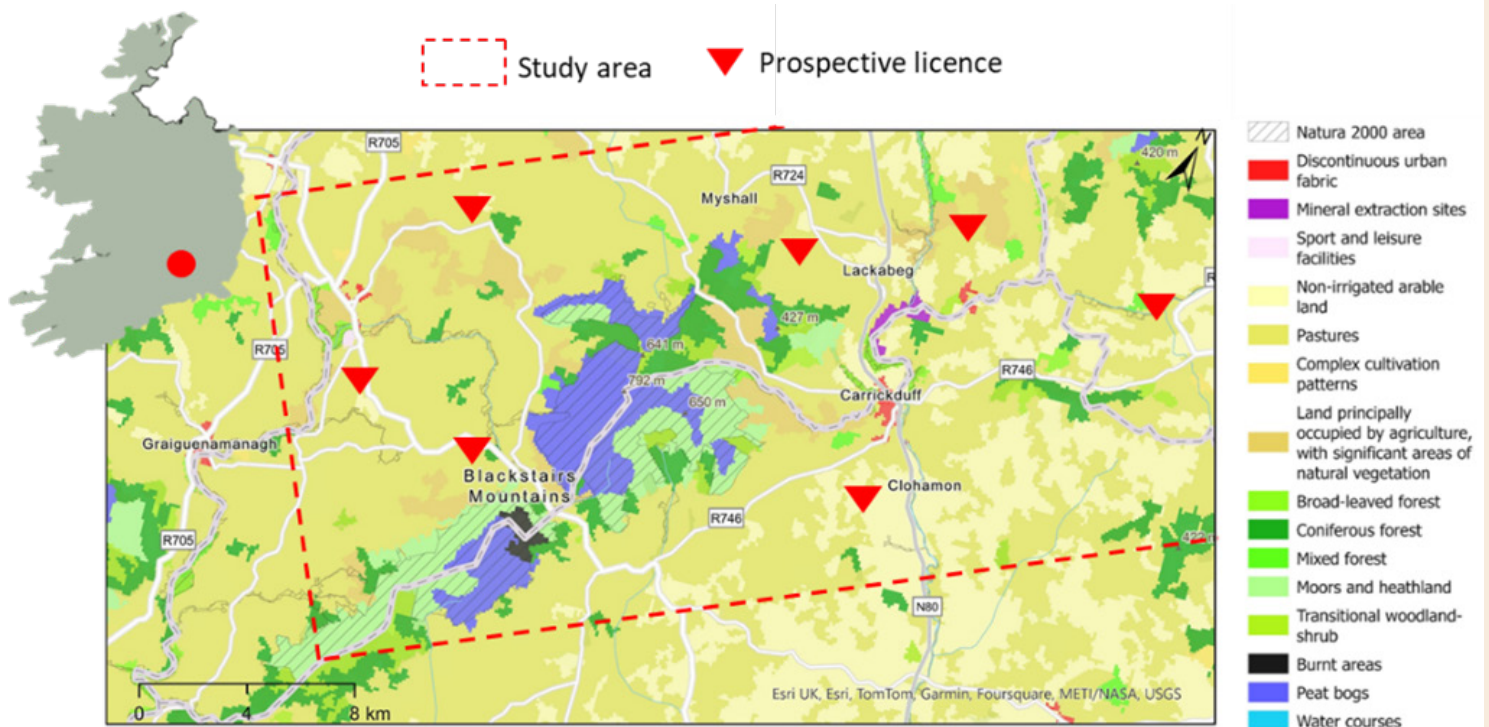


Fig. Overall geographical localization. Corine Land data cover classification 2018 + Natura 2000 map (EEA) and exploration area

The area has been historical mined and exploration activity also with traditional methods has been performed. There has been extensive knowledge of the deposit.

The area can be generally described as predominantly agricultural with some forestry. There are some rural houses and agricultural buildings in certain places and a number of quarries. In the territory are listed special protection areas, proposed natural heritage areas, natural heritage areas and special conservation areas.

Six of the prospecting licences areas overlap to a certain degree (some more than others) with a designated site under Habitat Directive and Wildlife Amendment Act. The area presents agricultural and quarrying activity. There are multiple aspects affecting the discussion relative to the project. People might not be keen on mine and it (presumed) impacts on hydrology.



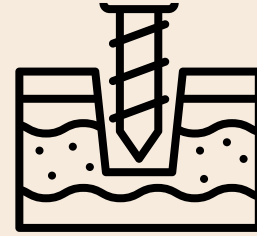
Resolution of any potential conflicts is mostly undertaken through the spatial planning process. At plan-making stages, conflicts or potential conflicts are sought to be resolved through the use of policies and policy objectives and zoning. The development management process is where most of the potential conflicts would be resolved. This means that most conflicts are resolved once an application is made to the local authority to obtain planning permission. There are first- and third-party rights of appeal to the national planning appeals body, An Bord Pleanála.

An prospective licence is reviewed by the Geoscience Regulation Office (GSRO) of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication, screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screenings by the Minister. There is no land use permit required for exploration. This would be required if extractive activities are considered. Compliance with the Birds and Habitats Directives is ensured through the undertaking of Appropriate Assessment (AA). There are four stages for Appropriate Assessment. In most cases for exploration activities, the first stage of appropriate assessment suffices.

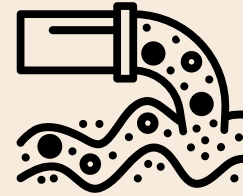
Source-pathway-receptor risk model was used by the applicant has part of the prospecting license application.

The majority of exploration activities consist of prospecting, boulder mapping, deep overburden geochemistry, geophysics, trenching and core drilling. The most successful methods used to date to identify prospects were prospecting by pegmatite boulder mapping.

Mitigation Measures include:



Water management systems implemented for drilling



Disposal of drill cuttings



Fuel and oil spillage prevention and management

The company engaged community and local politicians also on voluntary bases. Mandatory and voluntary consultation is undertaken prior and during the permitting process. Recent mining development applications in Ireland show that mining developers engage with the public and local politicians. This is undertaken on a non-statutory basis prior to submission of planning application but varies from project to project. It will usually involve the preparation of a stakeholder engagement strategy, identification of relevant national and local state/regulatory bodies, local community groups, NGOs, and key community leaders.

This exploration licence application has been fraught with community discontent and concerns.

The exploration activity was assessed and was considered to have no relevant impacts to the protected areas, low impacts techniques are also used. This process was completed through AA and EIA screening exercises.

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