

FAO: Leitrim County Council, Planning Office

**Submission to Leitrim County Council's Development Plan 2023-2029
Re: the granting of gold/silver prospecting licences in North Leitrim**

April 27th 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my concern and disappointment at the recent granting of prospecting licences in the North Leitrim/Manorhamilton area by Minister Eamon Ryan. This decision has the potential for significant detrimental impact on an area of great natural beauty, historical value & literary interest. As I am sure you are aware, the area in question includes 47 Townlands of North Leitrim, some of which are located from the Town via Skreeney, in the direction of Rossinver and others to the West of the Town via Lurganboy and on to Glencar. North Leitrim, thankfully remains a largely unspoilt part of Ireland and it would be unforgivable, if our generation permits a deterioration from its current state.

From my reading, with regard to the process of gold/silver mining, it has the potential to damage our streams, rivers & lakes as well as the quality of the air. It goes without saying, that such mining cannot enhance our currently lovely landscape, which has been recorded in song and poem over the decades and centuries – notably by the Nobel laureate William Butler Yeats (The Stolen Child). It is also worth noting that the Bonet river runs for miles through the area in question – South from Glenade lake, turning West near Manorhamilton through the woods and rolling hills of Lurganboy and onwards to Lough Gill, where it drains into the lake very close to an Island (Innisfree) that has been immortalised and recognised worldwide in Yeats's 'Lake Isle of Innisfree' – a poem that he penned while, homesick in London and, longing to be back in this beautiful part of the country.

I am a native of North Leitrim and, although I lived abroad for long periods of my education and training, I have gradually gravitated back to this lovely corner of our country over the years and decades. My principal residence is in Blackrock, Cork, as I am currently a academic in UCC, and my major personal project for the coming years is the restoration of 'Lurganboy Lodge' a protected structure & hunting lodge constructed by the Wynne family. Although the existing 'Wynne' ~19C village of Lurganboy is small, it contains two protected structures and is surrounded by beautiful rolling green fields as well as woods through which the Bonet river(mentioned above) flows. The area is an important natural resource for communities from several miles around.

I would like to request that reference is made in the emerging County Development Plan to this matter of substantial concern to many who reside in the locality and wish to preserve the natural and historic wealth of the area for future generations.

If you wish to discuss this matter with me, I would be happy to.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Mary W. McCaffrey, B.Sc., Ph.D

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