



18/12/2023

Circular 27/2023

To all Registered Foresters

Re: Road applications on INET

Currently, in relation to Forest Road applications, under the Environmental Considerations section, various questions require the submission of a report if a particular situation applies.

In order to streamline the application process, DAFM is setting aside the need for a report in relation to a number of questions (as detailed below) and will instead assess the situation itself on a case by case basis and if a report is required will write to the applicant seeking a report.

The text on iNET will be amended to reflect this change, but that process will take several weeks to complete. In the meantime, the 'work-around' provisions below apply, effective immediately.

The Registered Forester is still required to indicate whether the situation described applies to the proposed forest road, by ticking 'Yes' or 'No'. (Note that DAFM itself indicates whether an overlap applies in relation to Curlew breeding sites and Hen Harrier 'Red Areas' – these layers are not available to Registered Foresters and do not appear on iNET, due to their confidential nature.)

The above applies to the following questions, i.e. in relation to these questions (and these questions only), the Registered Forester checks the relevant layer(s) on iNET as directed by the question, and if overlap occurs, ticks 'Yes' but can ignore the requirement for a report, despite it being asked for in the question and / or supporting Note:

- a. Questions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 (ref. Birds);
- b. Questions 4.1, 4.3 (Designated Areas); and
- c. Question 6.1 (Undesignated Annex 1 Habitat).
- d. Also disregard the Notes under Qu. 5.1 and 5.3, in relation to Freshwater Pearl Mussel, i.e. road construction within these areas is not automatically ruled out (however, Applicants and Registered Foresters must be aware the extremely detailed mitigation is likely to be required).

If iNET refuses to upload the application being inputted due to an outstanding report arising from a particular response to one or more of the above questions, the Registered Forester can upload a single page reading the following (or similar): *"Response to Qu.[XX] of the*



Environmental Questions suggests that a report is necessary. However, Circular 27/2023 counters the need for this report at this point.”

Joanne Adams

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