



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-319988-24

Development	Construction of agricultural shed and associated site works.
Location	Glasshouse, Blueball, Co. Offaly.
Planning Authority	Offaly County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2436
Applicants	Trevor & Eilish Hinch
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission.
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellants	Trevor & Eilish Hinch
Date of Site Inspection	13 th September 2024
Inspector	Dolores McCague

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1. The site is located at Glasshouse, Blueball, Co. Offaly. The site is located on a rural road north of the N52 c 10km south west of Tullamore. The site comprises a rounded landform comprising quaternary deposits, approximately 600m north of the proposed Natural Heritage Area, Kilcormac Esker.
- 1.1.2. Associated lands, shown outlined in blue, include a laneway running along the subject site to the south which accesses land and a farmhouse.
- 1.1.3. The site is given as 1.255ha.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1.1. The proposed development is described in the notices as 'construction of an agricultural shed and associated site works. The proposed shed is 25.8m long by 8.2m wide by 4.948m high to wall plate, and 6.047 to ridge.
- 2.1.2. Although not stated in the description of the development or in the notices, the site works would involve the removal of a small hill, a natural mound of quaternary deposits, which is a discrete rounded shape above the surrounding land. No details of the amount of aggregate which would be removed or quarried from the hill is given.
- 2.1.3. The proposed shed is stated to be intended for use to store agricultural machinery and harvested crops.
- 2.1.4. The entire holding is stated to be currently being used for potatoes and corn.
- 2.1.5. The desk-based Archaeological Impact Assessment for Hinch Plant Hire Ltd, refers to the impact of proposed extraction and soil deposition on c5.9ha in Currygurry and Glasshouse. A licensed excavation referred to in detail was carried out at Glasshouse, Shinrone which is c 35-40km straight line distance away.
- 2.1.6. Existing and proposed site levels are shown. Ground level is shown as reaching 77.5m which is to be reduced to 67.5m - a 10m reduction. The existing level beside the road is given as 68.5m

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

3.1.1. The planning authority decided to refuse permission for three reasons:

1 The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 in Policy BLP-38 states that it is council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape. By ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the County's existing landscape.

The proposed development would require extensive excavation of an existing hill in a rural area and these works would detract from the appearance and character of the landscape and the proposal therefore materially contravenes Policy BLP-38 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2 The proposed development will require extensive excavation and transportation of material from the site and this will result in substantial emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants due to the extensive traffic movement involved. The proposal would conflict with National Policy Objective 54 of the National Planning Framework 2040 which seeks to 'reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions'. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to a National Policy Objective and public health and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3 By reason of the location of the site and its relationship to adjoining and adjacent residential properties, it is the view of the Local Authority that the proposed development would seriously injure the amenities of property in the vicinity and would depreciate the value of these properties. The Local Authority also considers there are more suitable alternative lands available within the landholding that may be considered suitable for the proposed development. Accordingly the proposed development materially contravenes Development Management Standard 120 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 which states that proposed agricultural

development would not result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of residential dwellings and it is considered that the proposal would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- 3.2.2. The planning report, 28th May 2024, recommending refusal for the three reasons in the decision, includes:

Reference to the County Development Plan chapter 4 biodiversity; chapter 5 economic development strategy including rural economic development policies and objectives, chapter 11 Water Services and environment, development management, and BLP-38.

BLP-38 It is Council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the county's existing landscape

The planner notes that the land to the west in the applicant's ownership is relatively flat, currently in agricultural use and may provide a more suitable alternative site.

3.2.3. Other Technical Reports

3.2.4. Water Services – 7th May 2024 – conditions

- 3.2.5. Tullamore Municipal District, 23rd May 2024 – further information – concerned with the large quantity of material to be removed from the site prior to construction. The applicant should specify the quantity and the period of time over which this will be removed. The applicant should indicate whether any processing of this material is proposed to take place onsite or elsewhere.

Concerned that the proposal will give rise to damage to the public road due to the increased HGV traffic. Invited to make a proposal to protect this infrastructure.

Provide details of the proposed use of the agricultural shed and how effluent arising is to be collected and treated.

4.0 Planning History

None stated.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 is the operative plan. Relevant provisions include:

4.6.2 Eskers

An Offaly Esker Study published in 2006 is a valuable source of information regarding the existing eskers in part of the county. There are twenty esker systems in Offaly containing 208 segments. Each esker system comprises a landform or series of landforms (esker segments) having a single process history, in a specific zone. The esker system covers over 4,000 acres in Offaly. The esker system examined by this survey, the Clonmacnoise Esker, is the largest esker system in the county, covering 5.79 km² and comprising one-third of the area of all eskers in the county. The study found that the Clonmacnoise esker system is of international importance due to its high habitat and species diversity and supports the designation of the Clonmacnoise esker system as a pNHA. The Study also confirms the importance of including policies in the Offaly Development Plan to restrict exploitation on eskers and suggested a further focus on pit restoration. In addition, the Study recommends the Clonmacnoise esker system, as well as many of its adjacent esker systems in Offaly, has the potential to host a portion of a Geopark spanning the Westmeath-Offaly region

Geology, Eskers and Quarries

BLP-09 It is Council policy to protect from inappropriate development and maintain the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest as contained in the scheduled list of geological heritage sites identified in Table 4.11 Offaly Geological Sites.

BLP-10 It is Council policy to encourage, where practical and when not in conflict with ownership rights, access to geological features in the county.

BLP-11 It is Council policy to protect and conserve the landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value of esker systems in the county as identified in the Offaly Esker Study, 2006.

BLP-12 It is Council policy to assess the impact of proposals for quarry development on nearby eskers, with reference to their status or relative importance, for example, amenity, landscape and scientific value in the context of the overall esker system.

BLP-35 It is Council policy to protect and preserve the county's Areas of High Amenity namely the Slieve Bloom Mountains, Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone, Durrow High Cross, Abbey and surrounding area, the River Shannon, Lough Boora Discovery Park, Grand Canal, Croghan Hill, Raheenmore Bog, Pallas Lake, Clara Bog, Clara eskers, Eiscir Riada and other eskers. Notwithstanding the location of certain settlements, or parts of, for which there are settlement plans (Towns, Villages, Sráids), within the Areas of High Amenity, it is not the intention of this policy to hinder appropriate sustainable levels of development (as set out in the plans and subject to proper planning). Further, it is policy to facilitate the sustainable extension and expansion of existing visitor, tourist related or other rural enterprises within the Areas of High Amenity, where such development is appropriate and where it can be demonstrated that it gives 'added value' to the extending activity and to the immediate area which is the subject of the 'Area of High Amenity' designation.

BLP-38 It is Council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the county's existing landscape.

BLP-39 It is Council policy to seek to ensure that local landscape features, including historic features and buildings, hedgerow, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the local landscape and character of an area, whilst providing for future development.

The Council recognises the unique importance of Offaly's Esker Landscape deriving from its geological, zoological, botanical, scientific and landscape value.

LANDSCAPE Sensitivity

G) THE ESKER LANDSCAPE Characteristics • Eskers were built up under the ice cap about ten thousand years ago and have archaeological significance, as they

formed the early highways in Ireland. • In old Irish, 'eiscir' means divide while 'riada' means road. Sensitivities • The eskers have geomorphologic, scientific, historical, cultural, recreational and amenity value and uniqueness. • In particular, the esker system north of Clara bog is critically important, as it is most likely the source of nutrient rich water, which feeds the bog's soak systems. • There is a need to balance the conservation of the important landscape features associated with eskers providing educational / tourism and recreational potential with the requirements of aggregate extraction and economic development. Hence, the esker landscape is highly sensitive to any future development and the opening up of new pits for sand and gravel extraction will be strongly resisted (refer to Chapter 5, Economic Development Strategy).

GSI Offaly County Geological Site Report

The Kilcormac Esker and surrounding sands and gravels include an exceptionally large accumulation of sands and gravels deposited both under the ice sheet and at its margin as the ice withdrew westwards across Offaly at the end of the last Ice Age. The esker forms part of the much larger Killimor-Birr-Fivealley-Kilcormac Esker System, which extends across the Midlands for over 70 km linear extent.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA The features are haphazardly arranged, high, striking examples of dry sand and gravel ridges, that stand proud of the surrounding landscape. These eskers and their associated sands and gravels in the locality are a good example of a deglacial, meltwater-deposited complex, with portions deposited under the ice, and portions at the ice margin, and are recommended as a County Geological Site.

Many of the esker ridge segments themselves are worthy of pNHA status geologically and geomorphologically.

DMS-120 Protection of amenities - Proposed agricultural developments shall demonstrate that the proposal;

Will not result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of residential dwellings outside of the applicants landholding in relation to noise, smell, pollution or visual amenities;
Will not result in a pollution threat to sources of potable water, water courses, aquifers or ground water;

Create a traffic hazard;

Makes proper provision for disposal of liquid and solid waste; and

Does not impact significantly upon Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Areas of High Amenity, Landscape Sensitivity Areas, Key Scenic Views and Prospects and Key Amenity Routes, sites of heritage or cultural value, or areas at risk of flooding.

5.2. Climate Action Plan, 2023

- 5.2.1. This plan seeks to tackle climate breakdown and it commits Ireland to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 5.2.2. Irish and regional waste policy is based on the waste hierarchy: waste prevention; preparing for reuse; recycling; and energy recovery; with disposal being the least desirable option. It is implemented by the Government, Local Authorities and the EPA. We are transforming our approach to waste in line with modern, circular economy principles. Ireland has scope for major progress in all the key areas of the waste hierarchy.

5.3. Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021

- 5.3.1. This establishes a framework to develop the transition towards a low carbon economy.

5.4. Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015

- 5.4.1. Section 15 requires a relevant body to have regard to the approved national mitigation plan, adaptation framework and sectoral adaptation plans, national transition objectives, and the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.

5.5. National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030

- 5.5.1. This Plan seeks to influence sustainable consumption and prevent the generation of waste, improve the capture of materials to optimise circularity and enable compliance with policy and legislation.

- 5.5.2. The circular economy offers a better model of production and consumption compared to the linear ('take-make-waste') approach which is resource and carbon intensive. The circular economy model fundamentally considers waste as a resource which can be recirculated into systems that focus on maintaining, repairing, reusing, refurbishing and recycling materials and products. Being resource efficient and getting more value from fewer resources is central to this model.
- 5.5.3. Avoiding waste generation through circular systems forms the basis for the circular economy sector actions and targets in the Climate Action Plan. Climate and the circular economy are inherently interlinked, and the findings are clear that there are significant greenhouse gas emission savings through maximising the efficiency of material usage.
- 5.5.4. Construction waste accounted for 60%, 9 million tonnes, of all waste generated within the State in 2021. The consumption of raw materials by the construction sector can be reduced by the use of secondary materials and this Plan supports the provision of secondary materials through a range of interventions.

5.6. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.6.1. The nearest Natura site is Charleville Wood SAC (site code 000571) located c5½ kilometres to the north east at the nearest point.
- 5.6.2. Kilcormack esker, a proposed natural heritage area, is less than 600m to the south.

5.7. EIA Screening

- 5.7.1. The proposed development is a sub-threshold development (under article 93 and class 2 (b) of Part 2 of schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations) for development: 'extraction of stone, gravel, sand or clay, where the area of extraction would be greater than 5 hectares'. '
- 5.7.2. Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size or location of the development, there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Appendices 1 and 2 attached to this report refer.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

- 6.1.1. This is a first party appeal on behalf of the applicant against the decision to refuse permission. The grounds includes:

Responding to reason no 1 - County Development Plan Policy BLP-38 - the grounds states that the hill is small in footprint and out of context with the surrounding landscape. It is not particularly visible behind trees at the side of the road and entirely hinders their enjoyment and benefit of their property. The potential impact on the landscape is very small and limited, if any.

The ribbon development along this road including either side of the site would suggest that this particular small area would ordinarily be granted permission for development consistent with DMS54 – rural infill development.

Responding to reason no 2 - NPF - National Policy Objective 54 reduction of carbon. If that policy was universally applied as in this case, there would be no basis for granting of planning permission to any gravel pit outside the Tullamore town limits.

The reason has not had regard to the site location, situated in an area which has historically and continues to currently supply gravel for Tullamore including major concrete manufacturers of national importance, see extensive historical evidence of pits in the wider area. A list with planning reference numbers is supplied.

The amount of excavation required is not extensive as the hill is relatively sheer and covers just 0.919ha. the material will constitute construction by-product and will replace other materials excavated for such use in the same general area.

There are large wind farm developments in this area which have consumed mass volumes of fill material for roads infrastructure and concrete production, contributing to carbon emissions on a magnitude not comparable to this application.

Responding to reason no 3 – contravention of Development Management Standard 120.

DMS-120 Protection of amenities has a number of sections and requires that agricultural developments:

Will not result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of residential dwellings outside of the applicants landholding in relation to noise, smell, pollution or visual amenities;
Will not result in a pollution threat to sources of potable water, water courses, aquifers or ground water;

Create a traffic hazard;

Makes proper provision for disposal of liquid and solid waste; and

Does not impact significantly upon Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Areas of High Amenity, Landscape Sensitivity Areas, Key Scenic Views and Prospects and Key Amenity Routes, sites of heritage or cultural value, or areas at risk of flooding.

Of the five sections the text around this reason suggests that just one is of concern, detrimental impact on property in the vicinity.

The site is situated in an area of small to medium sized farms all of which naturally have requirements for farm buildings. The property immediately to the west has a significant number of out buildings which have been altered to run a commercial business. Many other properties have buildings in proximity to the roadside. It is not proposed to change the nature of the farm and an agricultural entrance will remain. The site is shielded by the same treeline which partially shields the hill. They would welcome a condition requiring its retention.

Their land is disadvantaged by the hill. Its removal would benefit the farm. Post removal the ground will be ideal to support the proposed development. It is not usable or even safely accessible by stock or humans.

They refer to REDP-04 and REDO-04 as supporting the development.

REDP-04 It is Council policy to support the development of agriculture where it is compatible with the sustainable development of the county and commensurate with sustaining the farming community

REDO-03 It is an objective of the Council to support agricultural development and encourage the continuation of agriculture as a contributory means of maintaining population in the rural area and sustaining the rural economy.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

- 6.2.1. The planning authority have responded referring the Board to the technical reports on the file.

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1.1. I consider that the main issues which arise in relation to this appeal are appropriate assessment, the principle of the development, natural heritage and landscape, and climate change and a circular economy, and the following assessment is dealt with under those headings.

7.2. AA Screening

- 7.2.1. In accordance with obligations under the Habitats Directives and implementing legislation, to take into consideration the possible effects a project may have, either on its own or in combination with other plans and projects, on a Natura 2000 site, there is a requirement on the Board, as the competent authority in this case, to consider the possible nature conservation implications of the proposed development on the Natura 2000 network, before making a decision.
- 7.2.2. Appendix 2 to this report details my assessment under this heading.
- 7.2.3. There is no likelihood of impact on any Natura site.

7.3. The Principle of the Development

- 7.3.1. The area of the farm 5.59ha or 13.81 ac. A farm shed for agricultural produce, produced on the farm and for necessary machinery, would be acceptable in principle.
- 7.3.2. However I do not accept the need for a shed of this size, on a farm of this size.
- 7.3.3. The 'average' yield given for potatoes per acre in Ireland varies from 17 / 18 tonnes, to 10 tonnes per acre. At the lower yield this farm's acreage would potentially produce 138.1 tonnes and at the higher yield, 234.77 tonnes, the latter is equivalent to 234770kilos; at a weight per m³ volume of roughly 590 kg. for potatoes the estimated maximum space requirement would be 39.79 m³, required for the optimum

yield over the entire farm. The area of the proposed shed is 10,468 cubic metres which is more than 263 times that required to store a potato crop; and more likely 500 times that required. Even allowing some space for machinery storage I do not accept that the proposed shed is ancillary to any farming enterprise carried on at this location.

- 7.3.4. The Archaeological Impact Assessment states that the report was prepared for Hinch Plant Hire Ltd; the proposal has not been put forward as a commercial shed and cannot be assessed as such.
- 7.3.5. As stated in the planner's report, other locations exist within the land holding where an agricultural building could be erected, requiring little or no site excavation works. The proposal will involve an excessively large amount of aggregate removal. I do not accept that the application is for an agricultural shed to which the aggregate removal is ancillary. The response to the grounds of appeal states that it will not be treated as a waste.
- 7.3.6. In my opinion the removal of aggregate, which is a valuable commodity, is the main purpose of the proposed development.
- 7.3.7. In this regard the proposed development has not been properly described in the application notices and is inadequately documented in the application details.
- 7.3.8. I consider that the proposed development is unacceptable in principle and should be refused for that reason.

7.4. Natural Heritage and Landscape

- 7.4.1. A high level of protection is given to Eskers in the County Development Plan. The County Development Plan states, 'the Council recognises the unique importance of Offaly's Esker Landscape deriving from its geological, zoological, botanical, scientific and landscape value'. The site is made up of a rounded landform comprising quaternary deposits, rising 10m above the surrounding land, as it is located approximately 600m north of the proposed Natural Heritage Area, Kilcormac Esker, and is a landform associated with the esker.
- 7.4.2. The County Development Plan states that the opening up of new pits for sand and gravel extraction will be strongly resisted.

- 7.4.3. Policy BLP-38 states: It is Council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the county's existing landscape.
- 7.4.4. In my opinion the proposed development would impact adversely on of this important landscape feature, is therefore unacceptable because of its impact on the esker landscape, and on the natural heritage of the area, and should be refused for that reason.

7.5. Climate Change and a Circular Economy

- 7.5.1. In not acknowledging the purpose of sourcing building materials at this site, the application fails to address the impact it would have on the re-use of demolition waste, thereby impacting on the national objective, to achieve a reduction in the amount of Construction and Demolition Waste generated, as set out in the Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy. The proposed opening for extraction of a new source of aggregate does not support this national objective, and should be refused for that reason.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1.1. In accordance with the foregoing I recommend that planning permission be refused for the following reasons and considerations.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 1 The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out to protect eskers as areas of high amenity, (Policy BLP-35), and as features or areas of geological interest, (Policy BLP-09), and for their landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value, (Policy BLP-11). The proposed development, which involves the extraction of quaternary deposits associated with the Kilcormack esker would be contrary to this policy and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 2 The proposed development would be contrary to the policy (BLP-38) set out in the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances it's appearance and character. The esker landscape is highly sensitive to development and the Development Plan states that the opening up of new pits for sand and gravel extraction will be strongly resisted. The removal of this landscape feature associated with the Kilcormack esker would detract from the appearance and character of the landscape and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 3 The development of such a large building in the rural area is not justified by the agricultural needs of the subject landholding. The proposed development, would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 4 The proposed opening for extraction of a new supply of aggregate would not support the national objective of moving Ireland towards a circular economy, including by tackling the huge amount of C&D waste by facilitating its reuse.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Planning Inspector

18th October 2024

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	319988		
Proposed Development Summary	construction of an agricultural shed and associated site works (which include aggregate extraction on a 1.255ha site)		
Development Address	Glasshouse, Blueball, Co. Offaly		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		Yes	/
		No	No further action required
2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?			
Yes		Class.....	EIA Mandatory EIAR required
No	/		Proceed to Q.3
3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?			
		Threshold	Comment (if relevant)
			Conclusion
No		N/A	No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
Yes	/	Part 2, 2 (b) Extraction of stone, gravel, sand or clay, where the area of extraction would be greater than 5 hectares.	Proceed to Q.4
4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?			

No	/	Preliminary Examination required
Yes		Screening Determination required

Form 2

EIA Preliminary Examination

Bord Pleanála Case	319988		
Development Summary	construction of an agricultural shed and associated site works		
Examination			
			Yes / No / Uncertain
1. Is the size or nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?			No
2. Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?			No
3. Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location*?			No
4. Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?			No
Conclusion			
Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size or location of the development, is there a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment?			
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment	EIAR not required	Yes	
There is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment	Screening Determination required	No	
	Sch 7A info submitted?		No
There is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment	EIAR is required	No	

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 2

Template 2: Screening the need for Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

I have considered the project: construction of an agricultural shed and associated site works, in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is located at Glasshouse, Blueball, Co. Offaly.

The proposed development comprises construction of an agricultural shed and associated site works including the excavation and removal of extensive quaternary deposits in a rural area close to/ associated with Kilcormack esker .

No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works: scale of the development.
- Taking into account that Kilcormack Esker is a pNHA not a European site.

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.