



Your Ref: **32111000**
Our Ref: **G pre00220/2019**
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

06 July 2020

Mr Rory McDonnell,
Merrion House,
Merrion Road,
Dublin 4
Via email rory.mcdonnell@jacobs.com

Re: Scoping Document for proposed replacement of 7 manned level crossings between Limerick Junction and Cork City on the Dublin-Cork Railway line.

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On behalf of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated heading(s).

Archaeology

Further to the submission of a pre-planning enquiry in advance of the preparation of an EIAR for the above-proposed project *obo* Irish Rail (received this office 06-08-2019), the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has now received two Geophysical Survey Reports for Shinanagh/Imphrick, Co. Cork (20R0016) and Newtown, Co. Cork (20R0017). At a meeting on of 18-06-2020 an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy was discussed in relation to these reports in addition to the proposed works at Ballycoskery, Thomastown and Buttevant (see minutes of 18-06-2020: agreed 22-06-2020 attached below).

As noted in the report 20R0017 Newtown a number of subsurface anomalies were recorded in the vicinity of Recorded Monument CO008-040--- *Ringfort*. These anomalies may represent archaeological features/deposits associated with this monument. Archaeological mitigation in this regard is now outlined below.

Report 20R0016 Shinanagh/Imphrick has recorded extensive and possibly archaeologically significant anomalies to the E/SE/S of Recorded Monument CO007-120(001-/002) *Church and graveyard*. Geophysics to the north of this monument has recorded a circular enclosure with extensive and possibly significant features within it – possibly representing a hut-site/souterrain/area of burning. There are also a number of features/low earthworks surrounding the enclosure itself.

A site inspection carried out on 02-07-2020 revealed that the earthworks in the vicinity of CO007-120, in addition to the newly recorded enclosure and its' associated features, all have surface expression at present ground level. Furthermore, the enclosure is clearly



visible as an upstanding scarped monument ranging in height from c. 40-70/80cm enclosing an area approximately 50/60m in diameter. Archaeological mitigation with regard to these monuments/features is also outlined below.

Given the nature of the extensive groundworks required for this development and the possible significant, direct archaeological impacts on upstanding earthworks/archaeological monuments, please find outlined below the archaeological mitigation strategy as agreed at the meeting of 18-06-2020.

Archaeological Mitigation Strategy

The following Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is to be carried out by a suitably qualified, licensable archaeologist and geophysics professional in advance of any groundworks associated with the project. Please allow 2-3 weeks to facilitate the processing of the licences required for these works.

1. Geophysical Survey is to be carried out at the proposed development site (PDS) at Ballycoskery, Co. Cork. The issues regarding access to the site is noted and is pending resolution. This may be followed by a programme of archaeological test excavation – based on the survey results.
2. A programme of targeted archaeological test excavation, based on the results of the geophysical survey, is required at Newtown, Co. Cork in order to establish the location, nature and extent of archaeological features/deposits recorded.
3. Given the extensive and possibly significant archaeological earthworks/features, including a newly recorded upstanding enclosure, at Shinanagh/Imprick, a programme of targeted archaeological test excavation is required. This will establish the location, nature and extent of archaeological features/deposits revealed during geophysical survey and field survey. In particular the nature of the earthworks to the E/SE/S of RMP CO007-120--- needs to be established in tandem with the newly recorded enclosure and its' associated features.
4. As the archaeological impacts in Shinanagh/Imprick have the potential to be direct and significant, geophysical survey is to be carried out in the vicinity of a route previously considered for selection to the west of RMP CO007-120 in Ballynageragh townland. The NMS (DCHG) notes that this route was previously discounted due to its' proximity to RMP CO007-119(001-) *Rathmore Castle* and CO007-119(002-) *Excavation (occupation site)*. However as the 'Ballynageragh Route' has not been fully archaeologically assessed, a geophysical survey needs to be carried out here in order to establish whether subsurface archaeological features/deposits survive. This may then be followed-up with a programme of archaeological test excavation. This mitigation strategy may then facilitate the selection of alternative route for the development should the impacts of the current proposal at Shinanagh/Imprick be deemed to be of a greater archaeological impact *viz a viz* the Ballynageragh route. Of particular concern are the internal features highlighted within the newly recorded enclosure. If testing reveals that this feature represents the remains of a souterrain, The Department would be concerned that this feature would collapse during construction works.
5. As per current standard practice, and given the scale of the groundworks required in the townlands of Thomastown and Buttevant, geophysical surveys are to be carried out at both locations in order to establish whether any subsurface anomalies/features survive at these sites. This may then be followed-up by a programme of archaeological testing – as necessary and based on the geophysical survey results.



This recommendation is based on the papers/reports submitted to the Department on a pre-planning basis and is made without prejudice to any decision the Minister may take upon sight of a formal planning application.

You are requested to send further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at manager.dau@chg.gov.ie (team monitored); if this is not possible, correspondence may alternatively be sent to:

The Manager
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Is mise, le meas

Connor Rooney
Development Applications Unit
