



Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage

Coolglass Wind Farm Vol. 2 EIAR

Coolglass Wind Farm Limited

Prepared by:

SLR Environmental Consulting (Ireland) Ltd

City Gate, Mahon 1000, Cork, T12 W7CV

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11.0 Introduction

11.1 Background

This cultural heritage chapter was prepared by SLR Consulting Ltd. It presents the results of a cultural heritage impact assessment encompassing both buried archaeological remains and above ground built heritage, undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the Proposed Development’.

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding archaeological and cultural heritage landscape (for example, National Monuments and Registered Protected Structures). The assessment is based on a desktop review of the accessible archaeological and cultural heritage data and aims to identify known areas of archaeological/cultural significance that are likely to be impacted by the Proposed Development. A description of likely significant effects is presented, and appropriate mitigation methods are proposed.

11.1.1 Scope of Work / EIA Scoping

The Proposed Development is located in County Laois (Grid Reference: S 5467 8907), within the upland area of Fossy Mountain characterised by commercial forestry plantations. All elements of the Project are described in Section 3.5 of this EIAR and the description of the Proposed Development is found in section 3.8.1 of this EIAR.

11.1.2 Statement of Authority

This chapter of the EIAR has been prepared by Beth Gray of SLR Consulting.

Beth Gray is an Associate Archaeologist with SLR, based in the Edinburgh Office, with over seven years of experience in the sector. Beth’s academic qualifications include an MA (Hons) degree in Archaeology from the University of Aberdeen. She has been responsible for delivering cultural heritage environmental impact assessment reports and planning statements for renewable energy developments. Her work spans multiple jurisdictions. Working throughout Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales, Beth has been responsible for the delivery of cultural heritage chapters, and advice, thorough assessment of direct, indirect (including setting), and cumulative impacts (both direct and indirect). Furthermore, Beth is an Associate of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA).

11.1.3 Regulatory Background

11.1.3.1 National Legislation

Within Ireland, archaeological monuments and cultural heritage resources are protected through national and international policy, which are implemented in agreement with the requirements of the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valetta Convention). This was ratified by Ireland in 1997.

Archaeological monuments are primarily protected under the National Monuments Acts of 1930 to 2004 and sections of the National Cultural Institutions Act of 1997. Statutory protection is afforded at different levels to National Monuments, monuments included on the Register of Historic Monuments, and the Record of Monuments and Places.

Article 2 of the 1985 Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention) emphasises the importance of maintaining inventories of

archaeological and cultural heritage assets and for documentation to be prepared at the earliest opportunity in the event of a threat to these assets. The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established to fulfil the obligations of the Granada Convention and aims to be a central record of all architectural cultural heritage in Ireland. Article 1 of the Granada Convention defines architectural cultural heritage as:

- **Monument:** all buildings and structures of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest, including their fixings and fittings;
- **Group of Buildings:** homogenous groups of urban or rural buildings conspicuous for their historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest which are sufficiently coherent to form topographically definable units; and
- **Sites:** the combined works of man and nature, being areas which are partially built upon and sufficiently distinctive and homogenous to be topographically definable and are of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest.

The NIAH forms the basis for the recommendations for the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to the local authority for architectural cultural heritage assets to be included on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The RPS is a mechanism for the statutory protection of Ireland's architectural cultural heritage, formed under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act (2000) as amended. Architectural cultural heritage assets identified by the Minister as being of Regional, National or International rating within the NIAH are included in the recommendations for each local authority's RMP.

11.1.3.2 Local Planning Policy and Development Control

Relevant Local Planning Policy is provided in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (adopted January 2022). The aim of Chapter 12 is to protect, conserve and manage the archaeological and architectural cultural heritage of County Laois and to encourage sensitive sustainable development to ensure its survival and maintenance for future generations.

Relevant policy objectives for archaeological cultural heritage are as follows:

- *'AH1: Manage development in a manner that protects and conserves the integrity and character of archaeological cultural heritage of the county which avoids adverse impacts on sites, monuments, settings, features or objects of significant historical or archaeological interest and secure the preservation in-situ or by record of all sites and features of historical and archaeological interest.'*
- *'AH3: Protect the intrinsic value, character, integrity and settings of monuments and places in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMPs) and any forthcoming statutory register and protect Zones of Archaeological Potential against inappropriate development.'*
- *'AH4: In areas of archaeological potential, where groundworks are proposed, ensure that all works are undertaken to the highest standard and the resultant information made publicly available. Developers will be required to have regard to Archaeology and Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers (ICOMOS, 2000) in planning and executing development in sensitive areas. The Council favours the preservation in-situ of archaeological remains, where areas of archaeological potential are located in town centres or villages, preservation of archaeological remains by record will be considered.'*

The relevant standard or policy to achieve these objectives is set out within DM AH 1 which is quoted below.

'DM AH 1: Archaeological Potential

In areas of archaeological potential, where groundworks are proposed, the Council favours the preservation in-situ of archaeological remains, where areas of archaeological potential are located in town centres or villages, preservation of archaeological remains by record will be considered. Where it is proposed to undertake groundworks to lands within an area of archaeological potential or in the vicinity of Recorded Monuments or Zones of Archaeological Potential, the Council will require the preparation of an archaeological field evaluation by a licensed archaeologist, the details of which will be submitted with a planning application. Such development shall be assessed in the context of the following documents:

- o *Accord with the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (DoAHG, 1999).*
- o *The National Monuments Acts 1934-1994.*
- o *Heritage Council's Archaeology and Archaeology and Development Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers (2000).'*

11.1.4 Guidelines

Relevant guidance documents have been published by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the professional archaeological body the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. These publications have been adhered to in this assessment and include the following:

- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999);
- Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011);
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (2014); and
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022).

11.2 Assessment Methodology

11.2.1 Introduction

The methodology used to assess the direct and indirect effects of the Proposed Development upon Cultural Heritage was guided by '*Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*', published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2022.

In accordance with the EPA (2022) Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines, the assessment identifies effects as either direct or indirect, adverse or beneficial, and short-term, long-term, or permanent. Direct effects are those which change the cultural heritage significance of an asset through physical alteration; for purposes of this assessment, indirect impacts are those which affect the cultural heritage significance of an asset by causing change within its setting.

Direct effects on the cultural heritage significance of an asset have been assessed on the basis of a combination of the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset (where known), the probability of further assets being located within the affected areas and their likely significance, and the magnitude of impact on those assets to be caused by the implementation of the Proposed Development.

Indirect effects on the significance of cultural heritage assets have been identified and assessed with reference to the EPA Guidelines (2022). The assessment has been carried out in the following stages:

- initial assessment of intervisibility and other factors leading to the identification of potentially affected assets;
- assessment of the cultural heritage significance of potentially affected assets;
- assessment of the contribution of the setting to the cultural heritage significance of those assets;
- assessment of the magnitude of the impact of the Proposed Development Site on the contribution of settings to the significance of assets (by causing change within those settings); and
- prediction of the significance of the effect.

Where direct impacts/effects on known archaeological features have been identified, mitigation by design has been proposed wherever possible. Where not possible, mitigation by means of a proportionate level of archaeological recording is proposed, pending agreement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the County Laois Archaeological Advisor.

11.2.2 Study Areas

There is no guidance mandating the size of the study area required for the archaeological and cultural heritage assessment of wind farms. Based upon a review of the historic landscape and the exercise of professional judgment, two study areas were implemented for purposes of the current assessment, as follows:

- a 1km-radius study area, as measured from the Site boundary, for purposes of assessing buried archaeological potential and direct impacts; and
- a 5km-radius study area, as measured from the Site boundary, for purposes of assessing potential indirect impacts on surrounding cultural heritage assets as a result of change to setting.

11.2.2.1 Effects Scoped Out

Assessment of the following has been scoped out:

- effects on the setting of cultural heritage assets located at a distance in excess of 5km from the Proposed Development, unless identified as being of particular sensitivity to change; and
- effects on the setting of cultural heritage assets within the 5km study area that are beyond the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), and so would not to be intervisible with the Proposed Development, and where there are no identified 'third points' (co-visibility) of the cultural heritage asset and the Proposed Development.

11.2.3 Impact Assessment Methodology

In accordance with the relevant industry guidance, the impact assessment process adhered to was as follows:

- determination of the Significance of the Cultural Heritage Asset affected;
- determination of the Magnitude of Impact of the Proposed Development upon that Cultural Heritage Asset; and finally
- determination of the Significance of Impact of the Proposed Development.

The first two variables – Significance and Magnitude of Impact – are determined on the basis of the available evidence, using professional judgment. The third variable – Significance of Impact – comprises the product of the first two and is quantified using a standardised matrix (Table 11-4).

The concepts of Significance, Magnitude of Impact and Significance of Impact are discussed in detail below.

11.2.3.1 Significance

To allow for a detailed, justifiable, and intelligible determination of impact, it is necessary to establish a consistent terminology for discussing the importance of cultural heritage assets. This is referred to variously in statute, policy, and guidance, including as ‘importance’, ‘interest’, ‘significance’ and ‘special interest’. For the purposes of this assessment, the term ‘significance’ has been used consistently hereafter.

The Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, which relates specifically to archaeological remains, provides the following:

“Any material remains which can contribute to understanding past societies may be considered to have an element of archaeological significance... Archaeological significance or interest may also be seen in terms of the potential for sites, monuments or artefacts to enable people to experience directly the evidence for past societies and through this allow them to better understand and appreciate their own past.”

A more detailed approach is provided within Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), which conceives of cultural heritage significance as deriving from the following categories of ‘special interest’:

- architectural;
- historical;
- archaeological;
- artistic;
- cultural;
- scientific;
- technical; and
- social.

This guidance, which derives principally from the terms of UNESCO’s Granada Convention, makes the further point that these categories are not mutually exclusive, such that an asset might derive its significance from one, multiple or all of these interests.

In accordance with this guidance, the significance of the cultural heritage assets described within this assessment is discussed in terms of these contributing interests, enabling consistent, detailed, justifiable, and intelligible determinations of cultural heritage significance to be made.

Table 11-1 shows the potential levels of cultural heritage significance of an asset, based upon their statutory status, protection and grading. Where non-designated, the level of significance of an asset is described with regard to a scale of significance ranging from Highest to Negligible. This table acts as an aid to consistency in the exercise of professional judgement and provides a degree of transparency for others in evaluating the conclusions reached by this assessment (EPA, 2022).

Table 11-1 Cultural Heritage Significance

Significance	Criteria
Highest	Sites of international importance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Heritage Sites.
High	Sites of National importance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Monuments in State Ownership; National Monuments under a Preservation Order; and Nationally Important assets recorded in the NIAH.
Medium	Sites of Regional importance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites on the Record of Monuments and Places found within the relevant County Development Plan; and Regionally Important assets recorded in the NIAH and the Record of Protected Structures.
Low	Sites recorded within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), which are not included within the Records of Monuments and Places; and Locally Important assets recorded in the NIAH and the Record of Protected Structures.
Negligible	Sites that are of negligible or no cultural heritage significance
Unknown	Sites for which further information would be required in order to confidently assess their significance.

11.2.3.2 Magnitude of Impact

Determining the magnitude of any likely impacts requires consideration of the nature and extent of the change to the baseline cultural heritage conditions that would result from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

Impacts might be direct (e.g., physical truncation of buried remains as a result of ground disturbance) and/or indirect (e.g., adverse change to the setting of cultural heritage assets, both visually, and as a result of noise, vibration, traffic movements etc.).

Impacts may be beneficial or adverse and may be short-term, long term or permanent.

Magnitude of impact has been assessed with reference to the criteria set out in **Table 11-2**. The magnitude of both beneficial and adverse impact is assessed according to the same scale of impact, from high to neutral/none (EPA, 2022).

Table 11-2 Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact	Explanatory criteria
High Beneficial	The Proposed Development would considerably enhance the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Medium Beneficial	The Proposed Development would enhance to a clearly discernible extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Low Beneficial	The Proposed Development would enhance to a minor extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Very Low Beneficial	The Proposed Development would enhance to a very minor extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Neutral/None	The Proposed Development would not affect or would have harmful and enhancing effects of equal magnitude on the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Very Low Adverse	The Proposed Development would erode to a very minor extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Low Adverse	The Proposed Development would erode to a minor extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
Medium Adverse	The Proposed Development would erode to a clearly discernible extent the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.
High Adverse	The Proposed Development would considerably erode the cultural heritage significance of the affected asset.

11.2.3.3 Significance of Impact

The significance of impact levels and criteria are presented in **Table 11-3**.

Table 11-4 provides a matrix that relates cultural heritage significance to magnitude of impact (incorporating contribution from setting where relevant), to establish the likely overall significance of impact. This assessment has been undertaken separately for direct effects and indirect effects, the latter being principally concerned with effects resulting from development within the setting of cultural heritage assets (EPA, 2022). Where a Very Significant (or greater) impact is identified using this method, it would be considered a Significant Effect for purposes of EIA.

Table 11-3 Significance of Impact Criteria

Significance of Impact	Description
Profound	An impact which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Very Significant	An impact which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Significant	The development would create an impact on a designated asset which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment

Significance of Impact	Description
Moderate	An impact which alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing or emerging baseline trends
Slight	An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Not Significant/ Imperceptible	An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.

Table 11-4 Significance of Impact Matrix

Magnitude of Impact	Significance (excluding negligible and unknown)			
	Highest	High	Medium	Low
High beneficial	Profound	Profound	Very Significant	Significant
Medium beneficial	Profound	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate
Low beneficial	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate	Moderate
Very low beneficial	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Slight
Neutral/None	Not Significant/ Imperceptible	Not Significant/ Imperceptible	Not Significant/ Imperceptible	Not Significant/ Imperceptible
Very low adverse	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Slight
Low adverse	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate	Moderate
Medium adverse	Profound	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate
High adverse	Profound	Profound	Very Significant	Significant

11.2.4 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Analysis

The assessment of visual impact has been assisted by a ZTV calculation, prepared principally for landscape and visual impact assessment, and presented in Technical Appendix 11-1 found in Volume III of this EIAR. The ZTV maps predict the degree of visibility of the Proposed Development from points within a study area around the Proposed Development Site, as would be perceivable by an observer of average height. The ZTV model has been used to inform the assessment of the likely effect of the Proposed Development upon cultural heritage assets within the study area as a result of change to setting.

The ZTV is theoretical, being based on landform only ('bare earth'), and it does not take into account the screening or filtering effects of intervening vegetation, buildings or other surface features. As such, it is likely to overestimate the actual level of visibility of the Proposed Development.

Assets that fall outside the ZTV are excluded from any further assessment, except where a view has been identified which includes a cultural heritage asset and the wind turbines (a 'third point') and either contributes to or enables an appreciation of the asset's cultural heritage significance.

11.2.5 Cumulative Effects

A cumulative impact assessment is presented in **Section 11.6**. The assessment has considered all developments identified in **Chapter 1**. However, it is considered that the most likely source of any cumulative effects would arise from other wind energy developments within 10km of the affected cultural heritage asset (depending on the cultural heritage significance of the asset), which have either been consented, are subject of an active planning application or are subject of a planning appeal.

Assessment of potential cumulative effects has been limited to those assets for which the Proposed Development would itself result in a Very Significant (or greater) direct/indirect impact. The existing presence of any operational wind farms within the study areas and surrounding landscape has been considered as part of the baseline assessment.

11.2.6 Mitigation

A statement of the mitigation proposed for any identified impacts is provided after the results of the impact assessment. The potential for (and desirability of) mitigating any impacts by design, e.g., avoidance of direct impacts on cultural heritage assets, has been a consideration throughout the design process. Similarly, the potential to remove, re-locate and/or re-size specific turbines in order to reduce any possible indirect effects has also formed part of the design process. The use of screening to mitigate any impacts resulting from change to setting is rarely feasible for wind turbines, given their scale, but has also formed a consideration.

11.2.7 Residual Effects

A statement of the anticipated residual effects, i.e., following the implementation of the relevant mitigation measures, has been provided.

11.2.8 Consultation

In undertaking the assessment subject of this chapter, consideration has been given to the relevant scoping responses and other consultation undertaken as detailed in **Table 11-5** below.

Table 11-5 Relevant Consultation and Responses

Consultee and Date	Scoping/ Other Consultation	Issue Raised	Response/Action
An Bord Pleanála, 16/06/2022	Strategic Infrastructure Preapplication Meeting	Whilst no recorded archaeology has been identified within the Proposed Development Site, it is noted that there is still potential for archaeology to be found during construction. Requested that the provision	Monitoring will be included in mitigation proposals. The cultural heritage town of Timahoe will be taken into consideration for the assessment.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/ Other Consultation	Issue Raised	Response/Action
		for monitoring is included in the chapter. Noted that Timahoe is a cultural heritage town and requested that the assessment considers this.	
The Heritage Council 27/10/2022	Scoping	The Heritage Council will not be responding to this Proposed Development due to a lack of resources.	No further action was taken.

11.2.9 Sources Consulted

In compiling and assessing the baseline environment, the following sources were consulted:

- The Historic Environment Viewer as maintained by the Government of Ireland (Online) (accessed 18/01/2023);
- The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) (accessed 18/01/2023);
- The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) from the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (accessed 18/01/2023);
- The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (accessed 18/01/2023);
- The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) (accessed 18/01/2023);
- The Database of Irish Excavation Reports (accessed 18/01/2023);
- Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (accessed 18/01/2023);
- Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland (accessed 18/01/2023);
- Irish Townlands Online Database (accessed 18/01/2023);
- Placenames Database of Ireland (accessed 18/01/2023); and
- The Down Survey of Ireland (accessed 18/01/2023).

In addition, the following Ordnance Survey Maps were consulted using the online National Townland and Historical Map Viewer:

- Historic 6 Inch First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets LS025 and LS031 published in 1841;
- Historic 25 Inch Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets LS025 and LS031, published in 1908; and
- Historic 6 Inch Last Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets LS025 and LS031, Published in 1909.

11.2.10 Limitations / Difficulties Encountered

The archaeological baseline has been derived from the sources outlined in **Section 11.2.8**. It therefore shares the same range of limitations in terms of the comprehensiveness, completeness and accuracy of those sources.

With respect to assessing indirect impacts resulting from change to setting, as stated in **Section 11.4.2**, the ZTV is a theoretical, 'bare earth' model. As such, the results of the ZTV is likely to overestimate the actual level of visibility of the Proposed Development, as it does not take account of any intervening vegetation, built form or other surface features.

No site visit was undertaken by SLR Consulting as part of this Cultural Heritage Assessment due to the presence of dense conifer plantation forestry across the Site and surrounding area. However, several cultural heritage assets were inspected as part of the assessment of their setting, in order to assess their potential susceptibility to indirect impact; these are all discussed further in section 11.4.2.

11.3 Existing Environment

11.3.1 Methodology and Study Area

The type and density of recorded archaeological remains can be used to inform a predictive model of what further buried remains may survive buried within the Proposed Development Site. The location of the cultural heritage assets within 1km of the Proposed Development Site can be found in the gazetteer provided in Technical Appendix 11.1, in Volume III of this EIAR. Baseline information has been gathered using the sources identified in **Section 11.2.9**.

11.3.2 Archaeological Baseline

The Proposed Development Site comprises an upland area with multiple hills, including the Fossy Mountains and Cullenagh Mountain. The majority of the Proposed Development Site is covered by forestry. The area surrounding this forestry is mainly agricultural, with several small dispersed settlements, including Timahoe, Wolfhill, and Swan.

The Proposed Development Site is located in an area of varied geology, mainly consisting of chert, mudstone, sandstone, siltstone, and limestone. The quaternary sediments surrounding the Proposed Development Site mainly consist of till derived from namurian sandstone and shales, as well as bedrock outcrops and subcrops (Geological Survey Ireland, 2022).

A full description of the existing environment of the Proposed Development is found in **Chapter 3**.

11.3.2.1 Prehistoric

There are no known prehistoric cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site.

There are ten known prehistoric cultural heritage assets within 1km of the Proposed Development Site.

There are two prehistoric cultural heritage assets located alongside one another to the east of the Proposed Development Site. **LA025-013** is a megalithic structure, comprising a sub-circular mound with a small kerb, set stones, and a hollow with an embedded slab. The asset is located 1km east of the Proposed Development Site and c. 0.25km northeast of

the access track. The asset can be seen on Sheet LS025 of the Historic 6 Inch Ordnance Survey Map, published in 1841, recorded as a 'Druid's Altar'. **LA025-014**, a potential fulacht fiadh (burnt mound), is also recorded at this location, albeit no surface remains are visible.

Two barrows are located adjacent to one another, c.1km west of the Proposed Development Site. **LA031-020** is described as a sub-circular area with a dome-shaped rise and evidence of a fosse and bank. **LA031-019** is described as a circular area with a low bank with protruding stones. The barrows are situated approximately 500m to the east of the Clogh River, in an upland area of wet, marshy land.

A series of Fulacht fia (burnt mounds) are located to the west of the development. **LA031-023**, **LA031-024**, and **LA031-025** are located c.0.4km south of Turbine 8, with **LA031-023** and **LA031-024** not apparent above ground and **LA031-025** being noted as a slightly raised area containing burnt stone. Approximately 0.6km to the southeast is the proposed location of **LA031-026**, though no above-ground remains survive.

LA031-002 is located approximately 1km west of the Proposed Development Site, though there are no visible surface remains, and **LA031-003** is located approximately 0.2km southeast of **LA031-002**. **LA031-002** was discovered whilst excavating for fireclay in 1956. The asset contained an oblong pit with the remains of a wooden trough, which had a radiocarbon date of approximately 3,500 BP.

11.3.2.2 Early medieval

There are no known early medieval cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site.

There are two cultural heritage assets identified as raths, a type of early medieval ringfort, located to the northeast of the Proposed Development. **LA025-002** is located c. 0.4km to the north, and comprises an oval-shaped area defined by a bank with a shallow external fosse. **LA025-006** is located c. 0.75km northeast of the Proposed Development Site and is described as a subcircular enclosure with evidence of a fosse to the north and northeast. The rath is named 'Dun of Luggacurren' on the Historic 25-inch Ordnance Survey Map, published in 1908.

11.3.2.3 Medieval

There are no known medieval cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site, nor are there any within the 1km search area.

11.3.2.4 Post-medieval

There are no known post-medieval cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site.

There are six post-medieval cultural heritage assets within the 1km search area. **LA031-027** is located c.0.8km southeast of Turbine 8 and is described as a 'standing stone'. Due to its form, the stone is believed to have been erected in the 19th Century, rather than being a prehistoric megalith.

Saint Mary's Catholic Church (**1280250**) is located in Wolfhill, c.0.4km east of the Proposed Development. The church is a gable-fronted Catholic church, constructed in 1860 and remodelled in 1980.

LA019-016001, a graveyard, and **LA019-016**, a church, are located c.0.5km north of the Proposed Development Site. The church was most likely constructed in the late 16th

Century, possibly using parts of an earlier medieval chapel. All visible memorials within the graveyard post-date 1700 AD. An early Christian cross-slab (**LA019-016002**) is located within the graveyard.

LA025-003 is located c.0.9km northeast of the Proposed Development boundary and consists of an oval-shaped pit in which human remains and fragments of a bagpipe were recovered; the pit is known locally as Piper's Pit. It is thought that these remains may belong to a member of the O'Kellys or the O'Mores, who fought a battle over taxes on the nearby Knuckaun-Navish (Hill of Vengeance).

11.3.2.5 Undated

There are no known undated cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site.

There are five undated cultural heritage assets within the 1km search area. **LA019-018** is located c.0.9km north of the Proposed Development Site. The asset is a moated site, consisting of a sub-rectangular area with a shallow fosse overlooking the surrounding countryside. Additionally, there are four undated enclosures within 1km of the Proposed Development Site. **LA019-017** is located c.0.7km north of the Proposed Development Site and is described as a roughly oval enclosure with no surface remains. **LA025-004** is located c.0.9km northeast of the Proposed Development Site and is described as a circular enclosure with no surface remains. **LA025-031** is located c.0.4km west of the Proposed Development Site and is described as having been levelled 10 years before the asset was entered on the Sites and Monuments Register in 2007. **LA025-021** is located c.0.6km south of the Proposed Development Site and is described as a crop mark of subcircular conjoined enclosures that are visible on aerial photographs but do not have any visible surface remains. **LA024-038** is a crop mark indicating the presence of an oval enclosure located along the course of the proposed cable route.

11.3.2.6 Historic Mapping

A review of the Down Survey of Ireland data was undertaken, using the information made available by the University of Dublin. The Proposed Development Site is not specifically noted within the online mapping. However, the supplemental information tells us that the northern part of the Proposed Development Site, the townland of Fossy Upper, sits within the Barony of Cullenagh and the Parish of Fossy, with the rest sitting within the Barony of Ballyadams and the parish of Killebban. The 1659 census shows that Fossy Upper had 15 inhabitants, all of whom were English.

The rest of the Proposed Development Site sits within Coolglass, Crissard, Kylenebehy, Fallowbeg Upper, Aghoney, and Gorreelagh townlands.

A review of historical Ordnance Survey maps was undertaken using those available on the Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) National Townland and Historical Map Viewer. The following maps were consulted:

- Historic 6 Inch First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, published in 1841;
- Historic 25 Inch Ordnance Survey Map, published in 1908; and
- Historic 6 Inch Last Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Published in 1909.

Historic mapping from 1841 to 1908 shows few landscape changes within the 1km buffer zone. The majority of the land comprised agricultural fields interspersed with farmsteads. Some cultural heritage assets are named on the maps, including Saint Mary's Catholic

Church in Wolfhill (**1280250**), the Dun of Luggacurren (**LA025-006**), and the Druid's Altar (**LA025-013**).

The most notable change was the closing of the coal shafts and pits located in the vicinity of Wolfhill. Whilst these coal shafts are associated with the long-standing coal mining industry of Wolfhill and the surrounding area, there are no recorded heritage assets associated with the mining industry within the SMR or the NIAH. The 1841 Ordnance Survey Map notes the presence of the pits and shafts, with the 1909 Ordnance Survey Map marking them as 'disused'. This indicates their closure at some point during the intervening period. There is no indication of any coal shafts or pits within the Proposed Development Site itself.

No further potential or likely cultural heritage assets were identified within the Proposed Development Site, or its vicinity, on review of the available historic mapping.

11.3.2.7 Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland (1837)

Both the parish of Fossy and the parish of Killeban are mentioned in the Topographical Dictionary of Ireland. The entrance for Killeban notes *'The land is generally fertile, and chiefly in pasture, with some bog and mountain; the system of agriculture is improving. Limestone, flag-stone, and sandstone are quarried...'*

11.3.2.8 Townlands

Townland names can indicate previous land use and historical associations. The townland names presented in **Table 11-6** are those located within the Proposed Development Site. All townland names, translations, and potential meanings have been sourced from the Placenames Database of Ireland.

Table 11-6 Townland Names

Townland Name - Irish	Townland Name - English	Potential Meaning
An Chúil Ghlas	Coolglass	The green corner; nook
An Chrois Ard	Crissard	The high cross. In toponymy, 'cross' tends to relate to either a cross roads or a church.
Coill na Beithe	Kylenabehy	The wood of the birch/ birchwood
An Fosadh Uachtarach	Fossy Upper	The encampment?/The Upper Rest
An Fhailigh Bheag Uachtarach	Fallowbeg Upper	The place of cliffs
Áth Uaithne	Aghoney	The ford of Uaithne?
Garaoileach	Gorreelagh	Containing limestone?

11.3.2.9 Previous Excavations within the Site

No recorded previous excavations or archaeological works have been undertaken within the Proposed Development Site.

11.3.3 Summary of Archaeological Potential

No known cultural heritage assets have been recorded within the Proposed Development Site boundary.

However, there are 10 known prehistoric cultural heritage sites within the 1km buffer zone, comprising one megalithic structure, two barrows, and seven Fulacht fia (burnt mounds). The majority of the Fulacht fia are noted as no longer existing, with no visible surface remains, mainly due to damage during agricultural land use. The presence of these prehistoric cultural heritage assets within the 1km buffer is suggestive of localised prehistoric activity. However, the potential for unknown prehistoric cultural heritage assets to survive buried within the Proposed Development Site is low, with no further earthworks that would highlight the presence of any megalithic funerary monuments or Fulacht fia . These are often significant in size and would tend to be identifiable above ground; they would most likely have been recorded within the sources consulted as part of the baseline assessment. However, no site visit was carried out as part of this assessment and as such, their presence cannot be entirely ruled out. It is worth noting that a detailed 1m DTM survey of the entire Site was undertaken upon the commencement of the assessment of the Proposed Development. No above ground assets were observed from this data set.

The potential for early medieval cultural heritage assets to survive within the Proposed Development Site is low; there is no indication that there are any assets of this date within the Proposed Development Site.

The potential for medieval cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site boundary is very low, as there were no medieval assets identified anywhere within the 1km study area. Should any such remains survive buried within the Proposed Development Site they would most likely be agricultural in nature.

There is a low potential for unknown post-medieval cultural heritage assets within the Proposed Development Site; all post-medieval assets within the study area are upstanding and well-documented on historic and modern mapping. As there are no post-medieval assets on these maps, it is unlikely that there are any within the Proposed Development Site. As with the potential for medieval cultural heritage assets, should any such remains survive buried within the Proposed Development Site they would most likely be agricultural in nature, e.g., remnant field boundary ditches.

There are five undated cultural heritage assets within the 1km buffer zone. These remains consist of one moated site to the north of the Proposed Development Site, and four potential enclosures which have no recorded visible surface remains. The potential for unknown undated cultural heritage assets to survive buried within the Proposed Development Site is low.

11.4 Potential impacts

11.4.1 Potential impacts – Construction

11.4.1.1 Direct Impacts

Wind Farm

Based on the evidence presented in **Section 11.3**, there are currently no predicted direct construction impacts on known archaeological remains associated with the construction stage of the Proposed Development.

The potential for any as yet unrecorded archaeology to survive buried within the construction footprint is low. Any such remains would most likely be of no greater than low significance, based on the lack of any known significant remains. In the event that remains of low significance are present and that the magnitude of impact, in the worst case, was high, the significance of impact would be significant. In this instance suggested mitigation is proposed in **Section 11.5.1**.

Cable Routes

With reference to **Figure 11-1** the only asset that may be subject to direct impact as a result of the cable route would be as follows:

- the cultural heritage town of Timahoe.

In addition, the Option 2 Cable Route may have an impact on the cultural heritage town of Timahoe. Within the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027, Timahoe is a candidate for being an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The proposed cable route runs through Timahoe, following the alignment of the R426. Whilst the cable route is not anticipated to directly impact the buildings within an ACA, the road through the ACA is expected to be impacted directly. Due to the nature of an ACA, work is not restricted or prohibited, but any works are required to respect the special character of the area.

As a whole, Timahoe would be considered a locally important heritage asset for purposes of EIA. However, it is recognised that certain aspects of the town are of greater significance than others and are fundamental to the recognition of Timahoe as a 'cultural heritage town'. Notably, this includes the ecclesiastical complex and round tower, and the associated built and buried historic settlement remains. Aspects of the town that make a lesser contribution to its cultural significance include modern infrastructure and development, which tell us little, if anything, about the sequence of historic development of the settlement, and which retain little, if any, archaeological interest. The only aspect of the town that would be physically affected by the Proposed Development would be the modern road/footpath, during excavation of the cable trench. As described, this would not result in any loss of the archaeological interest that contributes to the town's cultural significance and to its recognition as a 'cultural heritage town'. In addition, following installation of the cabling, the route of the cable trench would be re-instated, such that there would ultimately be no material change to the appearance of the existing modern road/footpath or to the appearance of the town overall. In this context, the magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development upon its cultural heritage significance is anticipated to be Neutral/None, and the significance of effect to be Not Significant/ Imperceptible.

Recreational Amenity Trail

The Recreational Amenity Trail (RAT) follows existing track and road networks. The RAT will have no direct or indirect effect upon any cultural heritage assets.

11.4.1.2 Zones of Notification

Enclosure (**LA024-038**), which comprises an oval crop mark, visible on aerial photographs, is located 45m west of the proposed Option 1 cable route, within a field. Whilst Option 1 Cable Route doesn't necessarily appear to fall within the confines of the asset itself, it falls within the Zone of Notification for the asset.

A Zone of Notification is not a cultural heritage asset in and of itself, and is therefore not a receptor for impact for purposes of EIA. Rather, it identifies an area surrounding an asset in which appropriate notice for any works should be given to the Minister for Housing, Local

Government and Heritage under Section 12(3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

The Applicant is cognisant of this and will ensure that notification is made and any necessary confirmation/consents are obtained, and any necessary mitigation works agreed, prior to construction within the Zone.

11.4.2 Potential impacts – Operational

11.4.2.1 Wind Farm

Given the undulating topography and heavily forested nature of the landscape within and surrounding the Proposed Development Site, the potential for indirect effects to result during the operational phase is comparatively limited. Intervisibility between the majority of the cultural heritage assets within the Study Area and the Proposed Development would be negated, or very heavily filtered, in most instances, such that their settings would largely be considered to comprise modern plantation/trees; the experience of those assets would be one of enclosure and isolation within a forested expanse, and the views would be accordingly short range.

The Proposed Development Site would not form an aspect of that experience, or a perceivable aspect of the setting of those assets, such that the introduction of the proposed turbines would be imperceptible, resulting in no change to those baseline conditions. In this context, any further discussion of the majority of the cultural heritage assets within material proximity to the Proposed Development Site would be disproportionate and would not warrant any further inclusion within the EIA, in accordance with the EPA Guidelines (2022).

Of relevance, the potential for the operational phase of the Proposed Development to have an indirect impact upon Wolfhill Coal Mine and The Swan Brickworks, was raised during public consultation. The significance of these assets, and their centrality to a sense of local history and industrial/mining heritage has been acknowledged and duly reflected in the Proposed Development design, as follows:

- **Wolfhill Coal Mine**

One of the three clusters of turbines initially proposed – the southernmost – which was located within and around the Wolfhill landscape, has been entirely removed from the design in order to respect the coherence of the historic mine shafts and other infrastructure and preserve their individual and collective significance (see Appendix 8.1 for further information about the historical mine locations); and

- **The Swan Brickworks**

Engagement with the local community is ongoing in relation to the distribution of the community benefit fund, to explore opportunities for securing the improvement and preservation of this important industrial heritage site.

Given the above embedded measures and proposed improvements, and the results of the baseline assessment work undertaken to inform this chapter, the Proposed Development would not be anticipated to have a significant adverse impact upon these two locally significant assets. In this sense, and in accordance with the EPA Guidelines (2022), neither is considered any further within this chapter.

With regard to the above, the only assets warranting further detailed discussion within this chapter are as follows:

- Timahoe Ecclesiastical Complex, specifically:
 - o Timahoe Round Tower (LA018-031005);
 - o Timahoe Church (LA018-031001); and
 - o Castle/Tower House (LA018-031006); as well as
- Fossy Church (LA019-016);
- Ringfort – Rath (LA024-015001)
- Castle – Motte and Bailey (LA024-015002); and
- Saint Mogue’s Church, Timogue (12801929).

These assets have been identified as potentially susceptible to indirect impact as a result of change to setting and are discussed individually below.

Timahoe Ecclesiastical Complex

The village of Timahoe is located 1km northwest of the Proposed Development, within County Laois. At the western side of the village is a collection of ecclesiastical cultural heritage assets. The earliest ecclesiastical asset within this complex was a 7th Century early Christian monastery was founded by Saint Mo Chua, from whom the village gets its name. Historical records show that a church persisted on the site of the monastery from this period until the 11th Century, however, no known archaeological remains of this period have been found.

Timahoe was plundered by the Connaught king Toirrdelbach Ua Conchobhair in 1142, an event which is thought to have destroyed any standing ecclesiastical buildings. The prominent Uí Mórdha (O’Mores) family are thought to have re-founded the monastery after the destruction in 1142, and it may be around this time that the Timahoe Round Tower (**LA018-031005**) and associated church were constructed.

The associated church (**LA018-031001**) was listed as being under the possession of Great Connell Priory when it was dissolved in 1541, with the church appearing to fall out of use. The land was granted to Edward Randolph during the English Plantation of Laois and Offaly in 1552, with it subsequently being passed into the hands of the Cosby family in 1609. The church was subsequently converted into a tower house (**LA018-031006**) and later into a farm complex by the 18th Century. The church/tower house is in ruins, with the round tower still mostly standing. The Cosby family, based at Stradbally Hall c. 0.7km northeast, developed the village of Timahoe into what we see today.

A gothic revival Church of Ireland church was constructed around 1840 at the base of the round tower, approximately 20m north of the earlier church and tower house. It is currently used as Timahoe Heritage Centre. Several sets of human remains have been found in the area, including a Bronze Age burial (**LA018-031003**) and several sets of remains potentially relating to the 2nd Earl of Essex’s military campaign in Ireland during 1599 (**LA018-031009**).

Timahoe Round Tower (LA018-031005)

Description

The Timahoe Round Tower is a 30m high tower adjacent to the village of Timahoe, approximately 2.7km northwest of the Proposed Development. Constructed from Sandstone and Limestone, the tower has a base 17m in diameter and walls that are 2m thick. The tower is believed to have had five floors, reached by a series of ladders, with the

entrance door being located 4.9m above ground level (Corlett, 2018). The doorway of a round tower is normally aligned with the entrance of the contemporary church, however, the doorway of the Timahoe round tower does not (O'Keefe, 2003). This suggests that the ruined church at Timahoe may not have been contemporaneous with the round tower. The floors and ladders no longer exist, but the supporting ledges are present. Notably, the doorway of the tower is elaborately decorated in the Romanesque style, which includes pillars topped with carved human heads.

The function of round towers is hotly debated. The most popular theory is that they were defensive structures, providing refuge to the inhabitants of the monastery during times of attack. The raised door, the height of the tower, and the thick walls add prominence to this theory. O'Keefe (2003) believes that round towers have ceremonial use, potentially as high-status royal chapels or housing for important relics. The Irish name for a round tower, *cloigtheach*, translates to bell tower, leading many to believe that they acted as a belfry and as an audible call to prayer for the inhabitants of the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, the height of the round tower may indicate that it was a visual marker within the landscape, potentially identifying the location of the place of worship either for pilgrims or for those living in the local area.

Setting & Impact

Whatever the purpose of the round tower is, its relationship with its setting is key. The ecclesiastical assets at Timahoe are located within a relatively flat landscape at approximately 120m AOD. They lie to the east of Bauteogue River, a tributary of the Stradbally River. The topography of the surrounding landscape provides long-range views in all directions, even at ground level. With the potential for much longer-ranging views from the top of the 30m high tower. Historically, these long-range views would have allowed visibility of approaching parties from a great distance, as well as enabling the tower itself to be visible from a great distance. The historical key approaches to and from the asset are unknown.

The current setting of the asset comprises the village of Timahoe directly to the east, with several smaller villages and hamlets scattered throughout the surrounding farmland. The nearest larger town is Portlaoise, 10km to the northwest. The Proposed Development is located to the southeast of the assets, with Turbine 2 being located approximately 2.4km away. As stated, historical key approaches towards the asset are unknown, however, the asset is currently reachable from the main modern approaches into the village of Timahoe. These main roads are the R426 which runs north to south, and The Pike/Timahoe Road, which runs east to west. The entire ecclesiastical complex is enclosed by a line of trees, which provide screening of long-range views when standing at ground level.

From the base of the asset, long-range views in all directions are heavily screened by the built environment of Timahoe, the ecclesiastical complex, and the trees. These important long-ranging views outwards from the asset are no longer able to be appreciated, as the inside of the Round Tower is no longer accessible and all internal floors have been removed.

As stated, views towards the asset are also thought to have significance. The Proposed Development is not anticipated to be visible when approaching the asset along the R426 from the south. The Proposed Development is anticipated to be visible when approaching along the roads from the east and the west, however, as the Proposed Development Site is to the south of the asset, these views are anticipated to be peripheral. These peripheral views are not anticipated to impact the ability to appreciate the asset.

Views towards the asset along the R426 from the north will include 7 proposed turbines. At some points along the road, both the Proposed Development and the asset are anticipated to be visible. At some points, any views towards the asset are heavily screened by large trees that line the road. When the asset is visible within these views, it is offset from the Proposed Development, and as such its silhouette is anticipated to be visible and distinguishable among the skylines. As such, whilst the Proposed Development may cause a distraction from the views towards the asset along this approach, the asset as a marker within the landscape is still able to be appreciated and understood.

The asset is a National Monument (**114.01**) and is therefore of high sensitivity. The magnitude of impact upon their cultural significance is anticipated to be Very Low Adverse, and as such the significance of effects is moderate.

Timahoe Church (LA018-031001) and Castle/Tower House (LA018-031006)

Description

The remains of a church (**LA018-031001**) adjacent to Timahoe Round Tower are intertwined with the remains of a later townhouse (**LA018-031006**).

The oldest surviving remains of the church are thought to have been constructed in the 12th Century, with the red sandstone quoins on the eastern wall matching the sandstone construction of the nearby Round Tower. The church was extended eastwards in the 15th Century, forming a chancel extending to the east, now only seen by a blocked-up chancel arch on the eastern wall.

The church is believed to have been converted into a castle or tower house in the 16th Century, changes included removing the chancel, blocking the chancel arch, and heightening the east end of the church to form a tower. The remains of the tower can be seen on the eastern wall above the chancel arch. The tower house is believed to have been inhabited by the Cosby Family (Corlett, 2018).

The church/castle is mainly in ruins, with the eastern wall being the most complete. The footprint of the latest iteration of the asset can be identified, as the north and south walls are partially standing, with the foundations of the west wall being visible.

The asset draws its significance from both its multi-phased architectural interest and its group ecclesiastical interest with Timahoe Round Tower.

Setting & Impact

The setting of the asset is the same as the setting of the Round Tower, which sits 15m to the northwest. The current setting of the assets comprises the village of Timahoe directly to the east, with several smaller villages and hamlets scattered throughout the surrounding farmland. The entire ecclesiastical compound is surrounded by trees, which screen long-range landscape views. The nearest larger town is Portlaoise, 10km to the northwest. The Proposed Development is located to the southeast of the assets, with Turbine 2 being located approximately 2.4km away.

Whilst the ZTV indicates that seven turbines will be visible from the asset, the screening of trees surrounding it provides obstruction to any views in and out. Views outwards from the asset can only be appreciated at ground level, as any higher floors have been removed. The connection between the asset and the Round Tower can be appreciated and understood. Any glimpses of the Proposed Development would be minor intrusions within any views between the asset, with the assets' proximity to each other meaning that the Proposed Development is a minor distraction.

The asset is included on the Record of Monuments and places and is therefore of medium sensitivity. The magnitude of impact upon the asset through the construction of the Proposed Development is neutral; there would be no change affecting the understanding of the cultural significance, and thus the significance of the effect is imperceptible.

Fossy Church (LA019-016)

Description

Fossy Church (**LA018-016**) is a 16th Century Parish Church, located 800m southeast of the village of Timahoe.

The asset is constructed from uncoursed rubble and is approximately 14m in length and 8m in width. There is a doorway in the western gable, five windows visible on the south wall, and 5 windows visible on the north wall. The windows appear to have been added at different phases of the building's history, due to the differences in their design and placement, with some dating to the late 16th and early 17th Century. Some of these windows appear to have been on a first floor within the church, however, there is no evidence of floor joists. Additionally, the eastern elevation contains the remains of a window set into a large segmental-arched embrasure. There is a potential piscina, a stone basin, in the southeastern part of the church. There is an associated graveyard (**LA019-016001**) to the southwest of the church, surrounded by a stone wall, and containing headstones, as well as an early Christian cross-slab (**LA019-016002**). The earliest visible headstones date to 1700. The Ordnance Survey Letters for County Laois (1838) note that the remains of a historic road had been discovered, leading to the church from nearby Timahoe, however, this is not noted within any modern archaeological record.

Setting & Impact

The asset's setting comprises pasture at approximately 130m AOD. The land to the south gently slopes upwards, however, there are clear views in all directions. The L3840 road runs 130m to the north of the asset, with a track running to the west of the asset. There are modern working farms to the north, east, and west of the asset. The northern slope of Fossy Mountain is visible to the south. The asset derives its significance from both its architectural interest as a 16th Century rural church, as well as its immediate setting within the Civil Parish of Fossy/Timahoe and the townland of Fossy Lower. It is anticipated that seven of the turbines in the northern cluster will be visible from the asset, with Turbine 2 being located 1.6km to the southeast. Views of these turbines will encompass the majority of the southern view from the asset.

The asset derives its significance from both its architectural interest as a 16th Century rural church, as well as its immediate setting within the Civil Parish of Fossy/Timahoe and the townland of Fossy Lower. Whilst seven turbines within the Proposed Development are anticipated to be visible from the asset, their distance means that the ability to appreciate the architecture of the asset will not be impacted.

The asset's connection with its setting is highlighted in views to and from the asset with nearby settlements, primarily Timahoe and the domestic structures along the L3840 to the north. Views from the asset to these settlements are not anticipated to be impacted by the development, due to its placement to the south. It is anticipated that views from Timahoe towards the asset may include the Proposed Development, however, it is unlikely that the asset in its current ruined state would be visible from the village due to topography and screening in the form of trees and vegetation along the roads. Views from the L3840 will include both the asset and seven turbines. The townland of Fossy Lower

extends to the northernmost boundary of the Proposed Development, however, the townland boundary forms an intangible setting. As such, the Proposed Development would not impact the ability to understand the connection of the asset to its setting.

The asset is a National Monument (**114.02**) and is therefore of high sensitivity. The magnitude of impact upon the asset through the construction of the Proposed Development is neutral; there would be no change affecting the understanding of the cultural significance of the asset, and thus the significance of effect is imperceptible.

Ringfort – Rath (LA024-015001) and Castle – Motte and Bailey (LA024-015002)

Description

The asset comprises an ovular motte or mound, separated by a wide shallow fosse or ditch from a D-shaped bailey (**LA024-015002**). The motte is approximately 2m in height and measures 30m by 15m in area. The bailey is defined by a low bank, approximately 0.4m in height. A potential outer bank runs from the southeast to the northwest. The motte and bailey castle is anticipated to have been constructed on the Site of an earlier ringfort (**LA024-015001**). The Sites and Monuments Record notes an excavation was carried out at the Site, but no date nor report was given.

The asset has a preservation order (4/1981) under the National Monuments Acts and as such is considered a National Monument.

Setting & Impact

The asset is located within working farmland, within the Townland of Raheenduff Little. The Irish name of the townland, *An Ráithín Dubh Beag*, translates to *'the black little ring-fort'*. The asset is directly to the south of the road known as The Pike, which leads southwest from Timahoe. The asset can be accessed from The Pike, or the working farm located approximately 150m to the west. Additional working farms fill the landscape surrounding the asset. Aerial photography shows evidence of modern quarrying to the south and east of the asset.

The asset sits within a valley in the Timahoe Hills, between Fossy Mountain and Cullenagh Mountain. The topography of the surrounding landscape is relatively flat, with the asset sitting at 150m AOD. The ground starts to slope at the base of Fossy Hill, which is located approximately 2km southeast of the asset, and the base of Cullenagh Mountain, which is located 2.5km to the west.

The asset derives its significance from its setting within the valley. The positioning of the Rath, and later motte and bailey, would have provided command over the valley. The flat landscape surrounding the asset would allow for long-distance views, especially along the length of the valley, which runs from the north to the south/southwest. These long-distance views may have allowed for intervisibility with other nearby potentially contemporaneous assets, including the potential ringfort (**LA018-071**), located 0.7km to the north, or the enclosures lining the valley to the south/southwest (**LA024-025, LA024-026, LA024-027**).

Long-distance views from the asset are anticipated to include 8 turbines within the Proposed Development. Due to the orientation of the valley, north to south/southwest, these views of the Proposed Development are anticipated to be peripheral. This includes any views whilst approaching the asset along the valley. Additionally, due to the orientation of the valley and the potential contemporaneous assets, intervisibility between the asset and the other assets is not anticipated to be impacted.

The asset is considered a National Monument under a Preservation Order (4/1981) and is therefore of high sensitivity. The magnitude of impact upon the asset through the construction of the Proposed Development is neutral; there would be no change affecting the understanding of the cultural significance of the asset, and thus the significance of effect is imperceptible.

Saint Mogue's Church, Timogue (12801929)

Description

The asset is an 18th Century (constructed 1736) church, located within the townland of Timogue. The asset faces west, within a small churchyard. The church belongs to the Church of Ireland and is a detached three-bay single-storey gable-fronted structure, with a bellcote. A vestry projection was added in 1876, and the church was renovated in 1970. A window at the southwest of the buildings is engraved with a tribute to the RMS Lusitania, which was destroyed by a German Torpedo in 1915 during the First World War. A church in some form has likely existed in Timogue since the early Christian era, with the name Timogue (or Tigh Maodhóg) translating to the House of Saint Mogue, or Saint Máedóc of Ferns. Saint Mogue is thought to have lived in the 6th and 7th Centuries, implying that an earlier ecclesiastical site, dedicated to Saint Mogue, existed within the townland before the current church.

Setting & Impact

The asset's setting comprises the townland of Timogue, with the L7835 directly to the south, lined with telephone wires, and the majority of the buildings within Timogue directly to the east. The wider landscape of Timogue comprises arable farmland, which contains multiple working farms. The main approach to the Church is from the west, along the L7835, which can be seen on the 1841 6-Inch First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, suggesting this is the historic approach to the church. The purported site of Timogue Castle lies approximately 30m to the south, however, there are no surface remains. There are long-distance views from the church, however, these are primarily to the north as topography and historic tree plantation obscure views in other directions.

The asset's significance primarily derives from its architectural preservation, showcasing a good example of 18th Century rural ecclesiastical architecture, as well as the social interest of the RMS Lusitania inscription. The asset's immediate setting also provides significance, due to the connection between Saint Mogue, the Christian faith, and the townland of Timogue.

Views of the church along the main approach from the west are not anticipated to be impacted by the Proposed Development, nor are views out from the front of the church looking westwards expected to be impacted. Whilst it is anticipated that long-distance views of seven of the turbines may be possible in views towards the south, it is only the immediate setting of Timogue from which the asset draws its significance. As such, long-distance views of the turbine will be a minor infringement within long-distance views and will not detract from an appreciation of the church and its setting. Furthermore, the architectural and social significance of the church is not anticipated to be impacted by the Proposed Development.

Saint Mogue's Church is of high cultural heritage sensitivity due to its National Significance rating on the NIAH. The church is also included on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), record number RPS378, as part of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. The magnitude of impact upon the asset through the construction of the Proposed

Development is neutral; there would be no change affecting the understanding of the cultural significance, and thus the significance of effect is imperceptible.

11.4.2.2 Cable Route

There are no anticipated Operational Effects on any cultural heritage assets as a result of the cable route. Therefore, no harm or benefits are envisioned.

11.4.3 Potential Impacts - Decommissioning

11.4.3.1 Potential Direct Effects

On the assumption that decommissioning of both the wind farm and the cable route would cause no additional ground disturbance to that which occurred during construction, no additional direct impacts to the buried archaeological resource are anticipated.

11.4.3.2 Potential Indirect Effects

There would be no indirect effects during the decommissioning of the Proposed Development. During the decommissioning process, the land within the Proposed Development Site boundary will return to its pre-development state and as such the current setting of the assets, as stated within this chapter, will be re-established.

11.5 Mitigation Measures

11.5.1 Wind Farm

It is SLR's professional recommendation that monitoring, in the form of a watching brief, is conducted on all ground-breaking works within the Proposed Development Site due to the potential for preservation of previously unrecorded archaeology. Due to the nature of the landscape and its historical value, archaeological monitoring will ensure that any archaeological remains that will be physically affected, e.g., truncated or removed, will be proportionately recorded in advance. Any such monitoring or further mitigation works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and licensed archaeologist. The precise scope of the mitigation works will be agreed in liaison with the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and formalised within an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

11.5.2 Cable Route

Regarding the Enclosure (**LA024-038**), the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media must be given two months' notice of any intended works within the Zone of Notification under Section 12(3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

Regarding the impact on the town of Timahoe, due to the nature of an ACA, it is required that works to the public realm (including roads) will respect the special character of the area. As such, any damage to the road within Timahoe resulting from ground-breaking works must be fixed/replaced as it was or in the same style. These requirements are set out in Appendix 2 of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Any monitoring or further mitigation works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and licensed archaeologist. The precise scope of the mitigation works would be negotiated with the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and an agreed mitigation program would be documented in an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

11.5.3 Residual Impacts

11.5.3.1 Wind Farm

Direct

The completion of the archaeological mitigation programme outlined in **Section 11.5.1** would offset the direct adverse impact upon any unknown archaeological remains uncovered during works relating to the Wind Farm. Any harm caused to buried remains through ground disturbance would be offset to some degree by the benefits provided through the information gained during the archaeological investigation and reporting process. Any significant impacts identified on buried archaeological remains should be considered against this backdrop.

Indirect

A moderate significance of effect has been identified in relation to Timahoe Round Tower (**LA018-031005**). This level of effect is considered Not Significant for purposes of EIA, in accordance with the EPA (2022) guidance. No mitigation has therefore been proposed. This residual impact will be temporary, and will be removed at point of decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

11.5.3.2 Cable Route

The completion of the archaeological mitigation programme outlined in **Section 11.5.2** would offset any direct adverse impact on archaeological remains relating to the cable route. Any physical impact upon buried remains as a result of ground disturbance would be offset to some degree by the knowledge gained during the archaeological investigation and reporting process. Any significant impacts identified in respect to buried archaeological remains should be considered against this backdrop.

11.6 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative effects have been considered with regard to any windfarm developments that are:

- consented or are in the planning process as an original submission or in appeal; and
- within 10km of National Monuments that are predicted to receive an above Moderate effect from the Proposed Development.

11.6.1 Timahoe Round Tower (LA018-031005)

Timahoe Round Tower is discussed in detail in **Section 11.4.2**.

The consented Pinewood Wind Farm (**PL11.248518**) is located approximately 7km to the southwest of the asset. The scheme consists of 11 turbines, located around Cooper's Hill to the south of the R430.

The Pinewood Wind Farm is unlikely to be visible from the asset, nor from the approach to the asset from the north, due to heavy screening in the form of trees. As such, no cumulative effect upon the significance of Timahoe Round Tower would be anticipated.

11.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the results of a comprehensive assessment of the potential impact of the Proposed Development upon cultural heritage assets during the

construction, operational and decommissioning phases. This assessment has assumed a worst-case scenario, as described in **Section 3.8.2**.

This assessment has considered data from a diverse range of sources in order to determine the presence and significance of cultural heritage assets which may be affected by the Proposed Development, either directly or indirectly. The potential direct and indirect effects on the identified assets, mitigation measures for protecting known assets during construction or recording of currently unknown features which could be lost due to groundworks during construction, and the residual effects of the Proposed Development have also been appropriately assessed.

A direct impact on asset **LA024-038** and on the cultural heritage town of Timahoe has been identified; these impacts would occur during construction as a result of ground-breaking works associated with the cable route. Appropriate mitigation has been discussed in **Section 11.4.4**.

This report has considered the potential indirect impact on the National Monuments and closely associated cultural heritage assets within the study area. An imperceptible significance of effect was identified on Timahoe Church (**LA018-031006**)/Tower House (**LA018-031006**), Fossy Church (**LA019-016**), Ringfort/Rath (**LA024-015001**), Motte and Bailey (**LA024-015002**), and St Mogue's Church (**12801929**). A moderate significance of effect was identified for Timahoe Round Tower (**LA018-031005**).

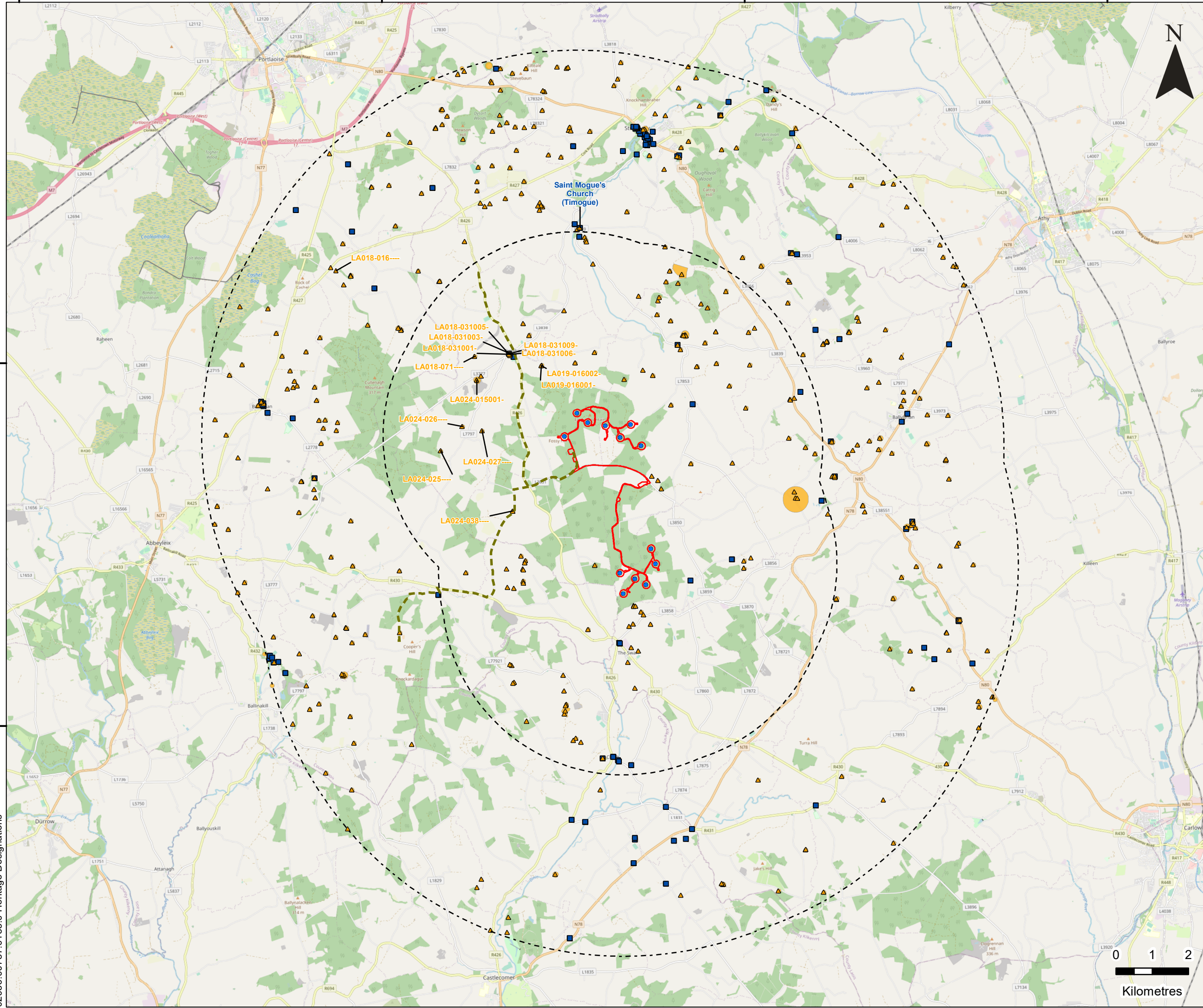
All of these indirect effects are Not Significant for purposes of EIA, and in accordance with the EPA guidance (2022). There are no predicted significant effects in EIA terms on cultural heritage assets resulting from the operation of the Proposed Development.

A proposed mitigation scheme for the construction, operational and decommissioning phases is described in this chapter and these mitigation measures will be agreed with the local planning authority, applying to all permutations of the design parameters set out in Table 3.1 of Chapter 3 of this EIAR.

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690000 680000

02036.00787.0135.0 Heritage Designations



LEGEND

- Proposed Development Site Boundary
- Proposed Turbine Layout
- Proposed Turbine Layout 5 km Buffer
- Proposed Turbine Layout 10 km Buffer
- Proposed Cable Routes to be Assessed (Separate Planning Application)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
- Archaeological Sites and Monuments
- Archaeological Sites and Monuments



SLR

7 DUNDUM BUSINESS PARK
WINDY ARBOUR
DUBLIN D14 N2Y7
IRELAND
T: 0129 64667
www.slrconsulting.com

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

CULTURAL HERITAGE

CULTURAL HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

FIGURE 11-1

Scale 1:100,000 @ A3 Date JUNE 2023

11.8 References

Legislation

- Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985);
- Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised) (Valetta, 1992);
- Cultural Institutions Act 1997;
- Heritage Act 1995;
- National Monuments Acts 1930, 1954, 1987, 1994, 2004; and
- Revised General Scheme for the Monuments and Archaeological Heritage Bill 2021.

Policy and Guidance

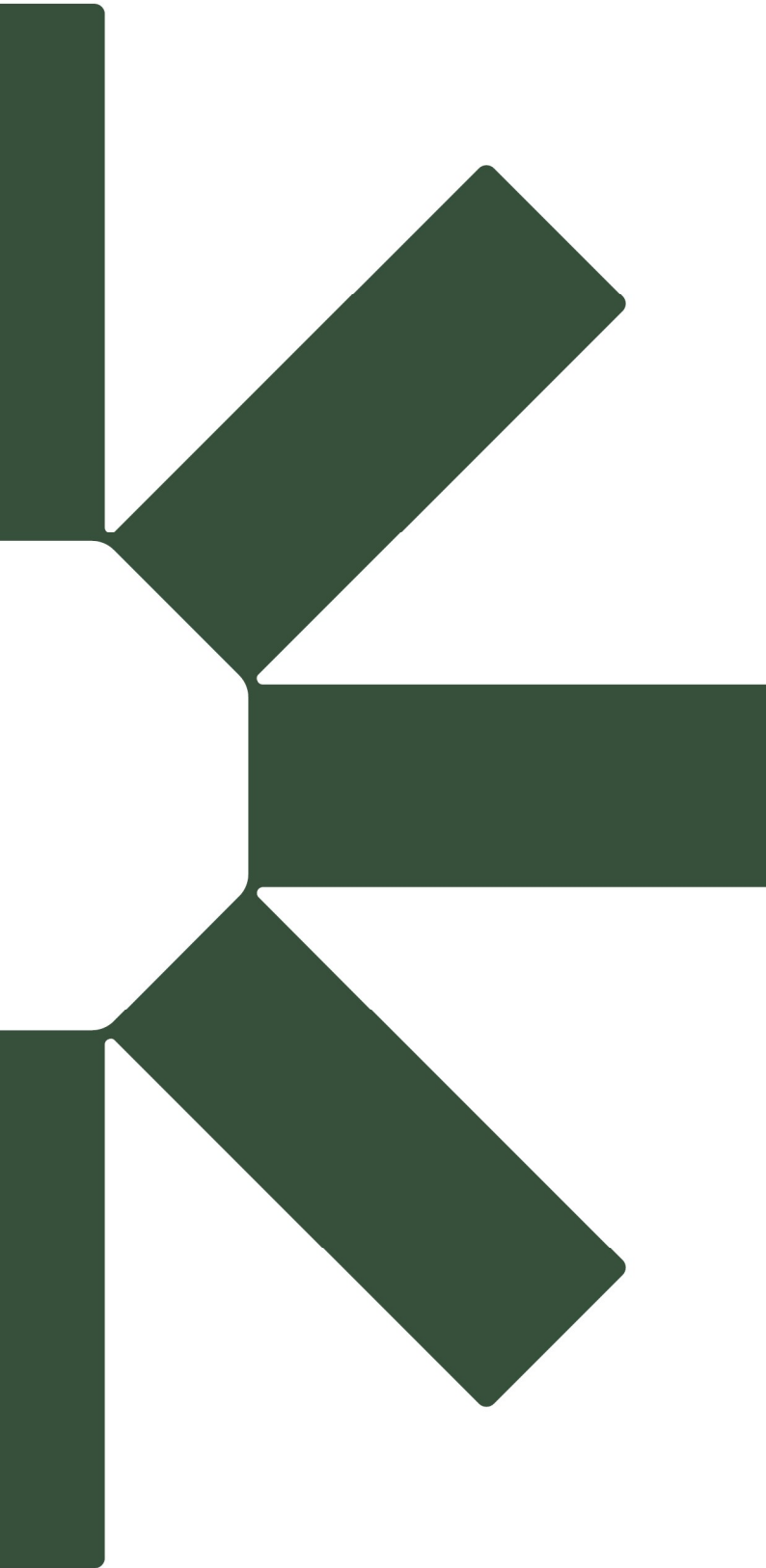
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