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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) provides supporting information to accompany a planning application to Cavan County Council by P&S Civil Works Ltd., in respect of their quarry extraction operations at Mullymagowan townland, Stradone, Co. Cavan.
- 1.2 The proposed development being applied for under this planning application is for:
 - Quarry extension development for rock extraction and associated processing over an area of c. 4 hectares within an overall planning application area of c. 4.9 hectares as previously permitted under P. Ref. 12/101 (P. Ref. 17/383) and never commenced;
 - A time period of 15 years is being sought to allow the previously permitted extraction be completed plus 2 years to complete restoration works (total duration sought 17 years);
 - The development proposed seeks to utilise existing ancillary buildings and facilities including weighbridge, wheelwash, portacabin office/canteen/toilet, waste water treatment system, processing plant, site entrance and all other associated site works, and ancillary activities as currently permitted by P. Ref. 07/827; and
 - Final restoration of the worked out quarry to a permanent water body and naturally regenerated wildlife habitat area.
- 1.3 The application site location is indicated on an extract from the 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey Discovery series map in **Figure 1-1** and at a scale of 1:10,000 in **Figure 1-2**.
- 1.4 The planning application is made in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).
- 1.5 P&S Civil Works Ltd. has been operating the existing quarry commercially since 1968. The existing quarry at Mullymagowan produces high polished stone value (PSV) chippings to local authorities, both directly and through building suppliers. The quarry is compliant with conditions attached to the previous planning permissions on the site and the proposed development will similarly be operated within accepted thresholds for this type of development.

Rational for planning application

- 1.6 The planning application is to provide for the supply of aggregates for the local construction industry in the short to medium term.
- 1.7 The proposed development was previously granted planning permission through P. Ref. 12/101 and was further extended by a period of 5 years (refer to **Appendix 1-A**). The previous planning permission expired on 13 January 2023. With the allowance for extension of the relevant planning period by 56 days¹ during the Covid-19 emergency the planning permission will finally expiry on 10 March 2023.
- 1.8 Within the proposed final extraction footprint of the P. Ref. 12/101 permission and to the previously permitted depth of c. 110m AOD, there are still approximately 3.75M tonnes of rock in-situ as no rock was previously extracted. The previous permission relates to a maximum annual extraction rate of 290,000 tonnes per annum for 10 no. years. It is now proposed to seek a 15 year period to extract

¹ DHPLG Circular PL05/2020 dated 9 May 2020

the rock at a reduced rate of 250,000 tonnes per year and a further 2 year period to carry out any final restoration works giving an overall development life of 17 years.

- 1.9 A copy of the previous planning permissions (P. Ref 12/101 and P. Ref. 17/383) is provided in **Appendix 1-A**.
- 1.10 The site contains reserves of rock that is used to produce high polished stone value (PSV) chippings with a range of 62 to 68. Chippings with a PSV range of between 60 and 80 are recommended for all national routes and high-speed roads. Chippings with a PSV of not less than 52 are recommended for minor roads but, where possible, good practice dictates to use the best chippings available.
- 1.11 The chippings produced from the existing quarry, and which are the anticipated product from future extraction operations on the application site, will be used to supply a number of local authorities for their road projects, both directly and indirectly.
- 1.12 Typically quarry aggregates are only commercially viable for transport within a c. 50-60km radius of the site due to transport costs. However high PSV products are a premium aggregate product which are desired in the bitumen making process and are used by local authorities for surface dressing with bitumen emulsions and therefore have a much wider transport range. Planning permission is required to secure this supply of high PSV stone from the site for the next 15-year period.

THE APPLICANT

- 1.13 P&S Civil Works Ltd. is a local business, founded in 1968, which provides premium stone, sand and concrete products for use in infrastructure such as roads. It is an important source of such supplies for many of Ireland's local authorities.
- 1.14 It is the parent company of Cleantech Civils Ltd., which has expanded to the UK and carries out a range of civil engineering work for the public, private and commercial sectors. The Group's Headquarters is based in Cavan.
- 1.15 Cleantech Civils Ltd. is an ISO 14001 (Environmental Management) and ISO 9001 (Quality Management) accredited company since 2010.

Environmental Commitment

- 1.16 The company is committed to achieving high environmental standards and has an established in-house environmental management system (EMS) at the site.
- 1.17 P&S Civil Works Ltd. t/a Cleantech Civils is registered with the Construction Industry Register Ireland which has been set up by the Construction Industry Federation (CIF). By registering with CIRI, members are eligible only by meeting strict criteria which upon approval a professional designation is granted (please see certificate as attached) and by committing to delivering excellence in every aspect of their work. They are competent and capable to deliver the job at hand, they run their business in a professional manner, and they sign up to continuous professional development to stay at the forefront of construction best practices.
- 1.18 As stated above, the group has achieved accreditation ISO14000 for its Environmental Management Systems. Copies of the company's Environmental Policy & NSAI 14001 Environmental Management Certification are provided in **Appendix 1-B**.

THE SITE

Site Location and Access

- 1.19 The overall landholding of the applicant (which comprises their existing quarry) straddles the three townlands of Mullymagowan, Drummuck and Tirlahode Lower. The planning application site itself is located fully within the townland of Mullymagowan, being c. 4.5km south of Stradone village and c. 10km southeast of Cavan town.
- 1.20 The site is in a rural area in the east of Co. Cavan, c. 1.25km east of the N3 (National Primary Road), which links Dublin and Cavan.
- 1.21 Access to the site is gained by taking the Regional R165 road off the N3 towards Bailieborough. There is a dedicated private access to the existing quarry. The location of the quarry is shown on **Figure 1-1** at a scale of 1:50,000.

Surrounding Land-Use

- 1.22 The general area is rural and agricultural in nature and characterised by a gently undulating topography associated with the indigenous drumlin landscape. Views in the area are generally enclosed by a series of low-lying hills, hedgerows and trees. Coniferous woodland features are also dispersed in the landscape. There are a number of minor worked gravel pits in the wider area. There is an active hard rock quarry in operation at Lavey, c. 1.4km southwest of the application site on the opposite side of the N3 road.
- 1.23 Small-scale residential buildings and farmsteads are scattered throughout the surrounding area. There are c. 46 potential dwellings within a 1km radius of the application site boundary. The nearest small settlement is Lavey, which is situated c. 2km to the northwest, along the N3 and is host to a number of dispersed services within the wider area.
- 1.24 Access to the site is via the private, dedicated access road to the existing quarry off the R165, c. 3.5km from its junction with the N3. The R165 is approximately 6 metres in width at this location. Its surface is in good condition. The quarry access road from the R165 crosses the L3500 to access the existing internal haul route. The L7503 runs along the western boundary of the proposed quarry extension area. Both the L3500 and the L7503 pass within the overall quarry landholding.

Overall Site Description

- 1.25 The overall landholding has an area of c. 39.7ha., of which c. 4.9ha. consist of the planning application area. **Figure 1-3** outlines the overall land ownership boundary in blue, and within which there are the following defined areas:
 - **Grey shaded** area consisting of **P. Ref. 07/827** which is an extant planning permission and contains the quarry access route from the R165 regional road to the site entrance, all of the site ancillary buildings, plant, facilities, storage, processing areas, etc., and the existing quarry extraction void;
 - **Yellow shaded** area consisting of the application site, which previously was granted planning permission (**P. Ref. 12/101**) for a c. 4 hectare rock extraction area. The planning permission has expired;
 - **Unshaded** area of lands to the western side of the L7503 road which are proposed to remain in agricultural use.

- 1.26 Levels within the application site range from c. 175m above Ordnance Survey (AOD) near the southern corner to c. 170m AOD in the eastern, c. 164m AOD in the western and c. 146m AOD in the northern corner. The proposed area for extraction (as previously approved under P. Ref. 12/101) is not directly adjoining the existing quarry void area, within which the water level is at c. 163m AOD. The highest point of the existing (southern) quarry face at c. 205m AOD. The majority of the existing processing area is at a level of c. 164m AOD, with the ground rising towards the east to a level of 172m AOD at the site entrance along the local road to the east of the processing area.
- 1.27 The central part of the quarry extension area has previously been used by the applicant for stockpiling aggregate materials, which has been agreed with Cavan County Council. There is evidence of rock outcrop on the application site, and this is especially evident on the public road, the L7503, along the western boundary of the quarry extension.
- 1.28 Facilities at the existing, permitted quarry site (P. ref. 07/827) include a weighbridge, wheelwash, portacabin office/canteen/toilet, water treatment system, processing plant, and all other associated site works and ancillary activities. The landuse in the immediate vicinity of the quarry is predominantly agricultural grazing lands, small-scale forestry and single/ small clusters of residential development.
- 1.29 There is a number of minor surface water features flowing within the landholding and, in particular, there is a stream flowing along the north-eastern boundary of the application site. The external site boundaries consists of mature hedgerows, treelines and post and wire fencing. Residences within the general area are confined to the public roads.

SCREENING

Introduction

- 1.30 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a formal process of identifying and anticipating the effects on the natural and human environments arising from a specific project or development. The EIA process is regulated by way of European EIA Directives, (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and national transposing legislation, principally the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations 2000 (as amended).
- 1.31 The EIA process as defined by the amended EU Directive, comprises the following activities:
- i. the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report by the developer;
 - ii. the carrying out of consultations with relevant stakeholders;
 - iii. the examination by the competent authority of the information presented in the environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) prepared by the developer and submitted as part of the land-use planning control / development consent process (together with any supplementary information provided) and any relevant information received through the consultation process;
 - iv. the reasoned conclusion by the Competent Authority on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account the results of the examination referred to in point (iii) and, where appropriate, its own supplementary examination; and
 - v. the integration of the Competent Authority's reasoned conclusion into any of the consent decisions made by it.

- 1.32 The start of the EIA process involves deciding whether an EIA needs to be undertaken in respect of a proposed project or not. An initial determination establishes whether the proposed project comprises *development, works or activity*, as defined in national legislation.
- 1.33 The decision-making process then proceeds by examining the legislation further to determine if the proposed project exceeds a defined threshold for EIA set by Part 1 and/or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). If not, then there is no statutory requirement for the project to be subject to EIA.
- 1.34 If this assessment does not provide a clear screening outcome, then the nature and extent of the proposed project and the development site and of the types of potential effects are examined further. This is done by reference to the criteria specified in Annex III of the amended EIA Directive. The *totality of the project* is considered, including off-site and secondary projects as well as *indirect, secondary and cumulative impacts*. Even though EIA in respect of a particular project may not appear to be necessary at first glance, it may be on closer examination, when processes / activities are looked at in detail and factors such as the sensitivity or significance of the receiving environment etc. are taken into account.

EIA Screening Assessment

- 1.35 Screening is the process of assessing the requirement of a project to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 1.36 Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) set out the forms of development that require an environmental impact assessment report(EIA).
- 1.37 Paragraph 19 of Part 1 of Schedule 5 states that the following form of development requires an EIA
“Quarries and open-cast mining where the surface of the site exceeds 25 hectares.
- 1.38 Paragraph 22 relates to changes or extensions. It states:
“Any change or extension of projects listed in this Annex where such a change or extension in itself meets the thresholds, if any set out in this Annex.”
- 1.39 Paragraph 2 of Part 2 of Schedule 5 refers to extractive industry and part (b) of that section states that the following requires an EIA:
“Extraction of stone, gravel, sand or clay, where the area of extraction would be greater than 5 hectares.”
- 1.40 In addition, paragraph 13(a) of Part 1 requires EIA in respect of:
“Any change or extension of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension refer to in Part 1) which would:-
- i. result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule and*
 - ii. result in an increase in size greater than –*
25 per cent, or
an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold,
whichever is the greater.
- 1.41 The estimated extraction area for the existing permitted quarry within the landholding (which was the subject of EIA assessment previously) is 13.9 hectares, 25% of this extraction area equates to 3.5 hectares. Therefore, the proposed quarry extension area of 4 hectares exceeds the 25% threshold

set out in Part 1 13(a)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) resulting in a requirement for an EIA.

SCOPING

- 1.42 The need to know the likely areas of potential impact and the appropriate methods by which to evaluate them prior to the commencement of detailed data collection or assessment is crucial in determining the nature and detail of information to be contained in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).
- 1.43 The application is for a quarry extension that was previously granted planning permission but never commenced.
- 1.44 A formal pre-planning consultation was held between planning staff of Cavan County Council and representatives of SLR Consulting Ireland and P&S Civil Works Ltd. on 10 August 2022.
- 1.45 Other consultations and informal discussions held by contributors in undertaking their environmental impact assessments are detailed in the specialist environmental sections of the EIAR where relevant, together with details of relevant archives and documentation held by state agencies and organisations.
- 1.46 The applicant is a long-established operator, who along with their consultants have detailed knowledge and experience of similar types of mineral extraction developments, both locally and nationally.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED WITH EIAR COMPILATION

- 1.47 This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) was compiled on the basis of published regional and local data and site-specific field surveys. No difficulties were encountered in compiling the required information.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT (EIAR)

- 1.48 An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) “*means a statement of the effects, if any, which the proposed development, if carried out, would have on the environment*”. As such, it is a systematic analysis and assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project on the receiving environment.
- 1.49 The principal objectives of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report are to:
 - identify and / or predict the significant impacts of a development;
 - identify what mitigation measures should be incorporated into the development to eliminate or reduce the perceived impacts;
 - interpret and communicate the above information on the impact of the proposed development, in both technical and non-technical terms; and
 - assist the local Planning Authority in the decision-making process with respect to the associated planning application.

Format of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

- 1.50 To facilitate clarity, this EIAR has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines (May 2022). The EIAR is sub divided into two volumes:

- **Volume 1** is the Non-Technical Summary (NTS); and
- **Volume 2** is the Environmental Impact Assessment report (EIAR) itself subdivided into fifteen chapters as described below. Associated appendices and supporting information are provided at the end of each chapter contained within the EIAR.

1.51 Volume 2: The Environmental Impact Assessment Report is sub-divided into:

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.52 An introduction to the development and a brief explanation of the aims and format of the EIAR. It also identifies the various professional consultants who have contributed to this EIAR, and the screening / scoping process carried out.

Chapter 2: Project Description

1.53 Chapter 2 provides:

- details of the physical characteristics of the whole project, including, where relevant, demolition works, the land-use requirements during construction and operation as well as other works that are integral to the project;
- the main characteristics of the operational and closure / restoration phases of the project e.g., nature and quantity of materials and natural resources.

Chapter 3: Reasonable Alternatives

1.54 Chapter 3 provides a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option.

Chapters 4 - 15

1.55 These chapters provide detailed information on all aspects of the existing (baseline) environment. They identify, describe and present an assessment of the likely significant impacts of the proposed project on the environment, recommend mitigation and monitoring measures to reduce or alleviate these impacts and describe the residual impacts and conclusions. They are grouped under the following sections:

- Chapter 4 : Population and Human Health
- Chapter 5 : Biodiversity
- Chapter 6 : Land, Soils and Geology
- Chapter 7 : Water (Hydrology & Hydrogeology)
- Chapter 8 : Air Quality
- Chapter 9 : Climate
- Chapter 10 : Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 11 : Material Assets
- Chapter 12 : Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 13 : Landscape
- Chapter 14 : Traffic
- Chapter 15 : Interactions

- 1.56 For each subject or specialist environmental topic, any associated references, plates, figures and appendices are provided at the end of the relevant chapter.
- 1.57 As required by the amended EU Directive and national transposing legislation, a non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, presenting an overview of the project and the EIA process and a summary of baseline studies, principal mitigation measures and key findings and conclusions is prepared and issued as a separate, stand-alone document.
- 1.58 The Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, incorporating all of the above sections, is provided as a separate and self-contained document in **Volume 1**.

CONTRIBUTORS

- 1.59 The contributors who have assisted in the preparation of this EIAR are identified in **Table 1-1** below:

Table 1-1
List of Contributors

Topic	Contributor	Company
Introduction	Shane McDermott <i>BSc(Hons), MRICS, MSCSI</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Description of Development	Shane McDermott <i>BSc(Hons), MRICS, MSCSI</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Alternatives	Lynn Hassett <i>BSc(Hons), MSc, PIEMA</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Population & Human Health	Lynn Hassett <i>BSc(Hons), MSc, PIEMA</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Biodiversity	Victoria Molloy <i>BSc (Hons) MIEEM</i> Michael Bailey <i>BSc (Hons) MSc. MIEEM</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Land, Soils and Geology	Nikolina Bozinovic <i>BSc, MSc</i> Peter Glanville <i>BA, MSc, EurGeol, PGeo</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Water	Orlaith Tyrrell <i>BSc</i> Dominica Baird <i>BSc. MSc. EurGeol, CGeol, MIAH</i> Peter Glanville <i>BA, MSc, EurGeol, PGeo</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Air Quality	Conor Hughes <i>MSc</i> Aldona Binchy <i>MSc.(Eng), PIEMA, MIAH</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Climate	Conor Hughes <i>MSc</i> Aldona Binchy <i>MSc. (Eng), PIEMA, MIAH</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland

Topic	Contributor	Company
Noise and Vibration	Conor Hughes <i>MSc</i> Aldona Binchy <i>MSc. (Eng), PIEMA, MIAH</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Material Assets	Lynn Hassett <i>BSc(Hons), MSc, PIEMA</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Cultural Heritage	Dr. Charles Mount <i>MA</i>	Archaeological Consultant
Landscape	Anne Merkle <i>Dipl. Ing (FH) MILI</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland
Roads and Traffic	John Doogan <i>Traffic and Road Safety Engineer</i>	Jennings O'Donovan & Partners Ltd.
Co-ordination of EIA	Shane McDermott <i>BSc(Hons), MRICS, MSCSI</i>	SLR Consulting Ireland

- 1.60 Each contributor has been fully briefed about the proposal and the background to it. They have also visited the site and are familiar with the local environment. They are considered to have the necessary competent experience, expertise and knowledge for the preparation of each topic area of the EIAR.
- 1.61 P&S Civil Works Ltd. has also provided detailed background knowledge of the site, environmental monitoring data and has carried out a review of the EIAR.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1-A

Planning permission 12/101

Planning permission 17/383

Appendix 1-B

Environmental Policy

ISO 14001 Environmental Management Certification

CIRI Certificate of Registration

Appendix 1-A

Planning permission 12/101

Planning permission 17/383

Appendix 1-B

Environmental Policy

ISO 14001 Environmental Management Certification

CIRI Certificate of Registration

FIGURES

Figure 1-1

Site Location Map 50,000 scale

Figure 1-2

Site Location Map 10,000 scale

Figure 1-3

Site Location Map 5,000 scale