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Lobinstown Quarry

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Section 12

Cultural Heritage

2024

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12 CULTURAL HERITAGE

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Dr. Charles Mount was commissioned by J Sheils Planning & Environmental Ltd. on behalf of Lagan Materials Ltd. trading as Breedon Ireland to prepare an assessment that addresses the impacts on the archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage of the application site and the surrounding area of a proposal for continuance and extension of an existing quarry on lands at Heronstown, Lobinstown, Navan, Co. Meath.

The development will consist of the continuance of operation of the existing permitted quarry and associated infrastructure (ABP Ref. 17.QD.0017; P.A. Ref. LB200106 & ABP Ref. 309109-21), deepening of the quarry extraction area by 1 no. 15 metre bench from 50 m OD to 35 m OD, a lateral extension to the quarry over an area of c. 4.8 ha to a depth of 35 m OD, provision for aggregates and overburden storage, and restoration of the site to natural habitat after uses following completion of extraction, within an overall application area of c. 18.5 hectares. An extraction capacity of up to 300,000 tonnes per annum is sought to provide the applicant with the ability to respond to demand for aggregates in the region. Permission is sought for a period of 20 years in order to extract a known resource with a further 2 years to fully restore the site. The site location and study area are indicated in Figure 12.1.

12.2 SCOPE OF WORK / METHODOLOGY

This study, which complies with the requirements of Directive EIA 2014/52/EU, is an assessment of the known or potential cultural heritage resource within a specified area and includes the information that may reasonably be required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment. It consists of a collation of existing written and graphic information in order to identify the likely context, character, significance and sensitivity of the known or potential cultural heritage, archaeological and structural resource using an appropriate methodology (EPA 2015 and 2022).

The criteria and definitions for describing effects set out below is drawn from the 2022 EPA Guidelines Table 3.4 Descriptions of Effects (Refer to Appendix 3).

The study involved detailed investigation of the archaeological, architectural, cultural and historical background of the development site, the landholding and the surrounding area extending 1 km from the development boundary (Refer to Figure 12.1). This area was examined using information from the Record of Monuments and Places of County Meath, the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, lists of excavations and cartographic and documentary sources. A field inspection was carried out to identify and assess any known archaeological and architectural sites and previously unrecorded features and portable finds within the area of the landholding.

An impact assessment and mitigation strategy has been prepared. An impact assessment is undertaken to outline potential adverse impacts that the proposed development may have on the cultural resource, while a mitigation strategy is designed to avoid, reduce, or offset such adverse impacts.

The application site is in the townland of Heronstown, Co. Meath, on Meath OS Six Inch Sheet No. 12, to the southeast of Lobinstown and north of the Parsonstown Road.

Extracts from the Record of Monuments and Places for County Meath are presented on a map of the local area around the site in Figure 12.1. RMP sites included on the Records of Monuments and Places statutory mapping are identified by black circles and polygons. The application area is outlined in red.

12.3 AUTHOR

The assessment was prepared by Dr. Charles Mount who is a member of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland and has more than thirty years of cultural heritage assessment experience. He is a graduate of University College Dublin with an M.A. and Ph.D. in Archaeology, and a professional diploma in EIA and SEA management. He also holds an M.B.A. in Management from the Open University. He has worked in a variety of heritage and management roles and has prepared more than 80 cultural heritage assessments for Environmental Impact Assessments. He has worked in both the State and industrial sectors and has extensive experience of the commissioning and management of all types of archaeological services from desk-based reports to test and full excavations and geophysical surveys. He is capable of assessing impacts on archaeology and cultural heritage at all stages of land use planning and development from site selection, through EIAR to planning condition compliance. Dr. Mount provides Project Archaeology Services to the Irish Concrete Federation (ICF), Bord na Mona, and a range of private sector organisations, and is responsible for implementing the ICF Code of Practice.

12.4 LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

No difficulties were encountered during the desktop study, site visit, or in the preparation of this report.

12.5 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

The following subsections set out the regulatory background regarding cultural impact assessments in Ireland in general and the site-specific planning background relevant to this cultural impact assessment.

12.5.1 LEGISLATION

No specific Irish legislation exists governing cultural heritage assessments.

12.5.2 PLANNING POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

The Meath County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027 is the statutory plan detailing the development objectives/policies of the local authority. The plan includes objectives and policies, relevant to this assessment, i.e., with regard to cultural heritage.

12.5.2.1 Cultural Heritage

Chapter 8 of the CDP sets out the policies on cultural heritage within the county. The Council is committed to identify, protect, conserve and manage the cultural and natural heritage of the County and to encourage its sensitive integration into the sustainable development of the County for the benefit of present and future generations. The Plan seeks to achieve a balance between the foregoing and economic prosperity and social integration.

In relation to Archaeological Heritage it is the policy of the Council to:

HER POL 1 To protect sites, monuments, places, areas or objects of the following categories:

- Sites and monuments included in the Sites and Monuments Record as maintained by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;
- Monuments and places included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under the National Monuments Acts;
- Historic monuments and archaeological areas included in the Register of Historic Monuments as established under the National Monuments Acts; Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 Chapter 8;
- National monuments subject to Preservation Orders under the National Monuments Acts and national monuments which are in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht or a local authority; and
- Archaeological objects within the meaning of the National Monuments Acts; and Wrecks protected under the National Monuments Acts or otherwise included in the Shipwreck Inventory maintained by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

HER POL 2 To protect all sites and features of archaeological interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monument and Places, in situ (or at a minimum preservation by record) having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and The Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999).

HER POL 3 To require, as part of the development management process, archaeological impact assessments, geophysical survey, test excavations or monitoring as appropriate, for development in the vicinity of monuments or in areas of archaeological potential. Where there are upstanding remains, a visual impact assessment may be required.

HER POL 4 To require, as part of the development management process, archaeological impact assessments, geophysical survey, test excavations or monitoring as appropriate, where development proposals involve ground clearance of more than half a hectare or for linear developments over one kilometer in length; or developments in proximity to areas with a density of known archaeological monuments and history of discovery as identified by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

HER POL 5 To seek guidance from the National Museum of Ireland where an unrecorded archaeological object is discovered, or the National Monuments Service in the case of an unrecorded archaeological site.

HER POL 6 To protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne in accordance with the relevant guidelines and national legislation, so that its integrity, authenticity and significance are not adversely affected by inappropriate development or change.

HER POL 7 To encourage the retention, conservation, and appropriate re-use of traditional buildings within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne in preference to either their replacement, or the construction of new buildings on green field sites.

HER POL 8 To ensure that development within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne shall be subject to the Development Assessment Criteria set out in Appendix 8 and the Development Management Guidelines in Chapter 11.

HER POL 9 To consider individual housing within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, as shown on Map 8.1 - UNESCO World Heritage Site - Brú na Bóinne, only for those involved locally in full time agriculture and who do not own land outside of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne and subject to compliance with all other relevant provisions contained in this Development Plan.

HER POL 10 To ensure that residential extensions within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne respect the scale, design and character of the original building. Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 Chapter 8

HER POL 11 To support the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and all stakeholders in the implementation of the Brú na Bóinne Management Plan, 2017.

HER POL 12 To recognise and respect potential World Heritage Sites in Meath on the UNESCO Tentative List – Ireland.

HER POL 13 To protect and preserve in situ all surviving elements of medieval town defences.

In relation to Archaeological Heritage, it is the objective of the of the Council to:

HER OBJ 1 To implement in partnership with the County Meath Heritage Forum, relevant stakeholders and the community the County Meath Heritage Plan and any revisions thereof.

HER OBJ 2 To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential is sited and designed in a sensitive manner with a view to minimal detracting from the monument or its setting.

HER OBJ 3 To protect important archaeological landscapes from inappropriate development. Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 Chapter 8

HER OBJ 4 To encourage the management and maintenance of the County's archaeological heritage, including historic burial grounds, in accordance with best conservation practice that considers the impact of climate change.

HER OBJ 5 To promote awareness of, and encourage the provision of access to, the archaeological resources of the county.

HER OBJ 6 To work in partnership with key stakeholders to promote County Meath as a centre for cultural heritage education and learning through activities such as community excavation and field/summer schools.

HER OBJ 7 To work in partnership with the community and all other relevant stakeholders to promote, understand, conserve and sustainably manage the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne.

HER OBJ 8 To encourage and facilitate pre-application discussions, in conjunction with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, regarding the siting and design of developments affecting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne and the scope of any necessary impact assessments.

HER OBJ 9 To refer all planning applications within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for comment. These comments will be considered in the assessment of all such planning applications.

HER OBJ 10 To actively support and encourage the re-use of vacant and derelict dwellings within the Core and Buffer Zone of the World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne by providing assistance and professional advice to owners seeking to re-develop such sites.

HER OBJ 11 To protect the ridgelines which frame views within and from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne from inappropriate or visually intrusive development.

HER OBJ 12 To prepare and implement a Business Plan for the World Heritage Site in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, subject to funding.

HER OBJ 13 To support the State in the nomination process of Tara and Kells to World Heritage status as part of an assemblage of Royal and Monastic Sites in co-operation with the relevant Local Authorities.

HER OBJ 14 To retain the surviving medieval street pattern, building lines and burgage plot widths in historic walled towns.

In relation to Architectural, Industrial and Landscape Design Heritage it is the policy of the Council to:

HER POL 14 To protect and conserve the architectural heritage of the County and seek to prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of Protected Structures.

HER POL 15 To encourage the conservation of Protected Structures, and where appropriate, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and sites in a manner compatible with their character and significance. In certain cases, land use zoning restrictions may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the protected structure.

HER POL 16 To protect the setting of Protected Structures and to refuse permission for development within the curtilage or adjacent to a protected structure which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure, where appropriate.

HER POL 17 To require that all planning applications relating to Protected Structures contain the appropriate accompanying documentation in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) or any variation thereof, to enable the proper assessment of the proposed works.

HER POL 18 To require that in the event of permission being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, any works necessary for the survival of the structure and its re-use should be prioritised in the first phase of development. It is the objective of the Council:

HER OBJ 15 To review and update the Record of Protected Structures on an on-going basis and to make additions and deletions as appropriate.

HER OBJ 16 To identify and retain good examples of historic street furniture, e.g. cast-iron post boxes, water pumps, light fixtures and signage, as appropriate.

HER OBJ 17 To promote best conservation practice and encourage the use of appropriately qualified professional advisors, tradesmen and craftsmen, with recognised conservation expertise, for works to protected structures or historic buildings in an Architectural Conservation Area.

HER OBJ 18 To provide detailed guidance notes and continue to develop the Council's advisory/educational role with regard to heritage matters and to promote awareness, understanding and appreciation of the architectural heritage of the County. Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 Chapter 8

HER OBJ 19 To commission a study over the lifetime of the Plan to assess the significance of the Mass Rocks and Holy Wells throughout County Meath.

HER POL 19 To protect the character of Architectural Conservation Areas in Meath.

HER POL 20 To require that all development proposals within or contiguous to an ACA be sympathetic to the character of the area, that the design is appropriate in terms of height, scale, plot density, layout, materials and finishes and are appropriately sited and designed with regard to the advice given in the Statements of Character for each area, where available.

HER POL 21 To encourage the retention, sympathetic maintenance and sustainable re-use of historic buildings, including vernacular dwellings or farm buildings and the retention of historic streetscape character, fabric, detail and features.

HER POL 22 Seek the retention of surviving historic plot sizes and street patterns in the villages and towns of Meath and incorporate ancient boundaries or layouts, such as burgage plots and townland boundaries, into re-developments.

HER POL 23 To actively promote the retention and restoration of thatched dwellings as a key component of the built heritage of the County.

HER POL 24 To encourage appropriate change of use and reuse of industrial heritage structures provided such a change does not seriously impact on the intrinsic character of the structure and that all works are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria.

HER POL 25 To protect and enhance the built and natural heritage of the Royal Canal and Boyne Navigation and associated structures and to ensure, in as far as practically possible, that development which may impact on these structures and their setting be sensitively designed with regard to their character and setting. Development of the project will be subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process.

HER POL 26 To encourage the protection and enhancement of heritage gardens and demesne landscapes, and to support, in consultation with the owners, the provision of public access to these sites as appropriate.

In relation to Architectural, Industrial and Landscape Design Heritage it is the objective of the Council to:

HER OBJ 20 To identify places of special character, with a view to their designation as Architectural Conservation Areas and to modify existing ACAs, where necessary.

HER OBJ 21 To prepare and review, where necessary, detailed character statements and planning guidance for each ACA.

HER OBJ 22 To avoid the demolition of structures and the removal of features and street furniture which contribute to the character of an ACA. The Council will require that any planning application for demolition or alteration within an ACA be accompanied by a measured and photographic survey, condition report and architectural heritage assessment.

HER OBJ 23 To ensure that conversions or extensions of traditional buildings or the provision of new adjoining buildings, are sensitively designed and do not detract from the character of the historic building.

HER OBJ 24 To update the survey of surviving thatched structures in the County and to promote available grant schemes to assist owners with their retention and repair.

HER OBJ 25 To carry out a survey of Land Commission dwellings over the life of the Development Plan, to acknowledge their contribution to the building stock of the County, as appropriate.

HER OBJ 26 To require an architectural / archaeological assessment, as appropriate, which references the Meath Industrial Heritage Survey and other relevant sources, for all proposed developments on industrial heritage structures or sites.

HER OBJ 27 To carry out Phase 2 of the Industrial Heritage Survey which will comprise a field survey and assessment of surviving structures and sites and consider (if appropriate) proposing them for addition to the Record of Protected Structures.

HER OBJ 28 To discourage development that would adversely affect the character, the principal components of, or the setting of historic parks, gardens and demesnes of heritage significance.

HER OBJ 29 To require that proposals for development in designated landscapes and demesnes include an appraisal of the landscape, designed views and vistas, including a tree survey, where relevant, in order to inform site appropriate design proposals.

12.5.3 GUIDELINES

The report format and the descriptions of effects are based on the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2022.

12.5.4 CONSULTATION

In the course of producing this document consultation was carried out with the Development Applications Unit (DAU) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. All of the issues raised by the DAU comprise the following:

- that the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist should be engaged to conduct the proposed archaeological monitoring under licence of all topsoil stripping in the area of the proposed quarry extension.

This response from the DAU has been addressed by the assessment.

12.6 RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

12.6.1 STUDY AREA

The overall study area extends 1 km from the application area in all directions and is shown in Figure 12.1.

12.6.2 BASELINE STUDY METHODOLOGY

The research has been undertaken in two phases. The first phase comprised a paper survey of all available archaeological, historical, and cartographic sources. The second phase involved a field inspection and assessment of the proposed development area.

12.6.3 PAPER STUDY

This is a document search. The following sources were examined and a list of sites and areas of archaeological potential compiled:

- Record of Monuments and Places County Meath;
- The Sites and Monuments Record;
- Available aerial photography;
- Cartographic and written sources relating to the study area;
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027; and
- The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

12.6.3.1 The Record of Monuments and Places

This was established under Section 12 (1) of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act and provides that the Minister shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes there are monuments, such record to be comprised of a list of monuments and relevant places and a map or maps showing each monument and relevant place in respect of each county in the State. The associated files contain information of documentary sources and field inspections where these have taken place. One Recorded Monuments was noted within the study area. All available information on these sites is provided in Appendix 12.1.

Note that although the Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 was signed into law by the President on October 13, 2023, the act had not been commenced at the time this assessment was prepared. This assessment uses the National Monuments Acts 1930-2014, which were still in force at the time the assessment was completed.

12.6.3.2 Cartographic Sources

This includes seventeenth century mapping as well the 1st and 2nd editions of the Ordnance Survey six-inch maps. Documentary sources provide more general historical and archaeological background.

12.6.3.3 The County Development Plan 2021-2027

This notes structures listed for preservation in the Record of Protected Structures (see Section 12.7.3.1).

12.6.4 FIELD INSPECTION

A field inspection was carried out on the 27th of April 2023 to determine the location, extent and ascertain the significance of any archaeological and architectural sites, to identify any previously unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds and to assess impacts on architecture.



12.7 RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT, HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

12.7.1 THE LANDSCAPE

The application site is located in the townland of Heronstown, Co. Meath, on Meath OS Six Inch Sheet No. 12, to the southeast of Lobinstown and north of the Parsonstown Road. The application site is located in an area dominated by agricultural lands and is in use as pasture, except for the existing quarry lands. The soil of the application site is fine loamy drift with siliceous stones (<http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>).

12.7.2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The following is a brief summation of the main types of sites and monuments that are known from the study area along with the historical development of the area. It is intended as a guide to the types of sites and monuments that might be encountered in the study area. The application site is situated in the townland of Heronstown, in the Barony of Slane Lower, and the civil parish of Killary.

12.7.2.1 The Prehistoric Period

There are no prehistoric sites or artefacts known from the study area and the nature of prehistoric activity is unknown.

12.7.2.2 The Early Medieval Period

By the eighth century AD, the Southern Ui Neill had become overlords of the Kingdom of Brega, extending over Meath, North Dublin and South Louth and ruled the vassal sept of the Ciannachta Brega, who occupied the study area (MacCotter 2008, 204-5). The Ciannachta occupied land on both sides of the River Boyne and are noted in the Irish Annals from the sixth century. Byrne suggests that they came from Co. Derry and had been settled on lands conquered by the Ui Neill. Classically, settlement at this period is indicated by the presence of enclosed farmsteads known as ringforts, when enclosed with earthen banks, and cashels when enclosed by stone walls. The closest ringfort is in Rathbranchurch townland (RMP ME012-029----) 1 km northeast of the application area.

12.7.2.3 The Later Medieval Period

The first appearance of the Anglo-Normans in the Meath was in 1171, when Milo de Cogan raided Meath and plundered Duleek. In the following year, King Henry II granted the Kingdom of Meath to Hugh de Lacy to hold as King Murrough O Melaghlin, King of Meath, had held it (Otway-Ruthven 1980, 52). Otway-Ruthven (1968, 42) notes that Richard Fleming, Baron of Slane, held the Parish of Killary containing the study area in the thirteenth century.

The process of sub-infeudation, which was characteristic of Anglo-Norman settlement, is normally associated with the construction of timber castles, known as Motte and Baileys. However, there are no Mottes known in the study area and the closest example is at Castletown (RMP ME012-015----) west of the study area. Manorialism describes the organisation of the feudal rural economy and society that characterised Anglo-Norman settlement. In Ireland, the Lord's Manor House was also often enclosed by a rectangular moat. These moated sites are a useful indicator of Anglo-Norman settlement. However, there are no Moated sites known in the study area or the vicinity. The closest example is in Lisboy townland (RMP ME006-051----) to the northeast of the study area.

12.7.2.4 The Post-Medieval Period

The Down Survey records that in 1641 Heronstown was held by Henry Gernan, Lord of Slane, and he retained it in 1670 (<http://downsurvey.tcd.ie>). By 1847-64, Griffith's Valuation records that the application area had come into the hands of William Henry Ogle who held it in fee (<http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie>).

12.7.3 BUILDINGS

12.7.3.1 Protected Structures

The Record of Protected Structures in the Meath CDP 2021-27 was examined as part of the baseline study for this chapter of the EIAR. The review established that there are no Protected Structures situated within the application area. There are four structures listed within the study area (see Table 12.1).

The closest Protected Structure to the application area is a Milestone RPS MH012-116 in Parsonstown Demesne townland. This structure is situated 0.537 km northwest of the application area. This and the remaining Protected Structures in the study area are all considered to be too distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development.

Table 12.1 Structures in the Record of Protected Structures in the study area

Number	MH012-115
Type	Stableyard and Lodge.
Townland	Parsonstown Demesne
Designation	Record of Protected Structures
Data source	Co. Meath Record of Protected Structures
Significance	Regional
Impact	None
Significance of impact	None
Description	Single storey gate lodge, and stableyard buildings – partially converted to dwelling
Photos:	-

Number	MH012-116
Type	Milestone
Townland	Parsonstown Demesne
Designation	Record of Protected Structures
Data source	Co. Meath Record of Protected Structures
Significance	Regional
Impact	None
Significance of impact	None
Description	Triangular-profile granite milestone, c. 1780, inscribed on two sides.
Photos:	-

Number	MH012-119
Type	Milestone
Townland	Parsonstown Demesne
Designation	Record of Protected Structures
Data source	Co. Meath Record of Protected Structures
Significance	Regional
Impact	None
Significance of impact	None
Description	Triangular-profile granite milestone, c. 1780, inscribed on two sides.
Photos:	-

Number	MH012-120
Type	Thatched house
Townland	Rathkenny
Designation	Record of Protected Structures
Data source	Co. Meath Record of Protected Structures
Significance	Regional
Impact	None
Significance of impact	None
Description	Detached four-bay single-storey house built c.1820, with porch addition. Pitched thatched roof with rendered chimneystack. Rendered walls. Timber sash windows.
Photos:	-

12.7.3.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), which is maintained by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, was examined as part of the baseline study on the 8th of March 2023. The review established that there are no structures included in the NIAH situated within the application area. The review established that there is one structure included in the NIAH situated in the study area, an outbuilding (see Table 12.2). The outbuilding is situated 1.08 km south of the application area and is considered to be too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.

Table 12.2 Structures in the Record of Protected Structures in the study area

Number	14401206
Type	Farmyard Complex
Townland	Rathkenny
Designation	None
Data source	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
Significance	Regional
Impact	None
Significance of impact	None
Description	Ranges of outbuildings, built c. 1820, comprising of pair of outbuildings flanking house, with detached outbuilding to north-east and detached outbuilding to south-west. Pitched corrugated-iron and fibre cement roofs. Rubble stone walls. Timber battened doors.
Photos:	-

12.7.4 ARCHAEOLOGY

12.7.4.1 Archaeological Assessment

12.7.4.1.1 Recorded Monuments

Examination of the Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Meath indicated that there are no Recorded Monuments located within the application area (see Figure 12.1 and Appendix 12.1). There is one Recorded Monument within the study area a Ringfort – rath (RMP ME012-029----) in Rathbranchurch townland (See Appendix 12.1 for full description). This monument is located c.1.187 km northwest of the application site and is considered too far distant to be impacted by the proposed development.

Note that in accordance with the Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2023 the RMP will be replaced by the Register of Monuments, but the RMP was still legally in force when this assessment was prepared.

12.7.4.1.2 The Sites and Monuments Record

Examination of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), which is maintained by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, on the 8th of March 2023 indicated that there are no SMRs listed in the application area or the study area.

12.7.4.1.3 Cartographic Sources

The Ordnance Survey 1st and 3rd edition six-inch maps and the first edition 25-inch maps of the area were examined. There is an area of quarried rock outcrop on the southwest side of field 4 that is indicated as 'Quarry' on the OS 1st edition OS mapping (see Plate 12.5). This old quarry is not of archaeological or cultural heritage significance.

12.7.4.1.4 Place Name Evidence

The place names were extracted from the cartography in order to facilitate the search for structures and monuments and small finds, to help identify any unrecorded monuments or structures, to search for any published papers and documents related to the study area and to assist in the study of the historical development of the area. The English translations of the townland names of the study area presented below are based on Logainm.ie. The placenames refer entirely to proprietors. The monuments referred to by Rathbranchurch and Rathkenny are both outside the study area.

Brownstown	lands of the Brown family
Heronstown	lands of the Hearn family
Parsonstown Demesne	estate of the Parson family
Rathbranchurch	church of Bran's fort

Brownstown	lands of the Brown family
Heronstown	lands of the Hearn family
Rathkenny	Kenny's rath

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12.7.4.1.5 Other sources

Examination of archaeological corpus works on prehistoric artefacts (Harbison 1969, Eogan 1965, 1983, 2000, Kavanagh 1991, Mount 1989, Simpson 1990), and pottery (O'Ríordáin and Waddell 1993) and Iron Age material (Raftery 1984) did not reveal any additional material in the study area.

12.7.4.1.6 Archaeological investigations in the study area

Examination of the excavations.ie database of Irish excavation reports indicated that there have been no archaeological investigations carried out in the study area.

12.7.4.1.7 Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

No sites of archaeological importance or National Monuments are located within the proposed application area.

12.7.4.1.8 Aerial Photographs

Examination of the Ordnance Survey 1995, 2000 and 2005 imagery, as well as Google Earth imagery from 2010, 2011, 2013, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 and Bing imagery, did not indicate any additional archaeological or cultural heritage sites in the application area.

12.7.4.1.1 Previous assessments

The existing permitted quarry area was the subject of an EIAR, which included an assessment of cultural heritage carried out by the author in 2019 (P.A. Ref. LB200106). The assessment concluded that there were no archaeological features or built heritage structures within the proposed development area. As a result, there would be no adverse impact on the known archaeological resource. The assessment recommended that the removal of all topsoil be archaeologically monitored.

12.7.4.1.2 Field Assessment

A field inspection was carried out on the 27th of April 2023 to identify any previously unknown archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites in the application area. See Plate 12.1 for the numbered fieldwork areas.

12.7.4.1.2.1 Area 1

This is the area of existing quarry that has already been assessed indicated as Area A on Plate 12.1.

12.7.4.1.2.2 Area 2

This is the southern part of a quadrilateral-shaped field of north-sloping pasture, with relict ridge and furrow, enclosed by low banks and hedgerows (see Plate 12.2). There is no visible indication of any archaeological, architectural, or cultural heritage material at ground level.

12.7.4.1.2.3 Area 3.

This is the southwest part of a rectangular-shaped field of northeast sloping pasture, enclosed by stony banks with hedgerow (see Plate 12.3). There is no visible indication of any archaeological, architectural, or cultural heritage material at ground level.

12.7.4.1.2.4 Area 4.

This is the northern part of a large roughly chevron-shaped field of north-sloping pasture, with relict ridge and furrow, enclosed by banks with hedgerow (see Plate 12.4). There is an area of quarried rock outcrop on the southwest side of the field that is indicated as 'Quarry' on the OS 1st edition OS mapping (see Plate 12.5). The old quarry is not of archaeological or cultural heritage significance. There is no visible indication of any archaeological, architectural, or cultural heritage material at ground level.

12.7.4.1.2.5 Area 5.

This the northern part of a rectangular-shaped field of north-west sloping pasture, enclosed by stoney banks with hedgerow and some trees (see Plate 12.6). There is no visible indication of any archaeological, architectural, or cultural heritage material at ground level.

12.8 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The following Impact assessment matrix provides an indication of the significance of potential effects arising during the life cycle of the development not accounting for any mitigation measures.

Table 12.3 Cultural Heritage - Impact Matrix			
'Do Nothing' Impacts	X		
Factors	Construction	Operation	Decommissioning
Direct Impacts	X	X	X
Indirect Impacts	X	X	X
Cumulative Impacts	X	X	X
Residual Impacts	X	X	X
'Worst Case' Impacts	● Unknown potential subsurface archaeology	X	X
None/imperceptible: X; Slight: ●; Moderate: ●; Significant/Very significant: ●.			
Refer to Appendix 3 for definition of Significance			

12.8.1 DO NOTHING IMPACTS

If the proposed development were not to proceed there would be no negative impact on the cultural heritage.

12.8.2 DIRECT IMPACTS

There will be no direct impacts on any known items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of heritage or special architectural interest in the application site or the vicinity.

12.8.3 INDIRECT IMPACTS

Indirect Impacts, also known as Secondary Impacts, are defined as impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway (See Appendix 3)

There will be no indirect impacts on any known items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of heritage or special architectural interest in the application site or the vicinity.

12.8.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative Impacts are defined as the addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects (See Appendix 3).

There will be no cumulative impact upon any archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites in combination with other plans or projects.

12.8.5 TRANSBOUNDARY IMPACTS

The EIA Directive 2014-52-EU invokes the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, 1991, and applies its definition of transboundary impacts (Refer Appendix 8.1). Given the location (c. 30 km from the border with N. Ireland), nature, size and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that the impacts of the development would not have any significant transboundary effects on cultural heritage.

12.8.6 RESIDUAL IMPACTS

Residual impacts refer to the degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect. Assuming implementation of the mitigation measures described below in EIAR Section 12.9, the majority of residual impacts on the human environment during all stages are assessed to be unlikely and imperceptible.

As a result of the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated in the design, no significant, negative, residual impacts on the archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage resource are predicted during the operational phase.

It is considered that following full restoration and closure of the site, that there will be no significant, long-term, negative impacts in terms of cultural heritage. The restored quarry will provide a more manageable environment than is currently the case, but with a change in land-use from the original agricultural use to mineral extraction to ultimately a future beneficial agriculture/amenity use.

There will be no residual impacts on the archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage resource.

12.8.7 WORST CASE IMPACT

In the worst case, the development might have a negative and permanent impact on previously unknown subsurface archaeological deposits or artefacts.

Table 12.4 Likely Direct and Indirect Impacts by Stage of Development under Cultural Heritage

Environmental Attribute/ Receptor	Description	Significance / Sensitivity of Impact	Nature of Impact	Overall Significance of Impact	Construction Stage	Operational Stage	Decommissioning Stage	Post Closure Stage
Archaeology (Recorded Monuments, RMPs)	ME012-029 Ringfort- rath Rathbranchurch	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	c. 1.2 km northeast of the application area and is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
Archaeology (Sites and Monuments Record; SMRs)	Not Applicable	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	There are no SMRs listed in the application area or the study area.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
Architecture (NIAH Structures)	14401206 Farmyard Complex Rathkenny	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	The outbuilding is situated c. 1.1 km south of the application area and is considered to be too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
Protected Structures (RPSs)	MH012-115 Stableyard and Lodge. Parsonstown Demesne	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	This structure is situated c. 0.77 km northwest of the application area. This Protected Structure is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
	MH012-116 Milestone in Parsonstown Demesne	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	This structure is situated c. 0.54 km northwest of the application area. This Protected Structure is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
	MH012-119 Milestone in Parsonstown Demesne	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	This structure is situated c. 0.97 km southeast of the application area. This Protected Structure is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
	MH012-120 Thatched house Rathkenny	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	This structure is situated c. 1.1 km southeast of the application area. This Protected Structure is considered to be too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal.		No impact expected	No impact expected.
Non Designated Structures	Not Applicable	Medium	Negligible	Imperceptible	No impact expected.	No impact expected	No impact expected	No impact expected.
Architecture (Architectural Conservation Areas)	Not Applicable	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	No impact expected.	No impact expected	No impact expected	No impact expected.
Historic Gardens or Designed Landscapes	Not Applicable	Medium	Negligible	Imperceptible	No impact expected.	No impact expected	No impact expected	No impact expected.
World Heritage Sites	Not Applicable	High	Negligible	Imperceptible	No impact expected	No impact expected	No impact expected	No impact expected.

12.9 MITIGATION MEASURES

12.9.1 DIRECT IMPACTS

The potential negative and permanent impact on unknown subsurface archaeological deposits or artefacts should be mitigated by monitoring of all topsoil-stripping by a qualified archaeologist. Any archaeological material identified during archaeological monitoring should be preserved *in situ* or by record as appropriate under licence from the National Monuments Service.

12.9.2 INDIRECT IMPACTS

No indirect impacts warranting specific mitigation were identified during the course of the cultural heritage assessment.

12.10 REFERENCES

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12.11 FIGURES

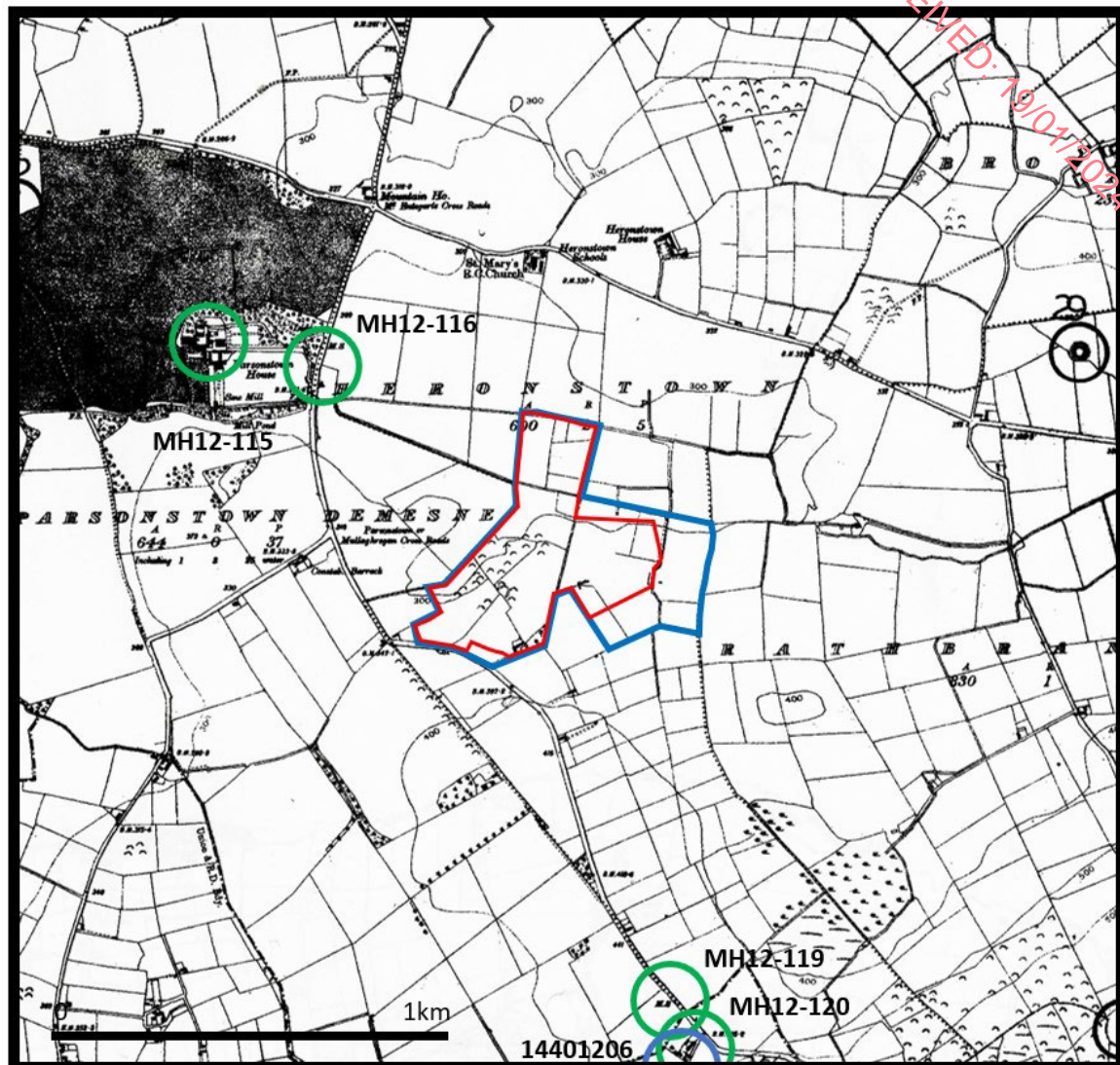


Figure 12.1 The study area indicated on the RMP map of Meath Sheet No. 12

The application area is indicated with the red line, the landholding with the blue line. Protected Structures are indicated with green circles and the structure in the NIAH with a blue circle.

12.12 PLATES



Plate 12.1 Numbered fieldwork areas indicated on a 2023 UAS drone image.



Plate 12.2 Panoramic view of area 2 looking northeast.



Plate 12.3 Panoramic view of area 3, the existing extraction, looking northeast.



Plate 12.4 Panoramic view of area 4, the existing extraction, looking northeast.



Plate 12.5 View of old stone quarry face in the southwest of area 4.



Plate 12.6 Panoramic view of area 5, looking south.