

David Behan

From: Appeals <Appeals@kildarecoco.ie>
Sent: Monday 31 March 2025 14:51
To: Appeals2
Subject: 31.03.25 Kildare County Council Submission ABP-321872-25- Further development at Hempstown Quarry, Co. Kildare.
Attachments: Cover Letter.pdf; 31.03.25 Kildare County Council Submission ABP-321872-25.pdf; Appendix1 Kildare County Council Internal Department Reports.pdf

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Hello,

Please see attached Kildare County Council Submission for ABP-321872-25 – Further development at Hempstown Quarry, Co. Kildare.

Thanks and regards,
Catherine

Asst Staff Officer,

Planning Department,

Kildare County Council, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co.Kildare.

W91 X77F

Contact: 045 980467: cehoward@kildarecoco.ie



Tá an ríomhphost seo príobháideach agus ní ceadmhach úsáid an ríomhphoist seo d'éinne ach don té ar seoladh chuige é. D'fhéadfadh go mbeadh eolas ann atá faoi phribhléid agus rúnda de réir an dlí. Munar duit an ríomhphost seo, déan teagmháil leis an seoltóir chomh luath agus is féidir. D'fhéadfadh nach iad tuairimí Chomhairle Contae Chill Dara na tuairimí atá curtha in iúl sa ríomhphost seo. Déanann Comhairle Contae Chill Dara iarracht ríomhphoist a chosaint ó víris. Mar sin féin, moltar duit gach ríomhphost a scanadh, mar ní ghlacann an Chomhairle aon dliteanas i leith damáiste do do chórais. Le haghaidh eolas ar do chearta príbháideachta agus ar conas a bhainistímid sonraí pearsanta, logáil isteach ar <https://kildarecoco.ie/YourCouncil/GovernanceandCompliance/DataProtection/> Chun do chuid sonraí pearsanta a nuashonrú cuir ríomhphost chugainn ag customer care@kildarecoco.ie Caithfidh tú deis a thógáil don Chomhairle cé thú féin a chinntiú trí cruthúnas céannachta agus/nó seoladh a sholáthar, sula ndéanaimid aon athruithe.

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Comhairle Contae Chill Dara

Kildare County Council

Planning Department.
045-980845.

Date: 31st March 2025
Your Ref: ABP-321872-25.

EMAIL
appeals@pleanala.ie

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG- _____	
ABP- _____	
01 APR 2025	
Fee: € _____	Type: _____
Time: _____	By: _____

Re: Application for continued extraction at Hempstown Quarry Co. Kildare.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to your letters dated 18th February 2025.

Please find attached Kildare County Council report, this is a report pursuant to Section 37L (12)(a) of the Planning and Development Act as amended, in relation to further development at Hempstown Quarry, Co Kildare. ABP Reference No 321872-25.

If permission is granted, Kildare County Council requests inclusion of a condition requiring payment of Development Contributions in accordance with the Kildare County Council development contributions scheme which was adopted in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

If you have any further queries please contact the Planning Department of Kildare County Council.

Yours faithfully,


Senior Executive Officer

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

ABP 321872-25



37L 12(a) Report

Name of Applicant
Address of Development
Development

Shillelagh Quarries Ltd.
Hempstown Commons, Blessington, Co. Kildare
Continued Extraction at Hempstown Quarry

This report provides the view of the Planning Authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Planning permission is sought under Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for continuance of use of an existing extraction facility. ABP Case number 321872-25 refers. The report is set out in four main sections as follows:

1. Description of Development and Background Information
2. Relevant Policy/Guidance provision
3. Planning Authority's view
4. Conclusion

1. Description of Development and Background Information

The development consists of further development of a quarry within an application boundary of 10.03 ha. where it is proposed to continue extraction activities in the existing quarry void (approximately 5 ha) and to laterally extend the existing quarry void to the northeast by approximately 1.89 ha, to a maximum working depth of 210 mOD.

The proposed duration of extraction is 12 years to reflect anticipated extraction of remaining reserves depending on market conditions, and a further 2 years for completion of restoration activities.

The reserve consists of greywacke which will be extracted by blasting and mechanical excavation. Excavated rock will be broken, crushed and screened at the working face, or adjacent to the quarry area, by mobile plant.

It is proposed to relocate the existing office container, wheel wash and recycled water tank and weighbridge within the application site and carry out realignment of the private access lane and decommissioning of an abstraction borehole, and to develop dedicated carparking facilities to support the quarry operations, and to continue use of soakaway ponds.

Access is via a privately-owned laneway connecting to a local road (L6030) which connects to the N81 approximately 1.1km to the south-east.

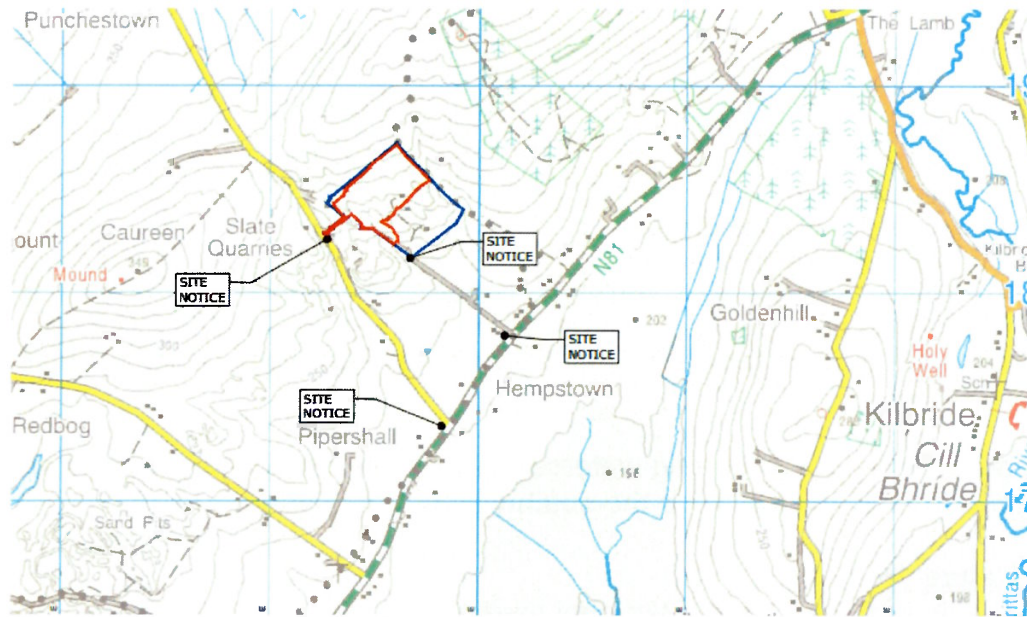
The subject S37L application is made concurrent with an application for substitute consent for quarrying at this location.

Site location / context

The site is located approximately 3.5km north of Blessington on the western side of the N81 within the rural townland of Hempstown Commons. The site is located wholly within County Kildare however, the north-eastern boundary of the site marks the county boundary between County Kildare and County Wicklow.

The application site comprises an existing operational quarry over an area of 10.3ha, within a wider quarry area comprising 18.45ha. The quarry is located within a wider area characterised by a mix of other quarrying operations, including a precast concrete manufacturing facility adjacent to the west and a rock quarry adjacent to the northern boundary, agricultural uses and one-off housing located along the approach roads to the site.

Access to the site is via the local road (L6030) to the south-west of the site, connecting to the N81 to the south-east. A network of internal roads/tracks traverses the site for the purposes of the operations taking place on site.



Site location – extract from application



Extent of application site, within larger EIA site boundary

Operations on site include extraction of rock within an area of approximately 5ha, through drilling, blasting and mechanical breaking of greywacke (and shale) rock, mobile crushing and screening of the rock into specific aggregate sizes, temporary stockpiling of screened aggregate in an area to the south and west of the quarry void space and loading aggregate materials onto road trucks for sale and distribution. Periodic drilling and blasting are undertaken by a third party to extract rock.

Mechanical equipment on site includes:

- 1 no. rock breaker,
- 2 no. excavators,
- 1 no. primary crusher,
- 1 no. secondary crusher,
- 1 no. tertiary crusher,
- 2 no. screeners 0.5,
- 2 no. wheel loading shovels,
- 2 no. 26T articulated haulers.
- In addition, the site also contains a wheelwash, weighbridge, office, staff facilities, mobile plant and associated infrastructure. An on-site "office cabin" container contains the welfare facilities and the weighbridge control room and site office.

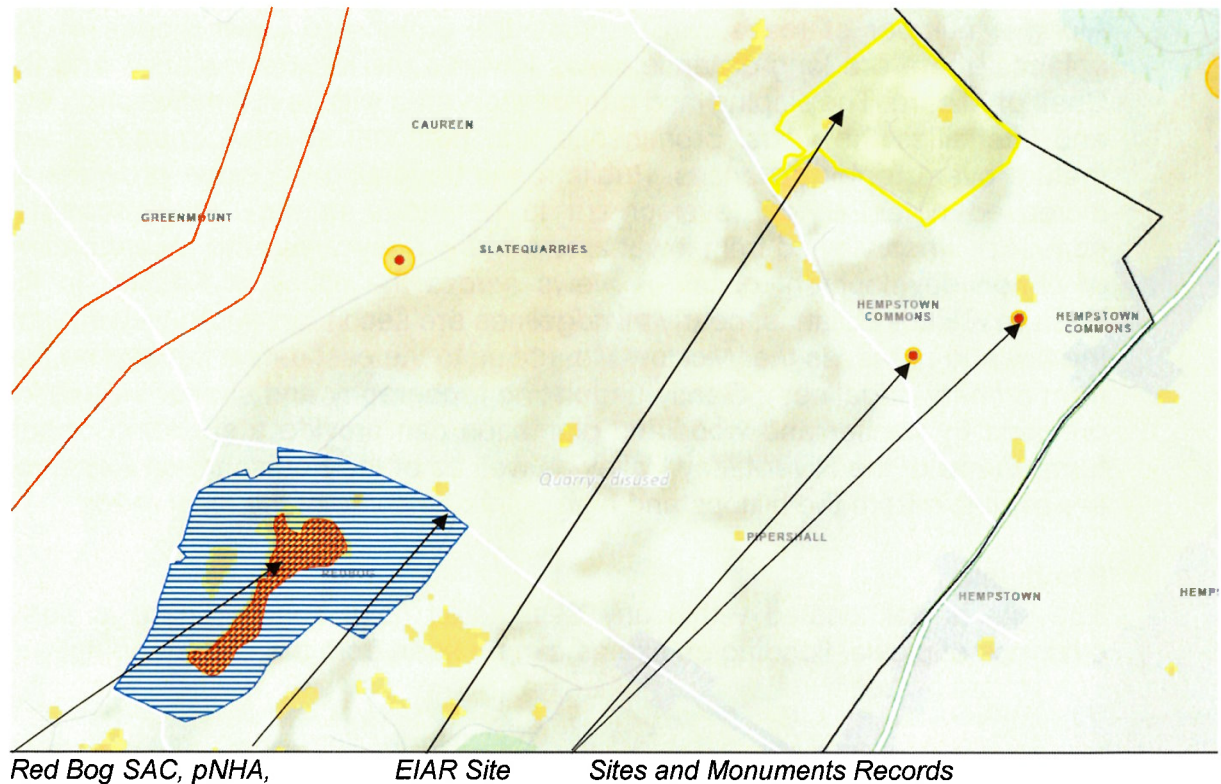
There are no naturally occurring watercourses on site. A soakaway pond and overflow pond are located close the south-western boundary.

Built / Natural Heritage

There are no records from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, the Kildare County Council Record of Protected Structures or the Wicklow County Council Record of Protected Structures located within 1km of the site.

There are approximately 6 no. features from the National Monuments Service Record of Monuments and Places located within 1km of the site, the closest 2 no. of which are referred to as a cist (KD020-016) and rock art (KD020-015002) and are situated approximately 350m south of the site.

The site is located approximately 1.5km north east of Red Bog Special Area of Conservation and pNHA. Red Bog is of ornithological significance and breeding birds recorded from the site include Mute Swan, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Coot, Moorhen, Snipe and Black-headed Gull. Red Bog 000397 SAC Qualifying Interests include Transition mires and quaking bogs.



Landscape Character

The site is located in the Eastern Uplands Landscape Character Area – a Class 3 high sensitivity landscape character area described as:

'Areas with reduced capacity to accommodate uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to prevalent sensitivity factors.'

In addition to the East Kildare Uplands Landscape Character Areas and the sensitivity of these areas to development, there are certain special landscape areas within the county, some of which overlap with sensitive landscapes. These areas have been identified as Areas of High Amenity.

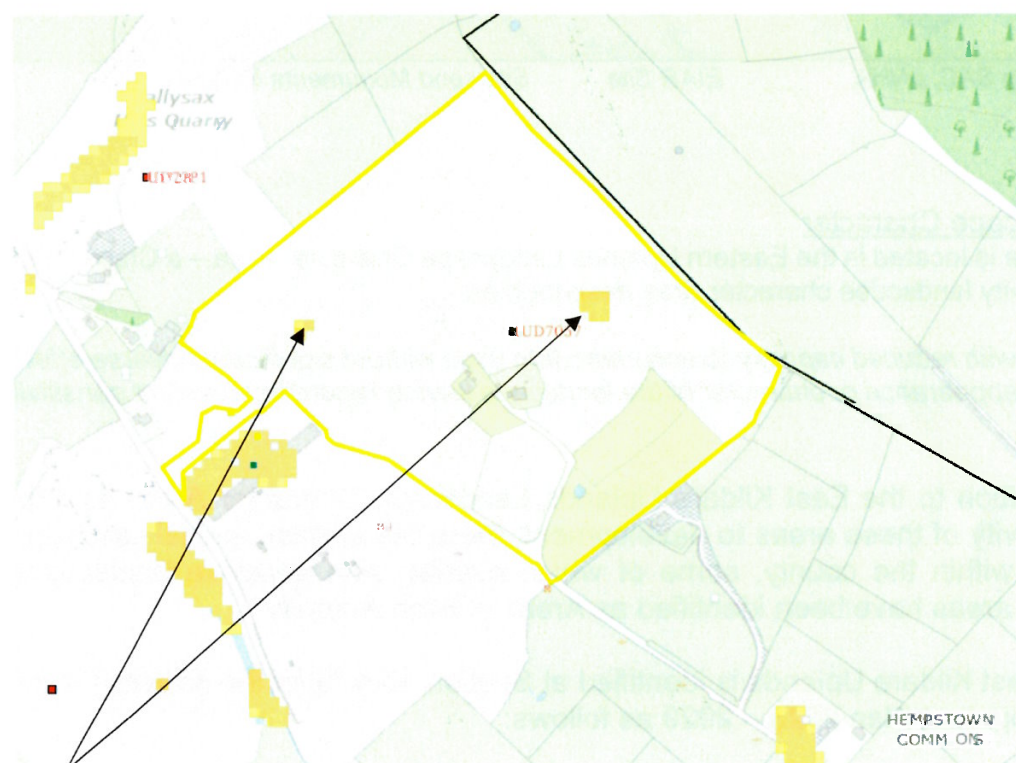
The East Kildare Uplands is identified at Section 13.4.12 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 as follows:

The Eastern Uplands are located in the east of the county and are part of the Wicklow Mountain complex. The topography rises from the lowland plains, through undulating terrain to the highest point of 379m above sea level (O.D.) at Cupidstownhill, east of Killeel. The elevated nature of this area provides a defined skyline with scenic views over the central plains of Kildare and the neighbouring Wicklow Mountains which further define the skyline and the extent of visibility. The East Kildare Uplands are rural in character with a number of scenic views from elevated vantage points. The general land use on the uplands is pasture, with some tillage, quarrying and forestry.

Along a number of roads, which cross the upper and lower slopes of the uplands, there are long-distance views towards the Kildare lowlands and the Chair of Kildare. The sloping land provides this area with its distinctive character and intensifies the visual prominence and potential adverse impact of any feature over greater distances. Public roads traversing the slope provides an increased potential for development to penetrate primary and secondary ridgelines when viewed from lower areas and in a few areas the recent pattern of ribbon development obscures views across the plains of Kildare. In the Eastern Kildare Uplands, nearly all ridgelines are secondary when viewed from the lowland areas, as the Wicklow Mountains to the east define the skyline (i.e. form primary ridgelines). Gently undulating topography and shelter vegetation provided by conifer and woodland plantation can provide a shielding of built form. Views of the River Liffey Valley as well as of the Poulaphouca Reservoir are available from the hilltops and high points on some of the local roads.

Flood data

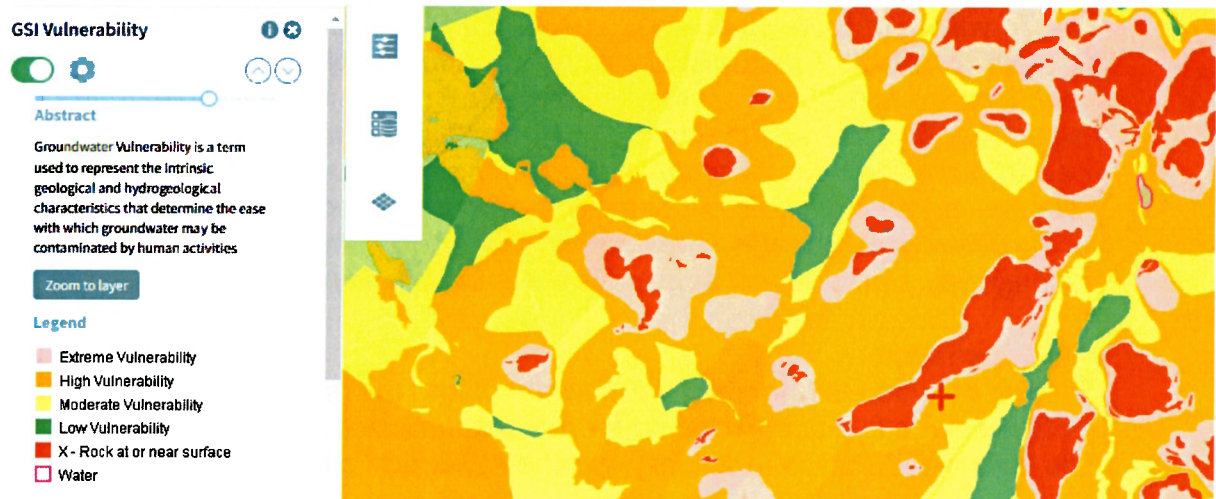
The site is not located within any designated flood zone. There is some evidence of pluvial flooding on site as can be seen from the GIS Mapping.



Pluvial flood data

Groundwater

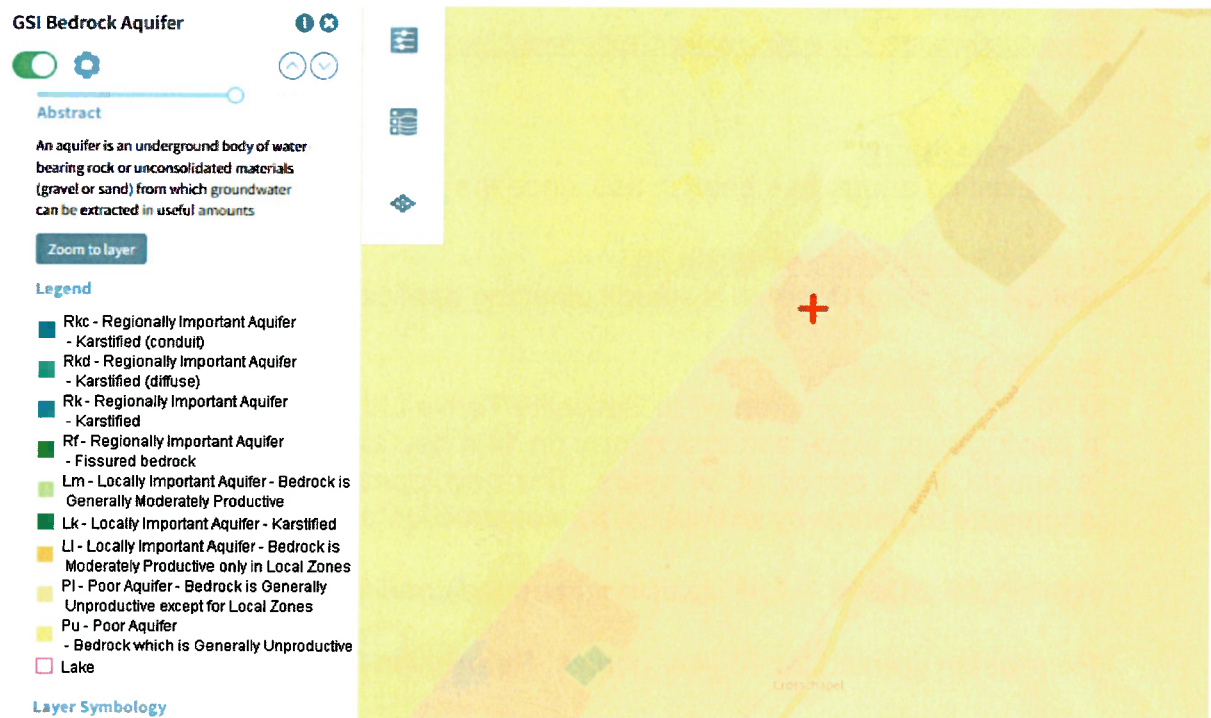
The site is located within an area of high groundwater vulnerability as per EPA online mapping and data sets.



Groundwater Vulnerability

Source: EPA Maps

The GSI bedrock aquifer data set identifies the site as being located within a poor aquifer where bedrock is generally unproductive except for local zones. Furthermore, the site is not located on a locally or regionally important gravel aquifer.



Bedrock Aquifer

Source EPA Maps

Geological Heritage

The site is identified as an audited site on the Geological Survey of Ireland Spatial Resources. Described as Slate Quarries – a series of quarries on the hillside.

*The GSI report identifies the following:
Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest*

The Townland of Slate Quarries in east Kildare, near Blessington is notable for its Slate Quarries. These slates can be seen in a range of quarries. Kearney Seal Quarries is the most northerly, Stresslite operate in the middle quarry and Frank Murphy Ltd has the lower quarry and the workings to the south of the road through the site. Although the original small quarries were probably for poor quality roofing slates, modern extraction is concentrated in three quarries run by different companies. Their output is for aggregate and concrete products, no longer for slates, which nowadays are generally imported.

Site Importance

The link between the name of the Townland, and the history of use of a natural earth resource is a strong reason for marking this area as a County Geological Site, and a good place to actually see the rocks well exposed.

Management/promotion issues

The proposal to include these working quarries as a CGS in no way is intended to limit the operations, but simply to mark their value as a place to see local geology well exposed, and to make the powerful connection between geology and people's everyday lives.

Link to report below:

https://gsi.geodata.gov.ie/downloads/Geoheritage/Reports/KE004_Slate_Quarries.pdf

Planning History

The existing quarry has been in use since the 1940s.

Quarry Registration – Section 261

QR 39 – Pl. Auth decision = submit planning application with EIS.

Planning Application

07/443 – permission granted to Stresslite Tanks Ltd for continued operation of a sand, gravel, stone and rock quarry on 14.4 hectares of land. The permission is sought for a period of 30 years. The development is for the provision of aggregate materials by extraction, for construction purposes.

ABP PL09.233338 – ABP decision amended conditions of 07/443.

Permission granted for 10 year period. Permission EXPIRED 29/12/2019.

Quarry Registration Section 261A

QRA 20-003 – KCC decision = application for substitute consent

Referred to **ABP 09.QV0130** – ABP decision = set aside the determination of the planning authority.

Enforcement

UD7057 – Warning Letter re: non compliance with conditions of 07/443.

UD7850 – (supersedes UD7057) – continued operation of quarry after permission expired – current High Court Section 160 proceedings 2024/630.

Planning Applications

18/1584 – EOD Refused to Stresslite Tanks LTD. for Extension of duration 07/443 continued operation of a sand, gravel, stone and rock quarry on 14.4 hectares of land. The permission is sought for a period of 30 years. The development is for the provision of aggregate materials by extraction for construction purposes.

19/1438 – Application by Shillelagh Quarries for continuance of the following development previously permitted under Kildare County Council (KCC) Reg. Ref. 07/443; ABP Ref. PL09.233338 for the operation of a sand, gravel, stone and rock quarry extraction including rock blasting, processing (crushing and screening) of aggregate and ancillary activities on 6.87 hectares with an overall development area of ca. 18.35 hectares for a period of 10 years with a further two years to complete site restoration to agriculture. The development will consist of: (1) continued use of the existing entrance from the L6030, (2) internal access routes, (3) over-burden storage and screening areas/mounds, (4) relocation of weigh-bridge and site office cabin (5) continued use of the existing wheel-wash, (6) aggregate processing (crushing and screening) using mobile plant (two mobile crushing plants and mobile screen, (7) staff welfare facilities and carparking facilities, and (8) the progressive and phased restoration throughout the life of the development. Permission is also sought for (9) the demolition of a residential dwelling within the Application Site boundary. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) will be submitted to the Planning Authority with the application.

KCC determined that the application was Invalid. KCC determination was subject to Judicial Review – decision = Planning Authority decision stands.

ABP-317649-23 – Shillelagh Quarries sought leave to apply for substitute consent. Application deemed withdrawn.

ABP 321578-25 – Current Application for Substitute Consent under Section 177E.

2. Relevant Policy / Guidance Provisions

There are multiple National Policy Objectives relating to water, protected areas, cultural heritage landscape character, air quality and noise. The following is noted regarding extractive industry.

NPO23

Facilitate the development of the rural economy through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.

Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region

There are multiple Regional Policy Objectives relating to water, noise pollution, air quality, light pollution habitats directive and landscape character. The following is noted regarding extractive industry.

RPO 6.7: Support local authorities to develop sustainable and economically efficient rural economies through initiatives to enhance sectors such as agricultural and food, forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio economy, tourism, and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage.

Quarries and ancillary activities- Guidelines for Planning Authorities April 2004
These guidelines note the economic importance of quarries and the demand for aggregates arising from the needs of the construction industry with particular reference to house building and infrastructure provision. It is further noted that aggregates can only be worked where they occur and that many pits and quarries tend to be located within 25km of urban areas where most construction takes place.

Chapter 2 of the Guidelines identifies appropriate development plan policies and objectives with regard to the development of quarries.

Chapter 3 identifies the potential environmental issues associated with the development of the extractive industry / quarries and recommends best practice / possible mitigation measures in respect of:

- Noise and vibration
- Dust deposition / air quality
- Water supplies and groundwater
- Natural heritage
- Landscape
- Traffic impact
- Cultural heritage
- Waste management

The Guidelines also recommend Environmental Management Systems (EMS) as a quality assurance system to measure a company's operations against environmental performance indicators.

Chapter 4 of the Guidelines refers to the assessment of planning applications and Environmental Impact Statements. It provides guidance on the information to accompany an application and the inclusion of possible planning conditions.

Chapter 5 refers to the implementation of the registration procedures set out in Section 261 of the Act.

Environmental Management Guidelines, Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals), EPA, 2006

These guidelines are intended to complement existing national guidance and to be of assistance to operators, regulatory authorities, and the general public

(They are also complemented by the 'Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry – Guidelines for Regulators'). The guidelines provide general advice and guidance in relation to environmental issues to practitioners involved in the regulation, planning, design, development, operation and restoration of quarry developments and ancillary facilities.

The environmental management guidelines also represent a summary of current environmental management practices for quarries and ancillary facilities (including manufacturing of concrete and bituminous mixes/asphalt products, and processing of dimension stone). They are based on a review of current environmental management practice in Ireland, the UK and Europe. Under each of the key environmental issues, good environmental practice is summarised together with recommendations for the use of environmental management systems (EMSs), and emission limit values (ELVs), where appropriate.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, August 2018

The guidelines coincide with the making of the European Union (Planning & Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) and the coming into operation of the Regulations on 1st September, 2018 in order to transpose the Directive into Irish law. The Guidelines replace *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out environmental impact assessment* issued by the DoECLG in 2013.

The purpose of the guidelines is to give practical guidance on procedural issues and the EIA process arising from the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU.

Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Chapter 9 – Our Rural Economy.

Section 9.9 Mineral Resources and Extractive Industry.

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 notes that mineral resources are generally located within the rural area. Reserves of suitable material are finite, and the nature of the extractive industry is such that the industry must be developed where the resource occurs.

Whilst the environment must be protected, it is also important to ensure the availability of adequate supplies of aggregates and to facilitate the exploitation thereof to meet the future needs of the county and region in line with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management. Aggregate resources are important to the general economy.

Extractive industry can have damaging environmental effects and **permission will only be granted where the council is satisfied that residential and natural amenities will be protected, pollution will be prevented, and aquifers and ground water safeguarded.**

It is the policy of the Council to:

RD P8	Support and manage the appropriate future development of Kildare's natural aggregate resources in appropriate locations to ensure adequate supplies are available to meet the future needs of the county and the region in line with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management and to require operators to appropriately manage extraction sites when extraction has ceased.
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The following objectives are also noted:

RD O42	<p>Ensure that development for aggregate extraction, processing and associated concrete production does not significantly impact the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) - Special Protection Areas (SPAs) - Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) - Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna - Zones of Archaeological Potential. - The vicinity of a recorded monument. - Sensitive landscape areas as identified in Chapter 13 of this Plan. - Scenic views and prospects. - Protected Structures. - Established rights of way and walking routes. - Potential World Heritage Sites in Kildare on the UNESCO Tentative List, Ireland
RDO43	Consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), with regard to any developments likely to have an impact on sites of Geological Importance listed in Chapter 12 of this Plan.
RD O44	<p>Require applications for mineral or other extraction to include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An Appropriate Assessment Screening where there is any potential for effects on a Natura 2000 site (see Chapter 12). - An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (E IAR) - An Ecological Impact Assessment may also be required for sub-threshold developments to evaluate the existence of any protected species / habitats on site. - A detailed landscaping plan to be submitted indicating proposed screening for the operational life of the site. The predominant use of native plant species in the proposed landscaping plan will be expected - Detailed landscaping and quarry restoration plans. Habitats and species surveying shall be carried out and shall influence the restoration plan for the site. - Comprehensive Site Restoration Plan and/or After-Use Strategy having regard to the principles of 'Rehabilitation Ecology' - Transport Impact Assessment
RD O45	Require, where permission is granted for quarrying / extraction of aggregates, the submission by the developer of a bond (cash deposit, bond from an insurance company or other security acceptable to the planning authority) to ensure the satisfactory completion and restoration of the site.

RD 046	Require road re-instatement work to be on-going during operations, in the interests of road and traffic safety. Works undertaken to re-instate/improve the public road should be undertaken by the quarry developer or paid by them and completed by the Council.
RD 047	Protect and safeguard the county's natural aggregate resources from inappropriate development.
RD 048	Manage the finite aggregate resources being mined by the extractive industries in the county to supply the future needs of our region while working to reach our climate change targets.
RD 049	Have regard to the following guidance documents (as may be amended, replaced, or supplemented) in the assessment of planning applications for quarries, ancillary services, restoration and after-use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2004). - Environmental Management Guidelines – Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals), EPA (2006). - Archaeological Code of Practice between the DEHLG and ICF (2009). - Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry (2008). - Wildlife, Habitats, and the Extractive Industry – Guidelines for the protection of biodiversity within the extractive industry, NPWS (2009).
RD 050	Ensure the satisfactory and sensitive re-instatement and/or re-use of disused quarries and extraction facilities, where active extraction use has ceased. Future uses should include amenity, recreation and biodiversity areas shall be informed by an assessment of the specific site/lands and shall be subject to an ecological impact assessment or other environmental assessments as appropriate. Where it is proposed to reclaim, regenerate, or rehabilitate old quarries by filling or re-grading with inert soil or similar material, or to use worked-out quarries as disposal locations for inert materials, the acceptability of the proposal shall be evaluated against the criteria set out in Section 15.9.6 of this Plan. The Council will resist development that would significantly or unnecessarily alter the natural landscape and topography, including land infilling/ reclamation projects or projects involving significant landscape remodelling, unless it can be demonstrated that the development would enhance the landscape and / or not give rise to adverse impacts.
RD 051	Require that quarry remediation plans provide for environmental benefit, biodiversity and re-wilding in all instances. The 80% requirement for environmental/biodiversity may be waived at sites closer to urban areas where a significant portion of the site is being provided for sports, recreation, and amenity.

Chapter 12 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

The plan sets out to protect, manage and enhance the County's biodiversity for future generations, including sites designated at national and EU level, protected species and habitats outside of designated sites and to promote the development of an integrated Green Infrastructure network in order to improve our resilience to climate change and to enable the role of Green Infrastructure in delivering sustainable communities.

The following is relevant in the context of the application.

It is the policy of the Council to:

BIP10	Maintain and protect the conservation value of geological sites of national or local importance and seek the sustainable management of the county's geological heritage resource as listed in Table 12.7.
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It is an objective of the Council to:

BI O60	Consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland regarding any development proposals within or likely to have an impact on Sites of Geological Importance set out in Table 12.7.
BI O61	Contribute towards the protection from inappropriate development of Geological Natural Heritage Areas that become designated during the lifetime of this Plan.
BI O62	Promote, encourage and support the provision of access to geological and geo-morphological features of interest in cooperation/consultation with landowners (where appropriate/practicable).
BI O63	Where appropriate support the restoration of Sites of Geological Importance (identified in Table 12.7).

Section 12.14.8 The Corridors (Connections)

12.14.8.9 The East Kildare Uplands Corridor

This corridor builds on the South Dublin County Council corridor (refer to the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-28) that runs south to Saggart Hill (close to the Kildare County border) and continues it southwards to Blessington and the Poulaphouca Reservoir – following the ridge line that generally divides parts of Kildare to the west and Wicklow to the east.

It includes some of the most elevated areas of the County with significant views over the plains of Kildare to the west and views of the Wicklow Mountains and Poulaphouca Reservoir to the east. This proposed GI Corridor includes, for example Cupidstown Hill - Kildare's highest point, Rathbane, Caureen (public right of way along the ridge line) and leads southwards to incorporate the Red Bog SAC (including ponds – a wildlife hotspot) and links up with the Glending Wood/Deerpark (County Wicklow). Subject to the cooperation of Wicklow County Council, the GI Corridor could then follow the local stream and associated ponds that run to the east of Blessington, through Kilmalum (Kildare) before entering Poulaphouca Reservoir (SPA). From Glending Wood, the corridor so is proposed to run through the elevated townlands of Newtown Park, Slieveroe, Glenmore, Carrigeen, Russborough Demense and reconnecting again with Poulaphouca Reservoir.

In addition to the features highlighted above, this GI Corridor includes a number of woodland and commercial forestry areas as well as a significant number of active and disused quarries, where after use activity should promote uses compatible with Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Chapter 13 – Landscape, Recreation and Amenity

It is an Objective of the Council

LR 08	Ensure that all quarrying activities and projects associated with the extractive industry comply with all relevant Planning and Environmental Legislation and the Guidelines for the Protection of Biodiversity within the Extractive Industry document 'Wildlife, Habitats & the Extractive Industry'.
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Chapter 15 – Development Management Standards

Development management standards are set out in Chapter 15 for a range of topics including car parking requirements, access arrangements and surface water management etc. Section 15.9.6 refers to extractive industry and sets out the following:

When assessing planning applications for quarry and ancillary developments, the Council will have regard to;

- Section 261 and Section 261A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended);
- the Quarries and Ancillary Activities Guidelines 2004 and any amendments to the Guidelines which may be made, and
- the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) publication 'Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (non-scheduled minerals)' 2006.

3. Planning Authority's View

Principle of the development

The principle of extending an existing quarry is supported in policy at all tiers, locally and nationally, however this is subject to environmental impacts such as noise, dust, landscape etc.

Much of the extraction was undertaken pre'63 and more recently under reg. ref. 07/443 however that permission has expired. The site is subject to two separate applications to An Bord Pleanála – Substitute Consent and the subject application for continued extraction.

The quarry currently occupies an extracted site area of approximately 5ha. A lateral extension area of 1.89ha to the north-east of the existing void space is proposed.

The reserve at the quarry is greywacke rock currently worked in the existing quarry to a maximum depth of 210 mOD. The final elevation for extraction in the proposed quarry extension is 213 mOD. An annual extraction tonnage of approximately 146,458 tonnes per annum is envisaged over a 12 year life of quarry, with a further 2 years for restoration.

It is proposed to extend the existing quarry void in a phased manner over three phases.

Phase 1 = initial works, relocation of equipment, development of car parks, relocation of temporary stockpiles, signage, decommissioning of abstraction borehole to facilitate road realignment of private access lane including removal of low value trees and scrub, installation of bypass separator for collected waters to pass through prior to discharge to primary soakaway, extension of existing sump to provide additional capacity to store collected waters.

Phase 2 = phased stripping of top soil and overburden over 25m sections, storage of topsoil and overburden over a period of 24 months, progressive extraction of rock resource within the quarry and extension area; relocation of crusher and screen to quarry floor. Blast rock from periodic blasting will be crushed and screened onsite. This phase will take place over a 12 year period.

Phase 3 = restoration, decommissioning all plant, equipment and temporary structures, scheduled planting – to be completed within 2 years following cessation of activities.

Any grant of permission on foot of this application should be mindful of the lifetime of the permission and should refer to specific periods of time for both extraction and restoration.

EIAR

The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), prepared in accordance with EIA Directives and their subsequent transposition into Irish law – including EC (EIA) Regulations and the Planning and Development Regulations. Guidance documents issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as well as by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have also been followed and include 2020 Environmental Assessments and Planning in Ireland – Planning Leaflet 11, Office of the Planning Regulator and 2018 Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The EIAR presents the analysis and assessments based on a grouped format and includes the following: Population and Human Health; Biodiversity, Land & Soils, Water, Air, Climate, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape, Interactions.

Internal Reports

The application was referred to a number of internal sections within Kildare County Council. Reports received are attached as an **Appendix** to this report.

Roads/Access

Material transported off site is by the only operational entrance / exit to the quarry site located off the L6030, which itself connects to the N81. This is the primary entrance for the development and thus caters for all employees, visitors and movement of aggregate products and materials (import/export). The proposed development will continue using this single entrance for all site related traffic.

The total daily trips associated with the quarry operation for the exportation of approximately 146,458 tonnes per annum accounts for 56 movements daily, 40 of which relate to HGV's (71.42%). These numbers have been broken down as follows:

- 40 daily truck movements enter and exit the site importing material, 20 inbound and 20 outbound;
- 12 staff trips daily, 6 inbound and 6 outbound; and
- 4 miscellaneous trips daily, 2 inbound and 2 outbound.

All materials leaving the Application Site will to be transported along the realigned internal access land existing onto the local road via the existing site entrance.

The Report of The Roads Planning Section of the KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department has noted that the following analysis has been carried out by the Applicant:

- Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA).
- Autotrack Analysis to check that there is adequate turning room for HGVs within the development and at the access entrance off the L6030.
- Check on sight lines at the access entrance off the L6030.

Conditions for the development are suggested in the appended Report.

Landscape / Visual

Section 2.6 of Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2004 states:

"The development plan will indicate areas of high landscape quality, together with proposed geological Natural Heritage Areas, where quarrying will not normally be permitted. While Quaternary landscape features such as eskers and moraines comprise valuable sediments, they also represent non-renewable records of past climate and environmental change, and should be afforded some protection."

The application site is located in the Eastern Uplands Landscape Character Area – a high sensitivity landscape area described as:

'Areas with reduced capacity to accommodate uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to prevalent sensitivity factors.'

The landscape and Visual (LVIA) chapter of the EIAR (Chapter 11) assesses a range of potential visible impacts that are likely to be generated as a result of the proposed development and concludes that the impact is notably low. The results of an analysis of eleven Viewshed Reference Points and five illustrative views within the study area varied from imperceptible (at all but one location), to slight-imperceptible. It identified little actual visibility is afforded due to

intervening topography and vegetation in a landscape characterised by undulating ground levels and mature hedgerows and field boundaries.

The Report of KCC Parks Section, appended to this report notes that no Arborist report appears to have been submitted with the suite of documents to detail the impact on the tree and hedge population via an impact assessment and removals and protection plan.

The proposed reinstatement plan details landscaping around the proposed water body. The plan is limited in detail and would require further detail from a landscape architect to quantify planting volumes, species and suitable implementation and a management plan.

The site is indicated to have a retained water body in the future reinstatement plan. The detailed secure fencing, with hedging on the interior detailed is of concern. The security of the site should be detailed as the fencing would also secure people within the fence line if someone were to get in, and as the vegetation matures on the edge of the banks, it would make it difficult to get out of the water body.

Supplementary planting should be provided around the site to create screening and buffers with the future of the site kept in mind, with this maturing by the time the facility is decommissioned.

Ecology/Biodiversity

No protected fauna species recorded on site, but red/amber list bird and mammal species were noted within the search area. No protected habitats or flora within or adjacent to site.

See Report of KCC Ecologist appended to this report notes that

The EIAR provided no clear Biosecurity Management Plan for the operational phase of works or for restoration activities.

The EIAR makes no reference to the occurrence of several **County Wetland Sites** in the Vicinity of the proposed development. It is a stated objective of the County Development Plan 2023 to 2029 that all such wetland sites in the zone of influence of a proposed development should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment.

KCC Objective BI O49 Protect wetland sites that have been rated A (International), B (National) C+ (County) and C (Local) importance as identified in the County Kildare Wetlands Survey 2012-2014, (See Tables 12.5 & 12.6). Any development within the zone of influence of these listed wetland sites should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment.

The EIAR has not demonstrated clearly how the objective **BI 01** of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 *...to increase biodiversity within the proposed development* would occur.

Restoration

The proposed restoration plan provides for a range of measures on site including recolonising bare ground along the edges of the quarry void, retention of void for use as a water body, provision of areas for aquatic and marginal habitats, woodland and scrub mosaic planting, provision of bat, invertebrate and bird boxes, reptile refugia and basking habitats. The range of measures is noted and should serve to prevent the loss of key features that have arisen on site through quarrying and that may have some ecological benefit or rich biodiversity interest.

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 notes that in developing any after-use strategy and/or restoration plan, there will be a requirement to prepare a detailed survey and assessment of the intrinsic ecological character first (by an appropriate ecologist), identifying the range and location of key species of flora and fauna on site. The rehabilitation plan should work around these habitats and species in a process known as Rehabilitation Ecology. Ideally, the final restoration plan will provide for a mosaic of habitats, including, for example, cliff/sand or gravel banks, ponds, wetlands, open meadow (appropriately seeded), naturally recolonizing scrubland and planted woodland (i.e., saplings of native tree species). The interface of habitats will provide for a rich biodiversity network. Where obvious scarring and visual impact off-site is evident, infilling and backfilling may be desirable however rather than reverting to agricultural grasslands, in such instances it is recommended that the lands be given over to specific biodiversity and ecological benefit with, for example, wildflower meadows and native woodland planting. It should be noted that the importation of any materials for the purpose of restoration requires planning permission, similarly where planning permission is required for any proposed after-uses same should be obtained.

In order to achieve this, specific targets need to be established. It is a requirement, that quarry remediation plans provide for environmental benefit, biodiversity, and rewilding in all instances. The 80% requirement for environmental/biodiversity may be waived at sites closer to urban areas where a significant portion of the site is being provided for sports, recreation and amenity uses.

The EIAR mentions and references in terms of mitigation a Site Restoration and Habitat Management Plan but appears not to have provided (or omitted) this from the information provided on the application file.

Appropriate safety measures will be required to be put in place regarding the proposed waterbody.

European Sites – Appropriate Assessment

The application is accompanied by an AA Screening Report that concludes that there will be no adverse effects on any European Sites as a result of the proposed works and that Appropriate Assessment is not required. While the Screening Report at Table 4.1 indicates that there is potential groundwater

connectivity between Red Bog SAC and the development site and a potential hydrological and functional connectivity to the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, the reports would not appear to fully rule out potential impacts on the integrity of these sites.

With regard to connectivity to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA via the Goldenhill River, reference is made to likely runoffs being made to ground before reaching the river. Proposed **mitigation** in the form of a bypass separator to be installed to remove potential contaminants prior to discharge to soakaways is also noted.

With regard to Red Bog SAC, the report concludes that it is highly unlikely that there is any hydraulic connectivity between the quarry void and the SAC.

Having regard to the foregoing, it is considered that further consideration should have been given and that the application should have been accompanied by a **Natura Impact Statement (Stage II Appropriate Assessment)** to fully address the potential impacts including appropriate mitigation measures.

An assessment report from KCC Ecologist is appended to this report. In summary the report examines the AA Screening Report and notes that Lesser Black Backed Gulls feeding several kilometres from Poulaphuca SPA in the winter months, it would be a requirement of the Screening Statement to rule out any usage of the proposed development site or its immediate vicinity by this species by conducting appropriate bird surveys.

It can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, **cannot be excluded** in light of the above listed European sites' conservation objectives.

Conclusion

Whilst the environment must be protected, it is also important to ensure the availability of adequate supplies of aggregates and to facilitate the exploitation thereof to meet the future needs of the county and region in line with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management. Aggregate resources are important to the general economy with over 500 active quarries nationally in 2018, directly employing over 5,000 people. The industry provides a valuable source of employment in some areas of the county and the sector is vital to ensure provision of raw materials for the construction industry to facilitate the building of residential units, health care facilities, education facilities, social infrastructure and physical infrastructure to accommodate the existing and anticipated population growth in the county over the lifetime of the Plan and beyond.

The remit of any Planning Authority is to balance the needs of economic activity in the County with environmental and social considerations. As set out previously, the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029, as well as policy at national and regional levels, all support the principle of such mineral extraction and processing proposals subject to environmental protection.

The proposed development comprises continuing the operation of and extension of quarrying activities including extraction of the rock (greywacke) using excavation techniques, which include drilling and blasting, and rock-breaking, processing of extracted material on the site and storage of overburden for future restoration of the site.

Having regard to the policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, the nature and design of the proposed development, and the character of adjoining development, it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable. It is considered however that a robust assessment of the EIAR and AA Screening must be undertaken to ensure that the proposal does not significantly affect the environmental sensitivities of the area and, where impacts are envisaged, that these are appropriately mitigated.

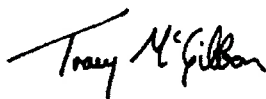
There is a concern that the proposed development has presented insufficient ecological impact assessment of the total project to allow a full assessment of the proposal over the entirety of its lifespan, construction, operation and post operational and restoration phase. Furthermore, it is contended that the development has not adequately addressed the potential for impacts on European Sites by failing to prepare and submit a Natura Impact Statement to accompany the application.

Should the Bord accept the conclusions of the AA Screening Report that Stage II Appropriate Assessment, is not required, then the Planning Authority is supportive, subject to full implementation of the mitigation and monitoring measures as set out in the EIAR.



Fiona Breen
Executive Planner

27/03/2025



Tracy McGibbon
Senior Executive Planner
28th March 2025

Appendix 1:

Kildare County Council Internal Department Reports:

ABP-321872-24 Hempstown Quarry-Environment Report 12.03.25

ABP-321872-25 Hempstown Quarry - Parks Report 11.03.25

ABP-321872-25 Hempstown Quarry-Ecology Report 27.03.25

ABP-321872-25 Hempstown Quarry-Roads Report 27.03.25

Reference Number: ABP-321872-24

Environment Section

Name of applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd

Planning Report

The following sections of the EIAR have been assessed by the Environmental Section:

- **Chapter 3 Population and Human Health**
- **Chapter 5 Land, Soils and Geology**
- **Chapter 6 Water**
- **Chapter 7 Air Quality**
- **Chapter 8 Climate**
- **Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration (Noise only sections assessed)**
- **Chapter 13 Material Assets**
- **Chapter 16 Schedule of Mitigation and Monitoring**

The Environmental Section agree in principle with the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures to be implemented as outlined within the chapters of the EIAR stated above.

No objection subject to the following conditions:

1. Contaminated surface water arising on site shall be contained on site and shall not be allowed discharge to any open drain or watercourse. Only clean uncontaminated surface water shall discharge to the surface water system. Refuelling of vehicles and machinery shall be carried out in a manner which prevents pollution of surface and ground waters and in accordance with plans to be agreed with the Environment Dept.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
2. Excavation shall not take place below a level of 1 metre above the highest seasonal water table level on site. Water levels in the surrounding wells are not to be drawn down by the quarry activities and continuous monitoring of the water levels in the wells shall be carried out. Any abstractions from groundwater shall comply with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, Register of Abstractions from Waters, Kildare County Council. The Planning Authority shall, if necessary, determine additional monitoring wells to be provided by the applicant.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
3. Within six months of the date of this decision, or such other time period as agreed with the Planning Authority, full details of the ground water monitoring programme shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority and this programme shall ensure that the existing ground water sources serving local residents and farms in the vicinity of the site are unaffected by the development. The developer shall carry out monitoring of surface water and groundwater in the vicinity of the site to include information on groundwater levels AOD and water quality. The monitoring locations, sampling procedure, frequency, and suite of water quality parameters to be tested for shall be agreed in advance with the Planning Authority and the monitoring shall begin prior to the commencement of the authorised activity.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

4. Where a water source within the affected area has been compromised by the development, the quarry operator shall take whatever measures necessary for the provision of an adequate supply to replace the affected supply in conjunction with and in agreement with the affected party(ies). The quarry operator shall provide the Planning Authority with the results of the monitoring (quality and levels) of all wells and boreholes within a 500-metres radius of the site as and when requested by the Planning Authority. The test results shall be submitted to the Planning Authority on an agreed basis.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
5. All surface water from the carpark areas shall pass through adequately sized and sited petrol/oil interceptor(s) before being discharged to the surface water system.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
6. Adequately sized fats, oils, greases interceptors shall be installed on all kitchen waste and canteen waste drainage lines.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
7. All overground oil, chemical storage tank(s) shall be adequately bunded to protect against spillage. Bunding shall be impermeable and capable of retaining a volume equal or greater than 110% of the capacity of the largest tank within the bunding area or 25% of the total volume of the substance which could be stored within the area, whichever is greater. Filling and offtake points shall be located within the bunded areas.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
8. The total dust emission arising from the on-site operations associated with the proposed development shall not exceed 350 milligrams per square meter per day, averaged over a continuous period of 30 days, when measured as deposition of soluble and insoluble particulate matter at any position along the boundary of the site. No stripping of topsoil or overburden shall be carried out in periods of dry weather.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
9. A Dust Assessment shall be carried out on the site by a competent Environmental Consultant within 3 months of commencement of on-site operations and continuously thereafter. The locations of the dust monitoring stations shall be agreed with the Planning Authority. The Dust Assessment Reports shall be submitted to the Planning Authority on a quarterly basis.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
10. The noise level attributable to all on-site operations associated with the proposed development shall not exceed 55 dB(A) (Leq) between 0800 hours and 1800 hours Monday to Friday inclusive (excluding bank holidays), and between 0800 hours and 1300 hours on Saturdays, when measured outside any noise sensitive location house in the vicinity of the site. Sound levels shall not exceed 45 dB(A) (Leq), 1hr at any other time.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
11. A Noise Assessment shall be carried out on the site by a competent Noise Consultant of on-site operations and at 6 monthly intervals thereafter or at any other time specified by the Planning Authority and shall give advance notice as specified by the Planning Authority. The locations of the noise monitoring stations shall be agreed with the Planning Authority. The Noise Assessment Report shall be submitted to the Planning Authority.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
12. Vibration due to blasting activities shall not exceed a peak particle velocity of 12mm/s when measured in any of the three mutually orthogonal directions (for vibration with a frequency at less than 40 Hz) at any vibration sensitive location in the vicinity of the site. Air overpressure

shall not exceed 125 dB (linear maximum peak value) at any air overpressure sensitive location in the vicinity of the site.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

13. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall prepare a Construction and Demolition Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) in accordance with Appendix C of the "EPA Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for C&D Projects (2021)" including demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness, these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. The RWMP must be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

14. An Environmental Audit of the site operations shall be carried out annually on behalf of the developer by a competent environmental consultant. Details of the monitoring arrangements, including locations and frequency of monitoring shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within three months of commencement of on-site operations. The audit should be prepared with reference to and take into account the requirements of the 2006 EPA publication 'Environmental Management Guidelines in the Extractive Industry' and shall be submitted to the Planning Authority not later than the end of February thereafter on an annual basis.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

15. An Extractive Waste Management Plan shall be drawn up for the quarry in accordance with Regulation 5: Extractive Waste Management Plan of the Waste Management (Management of Waste from the Extractive Industries) Regulations 2009 and shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

16. Prior to Commencement Notice Stage, the developer shall submit a Construction Phase Surface Water Management Plan in accordance with IFI Publication 2016 "Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters" for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The Plan shall address the collection, control and management of any surface water run-off from the site to prevent any polluting matter, suspended solids and silt, being discharged to any receiving water. The Plan shall, inter alia, include:

- (a) Site Layout Plan at sufficient scale identifying any potential surface water and/or groundwater receptors;
- (b) The location and design of any proposed mitigation measures; and
- (c) Proposals for a surface water and/or groundwater monitoring programme, as appropriate.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

17. If a discharge to waters of any silt laden water is proposed as part of the Surface Water Management plan for either the development or the operational stages of the proposal; the Environment Section shall be consulted as such a discharge can only be authorised under Section 4 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, as amended.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

18. The EIAR submitted by the applicant has been duly noted by the Planning Authority. All Mitigation Measures and Monitoring Measures outlined in Tables 16-1 to 16-14 of Chapter 16 of the EIAR shall be implemented as indicated within the Tables.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

Inspector:

Date:

Morgan O Flaherty

12/03/2025

Approved by SEE/SE:

Date:

SEE

12/3/2025

Kildare County Council, Parks Section, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces.



Planning Reference: ABP-321872-25.

Applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd.

Development Description: Industrial Development.

Address: Hempstown Commons, Blessington, Co Kildare.

Date: 11/03/2025.

Type: Parks Report.

1.0 Preamble/Introduction

Application for continued extraction at Hempstown Quarry under Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Environmental Impact Assessment Report submitted with application.

2.0 Assessment

The Parks Section has reviewed the documents and submitted drawings to An Bord Pleanála. The existing site contains some vegetation around its periphery and in areas where works will extend into. The submitted documents from WSP (4) Ecology and Biodiversity make note of trees and vegetation within the area. The report notes that there may be impact to trees and vegetation in section 4.7.2 and that some trees and vegetation will be permanently lost due to the development. No Arborist report was submitted with the suite of documents to detail the impact on the tree and hedge population via an impact assessment and removals and protection plan.

The proposed reinstatement plan details landscaping around the proposed water body.

The plan is limited in detail and would require further detail from a landscape architect to quantify planting volumes, species and suitable implementation and a management plan.

The site is detailed to have a retained water body in the future reinstatement plan.

The detailed secure fencing, with hedging on the interior detailed is of concern.

The security of the site should be detailed as the fencing would also secure people within the fence line if someone were to get in, and, as the vegetation matures on the edge of the banks, it would make it difficult to get out of the water body.

In the interim, should permission be granted. Supplementary planting should be provided around the site to create screening and buffers with the future of the site kept in mind, with this maturing by the time the facility is decommissioned.

3.0 Recommendation

In relation to the above proposed development, this section has reviewed the application and recommends the following further information/Condition be requested/included as part of any grant of permission:

3.1 Landscape Design.

3.1 (a) It is a requirement of the Parks Section that the Applicant/Developer retains the services of a qualified Landscape Architect (or qualified Landscape Designer) as a Landscape Consultant throughout the life of the construction works. A Practical Completion Certificate is to be signed off by the Landscape Architect when all landscape works are fully completed in line with the agreed landscape proposals. The Practical Completion Certificate to be submitted by the Developer.

3.1 (b) A comprehensive Landscape Design Rational & Landscape Proposal prepared by a suitable and qualified Landscape Architect (or qualified Landscape Designer). The following shall be included;

- A scaled Landscape Masterplan with cross- sections (where appropriate) showing the general layout and hard and soft landscape treatment of all external areas/spaces (including front and rear gardens), boundaries, structures, and features. This shall be generally provided at a maximum scale of 1/200.
- Details of Hard Landscape Design (where applicable) for boundaries, (walls, fences, screens), lighting, seating, kerbing, edging, surfacing.
- Details of Soft Landscape Design: detailed Planting Plan(s) and Planting Schedule(s) [species/varieties, quantities, sizes, rootball presentation, spacings]. Proposed planting should have a wide variety of species/varieties, using both native planting and non-native planting. The overall objective of planting in areas is that they are easily manageable, visually appealing, enhances biodiversity and pollinator friendly.
- A clearly outlined Landscape Plan which demonstrates that the proposed location of underground/over ground services will not impinge on the proposed trees or planting.

3.1 (c) It is the view of the Parks Section that areas of 'buffer screen planting' should be incorporated inside the existing boundary hedgerows on all sides of the development in order to effectively screen the proposed development in the short and long term. The applicant is requested to submit comprehensive landscape proposals which detail the following to all boundary planting areas:

- Any necessary supplementary planting, remedial or improvement works to the existing boundary hedgerows.
- Native species mix of 'Whips' and 'Feathered Maiden' planting to include a percentage of evergreen species such as Ilex (Holly).
- Standard trees, to include evergreen species.

- Required details: Planting Plan(s) and Planting Schedule(s) [species/varieties, quantities, sizes, rootball presentation, spacings].
- A 4-year Maintenance and Management Schedule is submitted to provide for the satisfactory future maintenance of the development in the interest of visual amenity. A timescale for implementation of all proposals, including specified landscape maintenance operations; landscape contract(s) defects liability clause, after certified practical completion (by the landscape consultant). The landscape management plan shall include/indicate quantity of visits required and ones which may require extra ad hoc visits for example with watering. The watering programme may also need to be included in months, July and August or as required with weather events to encompass tree planting and shrubs detailed.

Reason: To ensure full and verifiable implementation of the approved landscape design.

3.2 Trees and Vegetation.

3.2(a) Retention of the services of a qualified Independent Arborist as an Arboricultural consultant, for the entire period of construction activity. The applicant shall inform the planning authority of that appointment in writing prior to commencement of development.

The Applicant is requested to provide the following:

3.2 (b) An Arboricultural Assessment report in accordance with BS:5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction of the trees and hedgerows located on and adjacent to the proposed development site prepared by an independent, qualified Arborist as an Arboricultural Consultant and shall include all of the following:

1. Tree Survey Plan: all trees and hedges on and adjacent to the subject site (i.e. within falling distance thereof and where their rootzones maybe impacted by the development) shall be accurately plotted, tagged, and shown on a scaled drawing of a topographical survey of the site. Drawings of both existing and proposed layouts with trees plotted need to be provided.
2. Tree Survey Schedule: a summary of the surveyed trees and hedges, giving a breakdown of their tag nos., species, size, age, condition, and useful life expectancy.
3. Arboricultural Impact Assessment: a thorough, detailed and realistic analysis and assessment of the likely impacts of the proposed development on the surveyed trees and hedges; along with a summary table of the tree population and quantification of impacts/losses etc. (total number surveyed and total numbers/percentage to be retained and felled respectively).
4. Tree Constraints Plan: a scaled site plan (1:500@A1) showing the impacts of all surveyed trees in relation to the site layout of the proposed development.

5. Tree Protection Plan: a scaled site plan (1:500@A1) of the proposed development, clearly showing and distinguishing (by colour coding) those trees and hedges to be retained and protected and those to be removed ; showing alignments of Tree Protection Fencing and areas to be excluded from construction activities and compound(s), site office(s), plant, equipment and materials storage. Root Protection Areas (RPAs') of all trees and hedgerows to be clearly shown on this drawing.
6. Arboricultural Method Statement: clear and practically achievable measures to be used during the construction period, for the protection and management of all trees and hedges that are to be retained, as shown in the Tree Protection Plan.
7. Summary Table: Summary of all trees and hedgerow proposed for removal and retention to include numbers and percentages.
8. Arborist's name, arboricultural qualifications and contact details.
9. Date that the survey was carried out (surveys > 12 months are unacceptable).

Specific recommendations relating to Arboricultural Works

- All recommendations pertaining to tree retention, tree protection and tree works as detailed in the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in the submitted tree report shall be implemented in order to ensure the protection of trees and hedgerows on the site.
- All tree felling, surgery and remedial works shall be completed prior to the completion of construction works on site.
- All works on retained trees shall comply with proper arboricultural techniques conforming to BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work – Recommendations.
- The clearance of any vegetation including trees and scrub shall be carried out outside the bird-breeding season (1 March – 31 August inclusive) or as stipulated under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000.
- The Arborist shall carry out a post-construction tree survey and assessment of the condition of the retained trees and hedgerows. A Completion Certificate shall be signed off by the Arborist when all permitted development works are completed and in line with the recommendations of the tree reports and plans. The certificate shall be submitted to the Parks Section for written agreement upon completion of construction works on site.

Reasons:

To ensure the retention, protection and sustainability of trees/hedgerows during and after construction of the permitted development.

3.3 Ecology.

3.3 (a) Retention of the services of the qualified Ecologist as an Environmental Consultant throughout the life of the construction works. The applicant shall inform the planning authority of that appointment in writing prior to commencement of development. A Practical Completion Certificate or Report shall be signed off by the Ecologist when all construction works are fully completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and in accordance with the permitted development proposals. The Ecologist should monitor the site through the construction phases and supervise works as required during clearance, trimming or excavation.

Reasons: To ensure the protection of protected species and habitat.

Michael Yallop.

Michael Yallop,
Executive Parks and Landscape Officer.

Endorsed by:

Pp: Michael Yallop.

Carmel O Grady,
Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer.

Ecological Observations on Proposed Quarry Extension for Sand and Gravel Hempstown Commons, Co. Kildare

Planning Reference ABP-321872-25

Mary O'Connor Co. Kildare Ecologist

27/03/2005

Introduction

The Application Site is located in the townland of Hempstown Commons, 4 km north of Blessington. The Application Site is bound to the north-east by the Kildare/Wicklow border and is located within an area of historical quarrying. SQL share ownership of the private Application Site entrance with the adjacent landowner, Stresslite Precast.

Project Description

The development consists of further development of a quarry within an application boundary of 10.03 ha. where it is proposed to continue extraction activities in the existing quarry void (approximately 5 ha) and to laterally extend the existing quarry void to the northeast by approximately 1.89 ha, to a maximum working depth of 210m OD. The proposed duration of extraction is 12 years to reflect anticipated extraction of remaining reserves depending on market conditions, and a further 2 years for completion of restoration activities. The quarry is accessed via a privately-owned lane-way connecting to a local road (L6030) which connects to the N81. The reserve consists of greywacke which will be extracted by blasting and mechanical excavation. Excavated rock will be broken, crushed and screened at the working face, or adjacent to the quarry area, by mobile plant. It is proposed to relocate the existing office container, wheel wash and recycled water tank and weighbridge within the application site, and carry out realignment of the private access lane and decommissioning of an abstraction borehole, and to develop dedicated carparking facilities to support the quarry operations, and to continue use of soakaway ponds.

Further details are outlined here

The extraction of rock and processing of aggregate at the Application Site will involve the following:

- Continuation of excavation of rock using a variety of methods, including drilling and blasting, and rock-breaking;
- Continuation of mobile crushing, and screening of the rock into stockpiles of specific fragment sizes;
- Loading of material onto road-going trucks for sale and distribution to market;

- Trucks passing through a weighbridge and wheelwash before leaving the Application Site and travelling onto the N81 via a local road;
- Continuation of pumping collected waters from the quarry floor to the primary soakaway and overflow soakaway, as required.

Other proposed works include:

- Progressive stripping of overburden from the proposed quarry lateral extension area, which will be stored as a series of benches along the north-western wall of the existing quarry pit;
- Relocation of the existing office container, wheelwash and recycled water tank, and weighbridge within the Application Site boundary;
- Installation of a bypass separator prior to discharge of collected waters from the quarry floor into the primary soakaway; and
- Extension of the sump on the quarry floor

Observations on the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Stage 1

The Kildare County Council Ecologist acknowledges the preparation of a Screening for Appropriate Assessment included with the document and the use of the following rationale outline in Section 4.1 of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment included in the report for defining the zone of influence for the screening process and listing the potential sites of concern as

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063)
- Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122
- Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040
- Glensamole Valley SAC 001209
- Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC (001398)
- Mouds Bog SAC (002331)
- Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387)
- Knocksink Wood SAC

The findings of the screening report outlined the following

4.1.6 The Application Site is considered to be functionally connected to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, because of the Application Site's presence within the foraging range of one of its qualifying species (greylag goose) and the presence of suitable foraging habitat on adjacent land.

4.1.7. *The Application Site is potentially hydrologically connected to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA through the Goldenhill River.*

4.1.8. *Equally, the Application Site is potentially connected hydrogeologically to Red Bog SAC. The Application Site is not hydrologically, functionally or otherwise connected to any other European sites.*

The KCC ecologist accepts the findings of the screening report that the proposed development will not impact the following European sites,

- Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122
- Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040
- Glensamole Valley SAC 001209
- Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC (001398)
- Mouds Bog SAC (002331)
- Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387)
- Knocksink Wood SAC

due to the proposed development site not being *hydrologically, functionally or otherwise connected to any other European sites.*

The KCC Ecologist agrees with the finding of the Screening for AA that the two sites which are considered further are,

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063)

because of *hydrological* and *functional* links to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063) and possible *hydrogeological* links to Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397.

Birds associated with SPAs the Screening for NIS provided outlines that the site is located approx. 2.6 from the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, which has been designated for overwintering populations of greylag goose and lesser black-backed gull. The population of greylag geese is of note, because this species typically feeds on agricultural land, particularly cereal stubble and grassland.

The following is noted in the site synopsis for the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA: "Poulaphouca Reservoir is of national importance for its Greylag Goose population, which is one of the largest in the country. The site provides the main roost for the birds, with feeding occurring mostly on improved grassland outside of the site."

Burke *et al* (2022) has noted in that in recent years the peak count at Poulaphouca during the was 96 birds in January 2018, with counts of up to 73 birds the following winter. When present, the geese almost exclusively use the Threecastles subsite, which is the area of the SPA nearest to the proposed development site. Burke *et al* (2022) further note that the very small numbers seen at this site in some midwinter months is possibly due to birds **temporarily moving to nearby locations**.

Greylag geese typically forage within a range of **up to 6 km** from their roost sites. During breeding and moulting seasons (February-June), they tend to stay closer to their roosts, but in late summer and autumn, their foraging distances increase (Clausen *et al.* 2025) and as per SNH (2016), the core foraging range for greylag geese is accepted as being 20 km.

In theory the agricultural grassland within the Site could provide potential feeding habitat for this species, therefore it is imperative that detailed bird surveying, particularly wintering bird surveys should have been carried out to rule out any potential impact to this species

In order to confirm the presence or absence of SPA bird species from the Site, a series of bird surveys should carried out *between January and March*. It is recommended that a number of surveys be carried out comprising a Vantage Point survey and a Transect Survey to search for goose droppings.

This is the minimum requirement to show that the sites relationship to the qualifying interests of the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.

The Screening document acknowledges the inadequacy of the bird surveys in note 13 of the Screening Document,

It is acknowledged that the August 2024 survey would not encompass migratory populations of greylag geese, which tend to arrive from Iceland in late September/early October. No greylag geese were recorded in the October survey

It is also unclear as to why no surveys for foraging Lesser Black Backed Gulls was carried out as this species is a qualifying interest of the SPA

A recent report on the foraging behaviour of Lesser Black Backed Gulls in Belfast found that foraging behaviour can be at distances usually under 8km but can range up to 47km from a known site. Observations by the KCC ecologist has noted Lesser Black Backed Gulls feeding several kilometres from Poulaphuca SPA in the winter months, it would be a requirement of the Screening Statement to rule out any usage of the proposed development site or its immediate vicinity by this species.

On the basis of the screening exercise carried out above, it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising

from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, **cannot be excluded** in light of the above listed European sites' conservation objectives.

Remarks regarding the EIAR

The EIAR

- The EIAR mentions but appears to not have provided or omitted a Site Restoration and Habitat Management Plan for the site or any environmental assessment of same.
- The EIAR provided no clear Biosecurity Management Plan for the operational phase of works or for restoration activities.

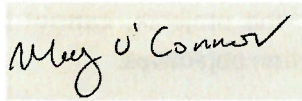
The EIAR makes no reference to the occurrence of several County Wetland Sites in the Vicinity of the proposed development it is a stated objective of the County Development Plan 2023 to 2029 that all such wetland sites in the zone of influence of a proposed development should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment.

BI 049 Protect wetland sites that have been rated A (International), B (National) C+ (County) and C (Local) importance as identified in the County Kildare Wetlands Survey 2012-2014, (See Tables 12.5 & 12.6). Any development within the zone of influence of these listed wetland sites should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment

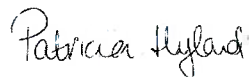
- The EIAR did not demonstrate clearly how the objective **BI 01** of the County Development plan *...to increase biodiversity within the proposed development* would occur.

Conclusion

In light of the above I have concerns with regard to the grant of permission for this proposal as there is insufficient ecological impact assessment of the total project to allow the Appropriate Authority An Bord Pleanála to adequately assess the proposal over the entirety of its lifespan, construction, operation and post operational and restoration phase.



Mary O'Connor
Executive Ecologist
Date 27.03.2025



Patricia Hyland
Senior Executive Planner
Date 27.03.2025

Guidelines re. the Extractive Industry and Ecology

- NPWS Irish Guidelines for Extractive Industry
- https://www.noticenature.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Notice-Nature-quarry-brochure-web_1.pdf

References

BTO RESEARCH REPORT 734 (2022) *Belfast's urban gulls: an assessment of breeding populations, breeding season movements and winter population* Katherine Booth Jones, Chris Thaxter, Gary Clewley, Shane Wolsey, Neil Calbrade, Phil Atkinson, John Calladine & Niall Burton

Burke, B., Fitzgerald, N., Kelly, S. & Lewis, L.J. (2022) Greylag and Pink-footed geese in Ireland 2017/18- 19/20. Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) Report. BirdWatch Ireland, Wicklow.

Clausen, K.K., Dalby, L., Heldbjerg, H. *et al.* Using tracking data to assess seasonal habitat use and conflict potential of Greylag Geese in Danish intensive agricultural landscapes. *Eur J Wildl Res* **71**, 6 (2025).

KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department Roads Report

Planning Ref Number: ABP 25- 321872

Applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd

Address: Hempstown Commons (Townland), Blessington, Co. Kildare.

Date: 27th March 2025

Preamble

Shillelagh Quarries Ltd, intend to apply for permission under section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for development at Hempstown Commons (townland), Co Kildare, W91 X0F2. The development consists of further development of a quarry within an application boundary of 10.03 ha. where it is proposed continue extraction activities in the existing quarry void (approximately 5 ha) and to laterally extend the existing quarry void to the northeast by approximately 1.89 ha, to a maximum working depth of 210 mOD. The proposed duration of extraction is 12 years to reflect anticipated extraction of remaining reserves depending on market conditions, and a further 2 years for completion of restoration activities. The quarry is accessed via a privately-owned lane-way connecting to a local road (L6030) which connects to the N81. The reserve consists of greywacke which will be extracted by blasting and mechanical excavation. Excavated rock will be broken, crushed and screened at the working face, or adjacent to the quarry area, by mobile plant. It is proposed to relocate the existing office container, wheel wash and recycled water tank and weighbridge within the application site, and carry out realignment of the private access lane and decommissioning of an abstraction borehole, and to develop dedicated carparking facilities to support the quarry operations, and to continue use of soakaway ponds. This S37L application is made concurrent with an application for substitute consent for quarrying at this location. This application is accompanied by an

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.

Recommendation

The Roads Planning Section of the KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department has noted that the following analysis has been carried out by the Applicant;

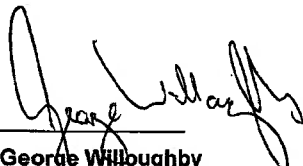
- Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA).
- Autotrack Analysis to check that there is adequate turning room for HGVs within the development and at the access entrance off the L6030.
- Check on sight lines at the access entrance off the L6030.

The Roads Planning Section of the KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department has **no objection** to the proposed development and recommends that the following planning conditions be imposed by An Bord Pleanala if planning permission is granted:

1. Lines of sight of the proposed access point to the development off the L6030 to comply at all times with the TII Standards.
2. The pavement and structural condition of the L6030 to be monitored on a regular basis by the Applicant with an FWD (Falling Weight Deflectometer) and pavement condition test to be carried out on the L6030 every 3 years in consultation with the Naas MDO and remedial works to be carried out where required on the L6030 where there is any pavement and structural damage to the L6030 to be agreed with the Naas MDO.
3. Surface water runoff to be collected and disposed of at the vehicular entrance and not discharged onto the public road network. Finished ground levels and falls to be indicated on a drawing. Surface water to be collected, attenuated and disposed of to a suitable outfall with petrol interceptors to be installed to protect the existing outfalls and water courses. This should be in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and the recommendations pertaining to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs).
4. The main access road within the development to be a minimum of 6.5 m in width to allow for 2 way HGV traffic and to have a bound SMA pavement finish. Circulation aisles at parking areas to be a minimum of 6.0 metres in width with parking bays 2.5m *5.0m in size.
5. No spoil, dirt, debris or other materials should be deposited on the public road network, its footpaths and verges by machinery or vehicles travelling to or from the development site during the construction phase.
6. The development should not impair existing land or road drainage.
7. The car parking spaces to be in accordance with the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.

8. The cycle spaces to be in accordance with the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.
9. Stop signage, signage and road markings are to be in accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Traffic Signs Manual.
10. The Applicant is requested to submit a Lighting Report and Site Lighting Layout drawings at scales of 1:250 demonstrating the development will not be a source of light pollution to adjacent lands, property and the public road network. Calculations are required to be submitted demonstrating that they have satisfied the requirements of ILP Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (GN01:2011) in relation to the impact of lighting design on the adjoining lands and properties. The applicant will be required to review the existing public lighting arrangements and submit proposals for the upgrade of public lighting (as deemed required) at this location. The lighting scheme is to be in accordance with the Kildare County Council Lighting Policy Street Lighting Technical Specification June 2019.
11. Landscaping works should not impact on public lighting and sight visibility and a root management plan is also required.
12. The Applicant is requested to submit to a draft Construction Management Plan for the realignment of the internal haul route that is to contain:
 - a. A Construction Traffic Management Plan indicating all haul routes to and from the site. Delivery times for plant and materials and waste collection shall have consideration to morning and evening peak school times in the area and peak traffic periods. This plan is also to contain mitigation measures to minimize the effects the proposed development would have on the immediate public road network and existing traffic movements.
 - b. Wheelwash arrangements and locations for the construction phase.
 - c. Location of the construction compound, use of cranes, parking and storage areas during the construction phase. (This is in the interest of the existing residential amenity of properties in the area).
 - d. The manner in which the existing public road network shall be kept clean.
 - e. Relevant construction site warning signs shall be in accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) Traffic Signs Manual.
 - f. A Construction Waste Management Plan that is to contain the final destination of each waste stream generated on site.
 - g. Hours of operation during the construction phase to be 08.00 hours to 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 0.800 hours to 14.00 hours Saturday. No work permitted on the Sundays and public holidays. (This is in the interest of the existing residential amenity of properties in the area).
 - h. During the construction phase the developer shall provide adequate off carriageway parking facilities for all traffic associated with the proposed development. This will include material delivery vehicles, service vehicles, construction plant and vehicles, waste skips and private vehicles of the workers on site. There shall be no parking of vehicles on the public road network.

28. The site is located adjacent to Public Roads and the Applicant is requested to submit an Acoustic Design Statement by a suitably qualified acoustic specialist to ensure the proposed development including external areas will not be exposed to noise levels in excess of the Kildare County Third Noise Action Plan L_{den} threshold of 70 dB (A) and L_{night} threshold of 57 dB (A). (Mitigation measures are to be included as deemed required).
13. The set back should be in compliance with the Kildare CDP 2023-2029.
14. The site access roads within the development should be finished with a surface course of Stone Mastic Asphalt, SMA 14 surf PMB 65/105-60 des 45mm thick, in compliance with clause 942 of NRA/TII specification or a similar approved surface course.
15. Prior to the commencement of development, the Applicant to obtain a licence from the Planning Authority for the erection of fencing / hoarding on the public footpath network pursuant to Section 254 of the Planning And Development Act 2000, as amended.
16. All works involving the opening of public roads or footpaths shall be carried out under a Road Opening Licence submitted to the Municipal District Area Office through the MRL system to ensure the following items are assessed:
- Contractors' experience and competency to carry out such works.
 - Compliance with the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (The Purple book, 2017 edition).
 - Compliance with Chapter 8 of Traffic Management Guidelines including a general assessment of traffic impacts within the local area.
 - Relevant Insurance's to carry out such works.



George Willoughby
Senior Executive Engineer,
Roads, Transportation & Public Safety,
Kildare County Council.



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara

Kildare County Council

Planning Department.
045-980845.

Date: 31st March 2025
Your Ref: ABP-321872-25.

EMAIL
appeals@pleanala.ie

Re: Application for continued extraction at Hempstown Quarry Co. Kildare.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to your letters dated 18th February 2025.

Please find attached Kildare County Council report, this is a report pursuant to Section 37L (12)(a) of the Planning and Development Act as amended, in relation to further development at Hempstown Quarry, Co Kildare. ABP Reference No 321872-25.

If permission is granted, Kildare County Council requests inclusion of a condition requiring payment of Development Contributions in accordance with the Kildare County Council development contributions scheme which was adopted in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

If you have any further queries please contact the Planning Department of Kildare County Council.

Yours faithfully,


Senior Executive Officer

Reference Number: ABP-321872-24

Environment Section

Name of applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd

Planning Report

The following sections of the EIAR have been assessed by the Environmental Section:

- **Chapter 3 Population and Human Health**
- **Chapter 5 Land, Soils and Geology**
- **Chapter 6 Water**
- **Chapter 7 Air Quality**
- **Chapter 8 Climate**
- **Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration (Noise only sections assessed)**
- **Chapter 13 Material Assets**
- **Chapter 16 Schedule of Mitigation and Monitoring**

The Environmental Section agree in principle with the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures to be implemented as outlined within the chapters of the EIAR stated above.

No objection subject to the following conditions:

1. Contaminated surface water arising on site shall be contained on site and shall not be allowed discharge to any open drain or watercourse. Only clean uncontaminated surface water shall discharge to the surface water system. Refuelling of vehicles and machinery shall be carried out in a manner which prevents pollution of surface and ground waters and in accordance with plans to be agreed with the Environment Dept.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
2. Excavation shall not take place below a level of 1 metre above the highest seasonal water table level on site. Water levels in the surrounding wells are not to be drawn down by the quarry activities and continuous monitoring of the water levels in the wells shall be carried out. Any abstractions from groundwater shall comply with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, Register of Abstractions from Waters, Kildare County Council. The Planning Authority shall, if necessary, determine additional monitoring wells to be provided by the applicant.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
3. Within six months of the date of this decision, or such other time period as agreed with the Planning Authority, full details of the ground water monitoring programme shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority and this programme shall ensure that the existing ground water sources serving local residents and farms in the vicinity of the site are unaffected by the development. The developer shall carry out monitoring of surface water and groundwater in the vicinity of the site to include information on groundwater levels AOD and water quality. The monitoring locations, sampling procedure, frequency, and suite of water quality parameters to be tested for shall be agreed in advance with the Planning Authority and the monitoring shall begin prior to the commencement of the authorised activity.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

4. Where a water source within the affected area has been compromised by the development, the quarry operator shall take whatever measures necessary for the provision of an adequate supply to replace the affected supply in conjunction with and in agreement with the affected party(ies). The quarry operator shall provide the Planning Authority with the results of the monitoring (quality and levels) of all wells and boreholes within a 500-metres radius of the site as and when requested by the Planning Authority. The test results shall be submitted to the Planning Authority on an agreed basis.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
5. All surface water from the carpark areas shall pass through adequately sized and sited petrol/oil interceptor(s) before being discharged to the surface water system.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
6. Adequately sized fats, oils, greases interceptors shall be installed on all kitchen waste and canteen waste drainage lines.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
7. All overground oil, chemical storage tank(s) shall be adequately bunded to protect against spillage. Bunding shall be impermeable and capable of retaining a volume equal or greater than 110% of the capacity of the largest tank within the bunding area or 25% of the total volume of the substance which could be stored within the area, whichever is greater. Filling and offtake points shall be located within the bunded areas.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
8. The total dust emission arising from the on-site operations associated with the proposed development shall not exceed 350 milligrams per square meter per day, averaged over a continuous period of 30 days, when measured as deposition of soluble and insoluble particulate matter at any position along the boundary of the site. No stripping of topsoil or overburden shall be carried out in periods of dry weather.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
9. A Dust Assessment shall be carried out on the site by a competent Environmental Consultant within 3 months of commencement of on-site operations and continuously thereafter. The locations of the dust monitoring stations shall be agreed with the Planning Authority. The Dust Assessment Reports shall be submitted to the Planning Authority on a quarterly basis.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
10. The noise level attributable to all on-site operations associated with the proposed development shall not exceed 55 dB(A) (Leq) between 0800 hours and 1800 hours Monday to Friday inclusive (excluding bank holidays), and between 0800 hours and 1300 hours on Saturdays, when measured outside any noise sensitive location house in the vicinity of the site. Sound levels shall not exceed 45 dB(A) (Leq), 1hr at any other time.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
11. A Noise Assessment shall be carried out on the site by a competent Noise Consultant of on-site operations and at 6 monthly intervals thereafter or at any other time specified by the Planning Authority and shall give advance notice as specified by the Planning Authority. The locations of the noise monitoring stations shall be agreed with the Planning Authority. The Noise Assessment Report shall be submitted to the Planning Authority.
Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.
12. Vibration due to blasting activities shall not exceed a peak particle velocity of 12mm/s when measured in any of the three mutually orthogonal directions (for vibration with a frequency at less than 40 Hz) at any vibration sensitive location in the vicinity of the site. Air overpressure

shall not exceed 125 dB (linear maximum peak value) at any air overpressure sensitive location in the vicinity of the site.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

13. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall prepare a Construction and Demolition Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) in accordance with Appendix C of the *"EPA Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for C&D Projects (2021)"* including demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness, these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. The RWMP must be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

14. An Environmental Audit of the site operations shall be carried out annually on behalf of the developer by a competent environmental consultant. Details of the monitoring arrangements, including locations and frequency of monitoring shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within three months of commencement of on-site operations. The audit should be prepared with reference to and take into account the requirements of the 2006 EPA publication *'Environmental Management Guidelines in the Extractive Industry'* and shall be submitted to the Planning Authority not later than the end of February thereafter on an annual basis.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

15. An Extractive Waste Management Plan shall be drawn up for the quarry in accordance with Regulation 5: Extractive Waste Management Plan of the Waste Management (Management of Waste from the Extractive Industries) Regulations 2009 and shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval.

Reason: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

16. Prior to Commencement Notice Stage, the developer shall submit a Construction Phase Surface Water Management Plan in accordance with IFI Publication 2016 *"Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters"* for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The Plan shall address the collection, control and management of any surface water run-off from the site to prevent any polluting matter, suspended solids and silt, being discharged to any receiving water. The Plan shall, inter alia, include:

- (a) Site Layout Plan at sufficient scale identifying any potential surface water and/or groundwater receptors;
- (b) The location and design of any proposed mitigation measures; and
- (c) Proposals for a surface water and/or groundwater monitoring programme, as appropriate.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

17. If a discharge to waters of any silt laden water is proposed as part of the Surface Water Management plan for either the development or the operational stages of the proposal; the Environment Section shall be consulted as such a discharge can only be authorised under Section 4 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, as amended.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

18. The EIAR submitted by the applicant has been duly noted by the Planning Authority. All Mitigation Measures and Monitoring Measures outlined in Tables 16-1 to 16-14 of Chapter 16 of the EIAR shall be implemented as indicated within the Tables.

Reason: In the interest of public health, to avoid pollution, and to ensure proper development.

Inspector:

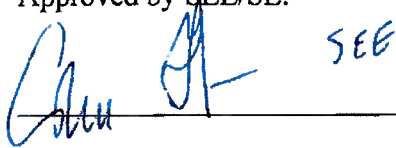
Date:

Morgan O Flaherty

12/03/2025

Approved by SEE/SE:

Date:

 SEE

12/3/2025

Kildare County Council, Parks Section, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces.



Planning Reference: ABP-321872-25.

Applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd.

Development Description: Industrial Development.

Address: Hempstown Commons, Blessington, Co Kildare.

Date: 11/03/2025.

Type: Parks Report.

1.0 Preamble/Introduction

Application for continued extraction at Hempstown Quarry under Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Environmental Impact Assessment Report submitted with application.

2.0 Assessment

The Parks Section has reviewed the documents and submitted drawings to An Bord Pleanála. The existing site contains some vegetation around its periphery and in areas where works will extend into. The submitted documents from WSP (4) Ecology and Biodiversity make note of trees and vegetation within the area. The report notes that there may be impact to trees and vegetation in section 4.7.2 and that some trees and vegetation will be permanently lost due to the development. No Arborist report was submitted with the suite of documents to detail the impact on the tree and hedge population via an impact assessment and removals and protection plan.

The proposed reinstatement plan details landscaping around the proposed water body.

The plan is limited in detail and would require further detail from a landscape architect to quantify planting volumes, species and suitable implementation and a management plan.

The site is detailed to have a retained water body in the future reinstatement plan.

The detailed secure fencing, with hedging on the interior detailed is of concern.

The security of the site should be detailed as the fencing would also secure people within the fence line if someone were to get in, and, as the vegetation matures on the edge of the banks, it would make it difficult to get out of the water body.

In the interim, should permission be granted. Supplementary planting should be provided around the site to create screening and buffers with the future of the site kept in mind, with this maturing by the time the facility is decommissioned.

3.0 Recommendation

In relation to the above proposed development, this section has reviewed the application and recommends the following further information/Condition be requested/included as part of any grant of permission:

3.1 Landscape Design.

- 3.1 (a) It is a requirement of the Parks Section that the Applicant/Developer retains the services of a qualified Landscape Architect (or qualified Landscape Designer) as a Landscape Consultant throughout the life of the construction works. A Practical Completion Certificate is to be signed off by the Landscape Architect when all landscape works are fully completed in line with the agreed landscape proposals. The Practical Completion Certificate to be submitted by the Developer.
- 3.1 (b) A comprehensive Landscape Design Rational & Landscape Proposal prepared by a suitable and qualified Landscape Architect (or qualified Landscape Designer). The following shall be included;
- A scaled Landscape Masterplan with cross- sections (where appropriate) showing the general layout and hard and soft landscape treatment of all external areas/spaces (including front and rear gardens), boundaries, structures, and features. This shall be generally provided at a maximum scale of 1/200.
 - Details of Hard Landscape Design (where applicable) for boundaries, (walls, fences, screens), lighting, seating, kerbing, edging, surfacing.
 - Details of Soft Landscape Design: detailed Planting Plan(s) and Planting Schedule(s) [species/varieties, quantities, sizes, rootball presentation, spacings]. Proposed planting should have a wide variety of species/varieties, using both native planting and non-native planting. The overall objective of planting in areas is that they are easily manageable, visually appealing, enhances biodiversity and pollinator friendly.
 - A clearly outlined Landscape Plan which demonstrates that the proposed location of underground/over ground services will not impinge on the proposed trees or planting.
- 3.1 (c) It is the view of the Parks Section that areas of 'buffer screen planting' should be incorporated inside the existing boundary hedgerows on all sides of the development in order to effectively screen the proposed development in the short and long term. The applicant is requested to submit comprehensive landscape proposals which detail the following to all boundary planting areas:
- Any necessary supplementary planting, remedial or improvement works to the existing boundary hedgerows.
 - Native species mix of 'Whips' and 'Feathered Maiden' planting to include a percentage of evergreen species such as Ilex (Holly).
 - Standard trees, to include evergreen species.

- Required details: Planting Plan(s) and Planting Schedule(s) [species/varieties, quantities, sizes, rootball presentation, spacings].
- A 4-year Maintenance and Management Schedule is submitted to provide for the satisfactory future maintenance of the development in the interest of visual amenity. A timescale for implementation of all proposals, including specified landscape maintenance operations; landscape contract(s) defects liability clause, after certified practical completion (by the landscape consultant). The landscape management plan shall include/indicate quantity of visits required and ones which may require extra ad hoc visits for example with watering. The watering programme may also need to be included in months, July and August or as required with weather events to encompass tree planting and shrubs detailed.

Reason: To ensure full and verifiable implementation of the approved landscape design.

3.2 Trees and Vegetation.

3.2(a) Retention of the services of a qualified Independent Arborist as an Arboricultural consultant, for the entire period of construction activity. The applicant shall inform the planning authority of that appointment in writing prior to commencement of development.

The Applicant is requested to provide the following:

3.2 (b) An Arboricultural Assessment report in accordance with BS:5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction of the trees and hedgerows located on and adjacent to the proposed development site prepared by an independent, qualified Arborist as an Arboricultural Consultant and shall include all of the following:

1. Tree Survey Plan: all trees and hedges on and adjacent to the subject site (i.e. within falling distance thereof and where their rootzones may be impacted by the development) shall be accurately plotted, tagged, and shown on a scaled drawing of a topographical survey of the site. Drawings of both existing and proposed layouts with trees plotted need to be provided.
2. Tree Survey Schedule: a summary of the surveyed trees and hedges, giving a breakdown of their tag nos., species, size, age, condition, and useful life expectancy.
3. Arboricultural Impact Assessment: a thorough, detailed and realistic analysis and assessment of the likely impacts of the proposed development on the surveyed trees and hedges; along with a summary table of the tree population and quantification of impacts/losses etc. (total number surveyed and total numbers/percentage to be retained and felled respectively).
4. Tree Constraints Plan: a scaled site plan (1:500@A1) showing the impacts of all surveyed trees in relation to the site layout of the proposed development.

5. Tree Protection Plan: a scaled site plan (1:500@A1) of the proposed development, clearly showing and distinguishing (by colour coding) those trees and hedges to be retained and protected and those to be removed ; showing alignments of Tree Protection Fencing and areas to be excluded from construction activities and compound(s), site office(s), plant, equipment and materials storage. Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of all trees and hedgerows to be clearly shown on this drawing.
6. Arboricultural Method Statement: clear and practically achievable measures to be used during the construction period, for the protection and management of all trees and hedges that are to be retained, as shown in the Tree Protection Plan.
7. Summary Table: Summary of all trees and hedgerow proposed for removal and retention to include numbers and percentages.
8. Arborist's name, arboricultural qualifications and contact details.
9. Date that the survey was carried out (surveys > 12 months are unacceptable).

Specific recommendations relating to Arboricultural Works

- All recommendations pertaining to tree retention, tree protection and tree works as detailed in the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in the submitted tree report shall be implemented in order to ensure the protection of trees and hedgerows on the site.
- All tree felling, surgery and remedial works shall be completed prior to the completion of construction works on site.
- All works on retained trees shall comply with proper arboricultural techniques conforming to BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work – Recommendations.
- The clearance of any vegetation including trees and scrub shall be carried out outside the bird-breeding season (1 March – 31 August inclusive) or as stipulated under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000.
- The Arborist shall carry out a post-construction tree survey and assessment of the condition of the retained trees and hedgerows. A Completion Certificate shall be signed off by the Arborist when all permitted development works are completed and in line with the recommendations of the tree reports and plans. The certificate shall be submitted to the Parks Section for written agreement upon completion of construction works on site.

Reasons:

To ensure the retention, protection and sustainability of trees/hedgerows during and after construction of the permitted development.

3.3 Ecology.

- 3.3 (a) Retention of the services of the qualified Ecologist as an Environmental Consultant throughout the life of the construction works. The applicant shall inform the planning authority of that appointment in writing prior to commencement of development. A Practical Completion Certificate or Report shall be signed off by the Ecologist when all construction works are fully completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and in accordance with the permitted development proposals. The Ecologist should monitor the site through the construction phases and supervise works as required during clearance, trimming or excavation.

Reasons: To ensure the protection of protected species and habitat.

Michael Yallop

Michael Yallop,
Executive Parks and Landscape Officer.

Endorsed by:

Pp: Michael Yallop

Carmel O Grady,
Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer.

Ecological Observations on Proposed Quarry Extension for Sand and Gravel Hempstown Commons, Co. Kildare

Planning Reference ABP-321872-25

Mary O'Connor Co. Kildare Ecologist

27/03/2005

Introduction

The Application Site is located in the townland of Hempstown Commons, 4 km north of Blessington. The Application Site is bound to the north-east by the Kildare/Wicklow border and is located within an area of historical quarrying. SQL share ownership of the private Application Site entrance with the adjacent landowner, Stresslite Precast.

Project Description

The development consists of further development of a quarry within an application boundary of 10.03 ha. where it is proposed to continue extraction activities in the existing quarry void (approximately 5 ha) and to laterally extend the existing quarry void to the northeast by approximately 1.89 ha, to a maximum working depth of 210m OD. The proposed duration of extraction is 12 years to reflect anticipated extraction of remaining reserves depending on market conditions, and a further 2 years for completion of restoration activities. The quarry is accessed via a privately-owned lane-way connecting to a local road (L6030) which connects to the N81. The reserve consists of greywacke which will be extracted by blasting and mechanical excavation. Excavated rock will be broken, crushed and screened at the working face, or adjacent to the quarry area, by mobile plant. It is proposed to relocate the existing office container, wheel wash and recycled water tank and weighbridge within the application site, and carry out realignment of the private access lane and decommissioning of an abstraction borehole, and to develop dedicated carparking facilities to support the quarry operations, and to continue use of soakaway ponds.

Further details are outlined here

The extraction of rock and processing of aggregate at the Application Site will involve the following:

- Continuation of excavation of rock using a variety of methods, including drilling and blasting, and rock-breaking;
- Continuation of mobile crushing, and screening of the rock into stockpiles of specific fragment sizes;
- Loading of material onto road-going trucks for sale and distribution to market;

- Trucks passing through a weighbridge and wheelwash before leaving the Application Site and travelling onto the N81 via a local road;
- Continuation of pumping collected waters from the quarry floor to the primary soakaway and overflow soakaway, as required.

Other proposed works include:

- Progressive stripping of overburden from the proposed quarry lateral extension area, which will be stored as a series of benches along the north-western wall of the existing quarry pit;
- Relocation of the existing office container, wheelwash and recycled water tank, and weighbridge within the Application Site boundary;
- Installation of a bypass separator prior to discharge of collected waters from the quarry floor into the primary soakaway; and
- Extension of the sump on the quarry floor

Observations on the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Stage 1

The Kildare County Council Ecologist acknowledges the preparation of a Screening for Appropriate Assessment included with the document and the use of the following rationale outline in Section 4.1 of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment included in the report for defining the zone of influence for the screening process and listing the potential sites of concern as

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063)
- Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122
- Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040
- Glensamole Valley SAC 001209
- Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC (001398)
- Mouds Bog SAC (002331)
- Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387)
- Knocksink Wood SAC

The findings of the screening report outlined the following

4.1.6 The Application Site is considered to be functionally connected to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, because of the Application Site's presence within the foraging range of one of its qualifying species (greylag goose) and the presence of suitable foraging habitat on adjacent land.

4.1.7. The Application Site is potentially hydrologically connected to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA through the Goldenhill River.

4.1.8. Equally, the Application Site is potentially connected hydrogeologically to Red Bog SAC. The Application Site is not hydrologically, functionally or otherwise connected to any other European sites.

The KCC ecologist accepts the findings of the screening report that the proposed development will not impact the following European sites,

- Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122
- Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040
- Glensamole Valley SAC 001209
- Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC (001398)
- Mouds Bog SAC (002331)
- Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387)
- Knocksink Wood SAC

due to the proposed development site not being *hydrologically, functionally or otherwise connected to any other European sites.*

The KCC Ecologist agrees with the finding of the Screening for AA that the two sites which are considered further are,

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063)

because of *hydrological* and *functional* links to Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063) and possible *hydrogeological* links to Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397.

Birds associated with SPAs the Screening for NIS provided outlines that the site is located approx. 2.6 from the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA, which has been designated for overwintering populations of greylag goose and lesser black-backed gull. The population of greylag geese is of note, because this species typically feeds on agricultural land, particularly cereal stubble and grassland.

The following is noted in the site synopsis for the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA: "Poulaphouca Reservoir is of national importance for its Greylag Goose population, which is one of the largest in the country. The site provides the main roost for the birds, with feeding occurring mostly on improved grassland outside of the site."

Burke *et al* (2022) has noted in that in recent years the peak count at Poulaphouca during the was 96 birds in January 2018, with counts of up to 73 birds the following winter. When present, the geese almost exclusively use the Threecastles subsite, which is the area of the SPA nearest to the proposed development site. Burke *et al* (2022) further note that the very small numbers seen at this site in some midwinter months is possibly due to birds **temporarily moving to nearby locations**.

Greylag geese typically forage within a range of **up to 6 km** from their roost sites. During breeding and moulting seasons (February-June), they tend to stay closer to their roosts, but in late summer and autumn, their foraging distances increase (Clausen *et al.* 2025) and as per SNH (2016), the core foraging range for greylag geese is accepted as being 20 km.

In theory the agricultural grassland within the Site could provide potential feeding habitat for this species, therefore it is imperative that detailed bird surveying, particularly wintering bird surveys should have been carried out to rule out any potential impact to this species

In order to confirm the presence or absence of SPA bird species from the Site, a series of bird surveys should be carried out *between January and March*. It is recommended that a number of surveys be carried out comprising a Vantage Point survey and a Transect Survey to search for goose droppings.

This is the minimum requirement to show that the sites relationship to the qualifying interests of the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.

The Screening document acknowledges the inadequacy of the bird surveys in note 13 of the Screening Document,

It is acknowledged that the August 2024 survey would not encompass migratory populations of greylag geese, which tend to arrive from Iceland in late September/early October. No greylag geese were recorded in the October survey

It is also unclear as to why no surveys for foraging Lesser Black Backed Gulls was carried out as this species is a qualifying interest of the SPA

A recent report on the foraging behaviour of Lesser Black Backed Gulls in Belfast found that foraging behaviour can be at distances usually under 8km but can range up to 47km from a known site. Observations by the KCC ecologist has noted Lesser Black Backed Gulls feeding several kilometres from Poulaphouca SPA in the winter months, it would be a requirement of the Screening Statement to rule out any usage of the proposed development site or its immediate vicinity by this species.

On the basis of the screening exercise carried out above, it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising

from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, **cannot be excluded** in light of the above listed European sites' conservation objectives.

Remarks regarding the EIAR

The EIAR

- The EIAR mentions but appears to not have provided or omitted a Site Restoration and Habitat Management Plan for the site or any environmental assessment of same.
- The EIAR provided no clear Biosecurity Management Plan for the operational phase of works or for restoration activities.

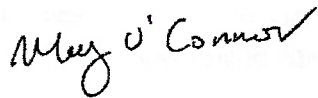
The EIAR makes no reference to the occurrence of several County Wetland Sites in the Vicinity of the proposed development it is a stated objective of the County Development Plan 2023 to 2029 that all such wetland sites in the zone of influence of a proposed development should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment.

BI O49 Protect wetland sites that have been rated A (International), B (National) C+ (County) and C (Local) importance as identified in the County Kildare Wetlands Survey 2012-2014, (See Tables 12.5 & 12.6). Any development within the zone of influence of these listed wetland sites should be subject to EclA and where appropriate, hydrological impact assessment

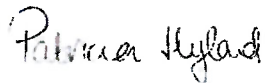
- The EIAR did not demonstrate clearly how the objective **BI 01** of the County Development plan *...to increase biodiversity within the proposed development* would occur.

Conclusion

In light of the above I have concerns with regard to the grant of permission for this proposal as there is insufficient ecological impact assessment of the total project to allow the Appropriate Authority An Bord Pleanala to adequately assess the proposal over the entirety of its lifespan, construction, operation and post operational and restoration phase.



Mary O'Connor
Executive Ecologist
Date 27.03.2025



Patricia Hyland
Senior Executive Planner
Date 27.03.2025

Guidelines re. the Extractive Industry and Ecology

- NPWS Irish Guidelines for Extractive Industry
- https://www.noticenature.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Notice-Nature-quarry-brochure-web_1.pdf

References

BTO RESEARCH REPORT 734 (2022) *Belfast's urban gulls: an assessment of breeding populations, breeding season movements and winter population* Katherine Booth Jones, Chris Thaxter, Gary Clewley, Shane Wolsey, Neil Calbrade, Phil Atkinson, John Calladine & Niall Burton

Burke, B., Fitzgerald, N., Kelly, S. & Lewis, L.J. (2022) Greylag and Pink-footed geese in Ireland 2017/18- 19/20. Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) Report. BirdWatch Ireland, Wicklow.

Clausen, K.K., Dalby, L., Heldbjerg, H. et al. Using tracking data to assess seasonal habitat use and conflict potential of Greylag Geese in Danish intensive agricultural landscapes. *Eur J Wildl Res* **71**, 6 (2025).

KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department Roads Report

Planning Ref Number: ABP 25- 321872

Applicant: Shillelagh Quarries Ltd

Address: Hempstown Commons (Townland), Blessington, Co. Kildare.

Date: 27th March 2025

Preamble

Shillelagh Quarries Ltd, intend to apply for permission under section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for development at Hempstown Commons (townland), Co Kildare, W91 X0F2. The development consists of further development of a quarry within an application boundary of 10.03 ha. where it is proposed continue extraction activities in the existing quarry void (approximately 5 ha) and to laterally extend the existing quarry void to the northeast by approximately 1.89 ha, to a maximum working depth of 210 mOD. The proposed duration of extraction is 12 years to reflect anticipated extraction of remaining reserves depending on market conditions, and a further 2 years for completion of restoration activities. The quarry is accessed via a privately-owned lane-way connecting to a local road (L6030) which connects to the N81. The reserve consists of greywacke which will be extracted by blasting and mechanical excavation. Excavated rock will be broken, crushed and screened at the working face, or adjacent to the quarry area, by mobile plant. It is proposed to relocate the existing office container, wheel wash and recycled water tank and weighbridge within the application site, and carry out realignment of the private access lane and decommissioning of an abstraction borehole, and to develop dedicated carparking facilities to support the quarry operations, and to continue use of soakaway ponds. This S37L application is made concurrent with an application for substitute consent for quarrying at this location. This application is accompanied by an

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.

Recommendation

The Roads Planning Section of the KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department has noted that the following analysis has been carried out by the Applicant;

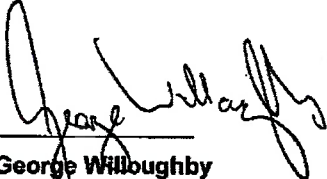
- Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA).
- Autotrack Analysis to check that there is adequate turning room for HGVs within the development and at the access entrance off the L6030.
- Check on sight lines at the access entrance off the L6030.

The Roads Planning Section of the KCC Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Department has **no objection** to the proposed development and recommends that the following planning conditions be imposed by An Bord Pleanála if planning permission is granted:

1. Lines of sight of the proposed access point to the development off the L6030 to comply at all times with the TII Standards.
2. The pavement and structural condition of the L6030 to be monitored on a regular basis by the Applicant with an FWD (Falling Weight Deflectometer) and pavement condition test to be carried out on the L6030 every 3 years in consultation with the Naas MDO and remedial works to be carried out where required on the L6030 where there is any pavement and structural damage to the L6030 to be agreed with the Naas MDO.
3. Surface water runoff to be collected and disposed of at the vehicular entrance and not discharged onto the public road network. Finished ground levels and falls to be indicated on a drawing. Surface water to be collected, attenuated and disposed of to a suitable outfall with petrol interceptors to be installed to protect the existing outfalls and water courses. This should be in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and the recommendations pertaining to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs).
4. The main access road within the development to be a minimum of 6.5 m in width to allow for 2 way HGV traffic and to have a bound SMA pavement finish. Circulation aisles at parking areas to be a minimum of 6.0 metres in width with parking bays 2.5m *5.0m in size.
5. No spoil, dirt, debris or other materials should be deposited on the public road network, its footpaths and verges by machinery or vehicles travelling to or from the development site during the construction phase.
6. The development should not impair existing land or road drainage.
7. The car parking spaces to be in accordance with the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.

8. The cycle spaces to be in accordance with the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.
9. Stop signage, signage and road markings are to be in accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Traffic Signs Manual.
10. The Applicant is requested to submit a Lighting Report and Site Lighting Layout drawings at scales of 1:250 demonstrating the development will not be a source of light pollution to adjacent lands, property and the public road network. Calculations are required to be submitted demonstrating that they have satisfied the requirements of ILP Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (GN01:2011) in relation to the impact of lighting design on the adjoining lands and properties. The applicant will be required to review the existing public lighting arrangements and submit proposals for the upgrade of public lighting (as deemed required) at this location. The lighting scheme is to be in accordance with the Kildare County Council Lighting Policy Street Lighting Technical Specification June 2019.
11. Landscaping works should not impact on public lighting and sight visibility and a root management plan is also required.
12. The Applicant is requested to submit to a draft Construction Management Plan for the realignment of the internal haul route that is to contain:
 - a. A Construction Traffic Management Plan indicating all haul routes to and from the site. Delivery times for plant and materials and waste collection shall have consideration to morning and evening peak school times in the area and peak traffic periods. This plan is also to contain mitigation measures to minimize the effects the proposed development would have on the immediate public road network and existing traffic movements.
 - b. Wheelwash arrangements and locations for the construction phase.
 - c. Location of the construction compound, use of cranes, parking and storage areas during the construction phase. (This is in the interest of the existing residential amenity of properties in the area).
 - d. The manner in which the existing public road network shall be kept clean.
 - e. Relevant construction site warning signs shall be in accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) Traffic Signs Manual.
 - f. A Construction Waste Management Plan that is to contain the final destination of each waste stream generated on site.
 - g. Hours of operation during the construction phase to be 08.00 hours to 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 hours to 14.00 hours Saturday. No work permitted on the Sundays and public holidays. (This is in the interest of the existing residential amenity of properties in the area).
 - h. During the construction phase the developer shall provide adequate off carriageway parking facilities for all traffic associated with the proposed development. This will include material delivery vehicles, service vehicles, construction plant and vehicles, waste skips and private vehicles of the workers on site. There shall be no parking of vehicles on the public road network.

28. The site is located adjacent to Public Roads and the Applicant is requested to submit an Acoustic Design Statement by a suitably qualified acoustic specialist to ensure the proposed development including external areas will not be exposed to noise levels in excess of the Kildare County Third Noise Action Plan L_{den} threshold of 70 dB (A) and L_{night} threshold of 57 dB (A). (Mitigation measures are to be included as deemed required).
13. The set back should be in compliance with the Kildare CDP 2023-2029.
14. The site access roads within the development should be finished with a surface course of Stone Mastic Asphalt, SMA 14 surf PMB 65/105-60 des 45mm thick, in compliance with clause 942 of NRA/TII specification or a similar approved surface course.
15. Prior to the commencement of development, the Applicant to obtain a licence from the Planning Authority for the erection of fencing / hoarding on the public footpath network pursuant to Section 254 of the Planning And Development Act 2000, as amended.
16. All works involving the opening of public roads or footpaths shall be carried out under a Road Opening Licence submitted to the Municipal District Area Office through the MRL system to ensure the following items are assessed:
- Contractors' experience and competency to carry out such works.
 - Compliance with the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (The Purple book, 2017 edition).
 - Compliance with Chapter 8 of Traffic Management Guidelines including a general assessment of traffic impacts within the local area.
 - Relevant Insurance's to carry out such works.



George Willoughby
Senior Executive Engineer,
Roads, Transportation & Public Safety,
Kildare County Council.