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INTRODUCTION

Background

- 12.1 This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), commissioned by SLR Consulting Ireland on behalf of Kilsaran Concrete, addresses the impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage of the application site and the surrounding area of a proposal for continued use of quarry, permission for a small lateral extension, deepening of the extraction area, a new waste water treatment system and a new rock milling plant at Rathcore Quarry County Meath. The site location and study area are indicated in **Figure 12-1**. The existing site, operations and the proposed development are described in detail in Sections 1 and 2 of this EIAR.
- 12.2 The proposed development will consist of:
- Permission for continued use of the previously permitted developments under P. Reg. Ref. No's. 01/1018 (PL17.127391); 95/1416 (PL17.099325) and 91/970 (PL17.089787) to include the existing quarry, drilling, blasting, crushing and screening of rock and related ancillary buildings and facilities;
 - Permission for continued use of the previously permitted developments under P. Reg. Ref. No. TA/120923 consisting of a discharge water treatment facility comprising two lagoons (30m x 13m), an oil interceptor, a reed bed (27m x 10m) and a concrete canal with "V" notch weir;
 - Permission for a small lateral extension of c.0.9 hectares from the existing quarry area of c.9.7 hectares as permitted under P. Ref. 01/1018 (PL17.127391) to give an overall extraction footprint of c.10.6 hectares;
 - Permission for the deepening of the overall extraction area (c.10.6 hectares) by 2 no. 15m benches to a final depth of c.45m AOD from the current quarry floor level of c.75m AOD as permitted under P. Ref. P. Ref. 01/1018 (PL17.127391);
 - Permission for a proposed new rock milling plant to be enclosed within a steel-clad building (c.575m² with roof height of 22.5m and exhaust stack height of 28.2m);
 - Replacement of existing septic tank with a new wastewater treatment system and constructed percolation area;
 - Restoration of the site to a beneficial ecological after-use;
 - All associated site works within an overall application area of 31.1 hectares. The proposed operational period is for 20 years plus 2 years to complete restoration (total duration sought 22 years).

Scope of Work / Methodology

- 12.3 This study which complies with the requirements of Directive EIA 2014/52/EU is an assessment of the known or potential cultural heritage resource within a specified area and includes the information that may reasonably be required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment. It consists of a collation of existing written and graphic information in order to identify the likely context, character, significance and sensitivity of the known or potential cultural heritage, archaeological and structural resource using an appropriate methodology (EPA 2002, 2003 and 2022).

- 12.4 The study involved detailed investigation of the archaeological and historical background of the development site, the landholding and the surrounding area extending 1km from the development boundary (**Fig. 12-1**). This area was examined using information from the Record of Monuments and Places of County Meath, the County Meath Development Plan 2021-2027, lists of excavations and cartographic and documentary sources. A field inspection was carried out on the 9th of September 2016 to identify and assess any known archaeological sites and previously unrecorded features and portable finds within the area of landholding.

Note that although the site visit was made several years ago there is no need to make a second visit as most of the application area, apart from Area 2, has already been stripped of topsoil and therefore has no potential surviving archaeological heritage.

- 12.5 An impact assessment and mitigation strategy have been prepared. An impact assessment is undertaken to outline potential adverse impacts that the proposed development may have on the cultural resource, while a mitigation strategy is designed to avoid, reduce or offset such adverse impacts.
- 12.6 The application site is located in the townlands of Rathcore and Connellstown, Co. Meath, on OS Six Inch sheet No. 48, north-west of the town of Enfield, and north-west of the R159 Road. It is situated in flat to undulating lowland pasture. The local soil is Fine loamy drift with limestones overlying with limestones (<http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>).
- 12.7 Extracts from the Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Meath are presented on a map of the local area around the site in **Figure 12-1**. RMP sites included on the Records of Monuments and Places statutory mapping are identified by black circles. The application area is shown in red.

Contributors / Author(s)

- 12.8 The assessment was prepared by Dr. Charles Mount who is a member of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland and a member of the Discovery Programme and has more than thirty years of cultural heritage assessment experience. He holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in archaeology as well as a professional diploma in EIA and SEA Management.

Limitations / Difficulties Encountered

- 12.9 No difficulties were encountered during the desktop study, field survey or in the preparation of this report.

REGULATORY BACKGROUND

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

Legislation

- 12.11 No specific Irish legislation exists governing cultural heritage assessments.

Planning Policy and Development Control

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

Cultural Heritage

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

- 12.14 The Council's Archaeological Heritage policies and objectives are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HER OBJ 4 To encourage the management and maintenance of the County's archaeological heritage, including historic burial grounds 2, in accordance with best conservation practice that considers the impact of climate change.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Built Heritage

- 12.15 In relation to Architectural, Industrial and Landscape Design Heritage the Council's policies and objectives are to :

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guidelines

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

Significant Risks

- 12.17 There are no known significant risks to human health or environmental effects, which may occur in relation to this cultural heritage assessment.

RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Study Area

- 12.18 The overall study area extends c. 1km from the application area in all directions and is shown in **Figure 12-1**.

Baseline Study Methodology

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

Paper Study

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

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

The Record of Monuments and Places

- 12.21 This was established under section 12 (1) of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act and provides that the Minister shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes there are monuments, such record to be comprised of a list of monuments and relevant places and a map or maps showing each monument and relevant place in respect of each county in the State. The associated files contain information of documentary sources and field inspections where these have taken place. 20 Recorded monuments were noted within the study area. All available information on these sites is provided in **Appendix 12-A**.

Cartographic Sources

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

The County Development Plan

- 12.23 This notes structures listed for preservation.

Field Inspection

- 12.24 A field inspection was carried out to determine the location, extent and to ascertain the significance of any archaeological sites and to identify any previously unrecorded or suspected sites and potable finds.

RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT, HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

The Landscape

- 12.25 The application site is located in the townlands of Rathcore and Connellstown, Co. Meath, on OS Six Inch sheet No. 48, north-west of the town of Enfield, and north-west of the R159 Road. It is situated in flat to undulating lowland pasture. The local soil is Fine loamy drift with limestones overlying with limestones (<http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>).

Historical and Archaeological Background

- 12.26 The following is a brief summation of the main types of sites and monuments that are known from the county along with the historical development of the study area. It is intended as a guide to the types of sites and monuments that might be encountered in the study area.

- 12.27 The site is situated in the townlands of Rathcore and Connellstown, in the barony of Moyfenrath Lower, and the civil parish of Rathcore.

The Prehistoric Period

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

The Early Medieval Period

- 12.29 In the Early Medieval period the barony of Moyfenrath Lower and the parish of Rathcore in which the application area is situated formed part of the kingdom of Laegaire under the Ua Caindelbáin kings (MacCotter 2008, 206). Settlement at this period is usually indicated by the presence of enclosed farmsteads known as ringforts and cashels. There are five ringforts known from the study area in Rathcore (RMP ME0048-003--- and RMP ME0048-006---), Ballynakill RMP (ME0048-001---), Ballynaskea (SMR ME048-046----) and Connellstown (SMR ME048-048----) townlands indicating settlement in the study area during this period.

The Later Medieval Period

- 12.30 In 1172 King Henry II granted the Kingdom of Meath to Hugh de Lacy to hold as King Murrough O Melaghlin, King of Meath, had held it (Otway-Ruthven 1980, 52). De Lacy granted the Ua Caindelbáin Kings the parish of Rathcore. The process of medieval sub-infeudation is normally associated with the construction of earth and timber castles, known as Motte and Baileys. These earthwork fortifications were used to house and defend the Norman lords and their retinues while they set about the process of pacifying and organizing their new fiefs. There are no mottes known in the study area and the closest example is in Jordantown townland (RMP ME048-005) 1.2km north-east of the application area. Manorialism describes the organisation of the feudal rural economy and society characterised by the vesting of legal and economic power in a Lord supported economically from his own direct landholding and from the obligatory contributions of a legally subject part of the peasant population under his jurisdiction. In Ireland the Lord's Manor House was also sometimes enclosed by a rectangular moat, these sites are referred to as moated sites, and they are a useful indicator of Anglo-Norman settlement. However, there are no known moated sites in the study area and the closest example is in Ballinderry townland (RMP ME047-113) 3km to the south-west of the application area.
- 12.31 The fifteenth century was characterised by the decline of Anglo-Norman power in Ireland and part of the response to this was the construction of masonry tower houses which sprang from the fifteenth century (Sweetman 1999, 137). There are no tower houses in the study area. The closest example is in Newcastle townland (ME048018---) 2.3km to the south of the application area. By the fifteenth century the application area, which formed part of the Manor of Rathcore, had come into the hands of Richard Duke of York (Ellis 2015, 112).

The Post-Medieval Period

- 12.32 The Civil Survey of Meath (Simington 1940, 181, 184) records that in 1640 Rathcore was held by Francis MacWey of Balliniskeagh and Andrew Dixon of Troman and contained a church a mill and some farmhouses. Conellestowne was held by Sir Richard Barnwell of Crickstowne. By 1670 Rathcore had come into the hands of Thomas Aylmer and Connellstown had come to Henry Boyle, Lord Shannon and Colonel Cary Dillon (downsurvey.tcd.ie).

BUILDINGS

Protected Structures

- 12.33 The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Record of Protected Structures in each were examined as part of the baseline study for this section of the EIAR. The review established that there are no structures within the application area listed in the Record of Protected Structures. There are two structures in the study area included in the Record of Protected Structures that are listed below. These structures are situated c. 0.9km and 1km north-east of the application area respectively and are considered too far distant from the application area to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development (see **Table 12-1** below).

Table 12-1 Protected Structures in the study area

No.	91486
Structure type	Thatched house
Townland	Rathcore
Designation	Protected Structure
Data source	Meath County Development Plan 2021-27 Record of Protected Structures
Perceived Significance:	Regional
Type of impact:	None
Significance & quality of impact	None
Description	Detached four-bay single-storey thatched house, built c.1820, now in use as public house. Single storey porch addition to entrance elevation. Replacement timber sash windows and red brick chimneystack.
Mitigation proposal	No mitigation required
Photos:	-

No.	91487
Structure type	Church
Townland	Rathcore
Designation	Protected Structure
Data source	Meath County Development Plan 2021-27 Record of Protected Structures
Perceived Significance:	Regional
Type of impact:	None
Significance & quality of impact	None
Description	Saint Ultan's Church of Ireland Church. Gable-fronted church, dated 1806. Porches added, c.1865. Ashlar limestone piers and cast-iron double gates. Graveyard to site.

Mitigation proposal	No mitigation required
Photos:	-

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

- 12.34 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) which is maintained by the Dept. of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht was examined as part of the baseline study for this chapter of the EIA on 10 November 2023. The review established that there are no additional structures included in the NIAH situated within the application area or the study area.

Field Inspection

- 12.35 On the 9th of September 2016 fieldwork was carried out to identify any additional upstanding non-designated structures in the vicinity of the extraction extension area. This involved assessing all upstanding Structures that are marked on the 1909-10 edition of the six inch Ordnance Survey mapping within 300m of the application area (see **Figure 12-1**). There are no upstanding structures indicated on the 1909-10 edition within this area.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological Assessment

Recorded Monuments

- 12.36 Examination of the Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Meath indicated that there are no Recorded Monuments located within the application area (see **Figure 12-1** and **Appendix 12-A**).
- 12.37 The closest Recorded Monument to the application area, an enclosure in Connellstown townland RMP MH048-023, is situated c. 0.8km to the southwest and is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development.

Sites and Monuments Record

- 12.38 Examination of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which is maintained by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on 10 November 2023 indicated that there are no SMRs included within the application area (see **Appendix 12-B**).
- 12.39 There are three additional SMRs included within the study area outside the application area (see **Figure 12-1**). The closest SMR site to the application area externally is SMR ME048-048---- the site of a cropmark of a levelled enclosure that is located c. 188m south of the application area. This levelled enclosure is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal. The remaining SMR sites in the study area are considered to be too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development.
- 12.40 St. Gorman's well (SMR ME048-025----) a Ritual site - holy well in Ballynakill townland is located c. 1.6km to the west and is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development.

Cartographic Sources

- 12.41 The seventeenth century Down Survey mapping, as well as Ordnance Survey 1st and 3rd edition six-inch maps and the 1st edition 25-inch maps of the area were examined. The analysis did not indicate any previously unrecorded archaeological sites in the application area or vicinity.

Place Name Evidence

- 12.42 The place names were extracted from the cartography in order to facilitate the search for structures and monuments and small finds, to help identify any unrecorded monuments or structures, to search for any published papers and documents related to the study area and to assist in the study of the historical development of the area. The English translations of the townland names of the study presented above below are based on Logainm.ie. The placenames do not indicate any additional heritage sites within the study area. Rathcore refers to one of a number of ringforts situated in the townland. Kilcorney may refer to a church outside the study area.

Ballynakill Town of the church

Ballynaskea Town of the briers

Connellstown Connoll's town

Cullentry Holly land

Jordanstown Jordan's town

Kilcorney Caharnach's church

Rathcore Curved rath

Archaeological investigations in the study area

- 12.43 The existing development was the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment carried out by John Barnett & Associates Ltd in 2001. The cultural heritage section of the assessment concluded that that the proposed development had no impact on archaeological sites, listed buildings or structures of historic or industrial archaeology.

- 12.44 In 2016 a proposal for continued use of the quarry, permission for lateral extension, deepening of the extension area and a new waste water treatment system was the subject of a cultural heritage assessment carried out by the author that formed part of an Environmental Impact Assessment that accompanied a planning application (Reg. Ref. TA/161227). Meath Co. Council granted permission for the development in 2017. This was subsequently appealed to An Bord Pleanála (Case Ref: PL17 .249132). In the An Bord Pleanála Inspector's Report on the planning appeal the Inspector Stated:

7.14.19. Impacts on cultural heritage are addressed in Chapter 11 of the EIS. Most of the proposed development will take place with already disturbed ground and there are no known items of cultural heritage interest in the lateral extension area. However, having regard to the possibility of the survival of sub-surface archaeological deposits the applicant proposes archaeological monitoring of the unquarried headland (lateral extension area). Subject to this mitigation measure, I do not consider that any adverse impacts on cultural heritage will arise.

- 12.45 Examination of the Excavations Bulletin at Excavations.ie indicated that there have been two archaeological investigation carried out in the study area and these identified little archaeological material. The summaries are presented below.

Rathcore/Jordanstown Licence number: 02E0228 Monitoring

Monitoring was carried out of the development of an eighteen-hole golf-course with up to seven lakes, bunkers, teeing areas and greens in the townlands of Rathcore and Jordanstown, in south County Meath. The site contains three ponds and several furze-covered natural hillocks, as well as three recorded and one potential archaeological site.

Soil-stripping was carried out by a digger fitted with a 2m-wide toothless bucket, after the sod had been broken with a power harrow. Monitoring took place over eight days between 5 March and 5 April. Soil-stripping was carried out over the greens and tees area, as well as three lake areas. The field boundary incorporating the potential archaeological site was removed by hand, and the ditch was filled in.

Rathcore/Jordanstown Licence number: 02E0228 ext Monitoring

The final phase of monitoring was carried out for the development of the golf course at Rathcore. Fieldwork was carried out over two seasons: the first consisted of the monitoring of the groundworks for the greens, tee-offs and lakes (Excavations 2002, No. 1507); the second consisted of monitoring the groundworks for the clubhouse and associated carpark. Monitoring was carried out on 1 July 2003; the soil-strip was carried out using a digger fitted with a 2m ditching bucket. The clubhouse is located in the south-western sector of the golf course, on the summit of a small hill; the carpark is located immediately south of the clubhouse on sloping ground. The area for the clubhouse, c. 20m in diameter, and a surrounding walkway were stripped to natural subsoil. The area for the carpark of equivalent size was also stripped. Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during monitoring.

County Development Plan

- 12.45 No sites of archaeological importance, National Monuments, or protected structures listed in the Meath Development Plan 2021-2027 are located within the proposed development area.

Aerial Photographs

- 12.46 Examination of the Ordnance Survey 1995, 2000 and 2005 aerial imagery as well as Google earth imagery from 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 and Bing imagery from 2016 did not indicate any additional cultural heritage sites in the application area.

Other Sources

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

Field Assessment

- 12.48 A field inspection was carried out on the 9th of September 2016. This involved an inspection of all the lands in the application area. See **Plate 12-1** for the numbered fieldwork areas. The site is in use as a stone quarry and it is proposed to locate almost all the extraction entirely within the existing void created by permitted rock extraction.

Note that although the site visit was made several years ago there is no need to make a second visit as most of the application area, apart from Area 2, has already been stripped of topsoil and therefore has no potential surviving archaeological heritage.

Area 1

This is the area of extraction which has been carried out down into geological strata. (see **Plate 12-2**). There was no visible indication of any cultural heritage material at ground level.

Area 2

This is a small headland of unextracted land extending into the extracted area from the west (see **Plate 12-3**). There was no visible indication of any cultural heritage material at ground level.

Area 3

This is an area of material processing and soil storage and will have no extraction (see **Plate 12-4 – 12-5**). There was no visible indication of any cultural heritage material at ground level.

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Direct Impacts

- 12.49 No direct impacts on any known items of cultural heritage, archaeology or buildings of heritage interest in the application area or the vicinity have been identified by the assessment.

Indirect Impacts

- 12.50 No indirect impacts on any known items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of heritage interest in the application area or the vicinity have been identified by the assessment.

Interactions with Other Impacts

- 12.51 No known items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of heritage interest have been identified in the application area or the vicinity by the assessment and therefore no interactions with any other environmental factor has been identified.

Do Nothing Impacts

- 12.52 If the proposed development were not to proceed no negative impact on the cultural heritage has been identified by the assessment.

Worst Case Impact

- 12.53 In the worst case scenario topsoil stripping might impact unknown subsurface archaeological material without preservation by record taking place in Area 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS / PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Direct Impacts

- 12.54 Due to the possibility of the survival of previously unknown sub-surface archaeological deposits or finds within Area 2, the unquarried headland, it is recommended that topsoil stripping within Area 2 be archaeologically monitored.

Indirect Impacts

- 12.55 No indirect impacts warranting specific mitigation were identified during the cultural heritage assessment.

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PLATES



Plate 12-1

View of the application area (within the red line) from Bing maps with the extraction area indicated with the mauve line, showing the numbered fieldwork areas.



Plate 12-2

Panoramic view of Area 1 looking north.



*Plate 12-3
View of Area 2 looking east.*



*Plate 12-4
View of material processing in area 3 looking west.*



*Plate 12-5
Panoramic view of stored soil in area 3 looking north-west.*

FIGURES

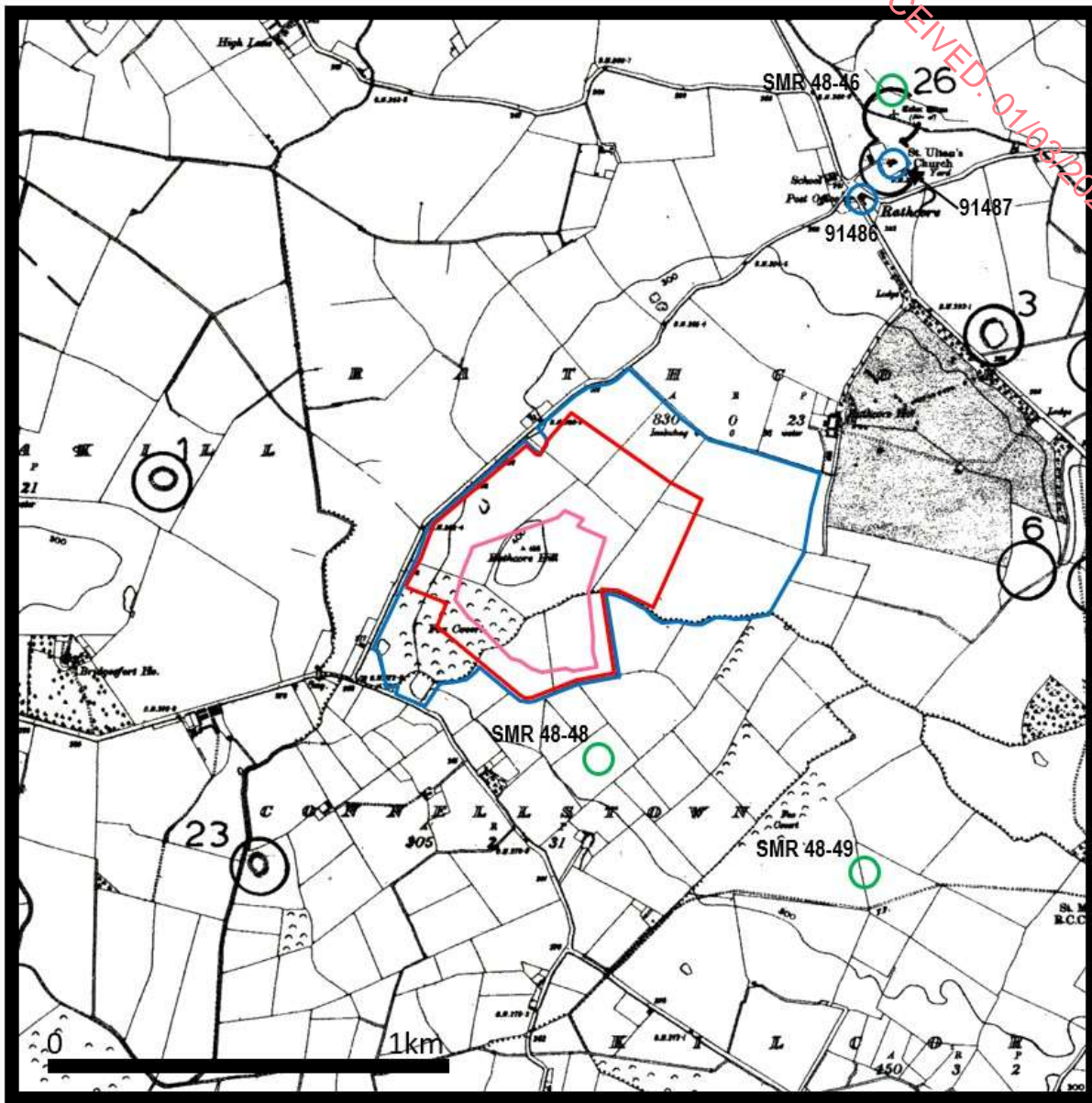


Figure 12-1

The study area superimposed on the Record of Monuments map for Co. Meath

The ownership area is outlined in blue; the application area is outlined in red, and the extraction area is outline in mauve. Recorded Monuments are indicated with black circles and sites in the SMR with green circles. Sites listed in the County Meath Record of Protected Structures are indicated with blue circles.

APPENDICES

Appendix 12-A

Sites in the Record of Monuments and Places

RECEIVED: 01/03/2024

ME0048-001--- Ballynakill Ringfort - rath

Oval area defined by scarp (dims. 44m NW-SE, 35m NE-SW) with external fosse. Entrance causeway at SSW.

ME0048-002--- Rathcore Church

Situated on a hillock with a small SE-NW stream c. 100m to the NE. Ussher (1622) describes the church and chancel of Rathcource as ruined, and he lists it as a chapel-of-ease to Trim. According to Dopping's Visitation Book (1682-85) St Ultan's church at Rathcore was a chapel-of-ease to St Patrick's in Trim (ME036-048012-), and the graveyard was not enclosed. At that time the church was in disrepair, but the chancel '37 feet by 21 (c. 11.3m x c. 6.4m)' was in better shape although still unusable. The present Church of Ireland church was built c. 1800 and is within a subrectangular graveyard (dims c. 68m NW-SE; c. 57m NE-SW) defined by masonry walls and hedges, with headstones dating largely from c. 1780 to the present.

There is no evidence of the older church but two stones re-used as grave-markers (H 0.18m; H 0.17m) might be from a door-frame of the medieval church. The octagonal font (ext. dims 0.58m; H 0.42m) with a circular basin (int. diam. D 0.2m) and chamfered under-panels described by Roe (1968, 126) is now kept in the church porch. A fragment of a headstone (Wth 0.2m; H 0.37m; T 5cm) has the incised date 1690 or 1660, and an incised double-line cross. A disc-headed cross (dims 0.12m x 0.11m; H 0.38m; span 0.28m) in the graveyard has the date 161(2?) and what might be the letters 'DRD' in relief on one face.

ME0048-002001--- Rathcore Graveyard

Situated on a hillock with a small SE-NW stream and St Ultan's well (ME048-026----) c. 100m to the NE. The site of the parish church of Rathcore (ME048-002----) is within a subrectangular graveyard (dims c. 68m NW-SE; c. 57m NE-SW) defined by masonry walls and hedges, but according to the Dopping visitation (1682-5) it was not enclosed in the late 17th century (Ellison 1972, 9). The font (ME048-002002-) which was in the graveyard (Roe 1968, 126) is now kept in the porch of the Church of Ireland church. The headstones date largely from c. 1780 to the present, but one has a 17th century date (ME048-002004-), and the cross (ME048-002003-) is also in the graveyard.

ME0048-002002--- Rathcore Font

The plain octagonal font (ext. dims 0.58m; H 0.42m) with a circular basin (int. diam. D 0.2m) and chamfered under-panels which is described by Roe (1968, 126) as being in the graveyard associated with the site of the medieval parish church (ME048-002----) is now kept in the porch of the Church of Ireland church of Rathcore.

ME0048-002003--- Rathcore Cross

In the graveyard associated with the site of the parish church of Rathcore (ME048-002----) and SE of the present Church of Ireland church is a small disc-headed cross (dims 0.12m x 0.11m; H 0.38m; span 0.28m) with the date 161(2?) and what might be the letters 'DRD' in relief on one face.

ME0048-002004--- Rathcore Headstone

In the graveyard associated with the site of the parish church of Rathcore (ME048-002---) and S of the W end of the present Church of Ireland church is a fragment of a headstone (Wth 0.2m; H 0.37m; T 5cm) that has the incised date 1690 or 1660 preceded by fragments of an inscription: ..SOW../..PAGEP.D../. Beneath the date is a Latin cross (H 0.23m; surviving span 0.13) formed by double incised lines.

ME0048-003--- Rathcore Ringfort - rath

Circular area defined by earthen bank (diam. 50m) with external fosse. Original entrance at NNE.

ME0048-006--- Rathcore Ringfort - rath

Circular area defined by scarp (diam. 58m) with traces of external fosse. Entrance may be at E or SW.

ME0048-023--- Connellstown Enclosure

Oval area defined by earthen bank (dims. 25m N-S, 40m E-W). No visible fosse. Original entrance cannot be determined.

ME0048-026--- Ballynaskea Ritual site - holy well

Holy well.

Appendix 12-B

Sites in the Sites and Monuments Record

RECEIVED: 01/03/2024

ME048-046---- Ballynaskea Ringfort - rath

Situated at the N edge of the valley of a small W-E stream that is c. 70m to the S. The cropmark of a circular enclosure defined by an inner (diam. c. 35m) and outer (diam. c. 55m) fosse features is visible on aerial imaged (ME048-045_1 to _3) taken in July 2018. The inner feature appears to be entire but the outer is D-shaped, backing onto the scarp down to the valley floor. It is not visible on any other aerial images.

ME048-048---- Connellstown Ringfort - rath

Located on a SW-facing slope. The cropmark of a circular enclosure (diam. c. 35m) defined by a single fosse feature is visible on Google Earth (2018). It is separated by a berm (Wth c. 10-15m) from an outer enclosure (diam. c. 55-60m) defined by a single fosse or drain feature from which at least five field drains extend. No entrance features are visible. It was first reported by Edward O'Regan. It is also visible on Google Earth (28/06/2018).

ME048-049---- Kilcorney Enclosure

Situated on a broad NW-SE ridge. The cropmark of a subcircular or oval feature (dims c. 50m NW-SE; c. 40m NE-SW) defined by a single narrow fosse feature is visible on Google Earth (2018). The fosse feature is quite slight and no entrance is visible. It was first reported by Edward O'Regan. It is also visible on Google Earth (04/03/2017; 28/06/2018).
