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Appendix 12-A Sites In The Record Of Monuments And Places

Meath County Council - Viewing Purposes Only!

RECEIVED: 04/07/2022

## Introduction

### Background

- 12.1 This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), commissioned by SLR Consulting Ireland Ltd. on behalf of BD Flood, addresses the impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage of the application site and the surrounding area of a proposal to switch proposed extension from approved Area 1 (c. 4 ha) shown on **Figure 12-1** (due to the poor quality of the materials) to the alternative proposed extension extraction Area 2 (c. 4.2 ha) adjacent to the existing sand and gravel pit development at the Murrens in 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 Chapters 1 and 2 of this EIAR.
- 12.2 The proposed development will consist of:
- Extraction of sand and gravel (dry working) over a lateral extension extraction area of c. 4.2 hectares adjacent to the existing sand and gravel pit development permitted by planning permission KA/141129 (ABP PL17.245257) with access gained from the existing pit.
  - Restoration of the lands will form part of the overall adjacent sand and gravel pit restoration site, returning the lands to a combination of agricultural grazing and beneficial ecological habitat.
  - The development will be commensurate with the life of existing site permission (P. Ref. KA14/1129 & ABP PL.17.245257) which is due to expire in December 2036.
  - All associated site ancillary works within an overall application area of c. 5.8 hectares.

### Scope of Work / Methodology

- 12.3 This study complies with the requirements of Directive EIA 2014/52/EU. The chapter 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, including architectural and archaeological aspects using an appropriate methodology (EPA 2002, 2003 and 2022). It consists of the following study stages:
- Baseline Studies; and,
  - Assessment of the proposed development area.
- 12.4 The study involved detailed investigation of the archaeological and historical background of the development site, the landholding and the surrounding area extending 1 km from the development boundary (**Figure 12-1**). This area was examined using information from the Record of Monuments and Places of County Meath, the Meath County Development Plan, lists of excavations and cartographic and documentary sources. A field inspection was carried out on 13 March 2025 to identify and assess any known archaeological sites and previously unrecorded features and possible finds within the area of the application site.

12.5 The criteria and definitions for describing effects set out below is drawn from the 2022 EPA Guidelines.

**Table 12-1: 2022 EPA Guidelines**

Quality of Effects	<b>Positive</b> A change which improves the quality of the environment.
	<b>Neutral</b> No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds or variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	<b>Negative/adverse Effects</b> A change which reduces the quality of the environment.
Significance of effects	<b>Imperceptible</b> An effect capable of measurement but without noticeable consequences.
	<b>Not significant</b> An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without noticeable consequences.
	<b>Slight effects</b> An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
	<b>Moderate effects</b> An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging trends.
	<b>Significant effects</b> An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	<b>Very Significant effects</b> An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters the majority of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	<b>Profound effects</b> An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics
Describing extent and context of effects	<b>Extent</b> Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of population affected by an effect.
	<b>Context</b> Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions.
Describing probability of effects	<b>Likely effects</b> The effects can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
	<b>Unlikely effects</b> The effects can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
Describing duration & frequency of effects	<b>Momentary effects</b> Effects lasting from seconds to minutes.
	<b>Brief effects</b>

	Effects lasting less than a day.
	<b>Temporary effects</b> Effects lasting less than a year.
	<b>Short-term effects</b> Effects lasting one to seven years.
	<b>Medium-term effects</b> Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
	<b>Long term-term effects</b> Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
	<b>Permanent effects</b> Effects lasting over sixty years.
	<b>Reversible effects</b> Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration.
	<b>Frequency of effects</b> Describe how the effect will occur.
Describing types of effects	<b>Indirect effects</b> Impacts on the environment which are directly result of the project.
	<b>Cumulative effects</b> The addition of minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create a larger more significant effect.
	<b>'Do-Nothing Effects'</b> The environment as it would be in the future should the project not go ahead.
	<b>'Worst case' effects</b> The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.
	<b>Indeterminable effects</b> When full consequences of change in the environment cannot be described.
	<b>Irreversible effects</b> When the character distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	<b>Residual effects</b> The degree of environmental change that will, occur after the proposed mitigation measures take effect.
	<b>Synergistic effects</b> Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents.

12.6 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.

12.7 The existing sand & gravel site is located within the townlands of Murrens, Baltrasna and Annagh, and the newly proposed extension area is located in the townland of Murrens, Co. Meath, on OS Six Inch sheet No. 14, c. 6 km to the south-west of the town of Oldcastle, and west of the R195 road. The soil of the area is a Rathowen series fine

loamy drift with limestones with a substrate of drift with limestones. The proposed development would involve the extraction of sand and gravel in a new area of c. 4.2 hectares.

- 12.8 Extracts from the Record of Monuments and Places for County Meath is 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 site is shown in red.

### Consultations / Consultees

- 12.9 In preparing this Environmental Impact Assessment Report a telephone pre-planning consultation meeting was held between an official of Meath County Council and SLR on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024. In addition, a pre-planning consultation document was issued to statutory consultees (including the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025. Details of those consulted and feedback obtained is contained in Chapter 1 of this EIAR.
- 12.10 Consultation feedback was received (dated 11 March) from the Development Applications Unit within the Department. The feedback included a requirement for an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) to be carried out as part of the overall Cultural Heritage assessment. Specific advice was provided in relation to the scope of the AIA, which has been followed as per the details contained in this chapter and its appendices.

### Contributors / Author(s)

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

### Limitations / Difficulties Encountered

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

### Regulatory Background

- 12.13 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

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

### Planning Policy and Development Control

- 12.15 The Meath County Development Plan 2021-27 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 archaeological and cultural heritage. The County Development Plan has several policies in relation to archaeological and architectural heritage (see below).

## The Council's Archaeological Heritage policies and objectives are:

- 12.16 **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 Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
  - 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;
  - 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 Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 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.
- 12.17 **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).
- 12.18 **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.
- 12.19 **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.
- 12.20 **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. It is the objective of the Council:
- 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 detraction from the monument or its setting.
- HER OBJ 3** To protect important archaeological landscapes from inappropriate development.

**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.

- 12.21 **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.
- 12.22 **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.
- 12.23 **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.
- 12.24 **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.
- 12.25 **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.
- 12.26 **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. It is the objective of the Council:

**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.

- 12.27 **HER POL 12** To recognise and respect potential World Heritage Sites in Meath on the UNESCO Tentative List – Ireland. It is the objective of the Council:
- 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.
- 12.28 **HER POL 13** To protect and preserve in situ all surviving elements of medieval town defences. It is the objective of the Council:
- HER OBJ 14* To retain the surviving medieval street pattern, building lines and burgage plot widths in historic walled towns.
- 12.29 In relation to **Architectural, Industrial and Landscape Design Heritage** the Council's policies and objectives are to :
- 12.30 **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.
- 12.31 **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.
- 12.32 **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.
- 12.33 **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.
- 12.34 **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.
- 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.
- 12.35 **HER POL 19** To protect the character of Architectural Conservation Areas in Meath.
- 12.36 **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. It is the objective of the Council:

**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.

12.37 **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.

12.38 **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.

12.39 **HER POL 23** To actively promote the retention and restoration of thatched dwellings as a key component of the built heritage of the County. It is the objective of the Council:

**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.

12.40 **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.

12.41 **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. It is the objective of the Council:

**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.

12.42 **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. It is the objective of the Council:

**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

12.43 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

12.44 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

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

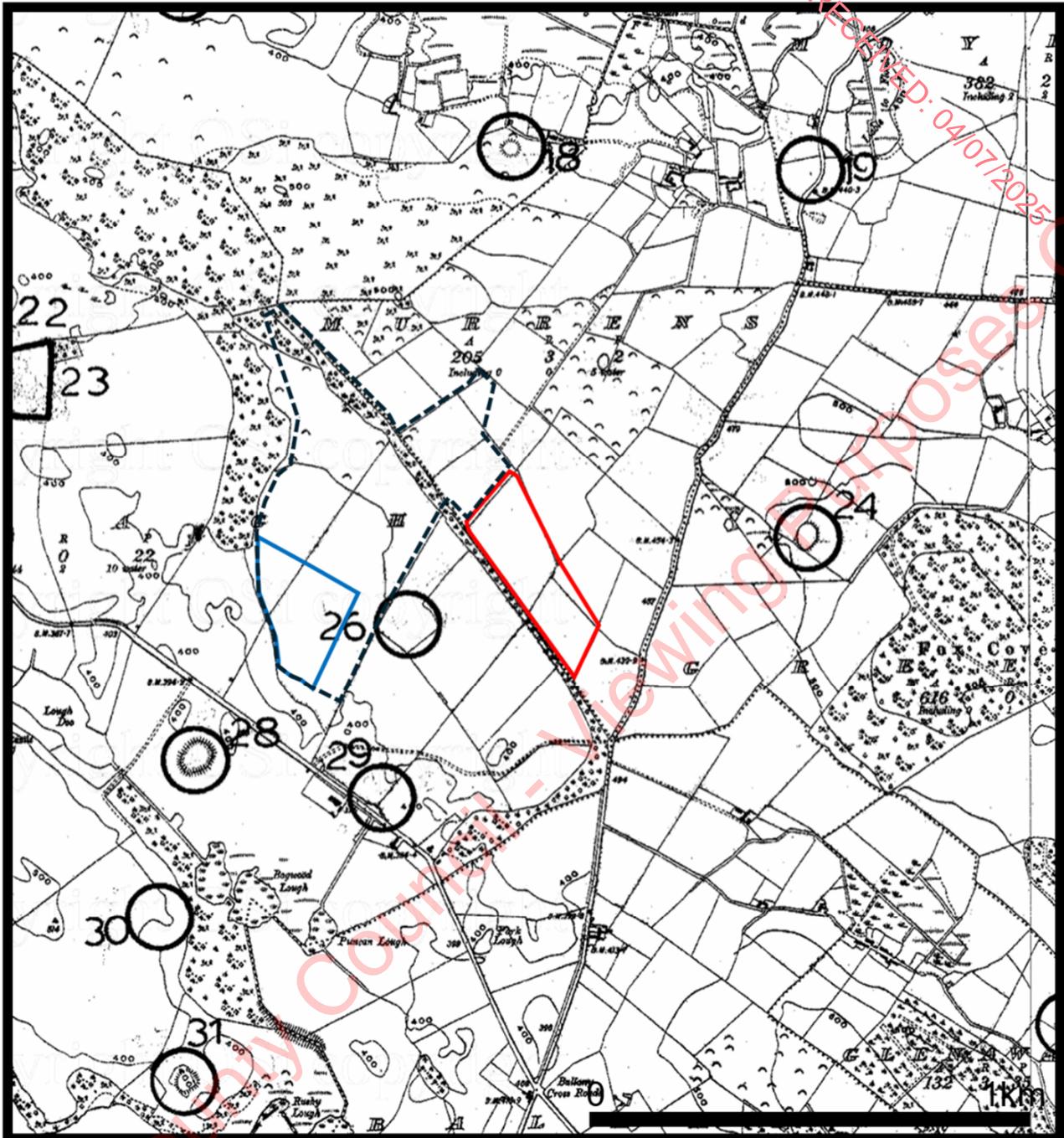


Figure 12-1 The study area superimposed on the Sites and Monuments Record

12.46 The entire and already permitted extraction area is indicated with the **dashed black line**, Area 1 (the existing permitted extension area where no extraction is now proposed) is indicated with the **blue line** and the newly proposed extension area, Area 2, is indicated with the **red line**. RMP sites are indicated with **black circles/polygons** and numbers.

### Baseline Study Methodology

12.47 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

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

- Record of Monuments and Places;
- 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

12.49 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. All available information on these sites is provided in **Appendix 12-A**.

Note, although the Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 was signed into law by the President on October 13, 2023, the part of the act superseding the Record of Monuments with the Register of Monuments had not been commenced at the time this assessment was prepared. This assessment uses the Record of Monuments and Places, which were still in force at the time the assessment was completed.

## Cartographic Sources

12.50 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

12.51 This notes structures listed for preservation.

## Field Inspection

12.52 A field inspection was carried out on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to determine the location, extent and to ascertain the significance of any archaeological sites and to identify any previously unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds.

# Receiving Environment, Historic & Archaeological Landscape

## The Landscape

12.53 The application site is located in the townland of Murrens, Co. Meath, on OS Six Inch sheet No. 14, c. 6 km to the south-west of the town of Oldcastle, and west of the R195

road. The soil of the area is a Rathowen series fine loamy drift with limestones with a substrate of drift with limestones. The proposed development would involve the extraction of sand and gravel in an area of c. 4.2 hectares (<http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>).

## Historical and Archaeological Background

- 12.54 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.
- 12.55 The site is situated in the townland of Murrens, the civil parish of Moylagh and the barony of Fore. Note original spellings of placenames recorded in source material are retained in the text.

### The Prehistoric Period

- 12.56 The nature of prehistoric activity in the study area is unclear as there are no prehistoric sites or finds known from the area.

### The Early Medieval Period

- 12.57 In the early medieval period the barony of Fore formed part of the Kingdom of Caille Follamain which was ruled by a branch of the southern Ui Neill descended from Colman Becc who died about AD 587. The centre of the Kingdom was at Kells and the earliest King Tuathal mac Mael Tuile is recorded here in AD 718. Five kings of Caille Follamain are recorded between AD 851 and 1017 (MacCotter 2008, 203). Settlement in the early medieval period is indicated by enclosed farmsteads known as ringforts and there are a number in the study area in Baltrasna (ME014-018), Moylagh (RMP ME014-019---), Annagh (ME014--022---; ME014-025---), and Greenan (RMP ME14-O24---) townlands as well as a number of undated enclosures that indicate substantial settlement in the study area in the early medieval period.

### The Later Medieval Period

- 12.58 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). In 1241 Hugh de Lacy's son, Walter de Lacy, died without a male heir and Meath was partitioned between his two granddaughters. The manor of Fore, containing the study area, went to de Geneville Lord of Trim husband of Maud de Lacy (Otway-Ruthven 1980, 187). The process of medieval sub-infeudation is normally associated with the construction of 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. Hugh de Lacy's motte castle was situated in his Demesne manor Fore which is now in Co. Westmeath 4km to the south of the study 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 and these sites are referred to as moated sites. They are a useful indicator of Anglo-Norman settlement. However, there are no moated sites known within the study area and there does not appear to have been any Norman settlement.

- 12.59 The fifteenth century was characterised by the decline of Anglo-Norman power in Ireland which had been ebbing since the early fourteenth century. Part of the response to this was the construction of masonry Tower Houses which sprang up after King Henry VI introduced a building subsidy of £10 in 1429 (Sweetman 1999, 137). Annagh Castle (ME014—02701-), to the south-west of the application site, is probably the remains of the Tower House that housed the lord of the study area.

## The Post-Medieval Period

- 12.60 The Down Survey and Civil Survey (Simington 1940, 266; [downsurvey.tcd.ie](http://downsurvey.tcd.ie)) record that in 1641 Murrens (called Thomasbrydstowne) was held by Thomas Kearnan but by 1670 was in the hands of Humphrey Rogers. Annagh in 1641 was held by Walter Nugent and by 1670 was in the hands of James Nugent. There are no structures referred to on the lands. In the eighteenth century Murrens passed through the hands of the Naper, Wadeet, Merryman, Wade, Nugent and Reilly families. In the early nineteenth century Murrens and Annagh were held by Walter Nugent (<http://www.logainm.ie/38857.aspx>).

## Buildings

### Protected Structures

- 12.61 The Meath County Development Plan 2021-27 containing the Record of Protected Structures was examined as part of the baseline study for this chapter of the EIAR. The review established that there are no Protected Structures situated within the application site or within the study area.

### National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

- 12.62 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) which is maintained by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage was examined on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 as part of the baseline study for this chapter of the EIAR. The review established that there are no structures included in the NIAH situated within the application site or the study area.

### Field Inspection

- 12.63 On the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 fieldwork was carried out to identify any additional upstanding non-designated structures in the vicinity of the newly proposed extension area. This involved assessing all upstanding structures that are marked on the 1910 edition of the six-inch Ordnance Survey mapping within 100 m of the application site (see **Figure 12-1**). There are no upstanding structures in this area that are of heritage interest.

## Archaeology

### Archaeological Assessment

#### Recorded Monuments

- 12.64 Examination of the Record of Monuments and Places for Co. Meath indicated that there are no Recorded Monuments located within the application site (see **Figure 12-1** and **Appendix 12-A**).

- 12.65 The closest Recorded Monument to the application site externally is ME014-026---- a Cashel with an internal house foundation (ME014-026001-) in Annagh townland. This is described in the RMP as:

*ME014-026---- Annagh Ringfort-Cashel*

*Situated on a rise in a low-lying landscape. This feature is not marked on any edition of the OS 6-inch map but it is visible on aerial photographs (GSIAP: N 257, 258). This is an oval or D-shaped and grass-covered area (dims 54m NNW-SSE; 40m ENE-WSW) with a straight side (L 23m) at S defined by a grass-covered stone spread (Wth 3-4m; max. int. H 0.5m; max. ext. H 1m), which has some quarry holes at W an E. There is no visible fosse and the only entrance (Wth 3m) is towards the W end of the perimeter at S. The remains of a house (ext. dims 11m E-W; 5m N-S) defined by stone spreads (Wth 1.5m; max. H 0.5m) and with an entrance at the centre of the N wall is in the N interior.*

*ME014-026001- Annagh House - indeterminate date*

*The remains of a house (ext. dims 11m E-W; 5m N-S) defined by stone spreads (Wth 1.5m; max. H 0.5m) and with an entrance at the centre of the N wall is in the N interior of cashel (ME014-026----).*

- 12.66 The monument is situated c.170m southwest of the application area and is considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development. Potential effects on the setting of the monument will be mitigated by the retention of the treeline on the western side of the application site.
- 12.67 The remaining Recorded Monuments in the study area as shown on **Figure 12-1** are situated further from the application site and are considered too far distant to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development.

**Sites and Monuments Record**

- 12.68 Examination of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which is maintained by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 indicated that there are no SMRs included within the application site or the study area.

**Cartographic Sources**

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

**Place Name Evidence**

- 12.70 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 refer entirely to topography and proprietors.

**Table 12-2:** Place Name Evidence

Placename	Translation
Annagh	A marsh or morass

Baltrasna	Cross town
Ballany	Town of the marsh
Glenaward	Glen of the bard
Greenan	A sunny hill
Moylagh	A flat hill
Murrens	Beautiful hills. Thomasbridstown in 1619

**Archaeological investigations in the study area**

12.71 Examination of the Co. Meath ePlan Online Planning Inquiry system (<https://meathcoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer>) indicated that there have been no previous archaeological assessments of the application site.

**Other investigations in the study area**

12.72 Examination of the Excavations Bulletin at excavations.ie indicated that there have been no excavations carried out in the study area. Soil stripping at the quarry has been the subject of archaeological monitoring carried out by the author in 2008 (Mount 2008), 2010 (Mount 2010), 2012 (Mount 2012), 2013 (Mount 2013), 2017 (Mount 2017), 2018 (Mount 2018), 2020 (Mount 2020) and 2021 (Mount 2021). No cultural heritage material was identified during monitoring.

**County Development Plan**

12.73 No sites of archaeological importance, National Monuments, or protected structures listed in the Meath Development Plan 2021-27 are located within the proposed development area.

**Aerial Photographs**

12.74 Examination of the Ordnance Survey 1995, 1996-2000, 2001-2005, 2006-12, 2011-13 and 2013-18 aerial imagery as well as Google earth imagery from 2009, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2024 and Bing imagery from 2016 did not indicate any additional cultural heritage features in the application site.

**Other sources**

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

**Field inspection**

12.76 A field inspection was carried out at the application site indicated on **Figure 12-2** on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2025. The purpose of the inspection was to identify any previously unknown archaeological or cultural heritage sites. The application site is a trapezoidal southwest sloping area of former forestry plantation from which the trees were felled and removed shortly before the site visit (see **Figures 12-3 – 12-5**). There was no visible indication of any cultural heritage material at ground level.



Figure 12-2: 2024 Aerial image of the application area, outlined in red, from Google earth showing the application area indicated by the red line.



Figure 12-3 Drone view of the application area looking northwest.



Figure 12-4 Ground level view of the application area looking northwest.



**Figure 12-5** Closeup of the ground conditions in the application area.

### Geophysical Survey

12.77 The application site is an area of former forestry plantation from which the trees were for the most part previously felled and removed, leaving significant woody debris behind. After consultation with a geophysics consultancy the consensus was that geophysics would not be appropriate for the application site as the branches and roots, etc would interfere with the sensor apparatus.

### Assessment of Potential Impacts

#### Direct effects

12.78 There will be no direct effects on any known significant items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of special architectural significance in the application area or the vicinity.

#### Indirect effects

12.79 There will be no indirect effects on any known significant items of archaeology, cultural heritage or buildings of special architectural significance in the application area or the vicinity.

### Interactions with Other effects

12.80 No interaction with other effects has been identified.

### Do Nothing Impacts

12.81 If the proposed development were not to proceed there would be no negative effect on the cultural heritage or potential to uncover any below ground cultural heritage features.

### Worst Case effect

12.82 In the worst case, without preservation by record taking place, the proposal could affect previously unknown archaeological heritage.

### Unplanned Events

12.83 No unplanned events arising from the proposal capable of impacting known archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage within the application site has been identified by the assessment.

### Cumulative Impacts

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

## Recommendation / Proposed Mitigation Measures

### Direct Impacts

12.85 Due to the possibility of the survival of previously unknown sub-surface archaeological deposits or finds within the application site, all topsoil-stripping in this area should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist under licence from the National Monuments Service.

### Indirect Impacts

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

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## Appendices

### Appendix 12-A Sites in the Record of Monuments and Places

#### ME014-018--- BALTRASNA Rath

The Archaeological Inventory of Co. Meath (Moore 1987, 59, No. 507) describes this site as a circular area defined by a scarp (diam. 30m) and outer fosse. Hut site in centre. Original entrance and causeway at NE. RMP file states the site is almost circular area 31m x 29m and enclosed by a grass-covered bank of earth and stone and a narrow shallow outer fosse. The entrance may have been a gap in the SE or NE. There is a fairly large 6-sided structure marked by a low grass-covered bank of earth and stone in the interior.

#### ME014-019---- MOYLAGH Ringfort

Small circular area enclosed by the remains of an earth and stone bank and an enclosing fosse. East side of monument bulldozed during road-widening about 1979.

#### ME014-022---- ANNAGH Ringfort

Small circular area enclosed by a bank of earth and stone and a shallow fosse and a low external earth and stone bank.

#### ME014-02301- ANNAGH Enclosure

D-shaped area 25m x 30m on a knoll enclosed by scarps and banks. Within it is a circular house platform 6.5m x 5m connected to the enclosure on its S side by a causeway 6.7m long and 4.2m wide. The entrance may be at NW. On a knoll to the south is an oval area enclosed by a well-defined bank with 2 large possible house platforms on the W slope of the northern part of the ridge. On the E slope of the ridge there is a circular feature 7m across with a narrow bank and southern interior.

#### ME014-02302- ANNAGH Field system

Field system associated with an oval enclosure.

#### ME14-024--- GREENAN Ringfort

Oval area enclosed by a grass-covered earthen bank with an external fosse. Possible original entrance at ENE.

#### ME014-026--- ANNAGH Enclosure

The Archaeological Inventory of Co. Meath (Moore 1987, 94, No. 917) describes this site as an oval area defined by an earthen bank (dims. 54m x 40m). Truncated, with modern entrance at SSE. Hut site with entrance on long side at N. Uneven interior. RMP file states this is an oval enclosure enclosed by a bank 3-4m wide and rising to c.0.5m over exterior. There are the foundations of a house toward the northern end measuring 11m x 5m with stone banks 1.5m wide and 0.5m high and an entrance at N.

#### ME014-028--- ANNAGH Enclosure

Large oval area enclosed by a low bank with possible original entrance at NNE. When visited on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2013 this site was found to be levelled.

#### ME014-029- ANNAGH Enclosure

The Archaeological Inventory of Co. Meath (Moore 1987, 94, No. 919) describes this site as an oval area, truncated on SE, defined by an earthen bank (dims 66m x 43m). The uneven interior has some slight banks and possible hut site. Destroyed on SE side by quarry. RMP file states that this is an enclosure 66m x 42.5m

enclosed by a bank and truncated on E side. There are two rectangular structures in the interior 1. In the north is 18.4m x 11.5m has a low grass-covered stone wall. 2 in the south is 7.7m x 5m

ME014-030--- ANNAGH Enclosure

Circular platform defined by a low scarped embankment.

ME014-031-- ANNAGH Earthwork

Round hillock enclosed by an embankment with an external fosse. Possible hut in interior. Possible tree-ring.

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