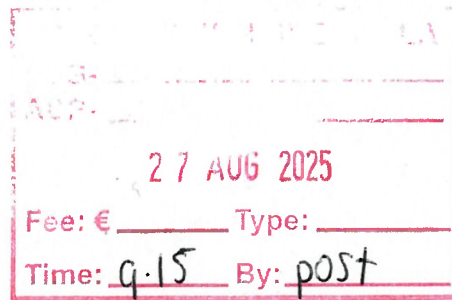




26th August 2025

Glasbolie
Ballintra
Co. Donegal
F94 HH22

An Coimisiún Pleanála - Case reference: QD05E.323037

Townlands of Ballymagroarty & Glasbolie, Ballintra, Co. Donegal, F94 KP08 Substitute Consent pursuant to Section 177E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended for development consisting of processing of asphalt and concrete products and associated infrastructure. An remedial EIAR and remedial NIS was submitted with this application.

Patrick McCaffrey & Sons Ltd (Applicant)

Quarry Application

Letter of Objection to Substitute Consent QD05E.323037

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to object in the strongest possible terms to the substitute consent application QD05E.323037 by Patrick McCaffrey & Sons Ltd to regularise quarrying, asphalt and concrete processing, and associated infrastructure at Ballymagroarty and Glasbolie, Ballintra. This quarry has never had valid planning permission and has expanded repeatedly without authorisation, leaving the local community powerless to prevent ongoing environmental destruction and severe impacts on residents quality of life. The result is an industrial site created through uncontrolled blasting, with no regard for safety, amenity, or the environment.

The expansion of the north quarry in 2007 onto private lands was undertaken without planning. Local people met a Council planner on site and were told that the matter was very complicated, and the quarry was able to expand without planning under original quarry lands. How a Council planner could try and fool residents with this story is beyond me. Donegal County Council bears responsibility for allowing this quarry to be created as the planning authority and one of the quarry's biggest customers, while it was destroying the environment and impacting on the lives of residents.



Google Maps showing our family dwelling to west and farmyard immediately north of north quarry

This current application appears to be a tactic used by P McCaffrey & Sons Ltd to keep on quarrying. This is the second substitute consent application following numerous judicial reviews used to keep on quarrying. Significant environmental damage has occurred since An Bord Pleanála refused 01/106 in 2003. It is pointless coming back years later and trying to assess environmental impacts that have already happened, for a quarry that would not have been allowed to be created in the first place if environmental assessments had been carried out. We have reviewed the rEIAR submitted and this document describes an idealised version of operations that does not reflect the reality on the ground.

In our opinion, P McCaffrey & Sons Ltd should not have carried out any further works requiring environmental assessment after the decision by An Bord Pleanála on QV0128 in October 2013, that the quarry had carried out development requiring environmental assessment. Since October 2013, P McCaffrey & Sons Ltd has carried out further unauthorised works that required environmental assessment including blasting of a deep void in the south quarry, provision of lorry park, installation of block-manufacturing plant and importation of stone for continued operation of the quarry. This application for substitute consent should not be considered by An Coimisiún Pleanála due to these unauthorised works. Furthermore, the Exceptional Circumstances Report is a fairytale and the dismissal of SU0128 by An Bord Pleanála is provided for within the planning acts and is not exceptional circumstances.

Our family home lies less than 200 metres from the abandoned north quarry, which presents serious risks:-

- Vertical cliff faces 150 metres high, with no benching
- Excavation below the water table, resulting in a dangerous quarry lake, with potential for drownings
- Groundwater exposed to potential contamination
- Quarry faces too close to property boundaries
- Inadequate perimeter security – easy to climb sheep fence with a single strand of barbed wire
- Berms that block high amenity scenic views and create a tunnel effect on the L7265 public road
- Restoration plan featuring four floating planted islands that offers no realistic remediation
- Misrepresentation in the rEIAR that the 2007 unauthorised extension was ‘quarry benching’

The farmyard is immediately adjoining the north quarry, and the impact of the quarry faces and lake is quite disturbing and impacting on stress and mental health, especially as you feel helpless as to the method and way it was created. The size of the blasts was enormous and the L7265 was blocked to traffic by An Garda Síochána to facilitate blasting. There are no sightlines at the junction of the north quarry and L7265 and the quarry opened a road directly opposite to transport materials to south quarry for processing. You would take your life in your hands driving on L7265 as the huge dump trucks would not stop as they crossed the road and traffic on the L7265 had to give way.

The north quarry needs a strategic examination of how it can be made safe for the children living in the vicinity and the young people who are often taking videos and pictures of the lake. This is an accident waiting to happen and cannot be granted substitute consent. This is a matter that P McCaffrey & Sons Ltd and Council as the local authority and planning authority need to address with the local community.

There must be fairness and equity in the application of the planning laws. Our own application for retention of our family home (PL05.211824) was refused for impact on rural and scenic amenities.

The development would interfere with a view towards the sea from a public road that is of significant amenity value. The development also involves the retention of extensive filling of the site that is unsightly and out of keeping with the character of the landscape in the area. It is considered that the development would, therefore, seriously injure the rural and scenic amenities of the area, contrary to the policy set out in section 2.6.5 of the current Donegal County Development Plan and to the guidance give in volume 3 of that plan and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The visual, noise, dust, and traffic impacts of the quarry are exponentially greater, yet the operator seeks to regularise them. The same standard of assessment must be applied.

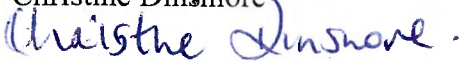
The south quarry is built on both sides of the road from L7265 to the N15. We often use this road and you are effectively driving through a working quarry with plant and machinery operating. The gates are often left open after work, and anyone could drive over the quarry face. The south quarry gives rise to excessive dust and noise and is very unsightly.

Patrick McCaffrey & Sons Ltd has profited from decades of unauthorised operations at the expense of residents, landowners, and the environment. Granting substitute consent would reward persistent non-compliance and legitimise irreversible damage.

We respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse substitute consent for case QD05E.323037.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Dinsmore



William Dinsmore

