

Karen Byrne

From: Saoirse Kavanagh <skavanagh@mhplanning.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 11 August 2026 14:25
To: Appeals2
Cc: Tom Halley
Subject: ACP 324277-26 Applicant Response to Cork Council Report
Attachments: Response to SC Council Report Combined.pdf

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A Chara,

On behalf of the applicant, please see attached a response to Cork County Council's report on the Substitute Consent application at Ardcahan, Dunmanway, Co. Cork.

Kind regards,
Saoirse

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An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

11 August 2026

Re: ACP 324277 – Response to Cork County Council’s Report on the Substitute Consent Application at Ardcahan, Dunmanway, Co. Cork

A Chara,

On behalf of the applicant, Murray Brothers Tarmacadam Ltd, this letter provides a response to the Cork County Council Report received by An Coimisiún Pleanála in relation to the substitute consent application for the quarrying of rock that took place between February 1990 and October 2014 at Ardcahan, Dunmanway, Co. Cork.

While the inclusion of all works post 1990 appears to meet the criteria of *JJ Flood & Sons (Manufacturing) v An Bord Pleanála* [2020] IEHC 195], the failure to register this pre-63 site under S261 by 27th April 2005 suggests the site only became unauthorised from that date only. However, it is accepted that the historic floor was used for access, storage and despatch. The extraction works from 1990 to 27th April 2005 have been included in this application for the avoidance of doubt.

The substitute consent application was submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) on the 6th May 2026. Cork County Council submitted a report to ACP with their assessment of the application on the 13th July 2026. A copy of this report was received by the applicant on the 24th July 2026.

Response to Planning Authority Report

The Applicant notes and welcomes Cork County Council’s detailed consideration of the Substitute Consent application. This response addresses the principal matters raised in the Planning Authority’s report, including ecology and remediation, water quality and Appropriate Assessment, noise and vibration, archaeology, the relationship with the concurrent Section 37L application, and wider planning considerations.

It is respectfully submitted that the remaining matters raised by the Planning Authority principally relate to requests for clarification, further supporting information, or matters more appropriately considered in the context of the separate Section 37L application for future quarrying activity. They do not identify any significant environmental effect which would preclude the granting of Substitute Consent.

It is the applicant’s view that the submitted documents and drawings provide sufficient information to enable An Coimisiún Pleanála to undertake its assessment. Nonetheless, if considered necessary, further information could be supplied to An Coimisiún Pleanála, either through a further information response, or by way of condition.

Poly Aluminium Chloride (PAC)

The Planning Authority raises questions regarding historic use of Poly Aluminium Chloride (PAC) within settlement ponds. The rEIAR and rNIS explain that PAC was utilised as a settling agent within a controlled surface water management system to improve the quality of discharged water. No evidence has been identified of significant adverse impacts to receiving waters arising from the use of PAC, and the rNIS specifically concludes that no significant water quality impacts associated with PAC usage were identified.

The use of settlement ponds, water recycling systems and chemical coagulants/flocculants to improve the settlement of suspended solids in quarry wash-water was an established standard water management practice within the quarrying and aggregate industry during the relevant period. PAC was used at Ardcahan for this purpose in very small quantities as part of a managed settlement pond system designed to promote the removal of fine suspended particles from process water.

Chapter 7 of the rEIAR notes that relatively low volumes of PAC were used on site, with just c. 25 litres per year required. The PAC solution used to be added to the wash water to ensure the settlement of fine particulates out of suspension. Thus, the use of very small quantities of PACs within washwater only had the effect of substantially lessening the Total Suspended Solids levels that might otherwise have been discharged.

This wash water was pumped up gradient into Pond A which had a large capacity and could also overflow to Pond B if necessary, which ensured sediment settlement and that no particulates were re-circulated down to the ponds in the lower part of Catchment Area 3. The use of PAC flocculate helped ensure that any fine particulates from the washing activities, were rapidly taken out of suspension when discharged into Pond A.

The EIAR identifies 'Area A1', located in the north-east corner of the site, as a sludge disposition site. There is no direct linkage to a discharge point from this Area A1 and as such the potential impact on the surface water in the area is identified as 'low'.

An extract from the map in Appendix 7.2 below which shows the location of Ponds A and B and Area A1.

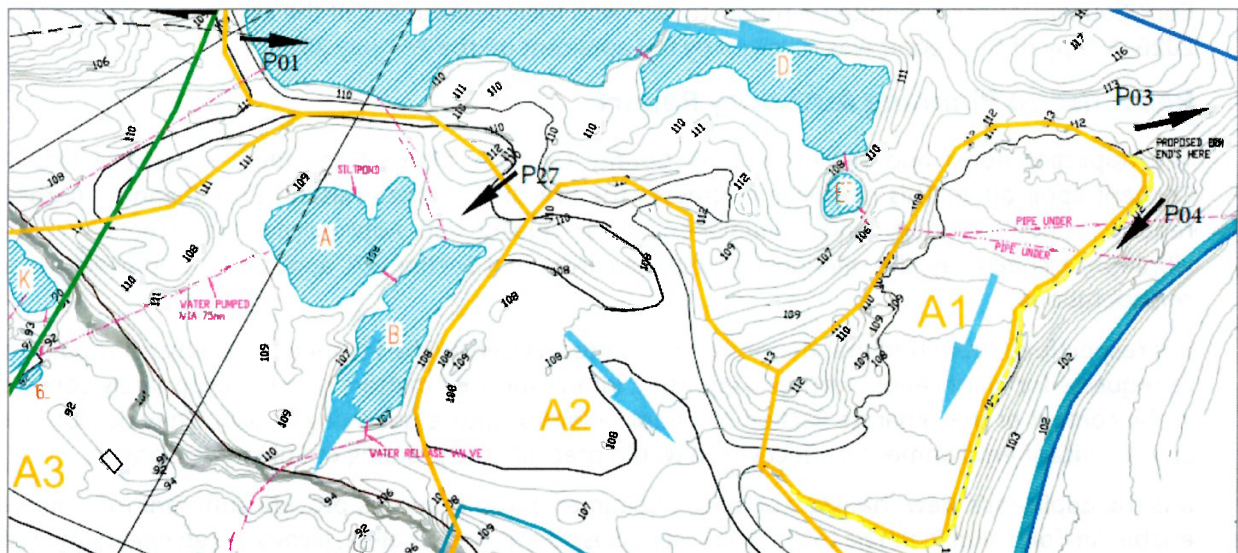


Figure 1 Extract from Appendix 7.2

There is no evidence before the Commission demonstrating that the historic use of PAC resulted in significant effects on the environment.

In relation to the Planning Authority's reference to Article 27, the Applicant does not accept, on the information currently available, that the historic use of PAC necessarily gives rise to a requirement for an Article 27 notification. However, if considered necessary, the applicant can submit an article 27 notification to the EPA in respect of the PAC as a condition of planning. The suggestion that Article 27 is relevant appears misplaced as Article 27 is only a relatively recently used provision in Ireland whereas this Substitute Consent application relates to works and use which ceased by 2014. Industry sources confirm that the suggestion of Article 27 being used in relation to PAC trace quantities in discharge water has not been raised elsewhere.

The Ecology Officer notes that the storage mound located in the southeastern section of the site has the potential to contribute to cumulative negative impacts on the water quality in the adjacent stream. As outlined in Chapter 6 of rEIAR, the aggregate washing process used by the tarmacadam plant created a fine material which was in the past a by-product and deposited in a heap in the southeastern part of the site. The slopes of this storage mound have been revegetated over the years and there are no concerns regarding instability. There is also a buffer area and earthen ditch between the toe of the slope and the stream.

Impact on Bandon River SAC

The Planning Authority notes that one of the key issues with the application relates to uncertainty regarding impacts to the water quality in the Bandon River SAC during the substitute consent period and the potential impact from the discharge of suspended solids and PAC, particularly in the context of Freshwater Pearl Mussel habitat.

There is inherent difficulty in retrospectively assessing water quality effects over the period 1990 to 2014. However, the rEIAR and rNIS undertook detailed assessment of hydrology, hydrogeology, water quality and ecological receptors. Those assessments concluded that no significant biological or physical impacts were identified in the adjacent stream or Bandon River, that the quarry operated above the groundwater table and did not require dewatering, and that the development did not adversely affect the integrity of the Bandon River SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The council queries the surface water run-off from the five discharge locations from the tarmac and old quarry areas and the potential impact on the adjacent stream. This is covered in Chapter 7 of the rEIAR, particularly in Section 7.2.4 and Table 7.1 which describes the site's surface water discharges and potential risk. The local topography of the site and camber of the main access road means that there is no runoff to the stream from the site area except for the five identified discharge points.

As noted above, the use of PAC on site allowed the suspended solids to be removed from the settlement ponds prior to any discharge from site. The silt created from these suspended solids was then contained on site. The settlement ponds A & B are dry and have naturally revegetated since quarry activity ceased.

The rNIS and rEIAR assessments concluded that given the implementation of the mitigation measures as part of the historical quarrying activities, the Development did not, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, adversely affect the integrity or conservation status of any of the qualifying interests of the Bandon River SAC and or any other European site in light of best scientific knowledge and that progression to Stage 3 of the Appropriate Assessment process (i.e., Assessment of Alternative Solutions) was not considered necessary.

The Applicant notes that the rNIS transparently acknowledges that occasional increases in suspended solids may have occurred during high-flow rainfall events, but concludes that any such contribution was not of a magnitude capable of adversely affecting the integrity of any European site. No evidence has been identified of significant biological impacts, fish kills, major pollution events, or significant environmental incidents attributable to the quarry during the assessment period.

It should also be noted that the Bandon River SAC was designated as a candidate European site in 2002, and formally designated as a full SAC in 2019, post cessation of quarrying activities in 2014.

Any impact on the Bandon River SAC could not solely be attributed to the quarrying activities from the site. The intensification of agricultural activity in the lands to the south and east of the site area over the last two decades are likely to pose a long-term cumulative risk in contributing potential sediment and nutrient runoff to the small local watercourse and Bandon River system. As noted in the EIAR, during the FWPM surveys silt plumes were present when the riverbed was disturbed. This was present at Ardcahan bridge and at sampling locations downstream of the Site. This demonstrates that there are also other sources of sediment within the catchment. Furthermore, it would be considered that the majority of any sediment realised between 1992 and 2014 would have washed way over the 12 year period and that any sediment now within the river would be from more recent releases.

The SC application seeks to make improvements to the surface water management at the Site, which will mitigate against any future deterioration of water quality within the adjoining stream and subsequently the River Bandon. As detailed in the EIAR, the proposed landscaping also includes measures and planting that will safeguard surface and ground water quality and thereby protect local water courses.

Ecology, Remediation and Habitat Compensation

The Ecology Officer acknowledges that no significant negative ecological effects would be likely to arise following implementation of the proposed remediation measures, but suggests that the remediation proposals are limited in scope and do not demonstrate sufficient compensation for the damage that has occurred since 1990.

The remediation strategy has been prepared specifically having regard to Section 177F of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Its purpose is to identify significant effects which have occurred, are occurring, or can reasonably be expected to occur, and to secure appropriate remedial measures. The statutory purpose of Substitute Consent is not to recreate the pre-development environment or to impose biodiversity offsetting or net-gain requirements in respect of all historical habitat change.

The rEIAR identifies the historic habitat losses associated with quarrying activity and proposes a comprehensive suite of remedial measures, including retention and protection of remaining woodland and heath habitats, wetland and pond enhancement, invasive species control, ecological monitoring, habitat restoration and natural succession measures. The current biodiversity value of the site is also acknowledged, including semi-natural habitats which have developed since quarrying ceased.

It is respectfully submitted that the Planning Authority's recommendation for additional compensatory measures appears to extend beyond remediation of historic effects and into biodiversity enhancement or biodiversity net gain objectives that are not statutory requirements of the Substitute Consent process. The purpose of the Substitute Consent application is to assess and regularise development already undertaken and to determine whether appropriate remedial measures are proposed, rather than to secure offsetting for all historic habitat changes on a hectare-for-hectare basis.

Furthermore, several of the mitigation measures referred to by the Ecology Officer relate to the concurrent Section 37L application and future quarrying activities rather than the historic quarrying development that is the subject of the Substitute Consent application. These matters are more appropriately considered within the context of the Section 37L application.

A Remediation Plan was submitted with the Substitute Consent application, and a Regeneration Plan was submitted with the S37L application. Combined these two plans provide detailed proposals for the existing and future ecology on site. To demonstrate how the two plans interact, a composite drawing has

been prepared and is submitted as part of this response. A copy Regeneration Plan, the Remediation Plan, and the composite drawing, are provided as appendices to this letter.

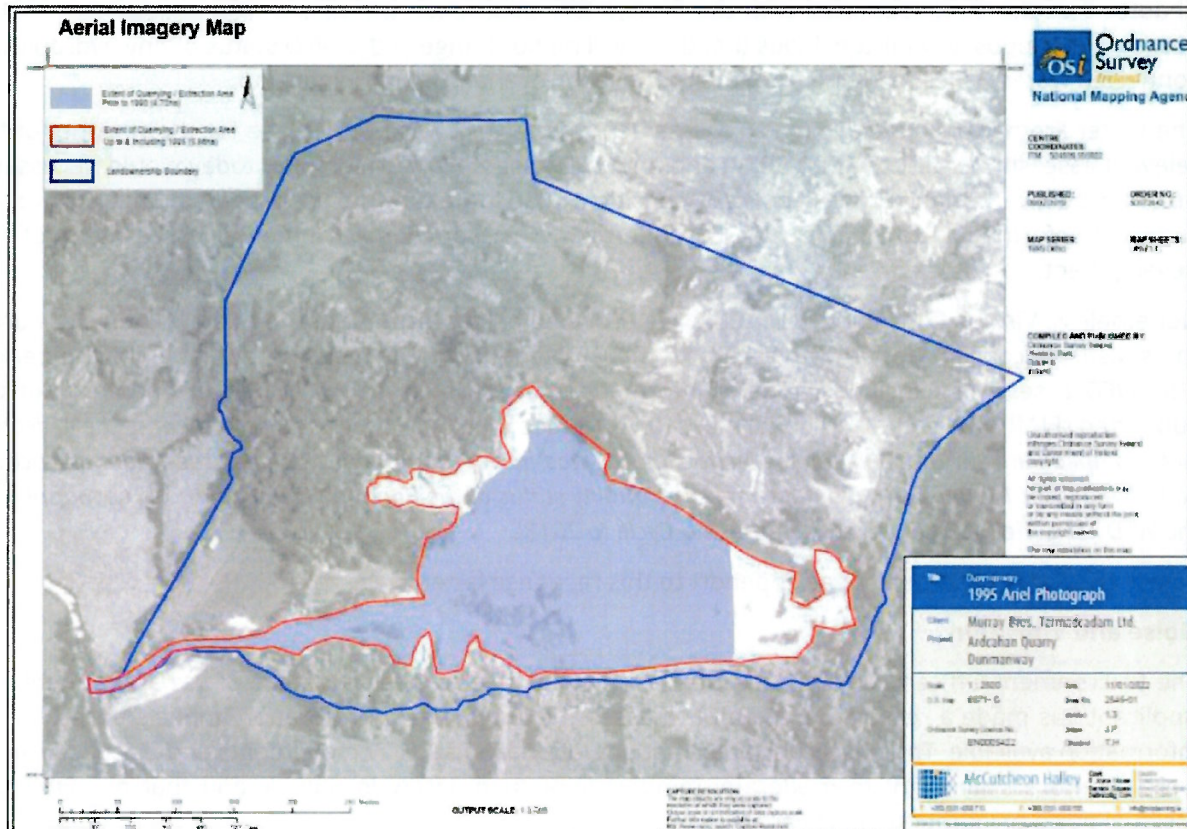


Figure 2 1995 Aerial Photography: Extraction Area as of 1995 outlined in red (extraction prior to 1990, shaded purple)

It should be noted that initial extraction activities that took place at the Site pre-1963, prior to the substitute consent period of 1990 to 2014. See Figure 2 above. Most of the vegetation clearance works that resulted in a loss of habitat pre-1995 are not subject to assessment within this substitute consent application.

While the Applicant does not accept that additional compensatory measures are necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Substitute Consent process, the Applicant remains willing to provide further quantification of historical habitat losses and gains, and to supplement the remediation proposals with further ecological enhancement measures if ACP considers this necessary to assist its assessment. This could be completed by way of consent compliance condition.

In 2022 ecological survey and assessments were completed by Kelleher Ecology Services, for the Site in support of a substitute consent application (later withdrawn). The findings and conclusions of these surveys are closely aligned with the findings of the surveys completed by MOR Environmental over the period of 2022 to 2026.

In conclusion, it is considered that the rEIAR and rNIS provides a robust framework for the management and restoration of the Site.

Water Framework Impact Assessment

The Applicant notes the request for a Water Framework Impact Assessment and associated monitoring information. It is submitted that the application is accompanied by a detailed Hydrology and

Hydrogeology assessment and remedial Natura Impact Statement specifically prepared to assess the environmental effects of the historic quarrying activities.

Chapter 7 of the EIAR submitted with the Section 37L application includes a WFD assessment on the Section 37L proposals, and concludes that there will be no change in the WFD status of any hydraulically connected waterbodies resulting from the proposed Ardcahan Quarry Expansion.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment framework was not in place for the majority of the relevant assessment period (1990-2014) and any WFD assessment undertaken today would necessarily be retrospective in nature. The Applicant considers that the assessments already submitted provide sufficient information to enable ACP to undertake a reasoned environmental assessment of the development.

Nonetheless, Viridus Consulting Ltd (VCL) have provided an assessment of the quarrying on site during the substitute consent period with regard to the WFD and EPA WFD mapping available for the period. This WFD assessment includes a lot of information that was already provided in Chapter 7 of the submitted rEIAR, with some additional maps. It concludes that *'A retrospective assessment of the Ardcahan sites compliance with the WFD for the period that it was in operation, indicates that the quarrying activity completed from 1990 to 2014 did not change the quality status of the Bandon River water body as mapped for the WFD 1st Cycle to 2016 and start of the 2nd Cycle to 2018'*.

Please see the full assessment as appendix to this response letter.

Noise and Vibration

The Environment Officer expressly accepts that, given the retrospective nature of the assessment, the Applicant has made a reasonable attempt to assess historic noise and vibration impacts based on the information available. The rEIAR concludes that operational noise, HGV movements and blasting impacts were no more than slight to moderate, temporary or momentary in nature, and that no significant residual noise or vibration effects arose.

The Planning Authority notes discrepancies regarding distances to nearby dwellings and seeks additional clarification in respect of historic monitoring locations, blast monitoring and complaints records.

The differing receptor distances appear to arise from differing measurement approaches and receptor definitions, including property boundaries, dwellings and noise-sensitive receptors. CLV Consulting have provided an updated map and have clearly set out the distances from the noise survey locations and the nearby dwellings. Please see their letter response for further detail.



Figure 3 Extract from Map included as appendix to CLV's response letter

There is no record available of any blast monitoring or complaints received during the substitute consent period of 1990-2014. As such there is no detail available to include in relation to these matters.

Archaeology

The Planning Authority acknowledges that any potential archaeological impact is inherently difficult to assess retrospectively because no previously recorded archaeological features were identified on the site and any impacts, if they occurred, are unquantifiable.

No Recorded Monument is affected by the application, and no archaeological material was identified during previous investigations. The Archaeological Officer does not recommend any archaeological mitigation measures or planning conditions in relation to the Substitute Consent application. The Archaeological Officer's recommendation for archaeological monitoring relates to the separate Section 37L application for future development.

Relationship with the Section 37L Application

The Applicant notes the Planning Authority's recommendation that no decision be taken on the Section 37L application pending agreement of compensatory measures. It is respectfully submitted that Substitute Consent and the Section 37L application are separate statutory processes, each of which must be determined on its own merits and in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions.

While cumulative effects have appropriately been considered where relevant, the adequacy of the Substitute Consent remediation measures should be assessed by reference to the historic quarrying development undertaken between 1990 and 2014, rather than by reference to future quarrying activity which is subject to a separate statutory assessment process.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the Planning Authority's concerns regarding the timing of the Section 37L determination should not alter the statutory test applicable to the substitute consent application. The question for the Commission in the substitute consent case is whether the historic development, assessed by reference to the rEIAR, rNIS and Planning Statement, can be regularised subject to appropriate remedial measures. The separate question of whether future quarrying should be permitted, and on what terms, falls to be considered under the Section 37L application.

Other

The council agreed with the conclusions of the rEIAR that the quarrying activity on site did not result in significant negative landscape and visual impacts. The landscape and visual impact during the 1990-2014 substitute consent period is assessed against a baseline environment with the existing quarry, which pre-dates 1963. The context of an existing quarry on site minimises the impact of the works completed during the substitute consent period.

The Roads Directorate Engineer had no issues with the application and recommended granting permission for the substitute consent.

The Planning Authority report identifies no significant unresolved concerns in respect of access, landscape and visual impact, air quality, flood risk or the established suitability of the quarry location.

Conclusion

The Ardcahan Quarry presents a particular planning history, including its pre-1963 origins, its former ownership and operation by Cork County Council, the subsequent permission for the associated macadam plant, the Applicant's acquisition of the quarry from Cork County Council, and the Applicant's reasonable belief as to the authorised status of the quarry.

Once the legal position became clear following the Section 261A process, the Applicant engaged with the process, complied with the enforcement notice, ceased quarrying operations and has maintained the site in an inactive state since 2014. This is not a case involving ongoing unauthorised quarrying activity, but rather a statutory process intended to regularise historic development and secure appropriate remediation.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the rEIAR, rNIS and Planning Statement adequately identify and assess the significant environmental effects arising from the historic quarrying activities and propose appropriate remedial measures. The Planning Authority report identifies matters where further clarification may assist ACP, but does not identify any significant environmental effect that would preclude the granting of Substitute Consent.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the application satisfies the requirements of Sections 177E, 177F and 177K of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and should be favourably considered by An Coimisiún Pleanála.

Yours sincerely,



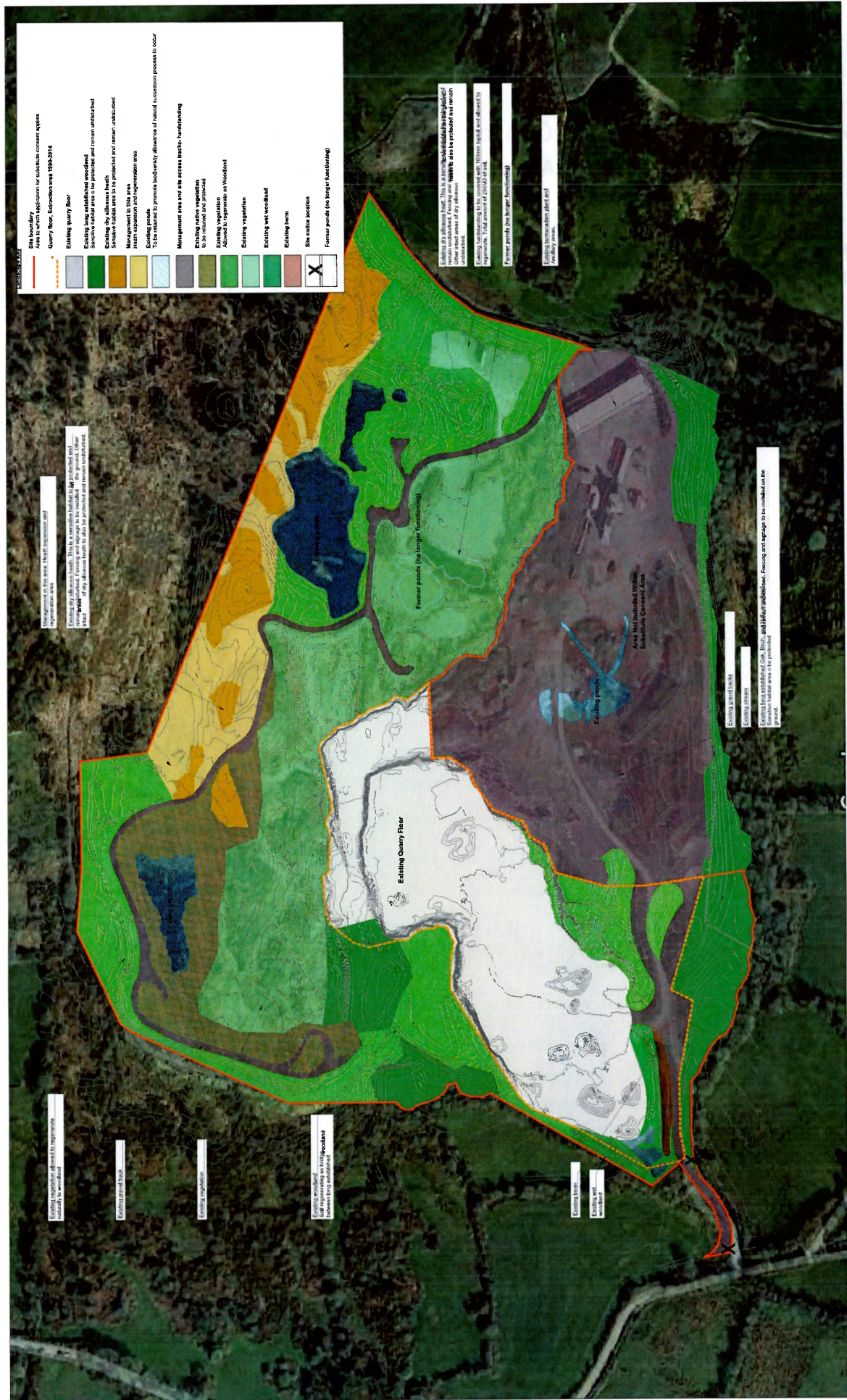
Saoirse Kavanagh

McCutcheon Halley

Appendix A – Substitute Consent Site Layout and Remediation Plan (Appendix 11.1 of rEIAR and submitted as a standalone drawing)

Please note a new 'former ponds' label has been added to two of the ponds shown in the centre of the site. Previously there was no label on these ponds.

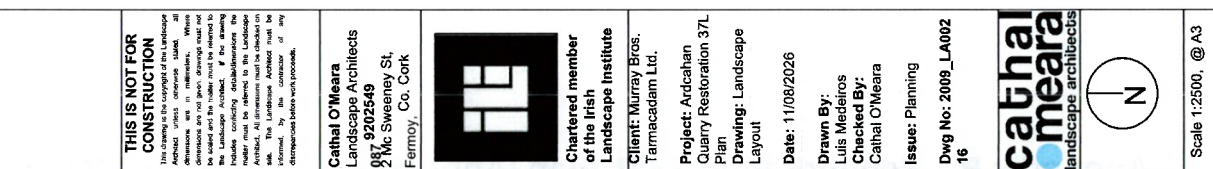
ARDCAHAN QUARRY SUBSTITUTE CONSENT SITE LAYOUT AND REMEDIATION PLAN



Appendix B – Regeneration S37L Plan (Appendix 11.1 of S37L EIAR and submitted as a standalone drawing)



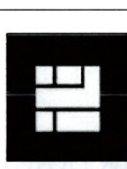
Landscape Key



THIS IS NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

This drawing is the copyright of the Landscape Architect unless otherwise stated. All dimensions are in millimeters. Where dimensions are not given, drawings must be scaled and the Architect must be referred to for clarification. If the drawing includes conflicting details/dimensions the ruler must be referred to the Landscape Architect. All dimensions must be checked on site. The Landscape Architect must be informed by the contractor of any discrepancies before work commences.

Cathal O'Meara
Landscape Architects
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Fermoy Co. Cork



**Chartered member
of the Irish
Landscape Institute**

Client: Murray Bros.
Tarmacadam Ltd.

Project: Ardcahan
Quarry Restoration 371

Drawing: Landscape Layout

Date: 11/08/2026

Drawn By:

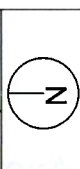
Checked By: Luis Medeiros

Issue: Planning

Dwg No: 2009_LA002
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cathal meara
landscape architects

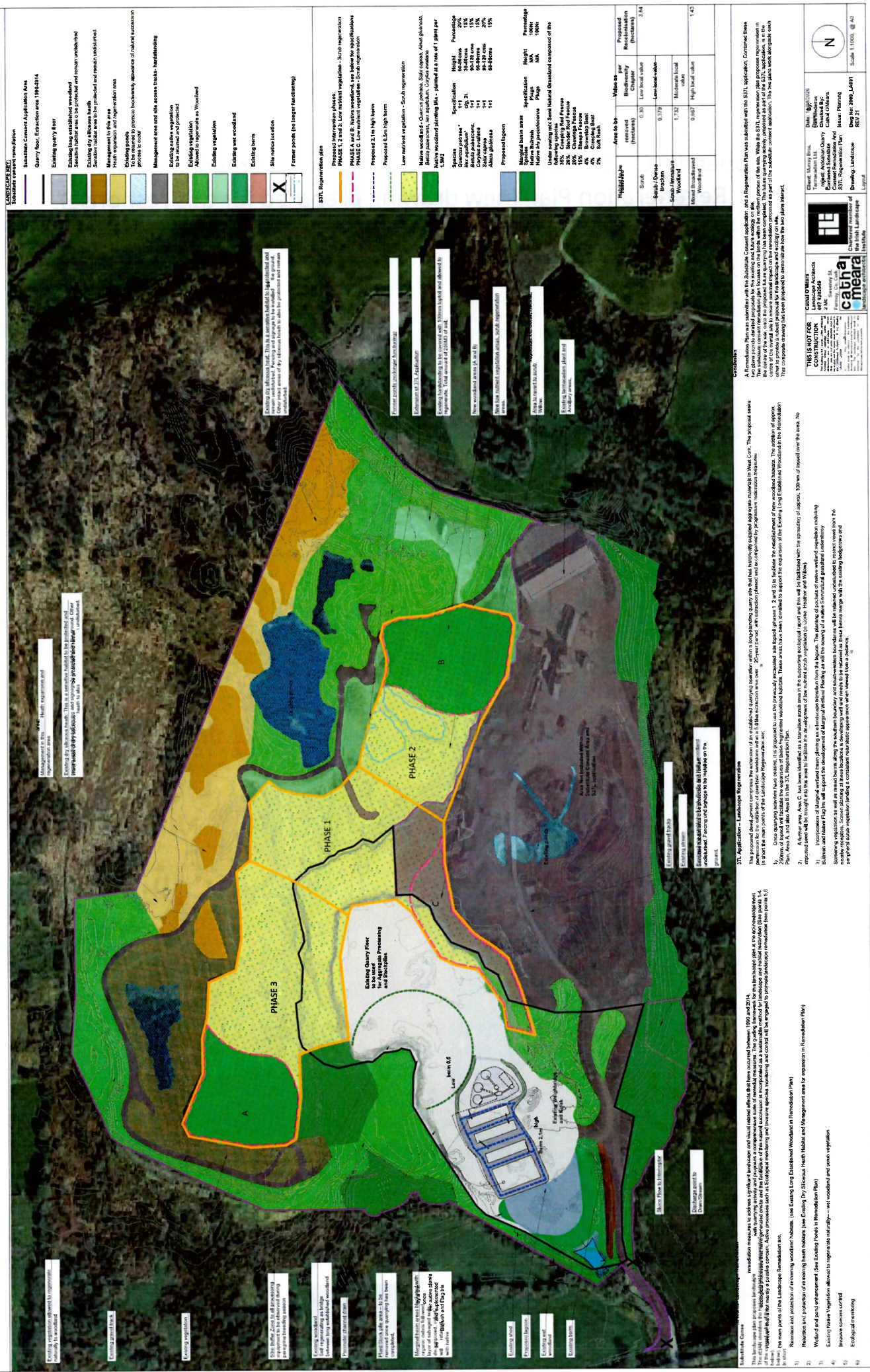


Scale 1:2500, @ A3

Appendix C – Combined Substitute Consent Remediation and S37L Regeneration Plan (new drawing prepared for this response)



ARDCAHAN QUARRY COMBINED SUBSTITUTE CONSENT REMEDIATION AND S37L REGENERATION PLAN



Appendix D – CLV Response Letter





23/09991L01
31 July 2026

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Saoirse,

RE: ARDCAHAN QUARRY - CORK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT RESPONSE LETTER

Pursuant to the reports submitted by Cork County Council in respect of the substitute consent and S37L planning permission submissions for the Ardcahan Quarry, we have provided a response to the items relevant to the noise and vibration impact EIAR chapters as follows.

Council Report Item #1

1.) The respective number and distances of all noise sensitive receptors within 500m and 1000m of the proposed development should be presented and quantified. The referenced noise sensitive receptors that each selected noise monitoring location is considered to be representative of should also be identified and quantified and shown on a suitably scaled map.

CLV Response:

A scaled map identifying each of the nearest noise sensitive receptors within 500m and 1km of the substitute consent application is provided in Appendix A at the rear of this document. The map also includes the 2014 noise monitoring locations (S01, 02 & 03).

A table detailing the distances of the identified noise sensitive receptors and noise monitoring locations from the nearest quarry boundary is provided in Table 1 on the following page.

Note that the values listed represent the distance from the receptors to the nearest property boundary and not to the nearest proposed / existing working areas of the quarry which would have different variances depending on the direction.

Receptor	Type	Distance (metres)
1	Dwelling	505 m
2	Dwelling	524 m
3	Dwelling	519 m
4	Dwelling	434 m
5	Dwelling	395 m
6	Dwelling	668 m
7	Dwelling	697 m
8	Dwelling	690 m
9	Dwelling	781 m
10	Dwelling	761 m
11	Dwelling	888m
12	Dwelling	971m
13	Dwelling	904 m
14	Dwelling	644 m
15	Dwelling	405 m
16	Dwelling	342 m
17	Dwelling	233 m
18	Dwelling	550 m
19	Dwelling	387 m
20	Dwelling	726 m
21	Dwelling	772 m
22	Dwelling	880 m
23	Dwelling	938 m
24	Dwelling	946 m
25	Dwelling	849 m
26	Dwelling	662 m
27	Dwelling	540 m
28	Dwelling	498 m
29	Dwelling	449 m
30	Dwelling	180 m
31	Dwelling	170 m
32	Dwelling	303 m
33	Dwelling	284 m
34	Dwelling	632 m
35	Dwelling	678 m
36	Dwelling	881 m
37	Dwelling	928 m
38	Dwelling	483 m
39	Dwelling	496 m
40	Dwelling	523 m
41	Dwelling	437 m
42	Dwelling	636 m
43	Dwelling	940 m
44	Dwelling	331 m
45	Dwelling	303 m
S01	Noise Monitoring Location	287 m
S02	Noise Monitoring Location	185 m
S03	Noise Monitoring Location	305 m

Table 1 Noise Monitoring Locations & Noise Sensitive Receptors Within 1km of Ardcahan Quarry

Council Report Item #2

2.) Clarify whether an assessment has been carried out for the presence of any tonal/impulsive elements in the noise arising from the identified noise sources and if the overall predicted and cumulative noise levels have been adjusted accordingly for the presence or otherwise of such elements.

CLV Response:

A tonal element assessment cannot be definitively carried out given without octave band noise level data for specific site sources. However, the predicted noise emission levels from the quarry would not be sufficiently above the ambient noise level environment in the vicinity to give rise to tonal elements.

The noise emission levels for both the construction and operational phases of the quarry are compared with the ambient noise levels measured in the vicinity in Table 2 below.

Receptor Location	Measured Ambient Noise Level	Estimated Noise Level		Comparison of Quarry Noise Levels w/ Ambient
		Construction Phase	Operational Phase	
Dwellings to East	41 - 49	43	43	Consistent with or below
Dwellings to Southwest	50 - 51	37	41	Below
Dwellings to Southeast	48 - 50	38	40	Below

Table 2 Quarry Noise Emission Comparison with Ambient Noise Level Environment (dB LAeq)

As can be seen from the above comparison, the predicted noise emission levels from the quarry are consistent with or below the ambient noise level environment in the vicinity and therefore would not be sufficiently high enough for tonal elements to manifest themselves at the nearest noise sensitive receptors even if they were present.

It should also be considered that quarry noise emissions (especially when there are multiple sources in operation at the same time) are generally broadband in nature.

In respect of impulsive noise, there will likely be impulsive noise events that occur due to the processes involved with earth moving equipment. However, as demonstrated in Table 2, the levels would not be sufficiently high enough for impulsive events to be at a nuisance level at the nearest noise sensitive receptors.

There would therefore be no justifiable basis for adjusting the predicted noise levels accordingly.

It should also be noted that all quarry noise sources will occur during daytime periods only.

Council Report Item #3

3.) Clarify whether overall predicted cumulative noise levels have had regard to noise levels and any noise contribution arising from the tarmacadam/asphalt plant.

CLV Response:

We can confirm that the predicted cumulative noise levels included contributions from both the future proposed quarry activities as well as from the existing tarmacadam / asphalt plant operations.

Council Report Item #4

4.) The operational criterion as set out in Page 10.10 of the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Report, refers to 55dB $L_{Aeq,1hr}$ as being adopted as appropriate. The daytime criterion as set out in Page 10.19 of the same assessment report refers to 50dB $L_{Aeq,1hr}$. This is assumed to be an error which should be clarified.

CLV Response:

We can confirm that is correct. The operational phase noise criterion of 55dB $L_{Aeq,1hr}$ was established in Section 9.4.1.1 of the Chapter. The subsequent referencing of this criterion in Sections 9.5.3 was incorrectly stated as being 50dB $L_{Aeq,1hr}$.

Note that this typo does not have any bearing on the assessment findings or conclusions detailed in the Chapter.

We trust this letter provides sufficient response for the concerns raised by Cork County Council. However, please do not hesitate to contact this office if they have any further queries or concerns.

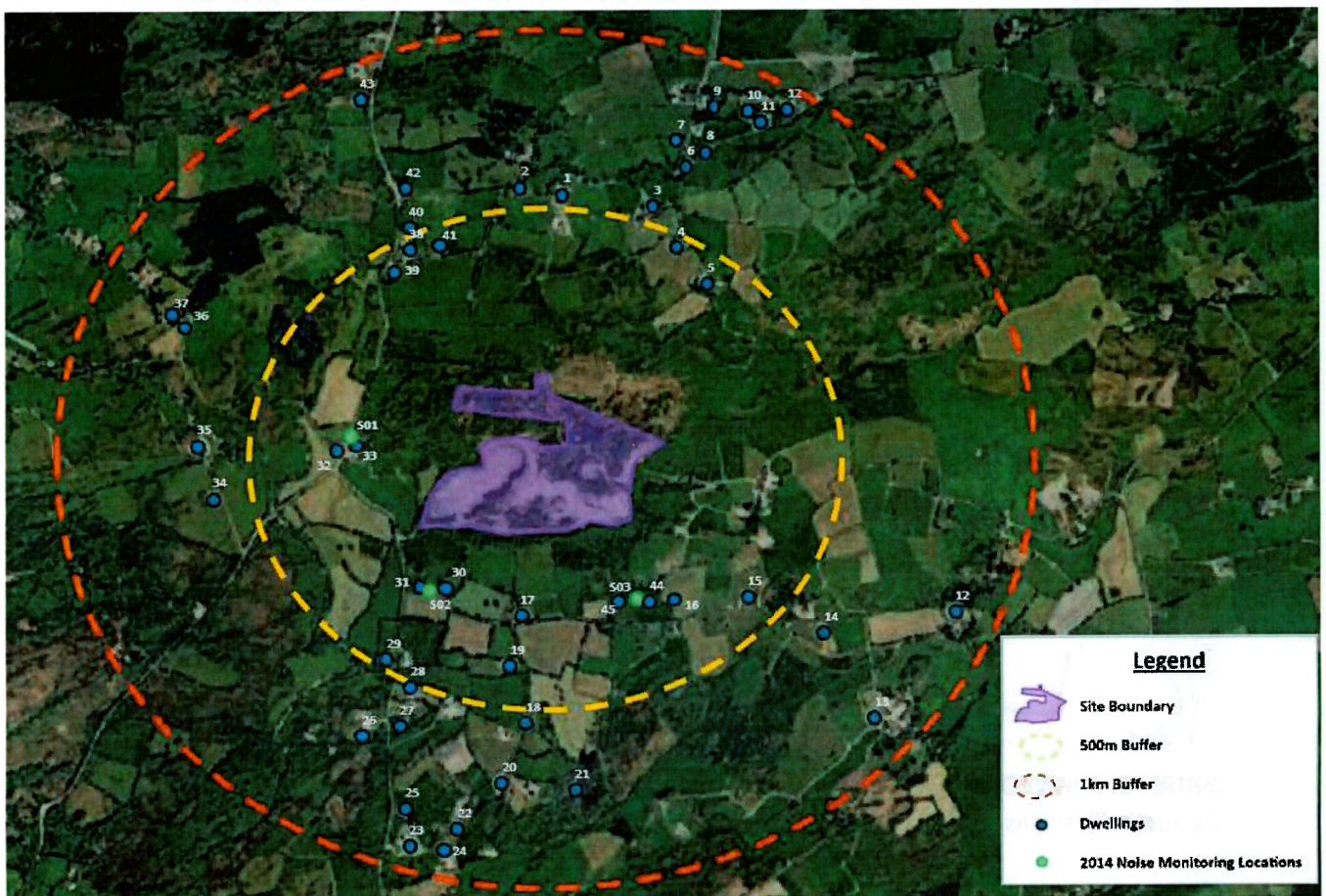
Yours sincerely,



BRIAN S. JOHNSON
Acoustic Specialist

APPENDIX A

Scaled Map Identifying Each of the Nearest Noise Sensitive Receptors at Distances Of 500m & 1 km From the Nearest Development Boundary in Each Direction



Appendix E – Viridus Response Letter, with Water Framework Directive Assessment



For the Attention of:

Saoirse Kavanagh, Executive Planning Consultant,
McCutcheon Halley, Chartered Planning Consultants,
6 Joyce House, Barrack Square,
Ballincollig, County Cork.

Date: 10th August 2026

Subject:- Ardcahan Quarry Application for Substitute Consent - Water Framework Directive Information

Dear Saoirse,

As per your recent request, in response to the Cork Co. Council (CCC) report to An Comisiún Pleanála, (ACP), on the Ardcahan Quarry Substitute Consent Application by Murray Brothers Tarmacadam Ltd., (MBT), for the historic quarrying of sandstone bedrock that took place between Feb 1990 and Oct 2014, (along with associated site development works), at Ardcahan, near Dunmanway in Co. Cork, VCL have reviewed Chapter 7 (Hydrology and Hydrogeology) of the remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (rEIAR) with a view to reporting the aspects specifically pertaining to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), and present that information below.

Background

The overall MBT landholding is 25.2 hectares (ha) while the footprint of the Substitute Consent area is about 15.2 ha with a 1990 quarry area of 4.72 ha and a total extraction area between 1990 to 2014 of 5.94 ha. There has been no extraction or quarrying at the site since October 2014.

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), as amended by Directives 2008/105/EC, 2013/39/EU and 2014/101/EU, was signed into law in October 2000. It requires EU member States to achieve water quality of at least *Good Status* in rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters by 2027 at the latest. The Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). The Directive requires that management plans, based on River Basin Districts (RBD), be prepared on a river basin basis and specifies a structured method for developing these plans.

The WFD is implemented through the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) in 6-year cycles. WFD Cycle 1 covered the period 2010 – 2015; WFD Cycle 2 covered the period 2016 – 2021; and WFD Cycle 3 covers the period 2022 – 2027. The local authorities coordinate water quality management across a five region structure and the directive includes surface waters and groundwaters.

Under the WFD water quality of River Basin Districts is assessed biologically, physically and chemically. Assessment is done using surveys that are predominately conducted by the EPA, local authorities and complemented by other government bodies including Inland Fisheries.

Retrospectively the WFD Cycle 1 (2010 to 2015) and Cycle 2 (2016 to 2021) are the periods relevant for the Subsequent Consent Application as quarrying was undertaken prior to the WFD commencement up to 2014.



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WFD Water Bodies

The Ardcahan Quarry site is situated in the South Western River Basin District (SWRBD) and the river catchments are located within Hydrometric Area (HA) No. 20 (Bandon-Ilen ID 20) as defined by the Water Frame Work Directive (WFD).

The sub-catchment for the rivers to the northwest of Dunmanway is identified by the EPA as Bandon_SC_10 with the majority of the quarry site located with the Sub Basin Bandon_020 catchment which covers an area of 48.34km². A small section of the northern boundary of the site is located on the southern boundary of the Sub Basin Caha_20 catchment. (Note that EPA Catchment Maps are presented in Appendix 7.1 of the eIAR.)

The main hydrological feature near the site is a small unnamed stream that flows along the sites eastern and southern boundaries. This small watercourse, (identified as the boundary stream), has an estimated catchment area of about one square kilometre (1km²) of which the site area occupies approximately 25%. The remainder of the catchment is occupied by upland agricultural grassland and scrub vegetation.

The stream flows adjacent to the site close to its eastern and southern boundaries and reaches the Bandon River about 500m to the southwest of the quarry site. Refer to Figure 1.

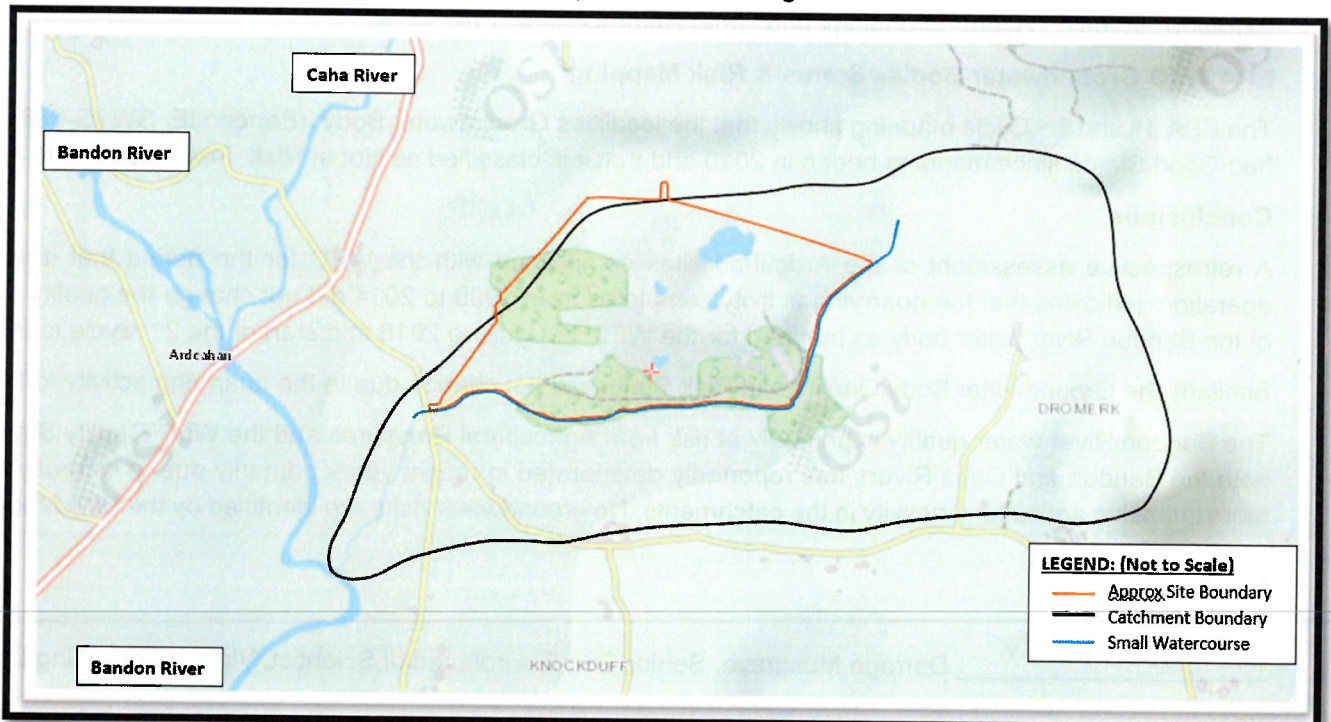


Figure 1: Hydrological Features including the local catchment area of the adjacent 'Boundary Stream'.



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EPA WFD Water Bodies Status & Risk Mapping

The EPA web site provides access to a range of WFD maps showing the Quality Status and Risk Status for Waterbodies and Groundwater Bodies across the state for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd WFD Cycle Monitoring.

These were reviewed for the Ardcahan locality and are included in Appendix A at the end of this document.

The EPA WFD maps show that for the period that the Ardcahan quarry was in operation, up to 2014, the Water Quality Status for the local Bandon and Caha River waterbodies was 'Good'. Refer to the 2010 – 2015 and 2013 to 2018 Maps presented in Maps A.1 and A.2

Subsequently the status of the Bandon River was mapped as Moderate for the 2016 to 2021 (2nd Cycle) period, as presented in Map A.3. This deterioration occurred while no quarrying activity was taking place.

The WFD 2nd Cycle Risk Mapping indices that the Bandon River is not at Risk but the Caha is, (see Map A.4).

Assessment of the EPA WFD Pressures Maps (3rd Cycle) indicates that both River systems are At Risk from Agricultural Pressures, (see Map A.5).

The Caha River, which is upstream of the Ardcahan quarry area, is also identified to be under pressure from Extractive Industry, Hydromorphology and Other Anthropogenic Pressures.

EPA WFD Groundwater Bodies Status & Risk Mapping

The EPA 1st and 2nd Cycle mapping shows that the localities Groundwater Body, (Bandon IE_SW_G-086), had had Good Status since mapping began in 2010 and that it is classified as Not at Risk. See Maps A.6 to A.8.

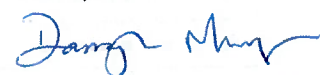
Conclusions

A retrospective assessment of the Ardcahan sites compliance with the WFD for the period that it was in operation, indicates that the quarrying activity completed from 1990 to 2014 did not change the quality status of the Bandon River water body as mapped for the WFD 1st Cycle to 2016 and start of the 2nd Cycle to 2018.

Similarly the Groundwater Body Quality and Risk Status did not change due to the quarrying activity to 2014.

The Bandon River water quality is primarily at risk from Agricultural Pressures and the WFD Quality Status of both the Bandon and Caha Rivers has reportedly deteriorated in recent years primarily due to increased and more intensive agricultural activity in the catchments. No groundwater risks are identified by the EPA Mapping.

Yours,



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Appendix A is included below.



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Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.1 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2010 to 2015 (WFD 1st Cycle) Period.
WFD Bandon_020 River and WFD Caha_020 River Segments Showing Good Quality (Green) Status.
(EPA River Quality Status Mapping 2010 to 2015 from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



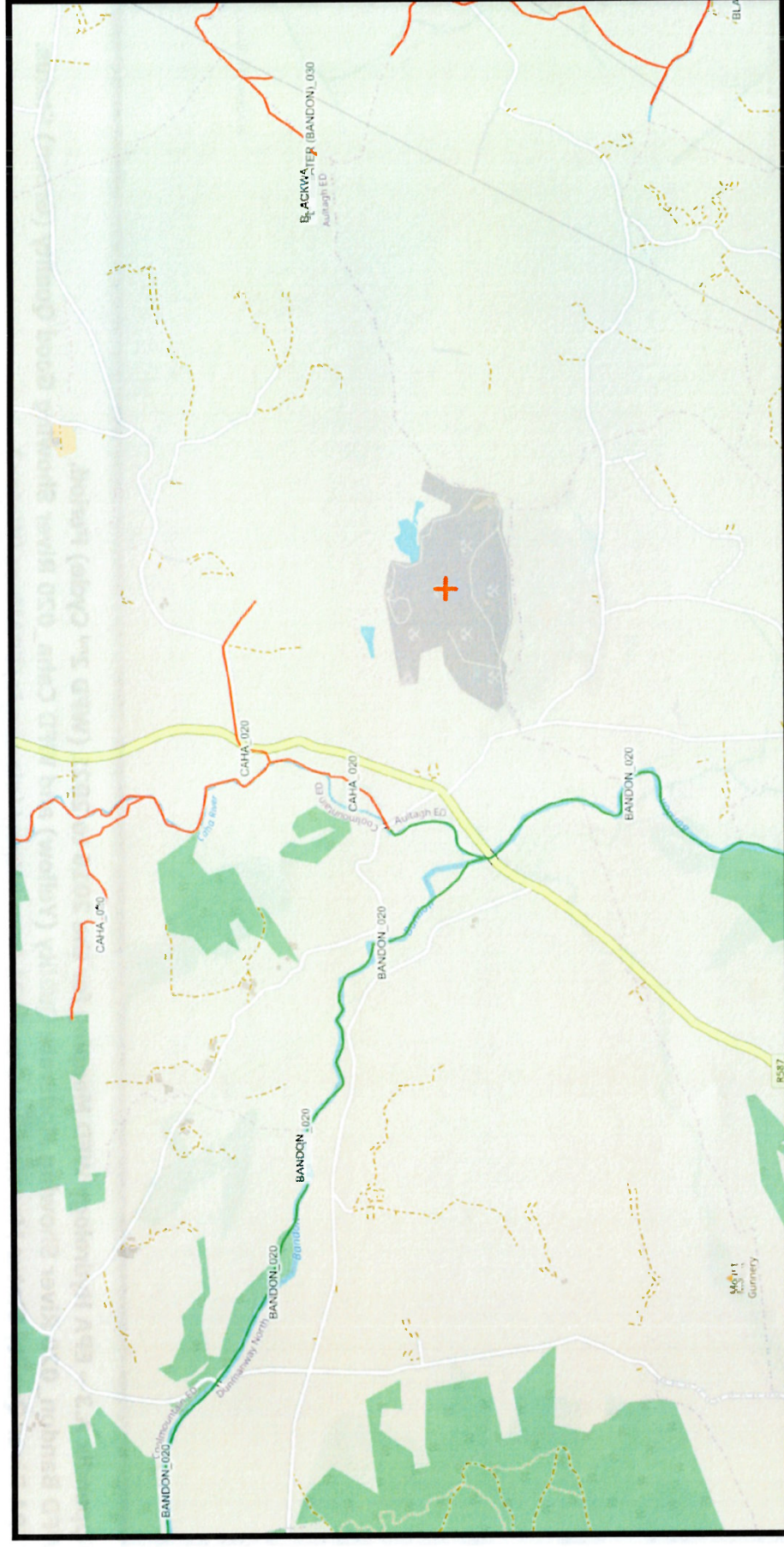
Appendix A.2 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2013 to 2018 (WFD 1st & Early 2nd Cycle) Period. WFD Bandon_020 River and WFD Caha_020 River Segments Showing Good Quality (Green) Status. (EPA River Quality Status Mapping 2013 to 2018 from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water->)

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.3 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2016 to 2021 (WFD 2nd Cycle) Period.
WFD Bandon_020 River Showing Moderate Quality (Yellow) and WFD Caha_020 River Showing Good Quality (Green) Status.
(EPA River Quality Status Mapping 2016 to 2021 from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



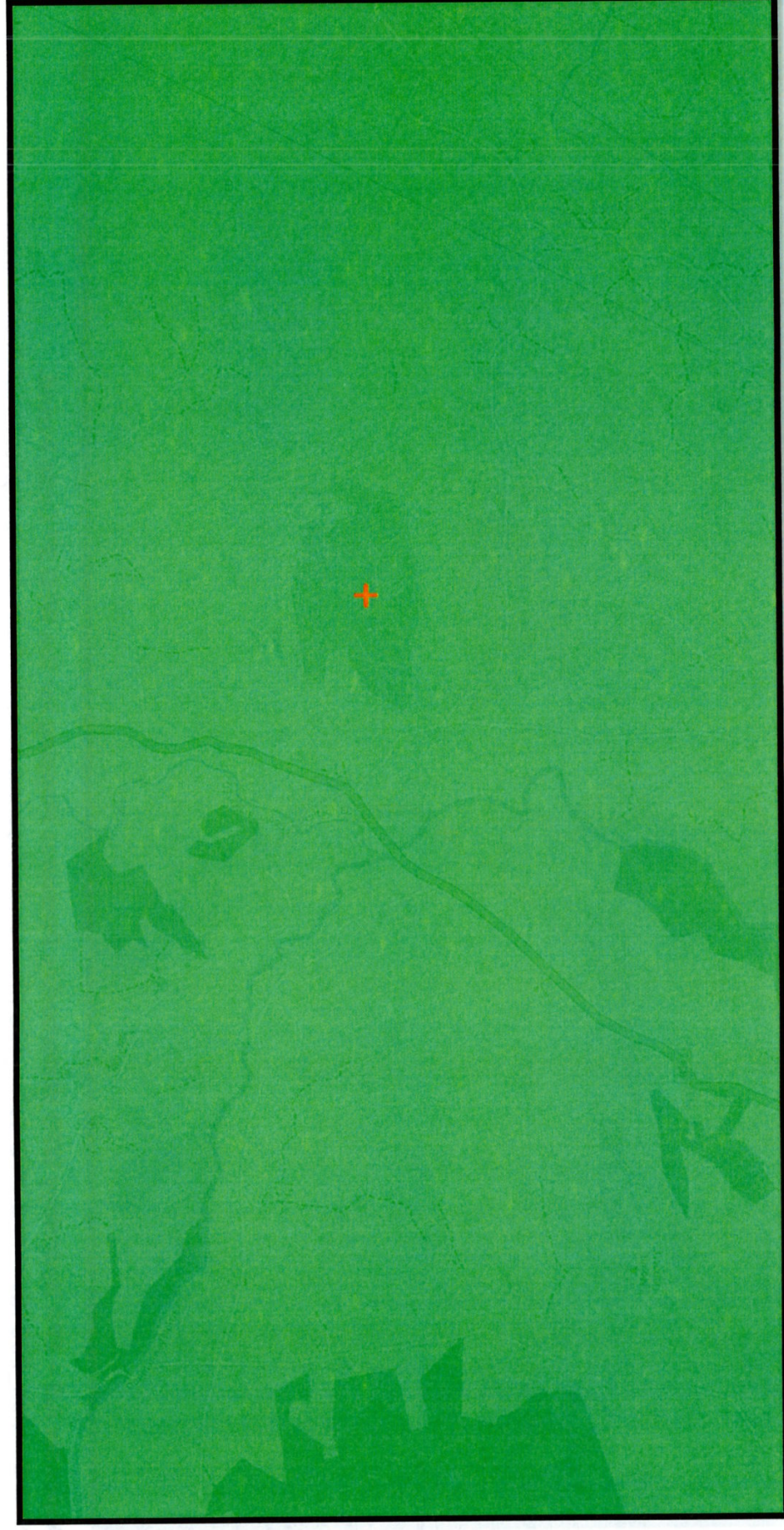
**Appendix A.4 – EPA Hydrology WFD Waterbodies Risk Mapping for the WFD 2nd Cycle Period.
WFD Bandon_020 River Showing Not At Risk (Green) and WFD Caha_020 River Showing At Risk (Red).
(EPA WFD Risk 2nd Cycle Mapping from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water->)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.5 – EPA Hydrology WFD Waterbodies Pressures Mapping for the WFD 3rd Cycle Period.
WFD Bandon_020 River and WFD Caha_020 River Both Showing At Risk (Red) due to Agricultural Pressures.
(EPA WFD Waterbodies Pressures Mapping from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.6 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2010 to 2015 (WFD 1st Cycle) Period.
WFD Bandon Groundwater Body (Code IE_SW-G_086) Showing Good Quality (Green) Status.
(EPA WFD Groundwater Bodies Quality Status Mapping 2010 to 2015 from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water.>)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.7 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2016 to 2021 (WFD 2nd Cycle) Period.
WFD Bandon Groundwater Body (Code IE_SW-G_086) Showing Good Quality (Green) Status.
(EPA WFD Groundwater Bodies Quality Status Mapping 2016 to 2021 from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water.>)**

Appendix A: Ardcahan Quarry rEIAR – Water Chapter Extra WFD Map Data EPA WFD Hydrology Catchment, Water Quality and Risk Mapping



**Appendix A.8 – EPA Hydrology WFD Mapping for the 2021 to 2027 (WFD 3rd Cycle) Period.
WFD Bandon Groundwater Body (Code IE_SW-G_086) Showing Not At Risk (Green) Status.
(EPA WFD Groundwater Bodies Risk Mapping from <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.)**