



3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter has been prepared by Gavin Lawlor and Bernard Dwyer of Tom Phillips + Associates in conjunction with Milford Quarries Ltd. and provides a detailed description of the development together with details of the existing environment.

Gavin Lawlor is a Director of Tom Phillips + Associates. He holds a BA (Social Science) from University College Dublin, where he graduated in 1995 with a Masters in Regional and Urban Planning (MRUP) Degree and is a Full Member of the Irish Planning Institute (IPI) with 25 years' experience. Further competent experts have been engaged to address specific issues and/or portions of the EIAR.

Bernard Dwyer is an Associate at Tom Phillips and Associates. He holds a Masters in Planning and Sustainable Development (MPLAN) from University College Cork where he graduated in 2014 and is a full member of the Irish Planning Institute (IPI) with 11 years' experience.

As set out in Chapter 2 of this rEIAR, the subject site at Redrock Quarry is located in County Carlow in the townland of Clogrennane and borders County Laois. The Applicant's wider landholding on the Redrock Quarry comprises of an existing stone quarry, particularly sandstone and siltstone, primarily through mechanical extraction over an area of approximately 8.66 hectares. The quarry has remained inactive for a number of years and is currently inactive pending consent from the An Bord Pleanála.

3.2 Summary of the Historic Development

The quarry was registered in 2005 under a different operator and included for the extraction of sandstone and siltstone, conducted primarily through mechanical methods. The total area extracted over the lifetime of the quarry was approximately 8.66 hectares. The quarry was originally registered on the basis of pre-63 origins owing to historical maps which showed a borrow pit in the north eastern corner of the site.

The applicants acquired the site in 2023 and there has been no extraction activity on the lands since this date. This S177E Substitute Consent application is being sought in order to regularise historic unauthorised development identified during the S261A process.

The need for substitute consent arises from previous S261A proceedings. Carlow County Council's determination in 2012 that historic extraction had taken place at the site which would have required a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment as per Section 261(2)(a)(i) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The Planning Authority also determined that development had occurred post 26th of February 1997, which would have required an Appropriate Assessment and this had not been conducted. Please refer to Section 3 for a detailed breakdown of the site's planning history in respect to quarry operations that occurred on site.

The S261A determinations and decision was referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála (then An Bord Pleanála) who upheld the determinations and decision of Carlow County Council.

The operators at the time were not in a position to remedy the above and as a result, large scale commercial extraction ceased in 2014 following the determination of An Coimisiún Pleanála in relation to the S261A proceedings.

It should be noted that to the best of our knowledge, no significant extraction activities began at the site until the period between 2000 and 2005, as evidenced by historic aerial imagery and based on discussions between the applicants and the previous operators of the site. Further assessment of historic aerial imagery of the site, confirms that the bulk of extraction at the site took place between 2005 and 2010-2012 timeframe. This is consistent with economic activity at the time.

The Aerial imagery further suggests that there was a small level of extraction from the lands following the S261A proceedings. Information on this is limited but we understand that relatively modest quantities of material were removed in campaigns c. 2018 and 2021. This material would most likely have been used locally for agricultural purposes.

As outlined on drawings prepared by Hydro Environmental Services, it is estimated that 650K m³ have been extracted in total from the site. The majority of this extraction took place in the period between 2005 and 2012. By 2012 550K m³ had been extracted. Following this a further 100K m³ were removed up until the applicants took ownership in 2023. This equates to just over 8K m³ per year on average over that period (2012 – 2023). The lands during this period had effectively reverted to serving as a borrow pit for local users where small scale extraction took place to serve local agricultural road building etc.

The lands are currently in a disused state, with previous surface water management features still intact and operational.





Figure 3.1: Extract of Dwg. No. 105-SC Site Development History. (Source: Hydro-Environmental Services.)

The new owners and Applicant, Milford Quarries Limited, obtained the quarry on the 27th of March 2023. The quarry has remained inactive throughout the duration of the Applicant's ownership of the site.

3.3 Description of Historic Development

The development has been described in the statutory notices as follows:

Milford Quarries Limited, intend to apply for Substitute Consent, for development at a site in the townland of Clogrennane, Bilboa, Co. Carlow.

The development consisted of quarrying including rock extraction by mechanical means including extraction areas, stockpiling areas, surface water management and ancillary works. The quarry included an extraction area of c. 8.66 hectares within a wider landholding of c. 45.68 ha and involved extraction of up to c. 650,000 m³ of material over a c. 16-year period. The proposed development will also include for a restoration plan to agricultural grassland using excavated materials from an existing infill area at the western portion of the site.

We understand that lands outside of the Applicant's ownership, adjacent to the main site entrance, were previously used as a yard and additional access road for the site, without the benefit of Planning Permission. This area has since been reinstated to its original use and does not form part of this Application.

3.4 Screening

The west is screened by berms constructed from stripped soil/subsoil. While the north, east, and south are screened by trees, ditches and the natural sloping topography.

The retrospective Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (chapter 15 of this rEIAR) describes the study area surrounding the subject site as follows:

"The proposed development study area is located in the Hills and uplands area and is described as an area with the capacity to accommodate a range of uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regards to the localised sensitivity factors."

Further detail is provided in Chapter 15 - Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

3.5 Drainage

A hydrogeological assessment has been undertaken and is detailed in Chapter 8 Hydrology. Currently, surface water outfalls from a large pond in the floor of the quarry void.

3.6 Access

Access to the site and its boundary are currently unsecured. Previous vehicular traffic would have access the site via L7130 and L7134. The constructed berms and some natural ditches hinder access to the site from the west and south. Security measures including new entrance detail and site office will be proposed as part of the subsequent application for future



development to be made in accordance with Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act, as amended.

Further detail is provided in Chapter 13 – Traffic.

3.7 Operating Hours

As outlined above, the quarry has ceased significant operations since circa 2014 and following the outcome of the S261A proceedings. Condition No. 8 of the initial Section 261 Registration limited operating hours to between 7a.m. and 6p.m. Monday to Friday and 7a.m. to 1p.m. Saturday. Operations were excluded on Sundays and Public Holidays.

3.8 Hydrological Context

Regionally, the majority of the Proposed Development Site is located within the River Barrow surface water catchment and Hydrometric Area 14 of the Southeastern River Basin District. Meanwhile, the southwest of the Proposed Development Site is located within the River Nore surface water catchment and Hydrometric Area 15 of the Southeastern River Basin District.

EPA mapping suggest a stream (identified as Raheendoran Stream) flows through the site before ultimately discharging into the River Barrow. However, walkover surveys and drainage mapping indicate that the course of this stream has been altered by the historic quarrying activities and no watercourses cross the existing quarry void. Water gathers in the floor of the existing quarry and drains out from an existing pond in the north of the quarry. From here the stream/quarry discharge flows to the southeast along the existing quarry access road. The drain is culverted under the access road and flows to the east where it joins the Mortarstown Stream to the east. This stream flows east and discharges into the Fushoge River just upstream of its confluence with the River Barrow.

There is no existing discharge from the quarry within the River Nore catchment. However, there is an unnamed stream c. 1.3km west of the site which connects to the Dinin River that ultimately discharges into the River Nore. It is possible that runoff from some areas in the west of the site may currently flow to the west towards the Dinin River.

Further information is detailed in Chapter 8 – Hydrology.

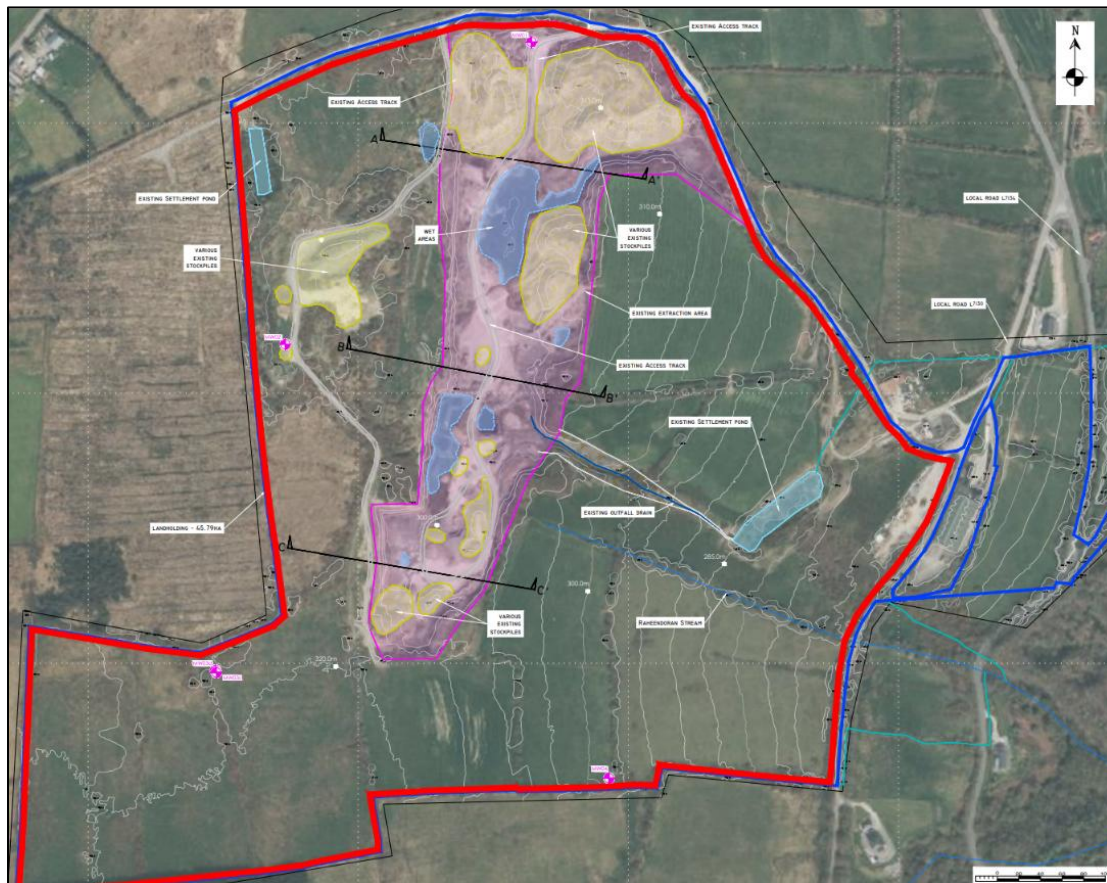


Figure 3.2: Extract from Dwg. No. P1687-0-1225-A0-103-SC-00D 'Existing Conditions'. (Source: Hydro-Environmental Services.)

3.9 Trade Effluent Discharge

A discharge licence was granted by Carlow County Council in November 2011 (DL/S4/2011/2). This licence was for the purpose of licensing discharges to waters as defined in the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977-2007 and included conditions on various matters including:

- Notification of incidents and reporting
- Site design and management
- Emission to Waters
- Waste Management

Annual Environmental Reports associated with the Licence were not available. However this is likely due to the fact that large scale operations began winding down shortly after the granting of this licence due to the economic downturn.

Chapter 8 of the rEIAR, prepared by Hydro Environmental Services (HES) includes Biological Q-rating data for EPA monitoring points upstream and downstream of the Development Site during the Extraction Phase. This detailed in Table 8-8 and demonstrates that where information is available, Q-ratings were generally in the moderate to good range. HES also carried out additional Water Quality monitoring at various dates in 2025 at the existing settlement ponds and outfall locations. Details are outlined in section Chapter 8.



3.10 Historic Mitigation

When the quarry was initially registered under Section 261 as QY14, a number of conditions were imposed to ensure environmental mitigation. The Section 261 Registration Notification dated 24th April 2007 includes 18 no. conditions, which sought assurances in relation to, *inter alia*, limiting noise levels, prohibiting surface water runoff to discharge to the public road, requiring any necessary environmental licencing is obtained, prohibiting washwater discharge, restricting the construction of ancillary buildings, requiring the public road is kept clean, requiring unsoiled surface water run-off collection and disposal, and requiring a restoration plan be submitted to the Planning Authority.

In addition, Condition no. 4 stated:

"The proposed development shall be operated so that the processes carried on, or the plant or machinery installed are such as could be carried on, or installed close to a residential area, without any detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust, or grit."

There were also conditions placed on the Trade Effluent Discharge Licence. It has not been possible to source any historic reporting in relation to adherence to conditions. However, baseline and surveying of the local and regional hydrology and other environmental factors indicate that there have been no adverse effects from the historic operations.