

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

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LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

INTRODUCTION

- 10.1 Roadstone Wood Ltd. intends to apply for a waste licence to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide for backfilling and restoration of the existing North Quarry on its landholding at Huntstown, Finglas, Dublin 11 using imported inert soils and stones.
- 10.2 This chapter of the Environmental Impact Statement describes and evaluates the existing landscape and visual resource surrounding the proposed inert waste recovery facility and has particular regard to its sensitivity and ability to accommodate change.
- 10.3 The proposed inert soil recovery facility is then applied to the baseline conditions to allow identification of potential impacts, prediction of their magnitude and assessment of their significance. Mitigation measures are identified to eliminate and reduce, insofar as practical, potential landscape and visual impacts.
- 10.4 The proposed inert waste recovery facility is located within the boundaries of a large existing quarry complex at Huntstown which currently comprises three separate limestone quarries, fixed and mobile aggregate processing plant, fixed concrete and asphalt production facilities, a construction and demolition waste facility and associated engineering and environmental infrastructure.
- 10.5 Following a desktop study and map review, the application site and its surrounds were visited and inspected by a Chartered Landscape Architect on 31 August 2010 in sunny weather conditions. For the purposes of this report and assessment, the study area is established as an area of approximately 2km surrounding the application site.
- 10.6 This chapter includes a number of drawings, which are presented at the end. The drawings are Figure 10-1 (Landscape Designations) and Figures 10-2 to 10-4 (Viewpoints A to F).
- 10.7 In assessing and describing impacts, and in accordance with the Glossary of Impacts included in the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements* (EPA, 2002), the terms identified in Table 10-1 below will be used:

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Table 10-1
Glossary of Impact Terminology

Term	Description
Positive Impact	A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
Neutral Impact	A change which does not affect the quality of the environment.
Negative Impact	A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, by causing nuisance).
Imperceptible Impact	An impact capable of measurement but without noticeable consequences.
Slight Impact	An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate Impact	An impact that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging trends.
Significant Impact	An impact which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound Impact	An impact which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Short-term Impact	Impact lasting one to seven years.
Medium-term Impact	Impact lasting seven to fifteen years.
Long-term Impact	Impact lasting fifteen to sixty years.
Permanent Impact	Impact lasting over sixty years.
Temporary Impact	Impact lasting for one year or less.

RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Existing Environment

- 10.8 The proposed waste recovery facility is located in the northern section of the existing Huntstown Quarry complex. It includes the near worked-out northern extraction void, which is proposed to be backfilled and restored using imported inert soil and stone, and some of the adjoining land.
- 10.9 The application site is bound by existing mature vegetation to the north, west and along parts of the southern and eastern boundaries. The existing aggregate processing area adjoins the site to the south-east.
- 10.10 The landscape surrounding the site comprises a mix of small to medium sized agricultural fields and industrial estates / business parks. There are a number of isolated private properties along local roads surrounding the site, however any larger residential areas are located at a minimum distance of 2km, to the south-east across the M50 Motorway (in Finglas West) and to the south-west at Corduff.

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- 10.11 The generally flat landscape around Huntstown does not include any unique or highly scenic features and it is considered that it has low to moderate sensitivity to change.

Landscape Designations

- 10.12 The Fingal County Development Plan 2005-2011 is the statutory plan with regard to landscape designations. The relevant landscape designations of lands surrounding the proposed waste recovery facility are described below:

Landscape Character Area

- 10.13 The current County Development Plan includes a description of 7 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the administrative boundary of Fingal County Council. The proposed waste recovery facility is fully located in the Low Lying Agricultural Character Area.
- 10.14 This LCA is generally described as: *'A mixture of pasture and arable farming on level land or land with few views or prospects. Generally large fields with few tree belts or large settlements. The more open character of the land combined with larger field patterns and low roadside hedges makes it a more difficult landscape to find suitable sites for development.'*
- 10.15 None of the High Amenity Areas, Areas of Sensitive Landscape, Landscape Groups and Views and Prospects identified as part of the Landscape Character Assessment are located in the vicinity of the proposed waste recovery facility.

Zoning Objectives

- 10.16 The development site is fully located within an area zoned under *'Objective RU: To protect and provide for the development of agriculture and rural amenity'*.
- 10.17 The vision for this Zoning Objective is described in Table No. 5.3 of the development plan as: *'This zoning objective seeks to protect the agricultural areas of the county...; while also seeking to preserve the rural amenity though ensuring new developments fit into the landscape sensitively and the natural features such as hedgerows and tree lines on ridges are protected.'*

Existing Visibility

- 10.18 The northern tip of the proposed inert waste recovery site and existing screening berms along the eastern boundary of the site are the only parts of the site visible from the surrounding landscape. However, these parts are only visible from a small number of elevated locations (flyovers) along the N2 Dual Carriageway to the north-east and the North Road (the former N2 National Primary Road) to the north of the site (identified as Viewpoints B and C).
- 10.19 The northern part of the application site was previously backfilled in 2002 and 2003. Final restoration and return of these lands to agricultural land use will take place at an early stage in the operation of the proposed inert waste

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recovery facility. At the present time the existing perimeter screening berms have naturally re-vegetated with grass and scrub species, similar to those found in the surrounding landscape.

- 10.20 The remainder of the application site, and in particular, the existing quarry void to be backfilled are screened in all views from the surrounding landscape (identified as Viewpoints A, D, E and F). This is due to the flat topography of the site, as well as numerous mature hedgerows along the local roads surrounding the site.

IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED WASTE FACILITY

Development Proposal

- 10.21 It is proposed to fill the existing quarry void with inert material, in order to restore the site to its original ground levels which will merge back into the surrounding landscape. On completion of the filling works, the site will be covered with suitable subsoil and topsoil material and grass seeded, so that it can be returned to agricultural use.
- 10.22 In an effort to re-establish some of the original, pre-quarrying landscape character, it is proposed to plant a number of native hedgerows and/or field boundaries across the restored area, similar to those identifiable on historic Ordnance Survey mapping of the area.

Future Visibility

- 10.23 None of the quarry backfilling activities will be visible from the surrounding landscape, as the existing quarry void is fully screened in all views from the surrounding landscape.
- 10.24 The placement of soil at, and final restoration of, the northern end of the application site will be temporarily visible in a small number of views from elevated positions along the N2 Dual Carriageway and the North Road.
- 10.25 Other than the above, the only visible evidence of the proposed waste recovery activity will be an increased number of HGVs using access roads to the site for delivery of the soil and stone used to backfill the quarry.

Predicted Impacts

- 10.26 The proposed restoration of the quarry site to its original ground levels and the return of the site to agricultural use will have a permanent positive landscape impact.
- 10.27 The increase in HGV traffic delivering infill material to the site will be apparent and will have a medium to long-term impact on views / prospects along surrounding local roads and motorways. However given that HGV movements are expected and accepted along established road networks and in view of both the history and recent intensity of quarrying activity in the Huntstown area, this impact will be largely imperceptible.

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- 10.28 The quarry backfilling works themselves will not be visible from any location in the surrounding landscape and will therefore not have any visual impact on views.
- 10.29 On completion of all works, the northern part of the site will be grass seeded, which will have a slight positive and permanent visual impact on the small number of views currently available from elevated positions along the N2 Dual Carriageway and the North Road.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- 10.30 Returning the lands at the North Quarry to their original ground level and to agricultural land use will have a positive landscape and visual impact in itself. As such, there will be no requirement for landscape mitigation measures for the proposed waste recovery activity.
- 10.31 In order to minimise any potential visual impact associated with the proposed restoration scheme, all existing hedgerows along the site boundary will be maintained for the duration of the quarry backfilling works. Any temporary plant, infrastructure and paved surfaces will be removed once the quarry restoration is complete.

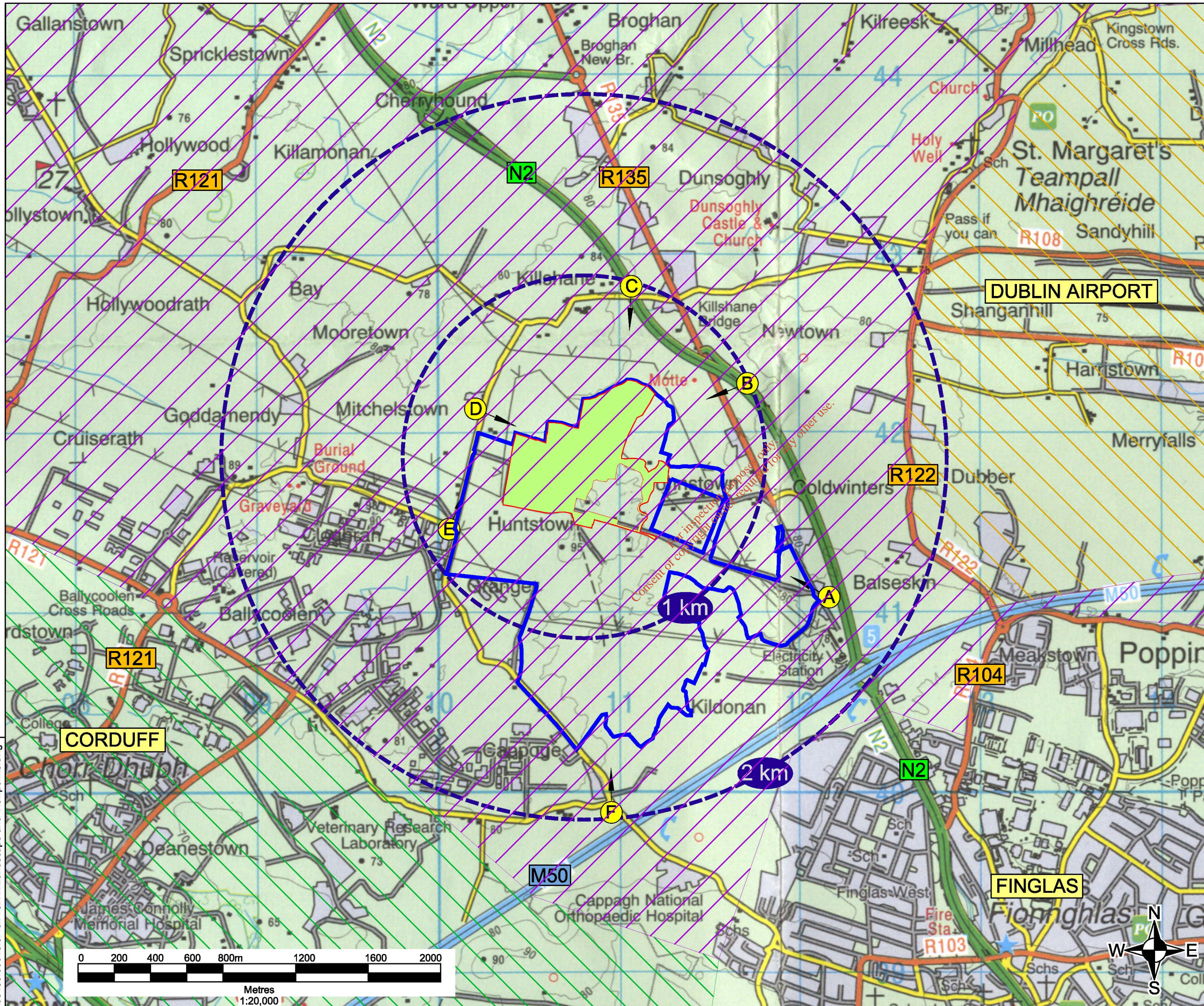
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10.32 The proposed development site is fully screened, by topography and vegetation, from any locations in the surrounding landscape, apart from a small number of elevated locations along the N2 Dual Carriageway to the north-east and North Road to the north of the application site. However, even in these views, only the northern part of the development site is visible; the existing quarry void is fully screened.
- 10.33 It is proposed to infill the northern quarry void at Huntstown Quarry with inert soil waste and to return the land to its original ground level. On, completion the land will be returned to agricultural use and hedgerow / field boundaries will be established across the site. This proposal will have a positive impact on both the landscape and the small number of views available of the site.
- 10.34 The increased traffic caused by the HGVs delivering the material to the site will have medium to long-term but imperceptible impact on views along the access roads to the site.
- 10.35 Due to the overall positive impact of the development proposal on the landscape and views, no additional mitigation measures will be required.

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FIGURES

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NOTES

- EXTRACT FROM 1:50,000 O.S DISCOVERY MAP NO. 50
- ORDNANCE SURVEY IRELAND LICENCE NO. SU 0000711 (C) ORDNANCE SURVEY & GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

- LEGEND**
- ROADSTONE WOOD LTD. LANDHOLDING (c. 201.8 ha)
 - WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 35.9 ha)
 - VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS
 - APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM CENTRE OF APPLICATION SITE

- LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS (LCAs):**
(FINGAL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2005-2011)
- LOW LYING AGRICULTURE LCA
 - RIVER VALLEYS/CANAL LCA
 - AIRPORT & SWORDS LCA



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ROADSTONE WOOD LTD.
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WASTE RECOVERY FACILITY,
HUNTSTOWN QUARRY,
NORTH ROAD, FINGLAS, DUBLIN 11

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS &
VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

FIGURE 10-1

Scale 1:20,000 @ A3 Date FEBRUARY 2011

00180.00015.0.18.FIGX-X.Landscape and Viewpoints.dwg



VIEWPOINT A: Eastern entrance to Huntstown Quarry


Description: This view northwest was taken from a location just south of the main (eastern) entrance to Huntstown Quarry. This entrance is located along the old N2, which is now a local access road. This view demonstrates that the proposed development site is fully screened by topography and intervening vegetation in views from locations to the southeast of the site.




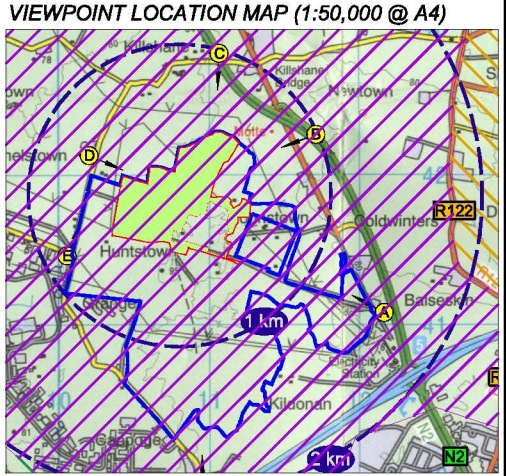
VIEWPOINT B: N2 - Just southeast of the flyover over the R135

Description: This view southwest was taken from location along the N2, nearby the flyover over the R135 (the old N2). The northern, already infilled section of the development site can be seen from this elevated position, however the remainder of the site, in particular the deep quarry void to be filled, are screened by existing berms and vegetation. The existing screening berms will fully screen the proposed development and the existing quarry void/face will not be exposed at any point. The proposed restoration of the site to agricultural land will have a positive impact on this view.

LEGEND

 ROADSTONE WOOD LTD. LANDHOLDING (c. 201.8 ha)

 WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 35.9 ha)



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**LANDSCAPE/VISUAL ASSESSMENT
VIEWPOINTS A & B**

FIGURE 10-2

Scale: NTS Date: FEBRUARY 2011

00180_00015.0.18.FIG-X.Landscape and Viewpoints.dwg

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The existing screening berms along the eastern boundary of Huntstown Quarry have naturally revegetated

The deep quarry void to be filled is screened by intervening vegetation



VIEWPOINT C: Kilshane Road - Flyover over the N2

Description: This view south was taken from the flyover over the N2, just west of Kilshane Cross. The inside of the existing screening berms along the eastern boundary of Huntstown Quarry are visible in this view, however the deep quarry void to be infilled is fully screened by intervening vegetation. The proposed development will not be visible, in this view from an elevated position and it can therefore be said that it will not be visible in any views from a northern direction.



Huntstown Power Station is partly visible in this view, however the proposed development site is fully screened by intervening vegetation and topography



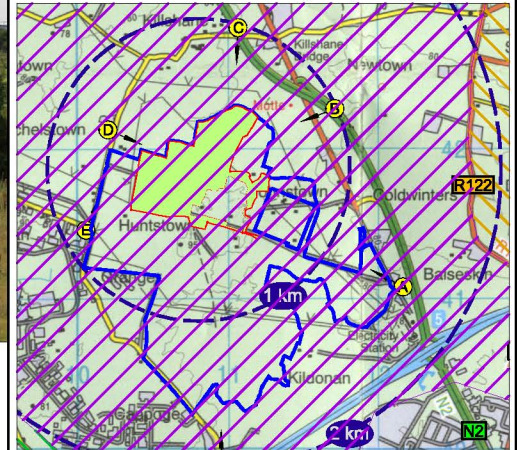
VIEWPOINT D: Kilshane Road - Approximately 300m north of the western access road into Huntstown Quarry

Description: This view east was taken over a field gate from a location along Kilshane Road to the west of the proposed development site. Views to the east along this road are generally screened by mature roadside vegetation (refer to Viewpoint E). However, even where glimpses into the neighbouring land are possible, intervening vegetation and topography further screen any views of the development site. The development site is not visible in any views from locations to the west of the site.

LEGEND

-  ROADSTONE WOOD LTD. LANDHOLDING (c. 201.8 ha)
-  WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 35.9 ha)

VIEWPOINT LOCATION MAP (1:50,000 @ A4)



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**LANDSCAPE/VISUAL ASSESSMENT
VIEWPOINTS C & D**

FIGURE 10-3

Scale NTS

Date FEBRUARY 2011

00180_00015.0.18.FIGX-X.Landscape and Viewpoints.dwg

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Mature roadside vegetation fully screens any views of the development site

The proposed development site is located in between these industrial units of Greenogue Business Park



VIEWPOINT E: Kilshane Road - Just north of the junction with Cappagh Road

Description: This view north along Kilshane Road was taken from a location just north of the roundabout at the junction with Cappagh Road. Mature roadside vegetation, along the entire stretch of this road to the west and northwest of the development site, screens all views of the proposed development. The development site is not visible in any views from locations to the west of the site.



Huntstown Quarry is fully screened by intervening vegetation and topography



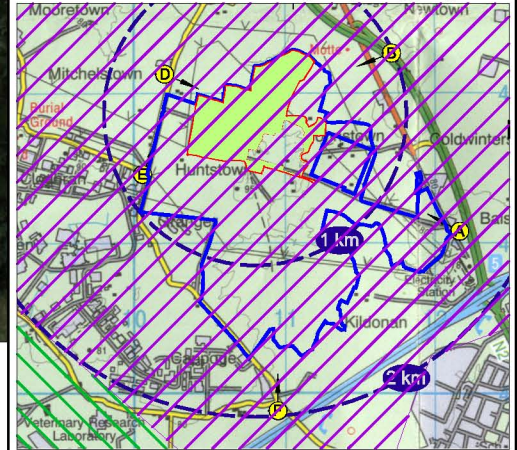
VIEWPOINT F: Cappagh Road - New roundabout at junction of Cappagh Road and Ballycoolin Road

Description: This view north was taken from the new roundabout at the junction of Cappagh Road and Ballycoolin Road, just northwest of the M50. Fencing, screening mounds and intervening vegetation screen any views of Huntstown Quarry in views from Cappagh Road. The proposed development will not be visible in any views from the south.

LEGEND

-  ROADSTONE WOOD LTD. LANDHOLDING (c. 201.8 ha)
-  WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 35.9 ha)

VIEWPOINT LOCATION MAP (1:50,000 @ A4)



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LANDSCAPE/VISUAL ASSESSMENT
VIEWPOINTS E & F

FIGURE 10-4

Scale	NTS	Date	FEBRUARY 2011
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