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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF A
PIGGERY OPERATION

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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PATRICK RYAN
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This document has been prepared on behalf of and for the exclusive use of Patrick Ryan by Montgomery EHS on the basis of an agreed specification for submission to Limerick County Council as part of the EIS process.

Conclusions and recommendations contained in this Document are based on information supplied by the Client and others. Unless expressly stated otherwise, information provided by Third Parties has not been verified by Montgomery EHS.

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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT	3
2.1	PRESENT SITUATION.....	3
2.2	NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT	4
2.3	DO NOTHING AND DO SOMETHING SCENARIOS	5
3	POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION.....	5
	HUMAN BEINGS	5
3.1	COMMUNITY	5
3.2	AIR QUALITY	6
3.3	NOISE	6
3.4	LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL.....	7
	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.....	7
3.5	TERRESTRIAL ECOLOGY	7
3.6	AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT	8
3.7	SOILS GEOLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY.....	8
3.8	CLIMATE.....	8
	MATERIAL ASSETS.....	8
3.9	AGRICULTURE	8
3.10	NON-AGRICULTURE MATERIAL ASSETS	9
3.11	NATURAL AND OTHER RESOURCES.....	9
	ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE.....	9
	FIGURES	10

Figures

Figure 1	Region Map
Figure 2	Local Map
Figure 3	Site Map
Figure 4	Aerial Photography
Figure 5	Site Layout

1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed development at Patrick Ryan piggery operation at Ballyfaskin, Balllanders, Co Limerick has been prepared on behalf of Patrick Ryan by Montgomery EHS.

This proposed site is situated c. 3 km's north-east of Ballylanders, Co. Limerick

The E.I.S. relates to an application seeking planning permission for the

- 3 No. Fattening houses. - (Floor area c. 3* 1531.8 m²) located on the site of, and replacement of 1 Fattening House (Floor area c. 1070.4 m²)
- 1 Feed Mill (Floor area c. 400 m²)
- Farrowing House (Floor area 653.3 m²)
- 1 Dry Sow House (Floor area 1192.4 m²)
- 1 Construction of a Farrowing Houses (floor area 653.312 m²) and replacement of existing farrowing house (Floor area 413.8 m²)
- 1 replacement of Gilt House (Floor area 258.5 m²)
- 1 new access road and, any associated site works and ancillary structures arising from the proposed developments as outlined above.

The proposed houses are to be constructed in accordance with, and to comply with, S.I. No. 14 of 2008 EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (WELFARE OF FARMED ANIMALS) REGULATIONS 2008.

2 BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 PRESENT SITUATION

This E.I.S. forms part of a planning application to Limerick County Council on behalf of Patrick Ryan, Ballyfaskin, Balllanders, Co Limerick for permission to construct new and modified piggery buildings, along with all ancillary structures, new access road and associated site works.

The applicant, Patrick Ryan currently operates and manages the existing piggery at a capacity of 400 sows.

There is 1 person employed directly at this site with additional jobs in the areas of transport, feed, etc. indirectly employed. The operation of the proposed development will be along broadly similar principles to that carried out on existing piggery buildings within the county and surrounding counties; however it will be carried out in a welfare compliant environment. This will involve the feeding, management and husbandry of the pigs and general site management.

All fattened pigs produced on this site will be sent to the one of the pig processing plants in Ireland which is:

- Dawn Pork & Bacon, Grannagh, Waterford
- Dunbia (Ballymena) Ltd Ballymena, Antrim,
- Finns Meats, Mitchelstown, Cork
- Green Pasture Meats, Drumlish, Longford
- McCarren & Co, Cavan, Co. Cavan
- Rosderra (Carrig), Roscrea, Tipperary
- Rosderra (Edenderry), Edenderry, Offaly
- Staunton Foods, Bandon, Cork
- Vion Food Group (Cookstown), Cookstown, Tyrone

The proposed development will modify existing buildings and develop new buildings and will be operated by the applicant. While this proposed expansion piggery of the operation will be managed and operated in conjunction with the existing piggery operation.

This site of the proposed development is agricultural land, owned by Mr. Patrick Ryan the owner / operator of the existing piggery buildings and forms part of his overall landholding including the site of the proposed development. This site is located just off a R662 in the town land of Ballyfaskin, Ballylanders, Co. Limerick.

2.2 NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

The development of the pig meat industry is supported by government policy aimed at increasing the value of the export market. The Irish pig meat industry has achieved major success from the mid 1980's onwards in the development of an internationally competitive export orientated pig meat industry in Ireland and by 1995 the value of pig-meat exports had reached in excess of E260 million. At present pigmeat processing sector sales are valued at c. E700 million, of which E400 million is exported. Ireland represents less than 1.5% of EU production (2003). This progress was achieved with major rationalisation of the Irish Pig Industry with a reduced number of farmers with a larger number of animals, resulting in the pig industry becoming the most market led industry in Irish Agriculture.

This enterprise conforms to Irish national policy on the pig industry based on the Development Plan for the Irish Pig Industry announced by the Minister for Agriculture and Food on the 10th of July 1987, the Pig Production Group Report of 1988 and the Pig Industry in Ireland, Strategic Study, 2000. The pig industry in Ireland has been through a number of tough economic years in the late nineties. On an island basis it is essential that the present level of production be maintained, a critical mass of greater than three million pigs per annum is essential for the efficiency of the 9 processing plants remaining.

According to a recent European commission report " prospects for agricultural markets in the European Union 2004 - 2011, pig and poultry production and consumption are expected to keep growing over the medium term, with increased trade flows between the new and old member states. The meat exports have returned to a more normal situation after the extreme market conditions due to the second BSE scare, the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001 and avian influenza.

An intensive pig rearing industry has developed in County Limerick and Cork arising from the need to provide additional wealth in the area where more traditional farming practices are difficult.

Pig production in Limerick and Cork accounts for circa. €100 million annually in farm sales and 1,500 jobs in the county are directly dependent on the pig industry. On a national scale this stands at c. E 400 million, or 7% of total agricultural output, with 5,000 jobs directly dependant on the pig industry. This industry also provides a cheap source of organic fertilisers for farmers in the area.

This integrated enterprise will have a number of advantages to ensure its economic viability. It will have cost savings due to better quality buildings resulting in an improvement in herd Feed Conversion Efficiencies, i.e. less feed will be required to produce each unit of pig meat. It will also allow more efficient use of labour and other inputs, as time and expense will not be incurred transporting pigs between different sites.

Within the pig industry, the trend is towards larger scale pig farms reflecting,

- 1) The concentration of resources in terms of skilled labour and capital
- 2) Domestic and more increasingly, global pressures and
- 3) Economies of scale. Due to rising input costs, additional environmental and welfare requirements and the reduction in pig prices (in real terms) over this period Irish pig farmers need to improve efficiencies wherever possible.

The increase in the capacity at Patrick Ryan's piggery operation will help meet the growth in the sector description of the development.

2.3 DO NOTHING AND DO SOMETHING SCENARIOS

The Do Nothing Scenario looks at the environment, as it would be if no development was carried out. In the Do Nothing Scenario, the capacity would not be increased to 600 sows. The long term viability of the operation would have to be considered.

In the Do Something Scenario, capacity increase to 600 sows and the two piggery building and modified buildings will be constructed.

3 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

This section outlines the likely significant Environmental Impacts arising from the proposed increase in capacity of the piggery operation to 600 from 400. Where possible, design measures have been included to reduce or eliminate possible impacts but where this has not been possible, mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce or eliminate the identified impacts.

HUMAN BEINGS

Human beings interact, to a greater or lesser extent, with all aspects of the receiving environment. Therefore, impacts on any aspect of the environment have the potential to impact on human beings. The impact of the scheme as it specifically relates to human beings is covered under the headings, *Community, Human Health, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration* and *Landscape and Visual Impacts*.

3.1 COMMUNITY

Patrick Ryan's piggery operation at Ballyfauskin Ballylanders, Co Limerick is located 3 km to the North east of Ballylanders, town and some 25km from Limerick City.

At a regional, county and district level, it was considered that there will be no negative effects on population structure or trends, or on the local settlement pattern. However, the proposed developments at Patrick Ryan's piggery operation will have positive economic benefits and ensure sustained employment over the additional 20-year period. The pig industry is a significant employer in the Limerick Region. A knock on indirect effect leading to support of local services within the community is envisaged. Potential negative visual, noise, air quality and traffic impacts on human beings have been dealt within the relevant sections of the EIS.

3.2 AIR QUALITY

The air quality impact assessment was carried out by Montgomery EHS for the proposed development.

The proposed expansion to the piggery operation was also considered in terms of dust dispersion.

The existing operation indicates that the air quality in the vicinity of the plant is good with no significant impact to air quality as a result of existing site operations.

The proposed operation will be similar to the existing operation. The proposed additional piggery operation will have dust levels within relevant guidelines and that the future site operations will not have a significant impact on air quality.

Construction activities such as excavations and earth moving may generate quantities of construction dust, particularly in drier weather conditions however; these will be of a short duration and mitigation measures will be implemented. The effect of construction activities on air quality, in particular construction dust, will not be significant. An odour management plan has been generated in order to establish the measures necessary to minimise odour.

3.3 NOISE

Montgomery EHS carried out a baseline noise survey at 4 locations in the vicinity of the proposed development in order to assess and quantify the existing noise environment. Noise levels during the operational phase of the development were then measured to assess the noise impact of the development at nearby residential locations.

The noise climate in the vicinity of the existing site is relatively low. The fact that no complaint has ever been received indicate that noise levels from the plant's current operations do not have a significant impact on the noise levels of the surrounding area, and that there will be no impact from increasing capacity of sows.

The potential noise and vibration impacts on the surrounding area from extending the piggery operation were considered for two distinct stages: the short-term impact of the construction phase and the long-term impact of the operational phase.

During the construction phase of the project, there is a potential for generation of a temporary increase in noise and vibration due to the nature of activities undertaken during site preparation and development, such as rock breaking and excavation. However, the application of noise limits on construction activities and hours of operation, along with adherence to the guidance set out in British Standard BS 5228 1997 "*Noise Control on Construction and Demolition Sites*" will ensure that noise and vibration will be kept to a minimum.

Therefore during the operation phase, it is predicted that noise levels will remain below the EPA noise level limits at the nearest noise sensitive locations.

3.4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

Montgomery EHS assessed the landscape and visual elements of the proposed development. The existing piggery facility and associated infrastructure does not visually dominate the immediate landscape. The landscape itself is rural and agricultural and much of the landscape surrounding the site is low-lying with little topographic relief. Residential property is generally dispersed along local roads through increased development.

The site where the proposed development will be constructed is not visually prominent as it is the east of the existing piggery buildings. The existing hedgerows will be retained and strengthened to reduce the visual impact of the proposed development.

As such the site is neither sensitive nor vulnerable in landscape terms and in overall terms is typical of a landscape type that is widespread in the area.

Given the nature and impact of the existing facility, the proposed extension will not result in significant overall landscape and visual impact, though locally minor visual impact will arise.

Construction work will take place at a relatively low level and against the backdrop of the existing piggery operation with its various on-going activities. This impact will cease once the construction phase is complete.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This section covers the potential effects of the proposed development on the natural environment. The site and the lands surrounding are not part of any ecological designation, both national and EU. The site is of low ecological value, which is improved grassland with the land utilised for silage production.

3.5 TERRESTRIAL ECOLOGY

Montgomery EHS surveyed the flora and fauna within the site of the proposed piggery development. The ballyfaskin, Ballylanders, Co. Limerick is surrounded by improved grassland for silage production and grazing of cattle. The main impact on terrestrial ecology since the operation commenced was the removal of grassed area for the existing piggery operation. No significant impacts on terrestrial ecology are anticipated increasing the capacity to 600 sows. There is poor quality of habitats within the area of the proposed piggery development which is limited to improved grassland. This habitat is generally widespread around the limerick region. The area provides a habitat for birds and mammals of local importance and the loss of habitat resulting from the development will have a slight negative impact.

3.6 AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT

An assessment of the aquatic environment surrounding Mr Ryan existing piggery operation was carried out by Montgomery EHS. The site has limited water bodies with a small drainage ditch. Surveys of the habitats and flora and fauna were carried out. None of the species of plants and animals recorded were of specific nature conservation importance or interest.

The site will only discharge clean runoff that is collected and discharge to the drainage ditch. The increasing capacity and the additional piggery buildings will mean an increase in the discharge volume to the drainage ditch. No significant impact on the ecology of the area is expected from the increase in discharge from the clean surface water to the drainage ditch.

During construction, care will be taken that no accidental spillages will pollute the surrounding water bodies. Water runoff from the construction site will also be intercepted to ensure that no suspended solids are released.

3.7 SOILS GEOLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY

An assessment of the soils, geology and hydrogeology at the site of the proposed development was carried out by Montgomery EHS. The soil types occurring within the footprint of the proposed piggery development are mostly made up of glacial till. The site of the proposed a number of buildings will be excavated

3.8 CLIMATE

There are no direct impacts predicted on the existing macroclimate as a result of the proposed expansion. The expansion will however increase the viability of the piggery operation thereby facilitating the continued emission of pollutants such as NO_x into the atmosphere. Air quality emissions will be licensed by the EPA as part of Patrick Ryan's IPPC licence application. In setting limits for industry in an IPPC licence the EPA take account of national and EU legislative limits and guidelines for air pollutants and also Government policy in relation to Climate Change.

MATERIAL ASSETS

3.9 AGRICULTURE

The proposed piggery operation will occupy an area of approximately 2.6 ha, of which all are agricultural lands and improved grassland. Agricultural enterprises in this area and the surrounding land include dairying and drystock.

The lands proposed for the extension are wholly within the ownership of Patrick Ryan. The area is currently utilised used for silage production. This practice will discontinue if the proposed additional goes ahead and there will be a slight impact on volume of silage production due to the loss of volume of silage. Dust control measures during the construction and operation of the piggery operation will ensure that there will be no impact from dust on the surrounding lands or livestock.

3.10 NON-AGRICULTURE MATERIAL ASSETS

The development comprises of an extension to an existing piggery operation business operating for 20 years. So it would be expected to have no impact on non-agricultural materials assets such as property commercial enterprises.

3.11 NATURAL AND OTHER RESOURCES

Montgomery EHS assessed the impact on natural and other resources in the vicinity of the proposed extension to the proposed piggery operation and any impact on natural resources due to increased capacity from 400 to 600 sows. Overall, the proposed extension and increase in production rate will have some slight negative impacts on natural and other resources. There will be no significant impact on natural resources from the increase in use of raw materials for feeding and heating the additional piggery buildings. Construction materials in required will be brought from nearby sources.

ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

An assessment of the impact of the piggery buildings construction on architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage was undertaken by Montgomery EHS. No recorded archaeological sites within the proposed development area were identified and therefore no known archaeological remains will be affected by the proposed development. The site of the proposed development is considered to be of low significant archaeological potential.

FIGURES

Figure 1 Region Map

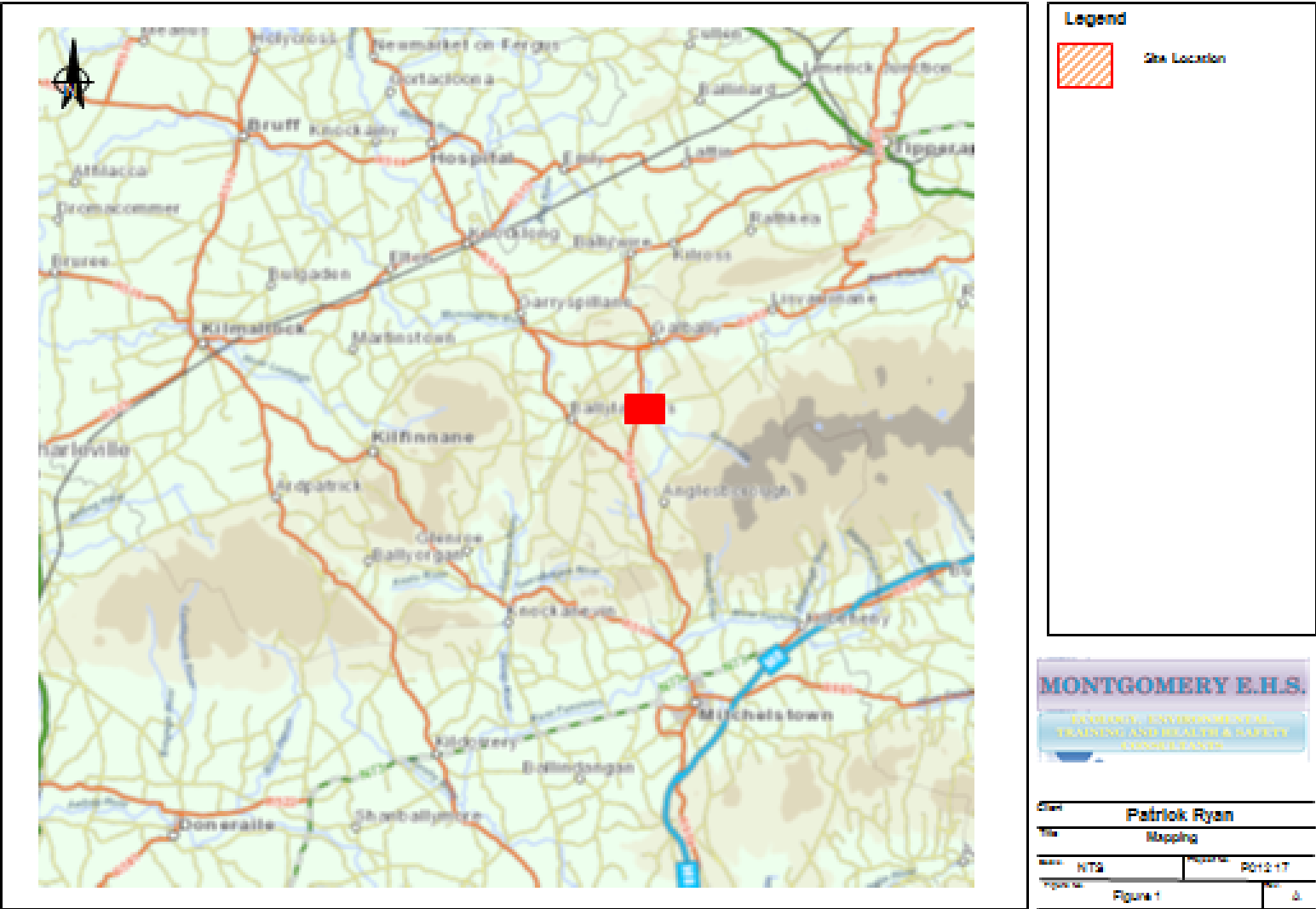


Figure 2 Local Map

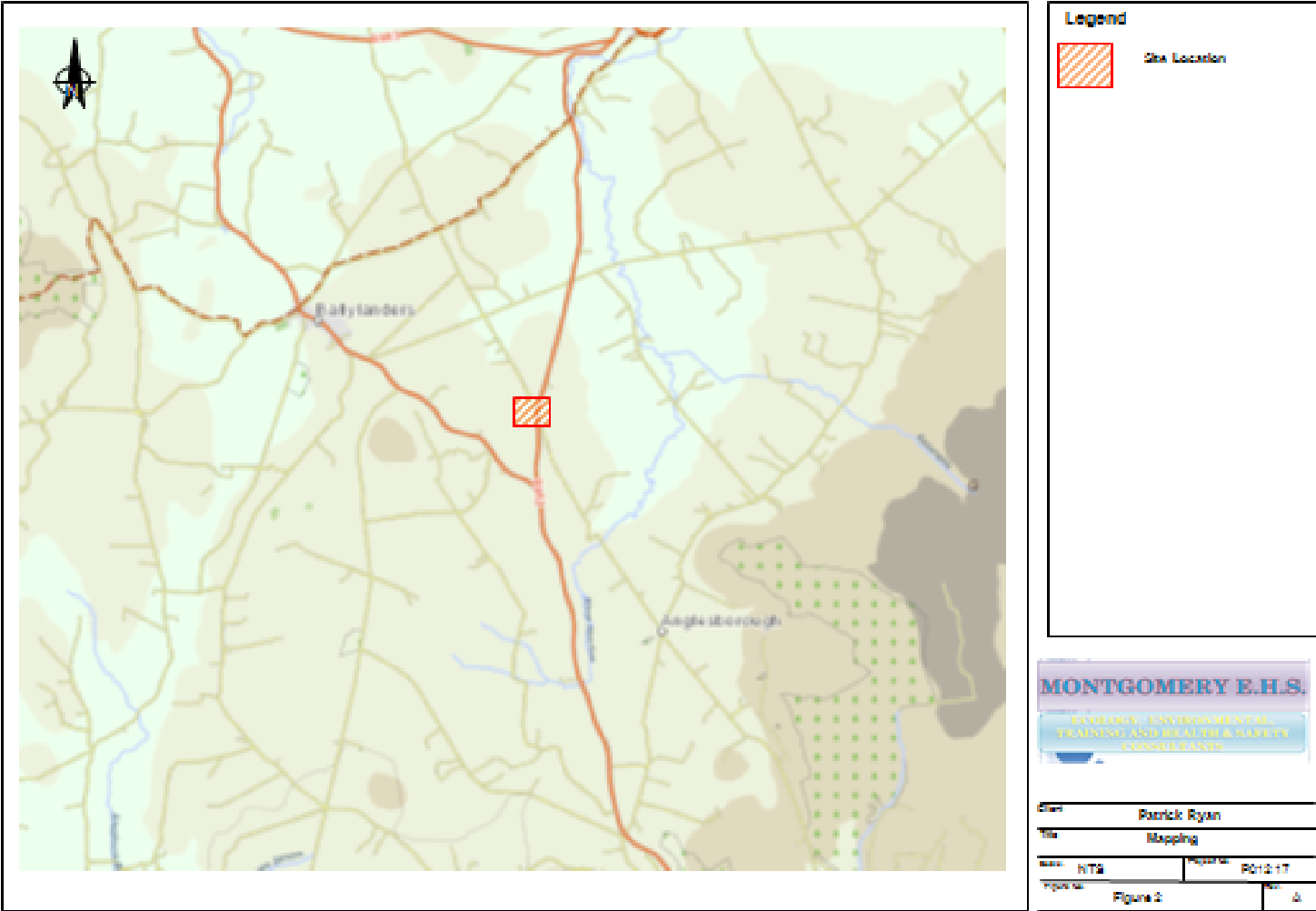


Figure 3 Site Map

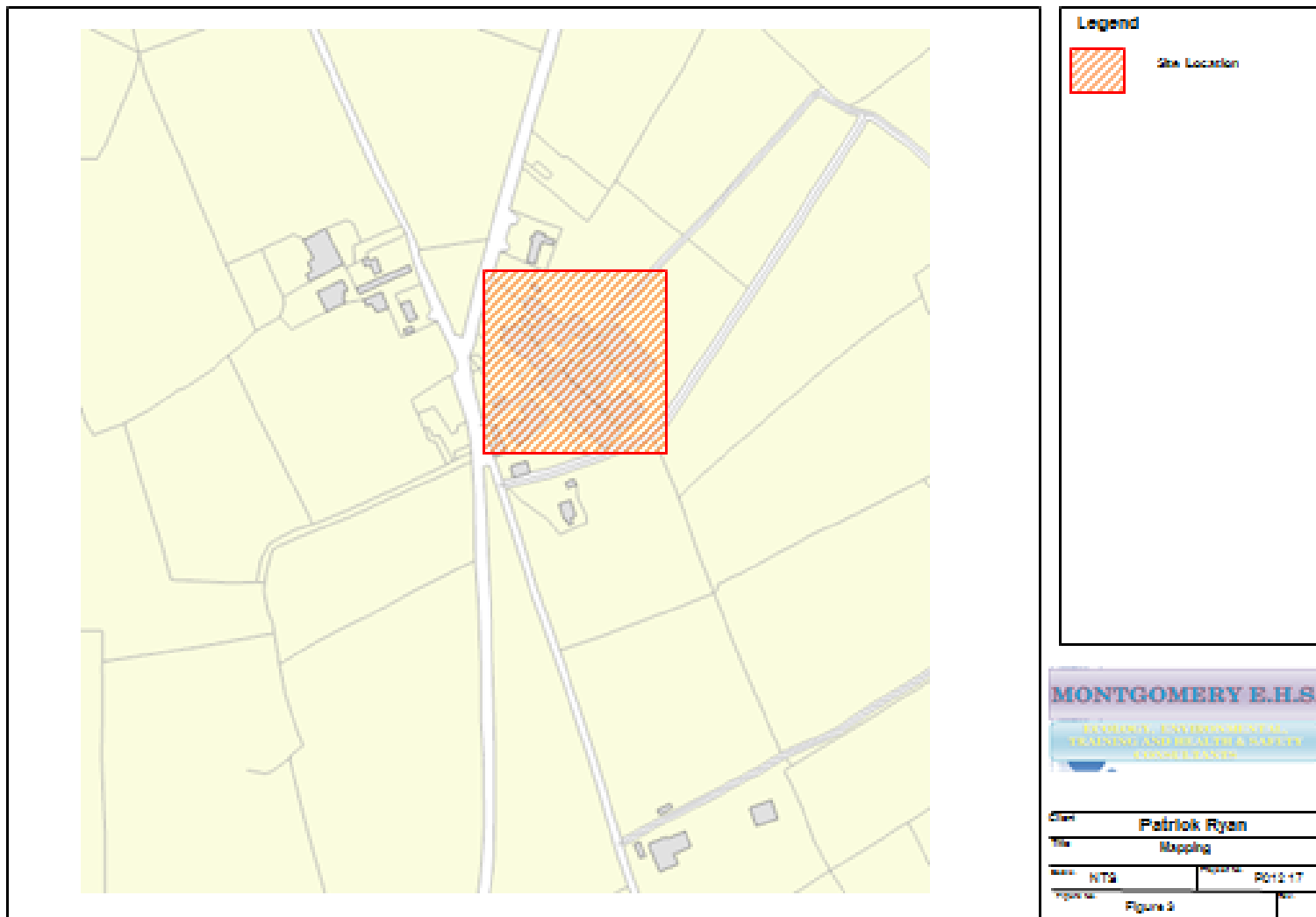


Figure 4 Aerial Photography

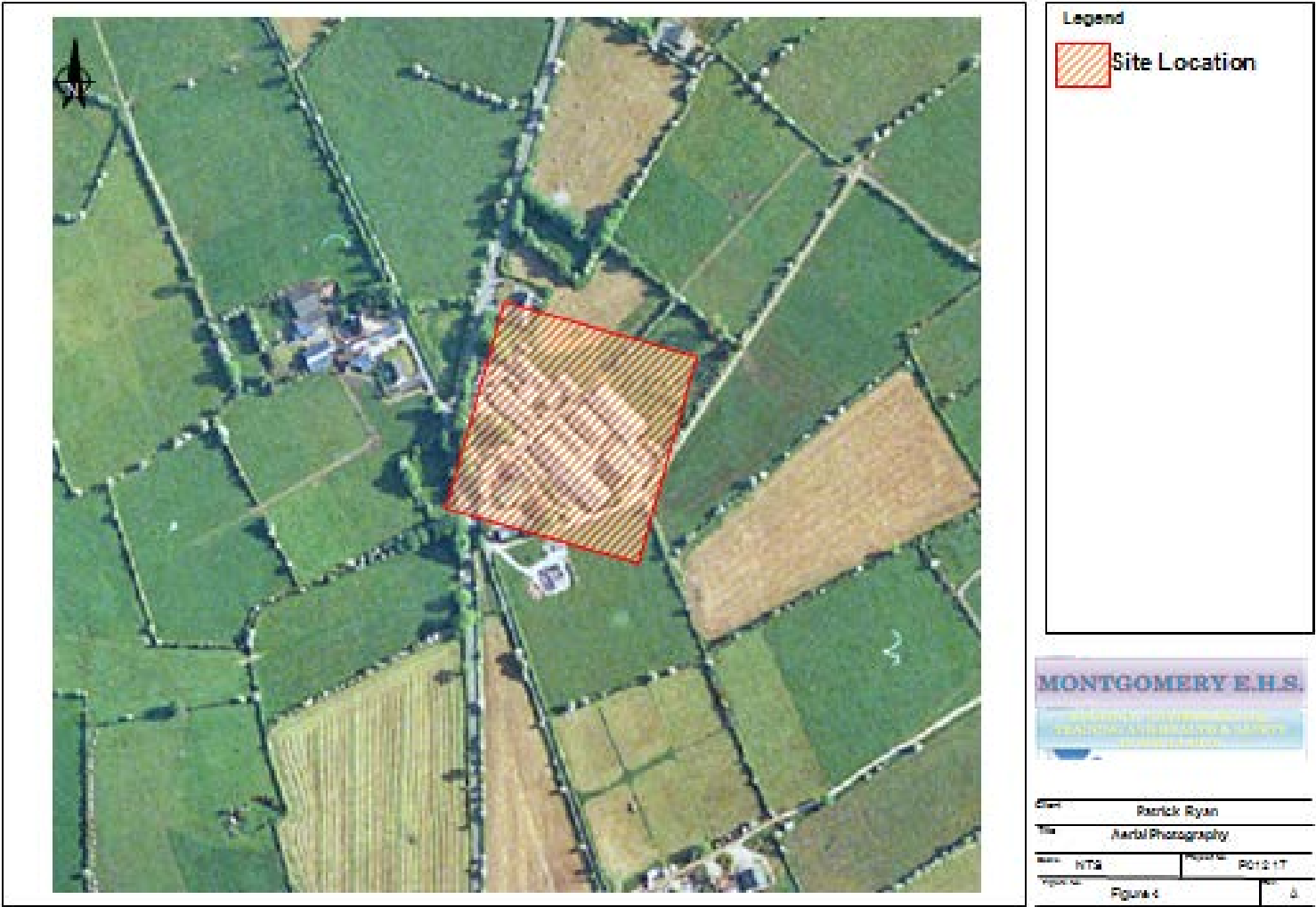


Figure 5 Site Layout

