

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background .....	1
Scope of Work.....	1
Legislative Framework / Planning Policy.....	2
Consultations.....	3
Author.....	3
RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT .....	4
Baseline Study Methodology .....	4
Landscape Baseline .....	5
Visual Baseline.....	6
Difficulties Encountered.....	7
IMPACT ASSESSMENT .....	7
Evaluation Methodology .....	7
Landscape and Visual Impacts.....	11
Impacts on Landscape / Planning Designations .....	14
Do-nothing Scenario.....	14
MITIGATION MEASURES .....	14
RESIDUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT .....	15
REFERENCES .....	16

## TABLES

Table 10-1 Visual Receptor Areas (VRA).....	7
Table 10-2 Susceptibility to change in relation to receptor type.....	8
Table 10-3 Definition of Levels of Magnitude .....	10
Table 10-4 Principles of Assessing Significance of Landscape and Visual Impacts ..	10
Table 10-5 Definition of Significance Criteria for Landscape and Visual Impact .....	11
Table 10-6 Magnitude of Landscape Effects .....	12
Table 10-7 Visual Receptor Sensitivity.....	13
Table 10-8 Magnitude of Visual Effects.....	13
Table 10-9 Significance of Visual Effects .....	14

## FIGURES

- Figure 10-1 Landscape Designations and Viewpoint Locations
- Figure 10-2 Viewpoints A, B and C
- Figure 10-3 Viewpoints D, E and F



## INTRODUCTION

### Background

- 10.1 This chapter of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) assesses the landscape and visual impacts arising from the proposed increase in the permitted rate of inert soil waste intake at the existing waste recovery facility at Huntstown Quarry, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11.
- 10.2 The application site is comprises the northern and western quarries within the existing Huntstown Quarry complex, approximately 1,300m northwest of the M50 and 300m west of the N2 dual carriageway. The proposed development provides for an increase in the permitted inert waste intake from a maximum of 750,000 tonnes max per annum at present to a maximum of 1,500,000 tonnes per annum in future years. It also brings forward the approved infilling of the West Quarry to an earlier date than previously envisaged. Further details on the background to the application and existing site operations are provided in Chapters 1 and 2 of this EIS.
- 10.3 Landscape and visual effects are independent but related issues; landscape effects are changes in the landscape, its character and quality, while visual effects relate to the appearance of these changes and the resulting effect on visual amenity. Wherever possible, identified effects are quantified, however the nature of landscape and visual impact assessment requires interpretation by professional judgement. In order to provide a level of consistency to the assessment, the appraisal of sensitivity and the prediction of magnitude and assessment of significance of the residual landscape and visual effects have been based on pre-defined criteria, as described further preceding the relevant sections of this assessment.

### Scope of Work

- 10.4 This landscape and visual impact assessment was undertaken in accordance with the **Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition, 2013; hereafter referred to as GLVIA3) and is structured in the following manner:
- *Introduction* – a brief description of the proposed development and the structure of this assessment, as well as an account of the relevant planning context (e.g. planning policies, designated landscapes, sites of nature conservation importance)
  - *Receiving Environment* – a description of the landscape and visual baseline
  - *Impact Assessment* – a description of the aspects of the development which are likely to cause a landscape and/or visual effect, including the methodology for and an assessment of landscape and visual receptor sensitivity, as well as the magnitude and significance of the landscape and visual effects;
  - *Mitigation Measures* – a description of the measures which will be integrated to mitigate any landscape and visual effects of the proposed development; and
  - *Residual Impact Assessment* – a summary of the degree of landscape and visual impact.

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

- 10.5 The assessment is illustrated by a Landscape Designations Map (including viewpoint locations), and two Viewpoint Sheets, refer to Figures 10-1, 10-2 and 10-3. Details of the approved restoration scheme and existing site activities are provided in Chapter 2 of this EIS (also refer to Figure 2-2 – Restoration Plan and Figures 2-3 and 2-4 – Restoration Cross-Sections).

## Legislative Framework / Planning Policy

- 10.6 The Fingal County Development Plan (FDP) 2011-2017 is the statutory plan detailing the development objectives/policies of the local authority. The plan includes objectives and policies, relevant to this assessment, i.e. with regard to land use zoning, the extractive industry and landscape character. The Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 was published for public consultation early in 2016. The upcoming plan was checked, for any proposed changes to planning policies/objectives, which could affect the proposed development.

### Land Use Zoning

- 10.7 All of the northern and part of the western quarry are located within an area designated 'Zoning Objective "RU" Rural' in the current CDP, which seeks to *"Protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture and rural-related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage"*.
- 10.8 The vision for Zoning Objective "RU" (Chapter 9 – Land Use Zoning) is described, as follows: *"This zoning objective seeks to protect and promote the value of the rural area of the County. This rural value is based on:*
- *Agricultural and rural economic resources*
  - *Visual remoteness from significant and distinctive urban influences,*
  - *A high level of natural features.*
- Agriculture and rural related resources will be employed for the benefit of the local and wider population. Building upon the rural value will require a balanced approach involving the protection and promotion of rural biodiversity, promotion of the integrity of the landscape, and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage"* 'Extractive Industry / Quarrying' is listed as permitted in principle under this zoning objective.
- 10.9 A along the western side of the West Quarry is covered by 'Zoning Objective "HI" Heavy Industry'. The vision for this objective states the following: *"Facilitate opportunities for industrial uses, activities and processes which may give rise to land use conflict if located within other zonings. Such uses, activities and processes would be likely to produce adverse impacts, for example by way of noise, dust or visual impacts. HI areas provide suitable and accessible locations specifically for heavy industry and shall be reserved solely for such uses."* 'Extractive Industry / Quarrying' is also listed as permitted in principle for this Zoning Objective.
- 10.10 The site is surrounded by a number of other Zoning Objectives, including objectives in relation to general enterprise and employment; office, research & development and high technology employment; warehouse, storage and logistics facilities; as well as provisions for a green belt to the northeast of the application site.
- 10.11 The current Draft Fingal County Development Plan (2017-2023) proposes to map the entire application site as 'Zoning Objective "HI" Heavy Industries. The stated vision for this objective in the Draft CDP remains unchanged and

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

'Extractive Industry / Quarrying' is still listed as permitted in principle for this Zoning Objective.

- 10.12 The entire application site is also designated as a Nature Development Area, i.e. an area with potential for biodiversity enhancement (Chapter 5 – Natural Heritage; section 5.2 Biodiversity). Both the current and draft CDP state that “*applications for planning permission must demonstrate how the proposed development will maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the site*”. It will be noted that the ongoing backfilling and restoration of the quarries at Huntstown is part of a wider, previously approved, restoration plan which makes provision for natural wildlife habitat at other sites across the Huntstown Quarry complex.

## *Extraction and Aggregates*

- 10.13 Objective EE 35 (Chapter 2 – Enterprise & Employment; Section 2.5 Quarrying and Aggregate Extraction) of the current CDP requires the Council to “*Consider proposals for aggregate extraction only where the Council is satisfied through an environmental assessment that environmental quality and amenity will be protected and appropriate provisions for the restoration of the landscape and habitat is being made*”. The Draft CDP includes a similar objective (i.e. Objective RF84). It will be noted that the principle of backfilling the Huntstown quarries was previously approved under planning permission Ref. FW12-0022 (An Bord Pleanála (ABP) Ref. 241693).

## *Views and Prospects*

- 10.14 Objective VP01 (Chapter 5 – Natural Heritage; Section 5.4 Landscape) of the current CDP requires the Council to: “*Protect views and prospects that contribute to the character of the landscape, particularly those identified in the Development Plan, from inappropriate development*”. No views requiring protection are identified in the vicinity of Huntstown Quarry in either the current or Draft CDP (refer to Green Infrastructure Map 1 of the current and Draft CDP).

## *Sites of Nature Conservation Importance*

- 10.15 There are no sites of Nature Conservation Importance in the vicinity of the application site.

## *Protected Structures*

- 10.16 An assessment of the impact of the proposed development on protected structures around the application site is presented in Chapter 11 of this EIS.

## **Consultations**

- 10.17 Following a review of published development plans and a site inspection, it was considered that there was no requirement for a separate formal consultation to be carried out with regard to landscape and visual impact of the proposed development.

## **Author**

- 10.18 The assessment including site work and completion of drawings was carried out by Anne Merkle, a suitably qualified Landscape Architect employed by SLR Consulting Ireland.

## RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

### Baseline Study Methodology

- 10.19 The landscape and visual baseline study has involved a desktop study, field work, data processing and analysis. The aim of the landscape baseline study *“is to provide an understanding of the landscape in the area that may be affected”* (Section 3.15 of GLVIA 3), including its constituent elements, landscape character and its geographic extent.
- 10.20 With regard to the visual baseline GLVIA 3 (Section 3.15) states that it is the aim *“to establish the area in which the development will be visible the different groups of people who may experience views of the development, the places where they will be affected and the nature of the views and visual amenity at those points.”*
- 10.21 Representative and illustrative viewpoints were selected for inclusion in the detailed assessment in respect of the following parameters:
- types of receptor: to include settlements, roads, marked footpaths and cycle paths, marked viewpoints, picnic areas and beauty spots and outdoor passive recreational locations;
  - different distances from the development;
  - different directions from the development with the aim of achieving a distribution from different compass points around the site; and
  - different altitudes.
- 10.22 The six chosen viewpoints (VP A-F) into the application site at Huntstown are shown in Figures 10-2 and 10-3. These represent typical views towards the site from surrounding areas. Photographs were taken in June 2016, using a Canon EOS 1000D digital SLR camera. The nature of the views was of relatively wide panoramas and it was therefore considered beneficial to present the photographs in this format. The panoramic views consist of two to four photographic frames merged together using ArcSoft - Panorama Maker 4 software. It should be noted that photography is a tool to assist in the visualisation process and cannot be expected to replicate the actual view, which would be attained on the ground

### Study Area

- 10.23 Following the desk top study, taking any designations, the land use zoning and built up environment into consideration, the study area was defined as an area extending up to 2km around the application site. Note however that the site survey revealed that the visual envelope, i.e. the area from where the application site is visible, is much smaller than the study area.

### Sources of Information

- 10.24 The desktop study and field work was supported, *inter alia*, by information available on the internet, digital as well as paper (Ordnance Survey) maps at different scales and the CDP 2011-2017, as well as the Draft CDP 2017-2023.

### Field Monitoring / Inspection

- 10.25 A detailed site survey was carried out on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 in sunny and bright conditions. The visibility was considered appropriate to carry out the assessment, which concentrates on publicly accessible areas such as the road and public footpath networks, residential and outdoor recreational areas.



# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

## Landscape Baseline

### *Existing Landscape Appraisals of the Application Site and its Surroundings*

- 10.26 The current County Development Plan includes a landscape character assessment (Chapter 5.4). This divides Fingal into 6 Landscape Character Types (LCT) and each LCT is given a value (exceptional to low) and rating for its sensitivity to change (high to low).
- 10.27 The Huntstown Quarry complex is entirely located within the Low Lying Agriculture Landscape Character Type (LCT). This LCT is described as: *“an area characterised by a mix of pasture and arable farming on low lying land with few protected views or prospects. The area has an open character combined with large field patterns, few tree belts and low roadside hedges. ...”*
- 10.28 The Low Lying Character Type is *‘categorised as having a modest value’* and low sensitivity. It is stated that low sensitivity LCTs *“can absorb a certain amount of development once the scale and forms are kept simple and surrounded by adequate screen boundaries and appropriate landscaping to reduce impact on the rural character of the surrounding roads. ...”*
- 10.29 The listed ‘Principles for Development’ include:
- *‘The skyline should be protected’*
  - *‘Existing tree belts should be retained and managed and older stands of trees restocked. Roadside hedging should be retained and managed. Proposals necessitating the removal of extensive field and roadside hedgerows or trees should not be permitted. Strong planting schemes using native species, to integrate development into these open landscapes, will be required. ...’*
  - *‘Sites with natural boundaries should be chosen, rather than open parts of larger fields....’*
- 10.30 None of the Highly Sensitive Landscapes or Preserved Views identified as part of the Landscape Character Assessment are located in the immediate vicinity of the existing recovery facility and proposed development at Huntstown.

### *Outdoor Recreational Facilities within the Study Area*

- 10.31 There are no outdoor recreational facilities, such as waymarked walking trails, in the vicinity of the application site.

### *Site Specific Landscape Appraisal*

- 10.32 The Huntstown Quarry complex covers a large portion of the area bound by the M50, North Road, Kilshane Road and Cappagh Road, northwest of Finglas. The complex is made up from four separate quarry areas (North, West, Central and South quarry), a large processing area, storage areas, some wildlife areas and office buildings. The Huntstown power plant, which is operated by Energia (formerly Viridian) is also located within the Huntstown complex.
- 10.33 The application site essentially comprises the North Quarry and West Quarry, both of which are enclosed by mature hedgerows and/or dense blocks of screen tree planting. In some locations along the boundary with Kilshane Road and Cappagh Road screening berms, in addition to the screen planting block views into the site.

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

- 10.34 The North Quarry is currently being backfilled with inert soil waste, with the northernmost third of the quarry almost filled to ground level and the southern two thirds still comprising a deep quarry void.
- 10.35 The West Quarry was previously stripped of approximately 3m of overburden and topsoil, in preparation for extraction works. As subsequent geological investigations indicate that it would not be economic to quarry the underlying rock, it is now proposed to backfill the area to its original ground level and restore it to agricultural use. The current ground cover consists of areas of bare ground, the early successional stages of willow scrub, as well as a number of shallow ponds.
- 10.36 The landscape surrounding the application site comprises a mix of several industrial estates and business parks, as well as a number of small to medium sized agricultural fields bound by mature hedgerows. There are a number of isolated private properties along local roads surrounding the site, however any larger residential areas are located a minimum distance of 2km away, i.e. to the southeast, across the M50 Motorway (in Finglas West) and to the southwest, at Corduff.
- 10.37 The generally flat landscape surrounding Huntstown (ground levels range from 70-80m AOD) does not contain any unique or highly scenic features.

## Visual Baseline

### General Visibility

- 10.38 Due to the flat topography of the general area in combination with many mature hedgerows, as well as the large buildings within the neighbouring industrial estates / business parks, views within the study area are generally restricted to the nearest obstacle. The only slightly elevated vantage points within the study area are a number of road flyovers, e.g. the flyover over the N2 along Kilshane Road. However, as illustrated by Viewpoint C, the existing quarry voids within the Huntstown Quarry complex cannot be seen, even from these more elevated viewpoints.
- 10.39 The North Quarry and West Quarry at Huntstown, as well as the remainder of the extraction areas are fully screened in views from the surrounding public road network, due to the mature vegetation along all site boundaries, as well as screening berms in some areas. The only elements of the Huntstown Quarry complex, visible in a small number of views, are the top parts of some of the larger processing plant (not subject to this application, refer to Viewpoints A-F on Figures 10-2 and 10-3).
- 10.40 The HGVs associated with the permitted backfilling works, are visible as they travel along the R135 Regional Road toward / from the site access road. The HGVs are also partly visible as they travel on internal haul roads along the north-eastern boundary of Huntstown Quarry, from a small number of locations along the R135 and on the flyover over the N2 at Kilshane Road (refer to Viewpoints A-C on Figure 10-2).

### Visual Receptors

- 10.41 The receptors with existing and/or potential views of the planning application area and HGV movements linked to the development consist of road users and residents of private properties in a small number of locations within the study area. Some of these experience similar views of the development and they were therefore grouped into two Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs). The

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

location and extent of each of the VRAs is indicated on Figure 10-1 and described in Table 10-1 below. The table further lists the types of receptors present in each VRA and describes the nature of views / visual amenity within the areas. Those Viewpoints representing a typical view from within one of VRAs are also listed (refer to Figure 10-1).

**Table 10-1  
Visual Receptor Areas (VRA)**

VRA No.	Location/ Extent	Types of Receptors	Nature of Views/Visual Amenity
1	1.5km along North Road / R135	Local road users and approx. 10 private properties.	Close distance views along North Road / R135 and of associated traffic. Views along road generally enclosed by mature vegetation. Mid distance partial views of HGVs accessing the northern quarry through gaps in the roadside vegetation (from the northern end of this VRA only). No views of any of the extraction areas or processing areas, which form part of the Huntstown Quarry complex.  Low visual amenity (presence of road and associated traffic).  Viewpoints A and B represent typical views.
2	Flyover over N2 along Kilshane Road	Local road users.	Medium distance views towards the northern boundary of Huntstown Quarry. Parts of some of the processing plant (not subject to this application) visible. HGVs accessing the northern quarry partially visible and obscured by intervening hedgerow. N2 and agricultural fields visible in foreground.  Low to medium visual amenity (presence of N2, Huntstown power plant and processing plant in otherwise rural agricultural view).  Viewpoint C represents typical view.

## Difficulties Encountered

10.42 No difficulties were encountered during the desktop study or field survey.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Evaluation Methodology

10.43 *In order to arrive at conclusions about the significance of landscape/visual effects, this LVIA links judgements about the sensitivity of a receptor with the magnitude of identified effects. According to GLVIA 3, Section 3.26, the sensitivity (or 'nature') of a receptor is "made up of judgements about:*

- *the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change arising for the specific proposal; and*
- *the value attached to the receptor".*

10.44 The magnitude (or 'nature') of effects is "made up of judgements about:

- *the size and scale of the effect - for example whether there is complete loss of a particular element of the landscape or a minor change;*
- *the geographical extent of the area that will be affected; and*
- *the duration of the effect and its reversibility" (GLVIA 3, section 3.26)*



# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

10.45 The judgements about the sensitivity and magnitude are supported by a number of pre-defined parameters, where possible, as described in more detail below. They are then summarised using word scales and combined using a matrix to arrive at the overall significance of the effects, also described in more detail below.

## Landscape Sensitivity

10.46 The sensitivity of the landscape is made up from a combination of judgements about the susceptibility of the landscape to change and the value attached to the landscape.

10.47 Susceptibility to change means the degree to which a landscape type / area / element is able to accommodate change (arising from a particular development) without detrimental effects on its character. Depending on the type of development proposed, this varies, *inter alia*, with the existing land use, the pattern and scale of the landscape, the visual enclosure / openness of views and the scope for appropriate mitigation. The value attached to the landscape can be judged, *inter alia*, by way of existing designations, landscape / scenic quality, rarity, recreation value.

10.48 For the purpose of this report landscape sensitivity is defined as HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW or NEGLIGIBLE, based on professional interpretation of the findings with regard to the susceptibility and value.

## Viewpoint Sensitivity

10.49 Viewpoint sensitivity is made up from a combination of judgements about the susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views / visual amenity and the value attached to views.

10.50 The susceptibility to change in relation to different receptor types is defined in terms of high, medium and low susceptibility in Table 10-2 below. The value attached to views is judged taking account of planning designations, such as protected views and other indicators of the values attached to views, e.g. in relation to heritage assets, views marked on maps or the provision of facilities for the enjoyment of views.

**Table 10-2**  
**Susceptibility to change in relation to receptor type**

Susceptibility	Visual Receptor Types
<b>High</b>	Users of outdoor recreational facilities including strategic recreational footpaths, cycle routes or rights of way, whose attention may be focused on the landscape; important landscape features with physical, cultural or historic attributes; principal views from residential buildings, beauty spots or picnic areas; communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the areas.
<b>Medium</b>	Other footpaths; secondary views from residential properties, people travelling through the landscape on roads, trains or other transport routes.
<b>Low</b>	People engaged in outdoor sports or recreation (other than appreciation of the landscape), commercial buildings, and other locations where people's attention may be focused on their work or activity.

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

10.51 The overall sensitivity of the visual receptors is summarised on a scale of HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW or NEGLIGIBLE based on professional interpretation of the findings with regard to the susceptibility and value.

## *Magnitude of Landscape / Visual Effects*

10.52 The judgements of the size or scale, geographical extent and duration/reversibility of the changes in the landscape are based on information (based on GLVIA 3, Sections 5.49 to 5.52) including:

- *"the extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost ...;*
- *the extent to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered ...;*
- *whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape ...;*
- scale at which effects may have influence (e.g. site level, immediate setting, landscape type/character area);
- full / partial reversibility possible.

10.53 Based on GLVIA 3, Sections 6.39-6.41, the judgements of the size or scale, geographical extent and duration / reversibility of visual effects are based on information including:

- *"the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition ...;*
- *the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;*
- *the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses;*
- *the angle of view in relation to main activity of the receptor;*
- *the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;*
- *the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;*
- full / partial reversibility possible.

10.54 The overall magnitude of the landscape/visual effects is summarised on a scale of 'substantial', 'moderate', 'slight' or 'negligible', based on professional interpretation of the findings with regard to size or scale, geographical extent and duration/reversibility. In order to assist the assessment, brief definitions of each level of magnitude are provided in Table 10-3, below.

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

**Table 10-3**  
**Definition of Levels of Magnitude**

Magnitude	Definition
<b>Substantial</b>	Total loss or major alteration of key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline conditions such that post development, landscape character or view composition attributes of the baseline will be fundamentally changed.
<b>Moderate</b>	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline conditions such that post development, landscape character or view composition attributes will be partially changed.
<b>Slight</b>	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline conditions. Change arising from the loss/alteration will be discernible, but the underlying landscape character or view composition attributes will be similar to the baseline.
<b>Negligible</b>	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline conditions. Change will be barely distinguishable, approximating to 'no change'.

## Significance of Effects

10.55 The significance of any identified landscape or visual impact has been assessed in terms of 'major' 'moderate', 'minor' or 'none'. These categories have been based on combining the overall sensitivity of landscape/visual receptors and overall magnitude of effects, as shown in Table 10-4 below. This process is not a quantitative process, there is not an absolute scoring system. Instead, the correlation of the two factors, although reflecting recognised features and methods, is in the end a matter of professional judgement:

**Table 10-4**  
**Principles of Assessing Significance of Landscape and Visual Impacts**

	Magnitude - Substantial-	Magnitude - Moderate-	Magnitude - Slight-	Magnitude - Negligible-
Sensitivity -High-	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor
Sensitivity -Medium-	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor
Sensitivity -Low-	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/None
Sensitivity - Negligible -	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/None	None

10.56 The above matrix is not used as a prescriptive tool and the methodology and analysis of potential effects at any particular location must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. Thus in some instances a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.

10.57 Table 10-5, below, provides a brief definition of the full range of significance criteria. For the purpose of this assessment it is considered that Major and Major / Moderate Impacts are significant.

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

**Table 10-5**  
**Definition of Significance Criteria for Landscape and Visual Impact**

Significance	Definition
<b>None</b>	The proposed scheme is appropriate in its context. It may be difficult to differentiate from its surroundings and would affect very few or no receptors.
<b>Minor</b>	The proposed scheme would cause a barely perceptible impact, and would affect few receptors.
<b>Moderate</b>	The proposed scheme would cause a noticeable difference to the landscape, and would affect several receptors.
<b>Major</b>	The proposed scheme would completely change the character and/or appearance of the landscape for a long period of time or permanently. It would affect many receptors.

## Landscape and Visual Impacts

### *Landscape Impacts*

#### Landscape Effects

10.58 There will be no additional landscape effects to those permitted under the existing planning permission (i.e. changes to the landform and removal of some scrub vegetation within the West Quarry). The only notable difference will be that the North Quarry and West Quarry will be backfilled faster and sooner than originally anticipated.

#### Landscape Sensitivity

10.59 The Fingal Landscape Character Assessment states that the Low Lying Character Type in which the application site is situated is of low sensitivity.

10.60 The site survey confirmed that the landscape immediately surrounding the application site is of low quality, due to the industrial character of the many developments in this area, as well as the presence of a dense network of roads and a number of high voltage powerlines. The many hedgerows along the roads and the few remaining agricultural fields are the only natural elements left in this otherwise manmade landscape. The susceptibility of the Low Lying Character Type to change is assessed as low. The susceptibility of the existing hedgerows to change is assessed as high. It should however be noted that none of these landscape elements will be affected by the proposed development.

10.61 The landscape within the study area does not contain any landscape designations, scenic viewpoints or features and is therefore of low value.

10.62 Considering the above, the overall sensitivity of the landscape character is assessed as LOW.

#### Magnitude of Change to Landscape

10.63 Table 10-6 below describes the size and scale, geographical extent and duration / reversibility of the identified main landscape effect and makes a judgement of its overall magnitude:

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

**Table 10-6  
Magnitude of Landscape Effects**

Parameter	Description
<b>Size and Scale</b>	The proposed increase in the rate of permitted waste intake will not increase the size or scale of the landscape effect of the permitted development.
<b>Geographical Extent</b>	The proposed increase in the rate of permitted waste intake will further not increase the geographical extent, over which the landscape effects are experienced.
<b>Duration/ Reversibility</b>	The proposed increase in the rate of permitted waste intake will shorten the period during which the permitted backfilling works will take place and will result in an earlier restoration of the North Quarry and West Quarry to their original landform and land use, i.e. agriculture.
<b>Overall magnitude</b>	Overall, the proposed increase in the rate of permitted waste intake will not result in an increase to the magnitude of the landscape effects already established and/or permitted under existing planning permissions.

## Significance of Landscape Impact

10.64 The sensitivity of the low-lying landscape character was assessed as LOW. It was further found that the proposed increase in permitted waste intake will not increase the magnitude of those landscape effects that are already established and/or permitted. There will therefore be **NO additional landscape impact** over and above what is already permitted, due to the proposed increased waste intake.

## Visual Impacts

### Visual Effects

10.65 There will be no additional visual effects to those permitted under the existing planning permission, apart from an increased number of HGVs travelling over the public road network each hour of the working day. These will be visible along the North Road / R135 and along the north-eastern application site boundary, in views from a small number of locations to the north and east of the site. It should be noted that the increase in HGV numbers will result in a shorter period over which the effects are visible as the North and West Quarry will be backfilled faster and sooner than originally anticipated.

10.66 All other works associated with the existing permitted development, as well as the proposed increased waste intake, will be screened by intervening vegetation and topography in all views from the surrounding area.

### Visual Receptor Sensitivity

10.67 Table 10-7 below judges the susceptibility of the visual receptors within each of the identified Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs), based on Table 10-2 above. The table further describes the value placed on views from within each of the VRAs and makes a judgement of the overall sensitivity of each VRA.



# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

**Table 10-7  
Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

VRA No.	Susceptibility	Value	Overall Sensitivity
1	Receptors of MEDIUM and HIGH susceptibility (road users and private properties)	No designated or scenic views. Views of heavy traffic already present.	MEDIUM
2	Receptors of MEDIUM susceptibility (road users)	No designated or scenic views. Views of heavy traffic already present.	MEDIUM

## Magnitude of Change to Viewpoints

10.68 Table 10-8 below describes the magnitude of change to views from within each of the VRAs, in terms of the size and scale, geographical extent and duration / reversibility of the main visual effect. The table also contains a judgement of the overall magnitude of change.

**Table 10-8  
Magnitude of Visual Effects**

VRA No.	Description of Magnitude of change (VE01)	Overall Magnitude
1	<p><u>Size &amp; Scale:</u> The number of HGVs visible from within VRA1 is already quite high. The proposed increase in HGV numbers, while doubled at times, will blend with and will be visible in the same way as the existing traffic.</p> <p><u>Geographical Extent:</u> Similar views from a 1.5km long stretch of road (refer to VRA 1 on Figure 10-1); Views along the road for road users; direct views from fronts of properties along this section of North Road / R135; Viewpoints between 0-1.5km, depending on distance to the HGVs at any one point in time (refer to Viewpoints A and B on Figure 10-2).</p> <p><u>Duration/Reversibility:</u> The visibility of the HGVs is temporary and the proposed increased intake will result in a shorter overall period of the effects.</p>	SLIGHT
2	<p><u>Size &amp; Scale:</u> The increased number of HGVs visible in the middle ground in views from within VRA2 will blend with the HGVs already visible and will be hard to discern at this distance. The HGVs take up a small portion of the overall view.</p> <p><u>Geographical Extent:</u> Similar views from a very small area on the flyover over the N2 (refer to VRA 2 on Figure 10-1); Short glimpses at 45 degree angles for road users; Viewpoints approximately 500m from the partially visible HGVs (refer to Viewpoint C on Figure 10-2).</p> <p><u>Duration/Reversibility:</u> The visibility of the HGVs is temporary and the proposed increased intake will result in a shorter overall period of the effects.</p>	NEGLIGIBLE

## Significance of Visual Impact

10.69 Based on Table 10-4 above, the sensitivity of each visual receptor was combined with the magnitude of the main visual effect to arrive at the significance of the visual effect. As shown in Table 10-9 below the impacts of the visual effect were found to be moderate/minor or minor, i.e. impacts not regarded as significant:

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

**Table 10-9**  
**Significance of Visual Effects**

VRA No.	Overall Sensitivity	Overall Magnitude	Significance
1	MEDIUM	SLIGHT	MODERATE / MINOR
2	MEDIUM	NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR

## Impacts on Landscape / Planning Designations

### *Land Use Zoning*

- 10.70 The proposed development comprises the restoration of an extraction quarry, which is one of the development types listed as 'permitted in principle' within the two zoning objectives covering the application site (i.e. Zoning Objective "RU" and Zoning Objective "HI"). The development is therefore regarded as being in compliance with these zoning objectives.
- 10.71 The proposed retention of all boundary hedgerows and of the existing wildlife areas, as well as the restoration of the application site to agricultural land and the replanting of boundary hedgerows which were previously removed will ensure that the biodiversity currently present on site will be maintained. This is in compliance with the provisions made under the current Fingal County Development Plan for Nature Development Areas.

### *Extraction and Aggregates*

- 10.72 This assessment demonstrates that the landscape and visual quality and amenity of the site and surrounding area, will not be affected by the proposed development. Further to that, the proposed restoration plan makes provision for the restoration of the landscape, which complies with Objective EE 35 of the current Fingal CDP.

## Do-nothing Scenario

- 10.73 If the proposed increase in waste intake is not permitted, the North Quarry would continue to be backfilled at the existing rate and the West Quarry would also ultimately be backfilled in time thereafter, in accordance with the existing agreed restoration scheme. While the end result would effectively be the same as what is proposed by this development, it would just materialise at a later time and date.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

- 10.74 The mitigation measures to be implemented, as part of the restoration of the quarry sites includes the following provisions:
- Infilling of the quarry voids to previous ground levels with inert material. This avoids the creation of a large water body which would attract birds and have a negative effect on nearby Dublin Airport;
  - Restoration of the infilled quarry voids to a beneficial agricultural afteruse, as well as biodiversity rich calcareous grassland in some areas; and
  - Planting of hedges, made up from native species, to re-create the hedgerow pattern, as it was present in this area prior to any quarrying activity

# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

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## RESIDUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.75 The assessment has found that the proposed increased waste intake will have no additional landscape impact over and above what is already approved and permitted by previous planning permissions. There will be moderate / minor to minor visual impact on a limited number of views, due to the increase in hourly HGV movements across the public road network and along internal quarry haul routes. However, there will be no visual impacts on the vast majority of views within the study area.
- 10.76 The proposed restoration of the quarry sites will ensure that they are returned to a beneficial agricultural afteruse. The approved restoration plan further provides for the retention and creation of some biodiversity rich wildlife areas, all of which will help mitigate the overall landscape impacts of the surrounding quarry development.

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# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

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## REFERENCES

**The Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)** Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, Routledge

**The Landscape Institute (March 2011)** Advice Note 01/11 – Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment, The Landscape Institute

**CAAS Environmental Services Limited on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (March 2002)** Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements, EPA Ireland

**CAAS Environmental Services Limited on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (September 2003)** Advice Notes on Current Practice (in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements), EPA Ireland

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# LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL 10

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## FIGURES

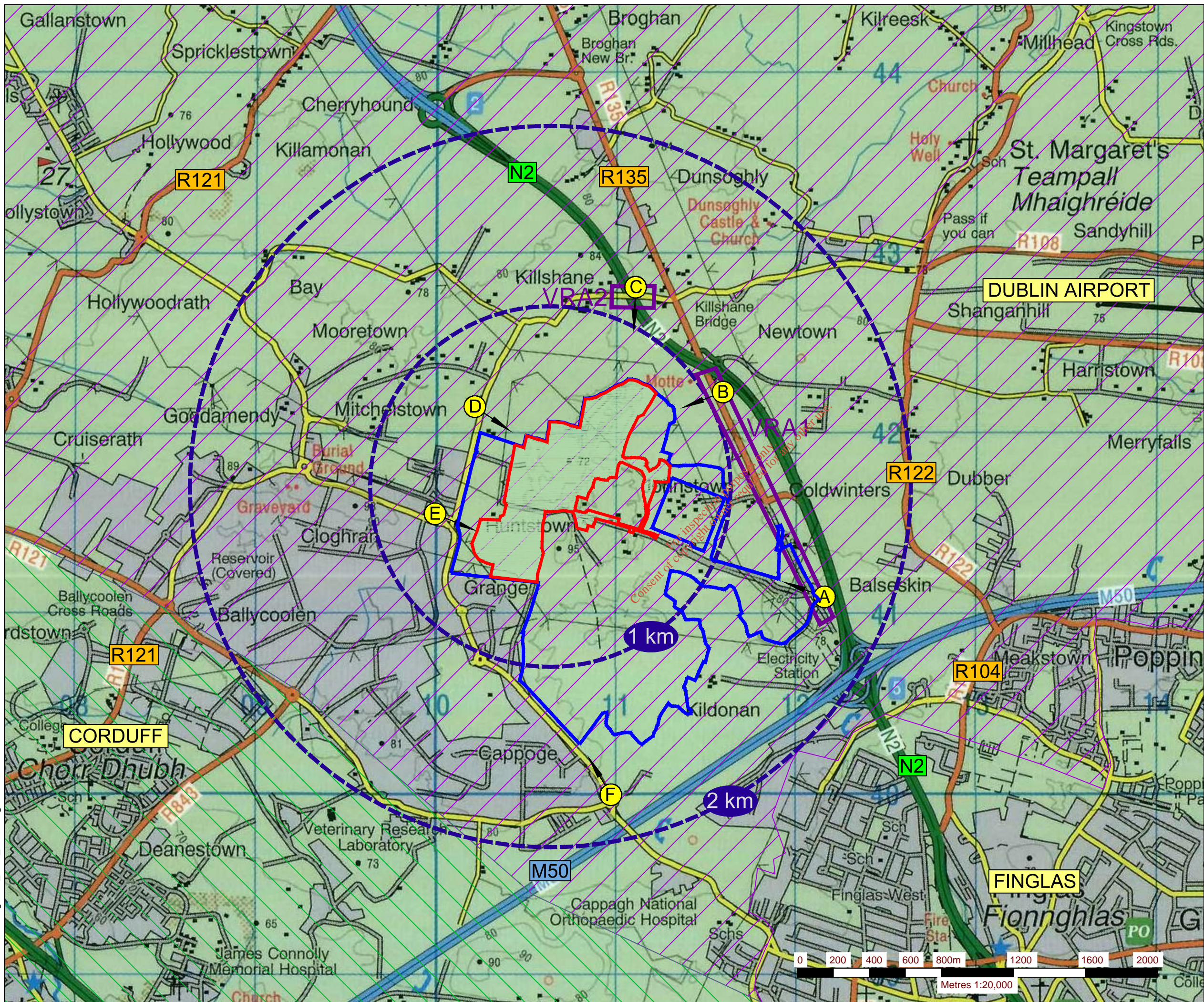
Figure 10-1  
Landscape Designations and Viewpoint Locations

Figure 10-2  
Viewpoints A, B and C

Figure 10-3  
Viewpoints D, E and F




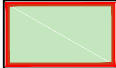
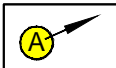

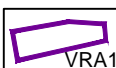


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**NOTES**

- EXTRACT FROM 1:50,000 O.S DISCOVERY MAP NO. 50
- ORDNANCE SURVEY IRELAND LICENCE NO. SU 0000716 (C)  
ORDNANCE SURVEY & GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

**LEGEND**

-  ROADSTONE LIMITED LAND INTEREST (c. 200.3 ha)
  -  APPLICATION AREA (c. 48.65 ha)
  -  VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS
  -  APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY
  -  VISUAL RECEPTOR AREAS (VIEWS OF THE APPLICATION AREA FROM LOCATIONS WITHIN ONE VRA ARE SIMILAR)
- LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES (LCTs):**  
(FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017)
-  LOW LYING AGRICULTURE LCT
  -  RIVER VALLEYS/CANAL LCT



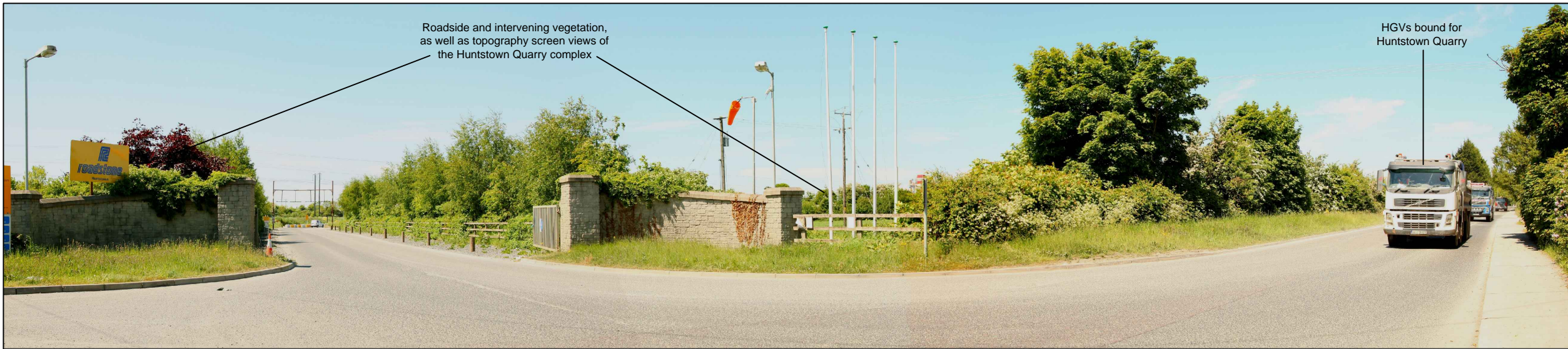
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**LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS & VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS**

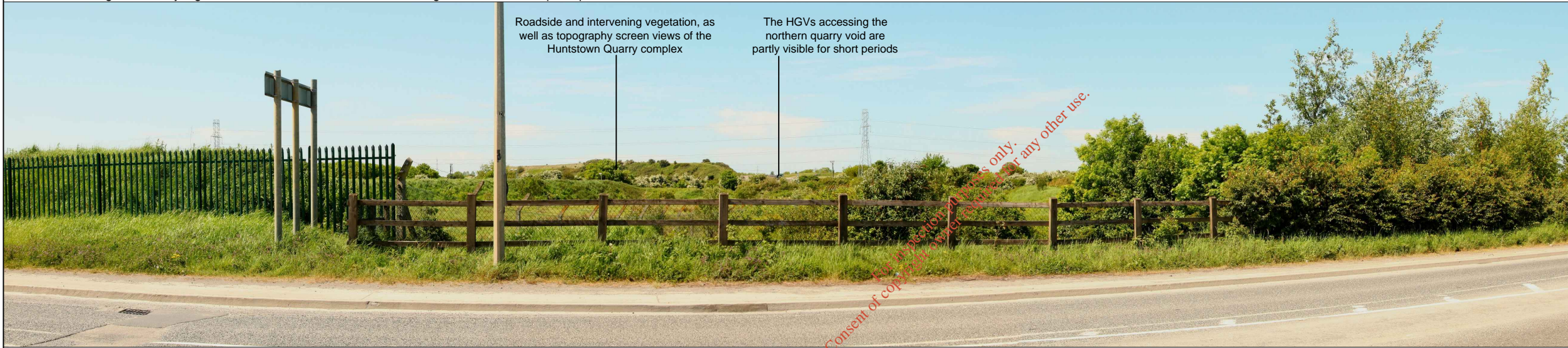
**FIGURE 10-1**

Scale: 1:20,000 @ A3 Date: AUGUST 2016

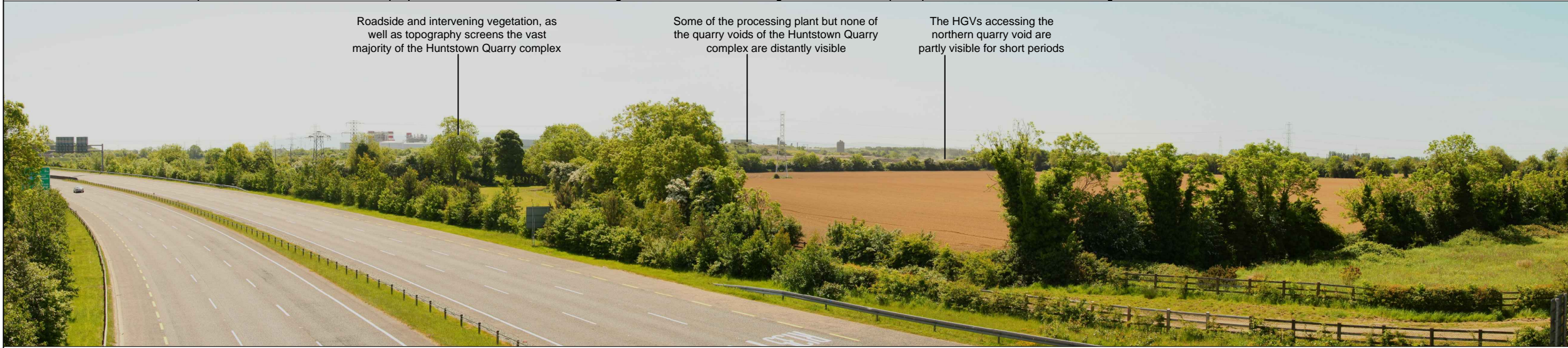




**VIEWPOINT A: Eastern entrance to Huntstown Quarry**  
 Approximate Elevation: **80m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **9300m** Direction of View: **Northwest**  
**Description:** This view northwest was taken from a location opposite the entrance to Huntstown Quarry. The entrance is located along the old N2, which is now a local access road. This view demonstrates that the extraction and processing areas within the Huntstown Quarry complex are fully screened by topography and intervening vegetation in views from locations to the southeast of the site. The only change visible in this view, due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works will be an increased number of HGVs per hour. Considering the already high number of HGV movements, this change will be almost imperceptible.





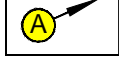

**VIEWPOINT B: R135 - Just south of the N2 flyover**  
 Approximate Elevation: **80m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **320m** Direction of View: **Southwest**  
**Description:** This view southwest was taken from location along the R135 (the old N2), just south of the N2 flyover. It demonstrates that the extraction and processing areas within the Huntstown Quarry complex are fully screened by topography and intervening vegetation in views from locations to the northeast of the site. The HGVs accessing the northern quarry void with backfill material are visible for short periods in the middle ground of this view, partly screened by vegetation. They are further visible, as they travel along the R135. The number of HGVs per hour will increase, due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works. However, the change will be almost imperceptible in the context of the existing HGV movements.

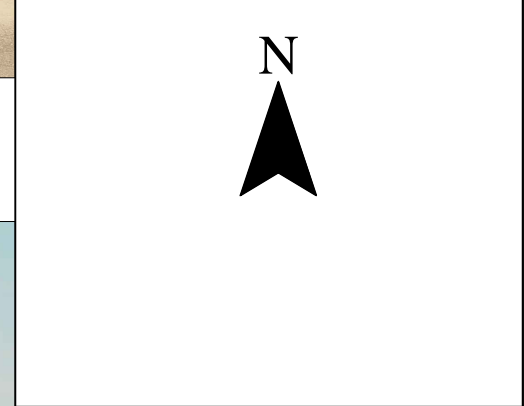
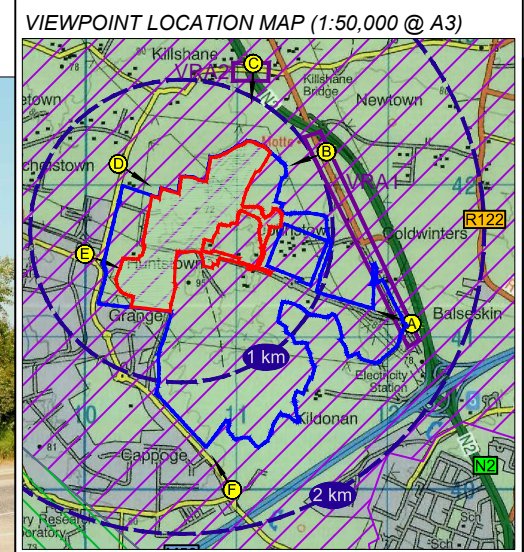


**VIEWPOINT C: Kilshane Road - Flyover over the N2**  
 Approximate Elevation: **85m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **450m** Direction of View: **South**  
**Description:** This view south was taken from an elevated location on the flyover over the N2 along Kilshane Road. It demonstrates that the majority of the processing plant and all of the extraction areas within the Huntstown Quarry complex are screened by topography and intervening vegetation in views from locations to the north of the site, even more so, when taking the elevated position of this viewpoint into account. The HGVs accessing the northern quarry void with backfill material are visible for short periods in the middle ground of this view, partly screened by vegetation. The number of HGVs per hour will increase, due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works. However, the change will be almost imperceptible in the context of the existing HGV movements.

**NOTES**  
 1. EXTRACT FROM 1:50,000 O.S DISCOVERY MAP NO. 50  
 2. ORDNANCE SURVEY IRELAND LICENCE NO. SU 0000716 (C) ORDNANCE SURVEY & GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

**LEGEND**

-  ROADSTONE LIMITED LAND INTEREST (c. 200.3 ha)
-  WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 48.65 ha)
-  VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS
-  APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY



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 NORTH ROAD, FINGLAS, DUBLIN 11  
**VIEWPOINTS A, B & C**  
**VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS**

**FIGURE 10-2**

Scale: N/A Date: AUGUST 2016

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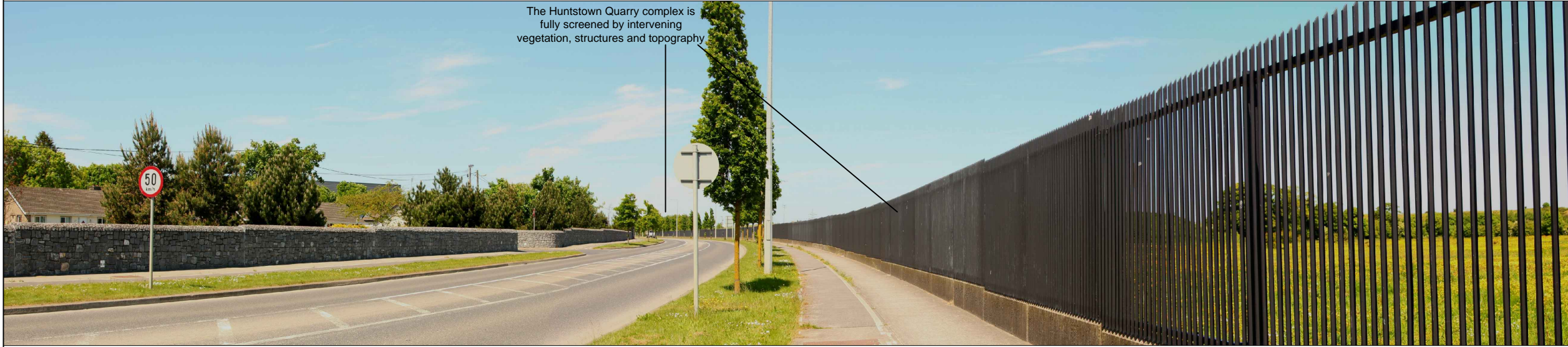




**VIEWPOINT D: Kilshane Road - Approximately 600m north of the junction with Kilshane Way**  
 Approximate Elevation: **80m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **270m** Direction of View: **Southeast**  
**Description:** This view east was taken over a field gate from a location along Kilshane Road to the west of the northern quarry, which forms part of the Huntstown Quarry complex. Views to the east along this road are generally screened by mature roadside vegetation. However, even where glimpses into the neighbouring land are possible, intervening vegetation and topography further screen any views of the application site. The changes due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works will therefore not be visible in any views from locations to the west of the site.





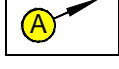

**VIEWPOINT E: Roundabout at the junction of Kilshane Road, Kilshane Way and Cappagh Road**  
 Approximate Elevation: **85m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **120m** Direction of View: **East**  
**Description:** This view demonstrates that mature roadside vegetation as well as tree shelterbelts, screen views to the east from Kilshane Road and Cappagh Road. The changes due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works will therefore not be visible in any views from locations to the west of the site.

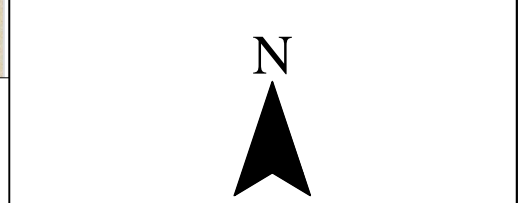
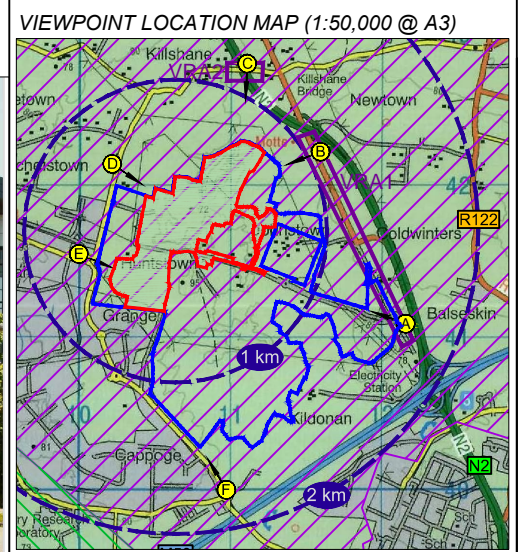


**VIEWPOINT F: Cappagh Road - Just north of junction with Ballycoolin Road**  
 Approximate Elevation: **80m AOD** Distance from substitute consent boundary: **1190m** Direction of View: **Northeast**  
**Description:** This view north was taken from Cappagh Road just north of the junction with Ballycoolin Road. Fencing, screening mounds and intervening vegetation screen any views of the Huntstown Quarry complex in views from Cappagh Road. The changes due to the proposed intensification of the backfilling works will therefore not be visible in any views from locations to the south of the site.

**NOTES**  
 1. EXTRACT FROM 1:50,000 O.S DISCOVERY MAP NO. 50  
 2. ORDNANCE SURVEY IRELAND LICENCE NO. SU 0000716 (C) ORDNANCE SURVEY & GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

**LEGEND**

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-  WASTE LICENCE APPLICATION AREA (c. 48.65 ha)
-  VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS
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**VIEWPOINTS D, E & F**  
**VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS**

**FIGURE 10-3**

Scale: N/A Date: AUGUST 2016

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