

National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004

Directions to the National Roads Authority in respect of a newly discovered National Monument in Lismullin Townland., Co. Meath on the route of the M3 Clonee to north of Kells approved road development.

Introduction

In the course of archaeological investigations on the route of the M3 Clonee to north of Kells approved road development being carried out under Ministerial directions A008 a previously unknown National Monument was discovered at Lismullin. The monument a ritual enclosure has not therefore been dealt with in the Environmental Impact Statement for the scheme or by An Bord Pleanála in its decision to approve the road development.

Archaeological excavations being carried out to preserve by record archaeological features discovered in previous investigations on the route have revealed an enclosure defined by two rows of stakeholes with an entrance leading to a centrally place smaller inner enclosure. The limited excavations carried out on the monument to date have revealed its extent within the CPO for the road. The outer enclosure is some 80 metres in diameter with an entrance on the east from which two radial rows of stakeholes lead to the inner enclosure which is 16 metres in diameter. There appears to be two slot trenches between the end of this entrance way and the inner enclosure.

The monument is located in the valley between the hills of Tara and Skreen and in the vicinity of Rath Lugh.

Following an inspection of the monument by the Chief Archaeologist and discussion on site with the Project Archaeologist it was agreed that the monument is of national importance and that a formal report should be submitted by the National Roads Authority to the Minister. Following an evaluation of submissions in the matter the view of the Minister is that the enclosure at Lismullin is a National Monument.

Under the provisions of Section 14A (3) of the National Monuments Act 1930, as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, where a previously unknown National Monument is discovered during the carrying out of a road development the Minister may, at his discretion, issue directions to the road authority to do one or more of the following: preserve, renovate, excavate, make a record of or demolish the monument. In making his decision the Minister may take account of the archaeological issues, the public interest and may also have regard to the following:

- The preservation, protection or maintenance of the heritage or amenities of the Monument;
- The nature of any injury or interference with the monument;
- The social or economic benefit accruing from the construction of the road;
- Any matter of Government or ministerial policy;
- The need to collect or disseminate information on the monument;
- The cost implications from issuing or not issuing a direction.

The Minister has consulted in writing with the Director of the National Museum of Ireland and has received the written comments of the Director in reply.

In considering the most appropriate form of directions to issue in the circumstances pertaining in this particular case the Minister has taken into account the potential of archaeological excavation and surveys to provide valuable information with regard to various aspects of the monument. Among these are the original nature of the monument; the date, nature and time-span of the use of the monument; the comparative chronologies of the enclosing elements and the relationship between the inner and outer enclosures. The Minister has also taken into account that the monument has been degraded by ploughing in the past, that the surviving features are shallow, that the monument is in a fragile state and that there is a risk of degradation of the monument by natural elements.

Having regard to the foregoing considerations the Minister has decided to issue directions to the road authority to fully excavate and record that part of the National Monument within the area of the CPO for the road. The archaeological excavations and recording are to be carried out in advance of any road construction works in the vicinity of the National Monument. In addition the directions require that the road authority carry out a topographical survey of the entire National Monument and the surrounding area, including the areas outside the CPO for the road and also to carry out geophysical surveys of the entire monument. These works will provide a better understanding of the monument and inform measures for the long-term protection of that part of the site that is located outside of the CPO for the road. The Minister is of the view that his decision in this regard is in the public interest and will also yield a significant heritage gain in providing information about an important National Monument, part of which will be left undisturbed.

Directions

All aspects of the archaeological works should be conducted in accordance with provisions of the policy and advice notes on archaeological excavations issued by the Department and in line with the provisions of the Code of Practice agreed with the National Roads Authority.

The Minister will appoint a committee to advise him on the conduct of the archaeological works carried out under these directions. The Project Archaeologist, Consultant Archaeologist and site director shall liaise closely with the committee on the conduct of the works.

The directions have been issued as **A042** and this number should be used in all correspondence and reports connected with the directions.

The road authority, the National Roads Authority, are directed to carry out the following archaeological works at the National Monument:

Schedule of archaeological works:

A schedule of the archaeological works required under these directions shall be submitted to the National Monuments Service. The schedule shall set out in detail the phasing of the works and the timeframes for the completion of the works.

Topographical Survey:

1. A full topographical survey is to be carried out of the entire National Monument both within the CPO for the road and in all other parts of the monument.
2. Details of the proposed survey are to be submitted to the National Monuments Service in advance of carrying out the work.
3. A detailed report on the survey is to be submitted to the National Monuments Service.

Geophysical Survey:

1. Geophysical surveys are to be carried out of the entire monument both within and outside the CPO for the road.
2. Proposals for the areas to be surveyed should be submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.
3. Method statements for the geophysical surveys should be submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.

Aerial Photographic Survey:

1. Aerial photographic records shall be made of the monument during and on completion of the archaeological works.
2. The photographic surveys shall be incorporated into the site archive.
3. Copies of aerial photographs shall be provided to the National Monuments Service as required.

Archaeological Excavations:

Archaeological excavations are to be carried out in the entire area of the National Monument within the CPO for the road as follows:

Archaeological Excavation of features and deposits:

1. All archaeological excavation of features and deposits shall be carried out by hand.

2. A method statement for all the excavations shall be submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.
3. The method statement shall include a plan showing the areas to be excavated and the excavation grid shall be marked on the plan.
4. All archaeological features and deposits within the CPO for the road are to be fully excavated and recorded.
5. Archaeological artefacts discovered in the course of these excavations should be treated, stored and conserved in line with guidelines and advice notes issued by the National Museum of Ireland.
6. All archaeological records and artefacts recovered from the site in previous investigations should be incorporated into the final archive for the site.
7. Details of the arrangements for the curation and storage of archaeological objects discovered are to be submitted to the National Monuments Service.
8. Details of the recording methodology to be used and the location of the site site archive during the course of the excavations are to be submitted to the National Monuments Service.
9. Details of any proposed changes to the approved method statement shall be submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.

Archaeological Team:

1. Any proposed change of the director of archaeological excavations on the site should be submitted to the National Monuments Service for approval.
2. The names of the senior supervisors on the excavations should be submitted to the National Monuments Service.
3. The names of all specialists who will be available as required should be provided the National Monuments Service.
4. The National Monuments Service shall be informed of any change in the size of the excavation team.
5. The National Monuments Service shall be notified of any change of the director of the archaeological excavations and the name of the new director should be submitted for approval.

Progress Reports:

1. A report on the progress of the archaeological works shall be submitted to the National Monuments Service every two weeks.
2. This report may be submitted by email to the Chief Archaeologist.

Post-Excavation Programme and Reports:

1. On completion of the archaeological excavations on site a preliminary report summarising the results of the excavations should be prepared and submitted to the National Monuments Section within 12 weeks of the end of works on site.
2. A programme for the post-excavation works required to analyse the results of the excavations and for the preparation of the final report on the excavations should be submitted to the National Monuments Section within 12 weeks of the completion of works on site. A proposal for the publication of the results of the excavations should be included with this submission.
3. A full report on the results of the excavations shall be submitted to the National Monuments Service within 18 months of the completion of works on site.
4. The National Monuments Service should be informed of the location of the site archive.
5. Copies of the preliminary report and the final report should be provided to the National Museum of Ireland.
6. On completion of the final report the National Museum of Ireland should be informed of the location of archaeological objects from the excavations and arrangements should be agreed for the final deposition of those archaeological objects.
7. A summary of the excavation results should be published in the Excavations Bulletin for the year in which the excavations are carried out.

Publication of results:

The results of the excavations and other archaeological works shall be published to the satisfaction of the Minister and in a format to be agreed with the National Monuments Service. The Minister may publish all or part of any report submitted on foot of these directions.

Project Archaeologist:

1. The Project Archaeologist appointed for the road development should ensure that the archaeological works are carried out in accordance with the terms of the directions.
2. The Project Archaeologist shall ensure that two copies of all reports required under these directions are submitted to the National Monuments Service.
3. The Project Archaeologist shall inform the National Monuments Service of the commencement and completion dates of every phase of the archaeological works required under these directions.

4. The Project Archaeologist is requested to facilitate the Director of the National Museum of Ireland or his officers should he wish to visit the site during the carrying out of the archaeological works.

Record Numbers for the archaeological works:

1. The record number E3074 already allocated to the excavations at Lismullin should be used to record the archaeological excavations carried out under these directions.
2. The record number for the topographical surveys will be allocated on approval of the proposed work.
3. The record number for the geophysical surveys will be allocated on approval of method statements.

Inspection of Works

Officers, servants or agents of the Minister may inspect the archaeological works at any time and full co-operation should be given to them in carrying out the inspections.

Protection of the National Monument:

To assist the Minister in providing for the long-term protection of that part of the site that is located outside of the CPO for the road, the National Roads Authority in so far as is practicable should provide the National Monuments Service with the names and addresses of the landowners of that part of the monument that lies outside the CPO for the road.

Dick Roche T. D.
Minister for Environment, Heritage & Local Government
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