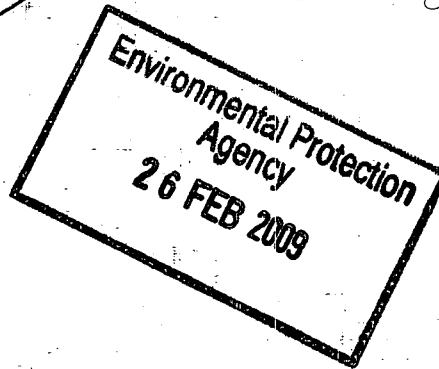


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Sub (61)  
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3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

**EPA Reference W0248/01.**

We wish to object to Oxigen Environmental Ltd. 's Waste License Application for a Biological Waste Treatment Facility and Landfill of 90,000 tonnes per annum at Corranure, Co Cavan.

The principal issues that we wish to raise are as follows:-

1. The immense negative impact of the existing facility on our family life.
2. The effects of the noxious odours and gases on the health and well being of our family and the wider community.
3. Mismanagement of the existing facility by Cavan County Council and Oxigen Environmental Ltd
4. Oxigen Environmental Ltd.'s track record
5. Unsuitability of site for landfill and biological waste treatment facility.
6. Lack of qualified personnel to operate existing landfill and proposed MBT plant.
7. Devaluation of our property and other homes in the area.
8. Negative Effect on the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Environment of local area.
9. Negative effect on the local community.
10. Pollution of local streams and water courses.
11. Road Usage and Traffic.
12. Lack of experience of operating MBT plant.
13. Issues with MBT.
14. Treatment of lechate from the plant.

**1. The immense negative impact of the existing facility on our family life.**

Our home is situated on the main Cootehill road approximately equidistance between Cavan town and the landfill at Corranure. We bought our house in 2005 and subsequently built a large extension and totally refurbished the house. Planning permission for the extension was granted by Cavan County Council. We moved into the house in early December 2005. It was on the first morning in our new home that I first became aware of the dreadful gas type smell outside of the house. It was a cold morning and the plants and trees were covered in white frost but I could not appreciate this as I was so shocked by the terrible smell.

Over the past 3 years we have endured so many days and nights where the smell has been unbearable. There are various different types of odours - gas type smell, old

waste smell, fresher rotting waste type smell, all equally sickening. We have become familiar with them all. These dreadful odours have had a very serious negative impact on our family life and hardly a day has gone by in the last three and a half years that we have not been affected by either the smell or the stress of the smell and the landfill.

## **2. The effects of the noxious odours and gases on the health and well being of our family and the wider community.**

We have four children aged 3, 5, 6 and nearly 9 years old. I have worried endlessly over the past 3 years about the effect this has had on them. I am concerned about the potential harmful effects of the landfill gases to their health (including odourless gases). I am also concerned about the effects of the dreadful smells. On certain nights when the smell is strong it comes into our house and it is as bad inside the house as it is outside the house. We have closed all the vents in the windows including the children's bedrooms but the smell still seeps in. I know that in 2006 and during the worst patches of 2007 and 2008 the children woke frequently during the nights and complained of the smell. Also on these occasions they complained of feeling sick because of the smell.

On so many nights we have been unable to relax in our sitting room because of the horrendous smell. It is then impossible to sleep because the smell is also in the bedrooms upstairs. Indeed on many nights I have been awoken during the night by the smell. I have lain in bed sick to the stomach and also worried that the children will waken also. This is no quality of life.

I would like to outline the effects on my own health and well being also. In addition to the obvious effects of feeling nauseous there are the following effects: - lack of sleep, irritability, stress re children/house etc, generally feeling down because of smell, depressed on certain days. The above complaints and concerns are common to all of the families that live within and 3 or 4 km radius of the landfill.

## **3. Mismanagement of the existing facility by Cavan County Council and Oxigen Environmental Ltd.**

The existing facility has been constantly mismanaged firstly by the County Council and now by Oxigen. Despite the many meetings, phone calls, letters and commitments as I type this objection this morning the smell has once again infiltrated my home. I have already made three phone calls to try and get it resolved. (3<sup>rd</sup> Feb.)

There were huge problems with the way in which cell 2 was constructed and filled and also the way in which the gas pipes were laid. This gave rise to the horrific odour problems of 2006. The subsequent permanent capping of the cell was a very lengthy process which gave rise to dreadful odour problems in late 2007. I have lost count of the letters and phone calls to the County Manager, the Director of Service, landfill management and staff, Environmental Officer, Health Service, EPA, Minister of the Environment that I undertook in 2006 and 2007 and yet the same odour problems occurred in 2008 and are continuing in 2009.

Despite promises from Oxigen and the council that they had learned from these mistakes delays and problems were also encountered in the capping of cell 3A which led to the odour problems in 2008, when the EPA were forced to close the facility.

The EPA's site inspection reports that I have seen for the last number of months have consistently found areas of non compliance at the facility under Oxigen's management.

#### **4. Oxigen Environmental Ltd.'s track record.**

Oxigen has been prosecuted by the EPA and convicted for a number of license breaches at their facility at Robinhood Road, Ballymount. These breaches include sending waste off site to facilities without EPA's consent, accepting more waste than the permitted amount, improper waste management practices, and failure to maintain a written record of all waste loads being accepted at the facility.

The facility at Corranure was closed temporarily by the EPA in December '08 due to a number of non compliances on site inspection reports.

#### **5. Unsuitable site for landfill and MBT plant.**

The site is wholly unsuitable given its close proximity to the urban centres of Cavan town, Ballyhaise, Butlersbridge and closeness to a large number of crèches, nursing homes, primary schools, secondary schools and Cavan College.

In addition planning permission has been granted by Cavan County Council for a large number of homes in the immediate area of the landfill over the last three years. A lot of these new houses and developments are being contaminated by the odours and gases from the existing landfill.

#### **6. Lack of qualified Personnel to operate existing landfill and proposed MBT plant.**

There has been a high turnover of managerial staff at the landfill. The last landfill manager left in Oct. '08 and has not been replaced yet. At a recent meeting Oxigen informed us that a consultant from Germany was managing the site. However today (3rd Feb.) when I contacted the landfill because of the terrible smell I was informed that he was only on site from Tuesday to Friday. I was informed that they had been having problems since Friday and that the main flare was not working. The company responsible for fixing the flare are based in the UK and staff on site were taking instructions over the telephone in an attempt to fix the flare. Last week the smell was due to a broken seal on a well head which went undetected.

The proposed MBT plant will require expert management by qualified people. Oxigen have not demonstrated that they have identified whether these resources will be available and can be attracted to this area.

#### **7. Devaluation of our property and other homes in the area.**

There is no doubt that it is very hard to sell houses in the area with the odour problems over the last few years. Any further expansion of the landfill and construction of the MBT plant would further reduce the values of the properties in the area.

#### **8. Negative Effect on the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Environment of local area.**

The site of the landfill was originally a marsh and local people can recall ducks swimming on it. The site today is in stark contrast. The landfill has already had a very negative effect on the area and the large size of the proposed bio-treatment facility buildings will really stand out when viewed from the Antiduff road and also the Cortubber area.

The Lismagratty ring fort is situated close to the proposed landfill extension area. This is a monument of historical interest in the area and we are concerned that it will be damaged by further development in such close proximity. Indeed it was noted in the Ellen O Carroll Archaeological report the excavated area associated with the extraction of cover material for the landfill site is currently right up to the corner of the south western edge of the ring fort.

Shantemon Mountain is situated close by to the landfill. At the top of the mountain there are historical monuments called the Shantemon stone row also known as Finn MacCool's fingers which is thought to be one of the oldest Megalithic monuments in the country. This is a beautiful scenic area and a path has been made up to the finger stones. Last summer I brought my children up here for a day out and picnic and it was ruined by the stench from the landfill.

#### **9. Negative effect on the local community.**

It has had a very negative effect on the local Community. My husband's family have lived in this area for over twenty years and many of our neighbours have been here for a couple of generations. Recently with the number of new housing developments and individual homes that have been built there have been a lot of new families moved to the area. Unfortunately our quality of life in the area is now totally compromised by the operation of the Landfill. Continuation of this facility will undoubtedly mean future generations will not make a home in the local area and indeed anyone who does not own a house or manages to sell their house will be forced to leave the area. People feel that they have put up with this landfill for over 20 years and they now want it closed permanently.

The Antiduff road is a nice quiet road to for a walk and it is a scenic area. Local people no longer go for walks there because of the smell. I remember in Cavan town this year the day that the Christmas lights were turned on the smell was particularly bad though out the town. On many occasions I have been at the children's playground on Cathedral road and the smell has been terrible. All of the parents have been complaining about it. These are just a few examples of the effect of the landfill on the local community.

#### **10. Pollution of local streams and water courses.**

We are afraid to drink the water from our well. I buy 5 litre containers of water and I never let the children drink the water from the tap.

The Corranure and Lismagratty streams have been polluted by the landfill. The most recent EPA site inspection report, states that Oxigen were in breach of conditions 3.15 and 6.1 of their license, on many occasions, because of discharges from the landfill to surface water.

#### **11. Road Usage and Traffic.**

The volume of traffic especially large trucks will increase significantly. The road from the by-pass to the landfill as it stands is barely able to cope with existing traffic. It gets flooded and is constantly covered in mud making it very dangerous. Large Oxigen waste disposal trucks often queue outside the gates of the landfill in the morning from 6.30 waiting for it to open.

#### **12. Lack of experience of operating Mechanical Biological treatment plant (MBT)**



The scale of this plant is unprecedented in this country and Oxigen have no experience of running such a facility. At a recent meeting they said they were using consultants from Germany who have expertise in this area. To state the obvious neither the directors of Oxigen nor the Consultants from Germany nor the EPA will have to live in close proximity to this plant once it has been constructed.

In addition, they have applied for license for accepting 5,000 tonnes of sewage sludge per annum and sufficient information is not given on how it is to be dealt with.

### 13. Issues with MBT.

MBT in itself does not result in the final treatment of waste. It is still unproven how to deal with the residue produced. The compost residue from MBT may still contain harmful chemicals. The recent Pork dioxin scare has highlighted this issue even further. MBT cannot get rid of PCB's. The EU has already warned that the use of the compost residue from MBT could lead to an accumulation of hazardous substances in soil.

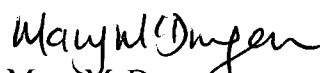
MBT also gives rise to issues about control of air emissions and lechate. To establish MBT in an Irish context should involve developing guidance for the management of outputs, developing a standard to measure how biodegradable different types of waste are and developing mechanisms to assess the performance of MBT.

### 14. Treatment of Lechate from the Plant

The lechate being pumped from Corranure to the town sewage system is causing odours and gases around Drumalee and the town and infiltrating homes en route. If you walk the 'sli na slainte' route from Drumalee around the town centre a very strong smell of the lechate can be found from open drains on certain days. During periods of heavy rain the overflow tank has to be emptied using a tractor and tanker to transport the lechate to the local water treatment facility at Keadue. Residents surrounding this plant at Keadue are also very unhappy with the smell from the lechate coming from the plant. We believe the volume of lechate will increase significantly with the additional landfill and proposed MBT plant. We are concerned that the water treatment plant at Keadue does not have the capability to deal with the lechate and to make the water safe for human consumption.

In summary, we request that the EPA refuse this application and also ensure the landfill is closed for good.

Signed by:

  
Mary McDwyer

  
Eamon McDwyer

Date 25/2/08