Appendix A9.1 Visual Impact Appraisals at Selected Viewpoints

1. Visual Impact Sensitivity

To assess the susceptibility of viewers and the amenity value of views, the assessor uses a range of criteria and provides a four point weighting scale to indicate how strongly the viewer/view is associated with each of the criterion identified in Chapter 9 (9.2.4).

Strong value	Moderate value	Mild value	Negligible value

Values associated with the view	VP1	VP2	VP3	VP4	VP5	VP6	VP7	VP8	VP9
Viewer Susceptibility									
Recognised scenic value of the view									
Views from within highly sensitive landscape areas									
Intensity of use, popularity (number of viewers)									
Provision of vast, elevated panoramic views									
Sense of remoteness / tranquillity									
Degree of perceived naturalness									
Presence of striking or noteworthy features									
Sense of Historical, cultural and / or spiritual significance									
Rarity or uniqueness of the view									
Integrity of the landscape character within the view									
Sense of place at the viewing location									
Sense of awe									
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	**ML**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**L**	**M**	**M**	**L**	**L**

VH = Very High, H = High, HM = High-medium, M = Medium, ML = Medium-low, L = Low, VL = Very-low

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP1	Access road to Kerdiffstown House	W

Representative of:

- A demesne landscape
- A public facility (Society of Saint Vincent De Paul)

Receptor Sensitivity

Medium low

Existing View

This is a contained view to the west from the Kerdiffstown House driveway. This section of the approach to Kerdiffstown house broadens between the Kerdiffstown landfill to the west and the mature riparian woodland associated with the Morell River to the east. At this point, Kerdiffstown House is in view to the north but it is not an axial avenue view – it is more of a meandering approach towards the southern end of the House. The landfill rises relatively steeply to the west as a scrub covered slope beyond a thin veil of mixed species trees on the boundary of the site. The profile of the visible northern (Zone 1) end of the landfill is an elongated mound.

Visual Impact at remediation stage

During the remediation stage the visible portion of the landfill will be subject of capping. This will result in the entire foreground slopes being stripped of vegetation and re-profiled to incorporate the geotextile membrane (cap) and subsequent soil layers. The view will consist of a bare-earth mound and associated earthmoving machinery. There is also likely to be equipment associated with the installation of a network of buried gas wells. It will appear as a substantial and busy construction site that will contrast with the mature parkland landscape of Kerdiffstown Demesne, The Morell River Corridor and Palmerstown House Estate across the river. Such effects will, however, be temporary as they take place during phase 1 of the remediation process. However, during this period the visual impacts will be of a **High-medium** magnitude.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)

Immediately following the remediation stage, grassland will be established on the capped landfill slopes along with some shrub vegetation to mask the view of the various gas outlet risers. A surface water bio-swale will have been constructed in the lower foreground. Construction activity will have ceased and only recreational users are likely to be seen on the remediated landfill. The 'green' appearance of the landfill slopes will begin to assimilate with the parkland landscape context surrounding the viewer in all other directions at this location. Even though the landfill is likely to be slightly more noticeable than it currently is in this setting it will not detract from visual amenity to any greater degree than the current baseline scenario. The magnitude of visual impact post construction is deemed to be **Neutral**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)

Following the establishment of mitigation screen planting along the nearest side of the swale feature there will be only a veiled view of the lower slopes of the remediated landfill with grassed slopes rising just above. There will also be something of an 'ecological aesthetic' associated with the vegetated drainage swale at the base of the slope. The magnitude of visual impact post mitigation establishment is deemed to be **Positive** in comparison to the baseline scenario.

Summary

Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium-low	High-medium	**Moderate**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium-low	Neutral	**Imperceptible**
Operational stage Residual	Medium-low	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP2	Walled Garden at Kerdiffstown House	SW

Representative of:

- A demesne landscape
- A public facility (Society of Saint Vincent De Paul)

Receptor Sensitivity

Medium

Existing View

This is a view from the centre of the walled garden that lies contiguous to the western side of Kerdiffstown House. The view uphill to the south-west takes in clusters of mature trees within the garden and a patch of woodland that lies on the boundary between the walled garden and Kerdiffstown Landfill. The mounded Northern (Zone 1) end of the landfill is barely visible through this heavy veil of trees even within the winter period depicted in the photomontage baseline scenario.

Visual Impact at remediation stage

The Northern (Zone 1) end of the landfill will be subject to substantial clearance and profiling as part of the capping works. This will result in a view of bare earth across the entire mound as well as the associated earth moving machinery. However, both the landfill and the machinery will be barely visible from here through the existing woodland vegetation, which will remain in place. During winter months it is considered that there may be a temporary **Low negligible** visual impact at this location.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)

Following the remediation stage it is likely that the grassed slopes of the landfill will not be discernible as more than the general massing that is currently sensed through the dense woodland screen. Thus the visual impact magnitude will be **Neutral**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)

It will not be possible to add significant additional tree planting to the landfill side of the boundary woodland as it would compromise the integrity of the cap. The limited tree planting that can take place right on the site boundary will serve to reinforce the visual screen towards the landfill, but the magnitude of visual impact will remain **Neutral**.

Summary

Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium	Low-negligible	**Slight-imperceptible**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium	Neutral	**No Effect**
Operational stage Residual	Medium	Neutral	**No Effect**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP3	2nd Hole of Palmerstown House Golf Course	W

Representative of:

- A recreational amenity (Private)

Receptor Sensitivity

Medium

Existing View

This is a view across the 2nd fairway of the Palmerstown House Golf Course towards the corridor of the Morell River which is defined by a narrow band of mature riparian woodland. In winter, a filtered view is afforded of the North-eastern slopes of the Kerdiffstown landfill a short distance beyond. These slopes are cloaked in rough grassland and scrub.

Visual Impact at remediation stage

During the remediation stage the visible slopes of the landfill will present as bare earth as capping works take place in this section of the landfill. These are temporary works, but they will involve the use of heavy machinery, which will also be visible from here and may detract slightly from the parkland-like surroundings and sense of tranquillity. During summer months when the leaves are on the intervening trees there will be glimpses of the landfill afforded. Overall, it is considered that the worst-case magnitude of visual impact at the remediation stage will be Medium-low.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)

Once construction activity has ceased and grassland has been established on the visible aspect of the landfill, it is unlikely to draw attention from this locality. It will begin to visually assimilate with the surrounding parkland tones and textures as an extension of this setting, but not quite to the degree of the mottled vegetative cover of the landfill that exists at present. Consequently, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be **Negligible**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)

Once mitigation tree planting along the swale at the base of the landfill slope becomes established along with some areas of shrub land cover on the landfill itself, there will be a stronger sense of visual assimilation with the surrounding land cover patterns and the site will appear more manicured than its baseline condition. The boundary trees will also serve to screen the landfill to a greater degree and deemphasise its height above surrounding ground levels. The residual visual impact is judged to be **Positive**.

Summary

Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium	Medium-low	**Moderate-slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium	Negligible	**Imperceptible**
Operational stage Residual	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP4	3rd Hole of Palmerstown Golf Course	NW

Representative of:

- A recreational amenity (Private)

Receptor Sensitivity

Medium

Existing View

This is a relatively contained view across the 3rd fairway of the Palmerstown golf course. Even in this winter view, the mature treeline that marks the corridor of the Morell River allows only heavily filtered views towards the mound at the northern end of the Kerdiffstown landfill. This lies a short distance away across the entrance avenue to Kerdiffstown House, which is not apparent from here. The principal viewing direction is southwards along the fairway.

Visual Impact at remediation stage

During the remediation stage the north-eastern slopes of the landfill will be visible as bare earth. These temporary capping works will involve the use of heavy machinery, which will also be visible from here and may reduce the sense of tranquillity and consequently, visual amenity. However, during summer months only glimpses of the landfill slopes and any construction activity will be afforded through small gaps in the treeline. On the basis of these reasons, it is considered that the worst-case magnitude of visual impact at the remediation stage will be Medium-low.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)

Once construction activity has ceased and grassland has been established on the visible slopes of the landfill, it will begin to blend with the surrounding golf course (parkland) setting. Although this represents a tidier form of land cover than exists at present it will not have quite the degree of camouflage as the existing scrub covered slopes of the landfill. On balance, the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be **Negligible**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)

Once mitigation tree planting along the swale at the base of the landfill slope becomes established as well as some small areas of shrub planting on the landfill itself, the scheme will blend more readily with the surrounding landscape context than immediately post remediation. The boundary trees will also serve to screen the landfill to a greater degree and deemphasise its height above surrounding ground levels. The residual visual impact is, therefore, judged to be **Positive**.

Summary

Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium	Medium low	**Moderate slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium	Negligible	**Imperceptible**
Operational stage Residual	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP5	L2005 Kerdiffstown Road	NE

Representative of:
- Local community views

Receptor Sensitivity
Low

Existing View
This is one of the few brief windows of visibility towards the Kerdiffstown Landfill site from the local road that flanks its western side as much as this road is enclosed by vegetation. The view is also adjacent to one of the closest dwellings to the site. More open panoramic views are afforded in the opposite direction (west) over farmland and the environs of Naas. The view to the east is contained at a short distance by the mounded Northern (Zone 1) end of the landfill, which is cloaked in a mottled combination of rough grassland and scrub.

Visual Impact at remediation stage
During the remediation phase, the visible portion of the landfill will be undergoing capping works and an internal site construction road will be utilised along the nearest boundary of the site. The landfill mound will appear as bare-earth and there will be a substantial amount of machinery and HGV movement along the construction road and on the mound itself. A low berm will be constructed along the boundary using the side-cast material from the road. The dwelling and associated sheds will be removed from the foreground along with the low masonry wall. The dense conifer hedge will be retained as an established visual screen. This conifer hedge will substantially screen the construction works for the proposed sports pitches and associated lighting and ball-stop nets from view at this precise location. However, there will be potential for a brief, but relatively close glimpse of the nearest sports pitches through the gap in roadside vegetation from just to the left of this viewpoint. The landfill and sports facility will present as a substantial construction site within the eastward view from this section of road and will noticeably reduce visual amenity from the baseline scenario. The visual impact during the remediation stage will be temporary in duration but is still deemed to be **High medium** in terms of magnitude.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)
Once construction activity ceases, the visual impacts experienced here will reduce. The grassed slopes of the mound will appear tidier than they do at present though there will be an array of gas riser outlets penetrating out of the mound with safety fencing around them. The brief glimpse of the adjacent sports pitch and associated infrastructure will still be afforded through this gap in the roadside vegetation (where not blocked by the conifer hedge) and this may reduce the sense of rural amenity slightly. On balance the visual impact magnitude is deemed to be **Low**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)
It will be possible to plant the boundary berm with semi-mature trees as this is beyond the extent of the capping layer. Once these have established there will be a filtered view of the grassed landfill mound with recreationalists occasionally passing by on the internal site trails. The view of a parkland context is considered preferable to the unkempt baseline scenario and the magnitude of visual impact is therefore considered to be **Positive** once mitigation planting has become established.

Summary
Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Low	High medium	**Moderate slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Low	Neutral	**No Effect**
Operational stage Residual	Low	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP6	Clubhouse of Naas Golf Course	S

Representative of:
- A recreational amenity (private)

Receptor Sensitivity
Medium

Existing View
This is a picturesque, framed view along the 1st and 18th fairways from the slightly elevated site of the Club House at Naas Golf Course. Banks of mature coniferous and broadleaf trees along the fairways enhance the parkland setting. In the distance along the 1st fairway can be seen the mottled and scrubby land cover of the top of the northernmost mound of Kerdiffstown Landfill, which tend to blend into this scene.

Visual Impact at remediation stage
During the remediation stage the visible aspect of the landfill will be stripped of vegetation to undertake the capping works. This will generate a view of bare-earth and the movement of earth moving machinery on the site, which will detract slightly from the visual amenity of this tranquil parkland scene. Whilst the landfill is a background feature from this specific viewpoint, similar views at closer proximity are likely to occur along the first fairway. The magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be **Low** during the remediation stage.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)
Once construction activity has ceased and the capped landfill mound is grassed the site is likely to appear as a visual extension of the golf course. The gas riser outlets are not likely to be readily discernible from here and overall the visual impact is considered to be **Positive** even prior to the establishment of mitigation planting.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)
There will be some limited additional tree planting possible around the stormwater management pond proposed for the northern tip of the site and once this has become established it will serve to blend the view of the landfill within this parkland vista to a marginally greater extent. A **Positive** visual impact remains.

Summary
Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium	Low	**Slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**
Operational stage Residual	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP7	7th Green of Naas Golf Course	SW

Representative of:
- A recreational amenity (private)

Receptor Sensitivity
Medium

Existing View
This is a relatively broad view from the elevated 7th green of Naas Golf Course looking to the south-west. The lower fore-to-middle ground consist of the fairways and greens of the golf course, beyond which can be seen the northern façade of Kerdiffstown House and its accommodation wing. Mature woodland trees substantially screen the view of the northernmost mound of Kerdiffstown landfill though the profile can be read and occasional glimpses of its slopes are afforded.

Visual Impact at remediation stage
During the capping process of the remediation stage of the proposed Project it may be possible to see earth moving machinery on top of the Northern (Zone 1) mound. Bare earth may also show though the branches of the intervening woodland trees to a marginally greater degree than the more camouflaged vegetation covered slopes of the baseline scenario. This may temporarily affect the parkland tranquillity of this visual context, however, such effects are deemed to be of a **Low** magnitude.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)
Once remediation activity has ceased at this end of the landfill, the partially visible grassed slopes of the Northern (Zone 1) mound will present as an extension of the parkland / golf course visual context. This is likely to be slightly more noticeable the existing vegetated slopes of the landfill, but will appear tidier and more managed in keeping with the golf course. Thus, the visual impact is deemed to be **Positive**.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)
There may be the opportunity to plant additional woodland trees on the wooded boundary of the site where this will not interfere with the capping layer of the landfill of the siltation pond at the northern end of the site. This will further enhance the woodland setting and the visual impact will remain **Positive**.

Summary
Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Medium	Low	**Slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**
Operational stage Residual	Medium	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP8	N7 Pedestrian Overpass to Johnstown	N

Representative of:	• Local community views
Receptor Sensitivity	**Low**
Existing View	This is a relatively broad vista afforded from the N7 pedestrian overpass to the south of the site. The visual context is dominated by the busy transport route below viewer, which then gives way to a mixed semi-rural landscape to the north. The substantial Johnstown Garden Centre occurs a short distance to the north-east and is surrounded by mature woodland trees. The farmed slopes in the immediate foreground also contain two large broadleaf trees. To the left of this field is a caravan sales operation backed by a dense line of conifers. Between these conifers and another stand of broadleaf trees can be seen the southern end of Kerdiffstown Landfill as a scrub covered mound. Other dwellings emerge from within the sporadic vegetation that flanks the local road that runs away from the viewer. There is also a prominent earth mound rising in the middle ground context within the site.
Visual Impact at remediation stage	There will be considerable modification of that aspect of the site that can be seen from here (Zones 3, 4 and 2B) throughout the remediation stage. Site entrance works, which involve an offset roundabout will occur just to the right of the local road alignment resulting in the loss of some existing vegetation and re-profiling of slopes. The local access road in the lower foreground will also be widened to include two-way cycle lane on its eastern side. This will result in the loss of some roadside vegetation and a more substantial corridor that will appear more urban and less rural than it does at present. The prominent mound of earth that can be seen on the skyline will also be redistributed to other locations within the site. A leachate management compound and methane flare will be constructed just beyond the line of conifers that occupy the centre of the depicted view and the 11m flare will rise above these trees. The scrub-covered mound to the right of the conifers will be stripped of vegetation and re-profiling slightly temporarily revealing bare-earth. All of these processes will result in the constant movement of HGVs along the local access road and earth moving machinery within the site. There is also likely to be site lighting required during winter months to facilitate remediation works. The appearance of a construction with an associated intensity of activity will detract from this semi-rural scene temporarily and the magnitude of visual impact is deemed to be **Medium**.
Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)	Following the completion of remediation stage works, construction activity at the site will cease and exposed areas of bare-ground will be grassed. There will be a higher degree of built development within view (compared to the baseline scenario) associated with the site entrance works, the leachate compound and new methane flare. However, such development will result in a generally tidier and more managed appearance for the site. The scene is likely to appear as more peri-urban than semi-rural in nature. Whilst the view will noticeably change, the visual impact is deemed to be **Neutral** on balance of the factors outlined above.
Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)	Woodland planting will be established around wetland ponds proposed at the southern end of the site and this will merge visually with the mature woodland trees that are to be retained along the south-eastern boundary of the site. There will also be additional perimeter tree planting and screen planting around the leachate compound / methane flare. Once established there will be something of a parkland aesthetic established which is deemed to result in a **Positive** visual outcome in comparison to the current baseline scenario.
Summary	Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Low	Medium	**Slight**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Low	Neutral	**No effect**
Operational stage Residual	Low	Positive	**Enhanced**

Viewshed Reference Point		Direction of View
VP9	Maudlins Interchange Overbridge	NW

Representative of:
- A major route

Receptor Sensitivity
Low

Existing View
This an elevated and relatively broad vista afforded from an overpass of the busy N7 road corridor which dominates the lower foreground. A vegetated off-ramp embankment on the northern side of the road corridor merges visually with a dense woodland setting beyond, which is the golf course context of Palmerstown House Estate. The northernmost mound of Kerdiffstown landfill can be seen above and just to the right of the main cluster of mature woodland trees in the intervening landscape. The mound is cloaked in scrubby grassland vegetation.

Visual Impact at remediation stage
During the remediation stage, the visible mound will be subject to capping, which will result in a view of bare earth and the activity of construction machinery. This may result in a marginal reduction in visual amenity in this particular section of the view, which is currently a tranquil parkland aspect. However, at this distance and in the context of the busy road corridor and variety of other intensive land uses in the immediate vicinity the visual change will be of a **Low-negligible** magnitude.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage (year 1)
Immediately following the remediation stage the visible mound will be grassed and construction machinery gone. It is likely to be slightly more noticeable than the somewhat camouflaged baseline context and may appear slightly ambiguous above the intervening treeline, appearing as a man-made landscape feature. However it will not noticeably detract from visual amenity at this location and will have a tidy appearance. Consequently, the magnitude of visual impact is judged to be **Neutral** at the beginning of the operational stage.

Visual Impact at Operational Stage post mitigation establishment (approx. 7yrs)
Some proposed tree planting along the nearest boundary adjacent to the proposed bio-swale might emerge into view and partially screen the lower slopes of the landfill mound in view. Areas of shrub planting on the capped mound will give a more mottled appearance to the mound and help to assimilate it with the surrounding parkland landscape. The scheme is then likely to contribute to the prevailing landscape aesthetic to a greater degree than the unkempt vegetation of the baseline scenario, resulting in a **Positive** visual impact.

Summary
Based on the assessment criteria and matrices outlined at Section 9.2.4 of Chapter 9, the significance of residual visual impact is summarised below.

	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Visual Impact Magnitude	**Significance of Visual Impact**
Remediation Stage	Low	Low-negligible	**Imperceptible**
Operational stage Pre-mitigation	Low	Neutral	**No effect**
Operational stage Residual	Low	Positive	**Enhanced**