

INSPECTORS REPORT

WASTE LICENCE REGISTER NUMBER 143-1

McGrath Industrial Waste Ltd., Gortnafolla, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.

Recommendation: The recommended proposed decision as submitted to the Board be approved

(1) Introduction:

McGrath Industrial Waste Ltd. have applied to operate a non-hazardous waste transfer station/recycling facility at Gortnafolla, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. Currently, unauthorised waste activities are taking place at the site. Waste is transported to the site in skips and sorted prior to the removal of various recyclable materials. The residual waste is then sent to landfill (primarily Derrinnumera landfill). The applicant has estimated that approximately 12,000 tonnes of waste per annum is accepted at the site with 500 tonnes being recycled and 11,500 tonnes sent to landfill. The site is also used as a storage area for waste collection vehicles (both empty and containing waste) which park there overnight before transporting the waste to landfill. Mayo Co. Co. wrote to McGrath Industrial Waste on two recent occasions (13/03/01, 16/07/01) requesting that all unauthorised waste activities cease at the site. However, waste activities have continued to take place at the facility. A planning application was received by Mayo Co. Co. on 07/03/2001 for the proposed development and this application is still under consideration. There is also evidence of historical landfilling of wastes at the site and the site had been used in the past for the disposal of wastes (estimated at 38,250 tonnes in total) from a number of sources (e.g. various industries, commercial premises etc.). The applicant has stated that the nature of waste deposited was non-hazardous only and the wastes disposed of includes plastic packaging, cardboard, timber, construction and demolition waste, glass, garden/green waste, municipal waste, septic tank sludge and animal waste. Landfilling of waste has not taken place at the site for a number of years.

The site is situated approximately 500m off the N5 Castlebar-Dublin road and is 6km northeast of Castlebar. The National Museum of Country Life has recently opened at a location (approximately 650m) to the northwest of the facility. There are 7 residential properties within an approximate 500m radius of the site with the nearest occupied house being approximately 20m from the facility boundary. A small limestone quarry, concrete manufacturing facility and an ESB depot for storage of timber poles/cables are located to the north/north west of the facility boundary. The site (3.1ha) is bounded by a Coillte owned forestry on the western/southern boundaries. **A plan showing the location of the facility to which the application relates is provided in Appendix 1.**

The recommended proposed decision does not permit the facility to continue the waste activities currently taking place at the site and waste may only be accepted when the proposed transfer station/recycling facility is constructed. This recommendation has been made having regard to the reasons outlined in Section 9 of this report. Whilst the Agency has a responsibility to encourage the recovery of waste wherever it is possible, the cessation of the current waste activities in the short term will not result in a significant decrease in the quantity of waste recovered in Co. Mayo. The applicant has stated that 4.1% of the total waste accepted at the site is recovered with the remaining 95.9% sent to landfill. The waste recovered represents approximately 1% of the total municipal waste arisings in Co. Mayo (excluding construction and demolition waste).

When the proposed transfer station/recycling facility is constructed, this facility will accept 60,800 tonnes of wastes in year 1 of the operation and the wastes accepted will consist primarily of construction and demolition (58%) along with household (24%) and commercial/industrial (18%) waste. The total waste accepted at the facility is predicted to increase to a maximum of 95,000 tonnes in its third year of operation. The wastes will be processed within the main waste transfer building, the recyclable materials removed and the residual waste sent to landfill.

Quantity of waste to be accepted (tpa)	95,000 tonnes (max.)
Environmental Impact Statement Required and Valid	Yes
Number of Submissions Received	17

SITE VISITS:

DATE	PURPOSE	PERSONNEL	OBSERVATIONS
18/10/00	Check Site Notice and facility surrounds	M. Henry	Non Compliant
05/12/00	Check Site Notice	M. Henry	Compliant
03/01/01	Site familiarisation	M. Henry & T. Nealon	Inspect facility
22/03/01	Site familiarisation	M. Henry & G. Carty	Inspect facility and surrounds
01/08/01	Site inspection	M. Henry & C. MacGearailt	Inspect facility and surrounds in view of noise complaint
22/11/01	Noise measurements	M. Henry & C. MacGearailt	Significant noise noted

(2) Facility Development

When constructed, the waste will be processed within the waste transfer building (approximately 67m x 36m x 10.5m) where the recyclable materials will be removed and the non-recyclable residual waste sent to landfill. Construction and demolition waste will also be processed within the transfer building. The waste processing plant proposed includes stone/concrete crusher, timber shredder, paper/cardboard baler, track machine diggers and powerscreen trommel. The recommended proposed decision requires the applicant to have adequate duty and standby capacity for all items of plant deemed critical for the processing of waste.

The main infrastructure proposed by the applicant includes a weighbridge, control office, wheelwash, maintenance building and machinery storage areas. The recommended proposed decision makes provision for this infrastructure. A foul water treatment system consisting of a silt trap, oil interceptor, septic tank, Puraflo treatment system and associated percolation area shall be used to treat foul water arising at the facility. As the percolation area will be located in an area where waste has been historically deposited, the recommended proposed decision requires this waste to be removed and a percolation area constructed with imported soil having a T value ranging from 15-30. The site will be surfaced with an impermeable surface, with the exception of some grass and landscaped areas.

(3) Waste Types and Quantities

The total quantities of wastes to be accepted at the facility when the proposed transfer station is constructed are as outlined below.

YEAR	TOTAL QUANTITY OF NON-HAZARDOUS WASTE (tpa)
Year 1	60,800
Year 2	76,000
Year 3 onwards	95,000

(4) Emissions to Air

Air: As stated above all waste processing is required to take place within the waste transfer building and no waste shall be stored external to this building with the exception of processed C&D waste and white goods destined for recovery. Waste for disposal is required to be stored in suitably covered containers within the transfer building and removed off-site within 48 hours of its acceptance at the facility (72 hours for Bank Holiday weekends). The applicant has proposed an odour/dust abatement system (carbon filter, bag filters) in order to minimise the impact of odour and dust emissions arising from activities within the waste transfer building. The applicant will be required to comply with a total particulate emission limit value of $50\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$ from the bag filter system. The proposed building will also be maintained under negative pressure. Monitoring requirements and an emission limit for dust deposition ($350\text{mg}/\text{m}^2/\text{d}$) are also set in order to control any fugitive dust emissions from activities on site.

Landfill Gas: The recommended proposed decision requires the applicant to install 3 landfill gas monitoring wells to monitor the levels of landfill gas arising from the historical disposal of waste at the site.

Noise: The current unauthorised waste activities taking place at the site are giving rise to significant noise nuisance beyond the facility boundary. Noise measurements undertaken on 22/11/01 by Agency inspectors confirmed an increase of 14 $L_{Aeq}dBA$ over background levels (increase from 43 $L_{Aeq}dBA$ to 57 $L_{Aeq}dBA$) and the noise measured was considered to be representative of activities occurring there on a regular basis, as confirmed by staff on the day. Significant impulsive noise was noted on 22/11/01 and L_{Amax} levels of 97dBA were recorded outside the facility boundary (approximately 70m from source). Impulsive noise was also noted during other site inspections by Agency staff and once again, these are considered representative of normal activities at the site.

Because of the potential noise emissions which are likely to arise from activities within the waste transfer building (particularly from the processing of large quantities of C&D waste), the recommended proposed decision requires the transfer building to be acoustically screened. The applicant has also proposed accordion type access/exit doors together with acoustic curtains while the air handling system will be contained within an acoustic enclosure. An acoustic screen (e.g. berm) is also required to be provided at the level at which the transfer building will be constructed in order to minimise the impact of traffic noise at the nearest noise sensitive location. These controls are considered necessary for the satisfactory operation of the proposed facility with respect to noise emissions. Due to the lack of controls presently in place, the recommended proposed decision prohibits the acceptance of waste until the proposed waste transfer building and associated infrastructure is in place.

Noise emission limits are specified in Schedule C of the recommended proposed decision and limits of 45 $L_{eq}dBA$ and 55 $L_{eq}dBA$ are applied for night time and daytime, respectively. Compliance with Condition 7 will ensure that there shall be no clearly audible tonal component or impulsive component in the noise emissions from the activity at the noise sensitive locations.

(5) Emissions to Groundwater

The bedrock geology at the facility is consistent with the Aille limestone formation which is described as a pure limestone unit comprising medium grained, medium to thick bedded limestone with subordinate shale partings. This formation is likely to be classified as a Regionally Important aquifer where groundwater movement is predominantly through fissures/fractures and the vulnerability of the aquifer is described as extremely vulnerable. Due to historical site activities, the majority of the natural unconsolidated overburden material comprising sand and gravel has been removed. Waste was encountered in many of the trial pits excavated during the site investigations and in some cases, this waste lies directly over bedrock. Elevated conductivity (2980uS/cm) and ammonia levels (5.4mg/l) were recorded in groundwater sampled beneath the facility. The applicant is required to install additional groundwater wells (one upgradient and one downgradient of the facility) to further

monitor the impact of past landfilling of waste at the facility. It is estimated that approximately 50% of the waste transfer building will be constructed on the waste body and the applicant has also proposed to undertake additional geotechnical site investigations prior to its construction (Condition 11).

(6) Emissions to Surface Waters

The site is within the catchment of the Manulla River which joins the Castlebar River approximately 1km north east of the site. The results of surface water chemical analysis undertaken adjacent to the facility showed no significant variation between upstream and downstream samples. However, elevated faecal and total coliforms were recorded in the surface water samples taken. The applicant is required to carry out routine surface water monitoring in accordance with Schedule D of the recommended proposed decision. When the proposed development is constructed, surface water falling external to the waste transfer building will be required to pass through silt traps and a Class I oil interceptor prior to discharge to an adjacent surface water body.

(7) Other Significant Environmental Impacts of the Development

None.

(8) Waste Management, Air Quality and Water Quality Plans

The Waste Management Plan for Connaught makes reference to the provision of a Materials Recovery Facility at Castlebar and the proposed development is in line with such provisions.

(9) Reasons for the Recommendation

The recommended proposed decision prohibits the acceptance of waste at the facility until the proposed waste transfer building and associated infrastructure are in place. Waste activities currently taking place at the site have been the source of a number of submissions/complaints to the Agency and Mayo Co. Co.. The waste activities currently being carried out at this facility are not permitted nor do they have planning permission from the Local Authority. Waste is processed in an open yard area and there is no infrastructure in place to minimise the impact of its operations on the environment. This includes the lack of air, surface water and groundwater protection measures. Any contaminated water from the site is currently allowed to diffuse in an uncontrolled manner to ground. The current operations at the site have also resulted in complaints/submissions being lodged with the Agency regarding excessive noise. There are no noise abatement measures currently in place at the site and the waste activities taking place are resulting in significant noise nuisance beyond the facility boundary. Significant impulsive noises are coming from the site as noted by inspectors on 01/08/01 and 22/11/01. I consider that the noise levels are causing environmental pollution as defined in Section 5(1)(b) of the Waste Management Act 1996 ('Create a nuisance through noise'). Therefore, I consider that the current unauthorised activities would not comply with the requirements of Section 40(4) of the Waste Management Act, 1996. For the reasons outlined above, the recommended proposed decision does not allow for the continuance of waste activities currently taking place at the site and only allows for the acceptance of waste after the proposed waste transfer building and associated infrastructure have been constructed and commissioned.

(10) Submissions/Complaints

17 valid submissions were received in relation to the waste licence application. An overview of all valid submissions received is provided below. This includes a summary of all issues raised in the submissions and shows how these issues are dealt with in the recommended proposed decision.

Ground 1: *Historical landfill/existing and current activities*

- (i) *Concern was raised that the historical disposal of waste will lead to seepage from the site and the seepage from trial pits on site should be analysed. The waste disposed of may contain active chemicals which may be released by compression, degradation and compaction resulting from the construction of the new building.*
- (ii) *The nature of the waste landfilled at the site should be fully determined. Can the Agency view the records of the industries which have used the site in the past (namely Baxter, Allergan, Travenol)? A full and comprehensive enquiry should be carried out as to the companies/facilities who used McGrath Waste Ltd. to dispose of material over the past 20 years.*
- (iii) *Waste was deposited at the existing facility without a licence or permission and such waste included medical waste and tablets. There is at least 20ft of waste under the proposed site. The site is too small and was used for illegal dumping.*
- (iv) *Many complaints to Mayo Co. Co. in relation to the existing facility were not satisfactorily dealt with. A number of pieces of correspondence (including photographs) were obtained from Mayo Co. Co. under the Freedom of Information Act relating to the past operation and activities at this site. McGrath Waste has operated at this site since 1974 and has not operated to acceptable environmental standards and has consistently ignored the local authority. Noise, dust, traffic, vermin and flies have characterised the lives of local residents over time. The Western Health Board has stated this facility has/will continue to pose a danger to health of local residents if it is not closed.*
- (v) *A lengthy submission was made to Mayo Co. Co. in relation to the 'illegal and unauthorised' operations at Gortnafolla, Turlough, Castlebar. The site continues to be used despite directions from the Co. Co. on two occasions to cease operations. The Co. Co. has threatened to prosecute Mr. McGrath but, on each occasion, they have not followed through with their threats. The local authority are more interested in protecting business than the interests of the people and it has failed to enforce statutory regulation and thus protect the health and welfare of the people. A summary of the issues raised with the Co. Co. since the mid 1980's together with a list of questions which the residents want the Co. Co. to answer.*
- (vi) *A local resident contacted Mayo Co.Co. who said that, as Mr. McGrath had applied for a licence, the Co. Co. can do nothing about the continuance of waste activities at the site.*
- (vii) *A complaint was made to the EU Commission relating to the continuance of a waste dump and its licensing as a waste transfer station. No prosecutions have been taken and no licence should be granted. There is a lack of confidence in the planning process and enforcement of pollution regulations. If planning permission is given, an appeal will be lodged with An Bord Pleanala and if necessary the EU Commission will be informed.*
- (viii) *The facility has been operating on an illegal basis, in breach of all regulations and has been ordered by Mayo Co. Co. to cease operations.*

Comment

Information on historical landfilling of waste at the site was submitted to the Agency as part of the application/EIS. This included details on the type/nature of the waste deposited and the estimated quantity of waste disposed of together with analyses of leachate seepage, groundwater and surface water. Landfilling of waste has not taken place at the site for a number of years, however, it is noted that unauthorised waste activities continue to take place at the site. Until a decision is made on this application Mayo Co. Co. are the responsible authority for controlling such operations. The issue of why no prosecutions have been taken to date is a matter for Mayo Co. Co. It is noted that the applicant has not been prosecuted to date under the Waste Management Act 1996. As stated above, I recommend that all current waste activities taking place at the site cease until the proposed waste transfer building and associated infrastructure is provided. The applicant will be required to monitor groundwater, surface water, landfill gas etc. to monitor the impact of historical waste disposal activities. Routine monitoring of all environmental media is required under the terms of the

recommended proposed decision and compliance with the conditions of the recommended proposed decision should ensure no significant impact on the environment. The Agency through its enforcement powers (site inspections, audits etc.) will assess compliance with the conditions of any waste licence granted and take whatever action it deems necessary. The issue of planning is outside the scope of the recommended proposed decision and is a matter for the planning authority while the health issues raised are dealt with under Ground 7 below.

Ground 2: Operation of proposed facility

- (i) *The plans for separation, recycling and disposal of waste are 'laughable' and such plans have been produced in the past to no avail. The financial viability of the plans for separation and recycling of waste should be examined.*
- (ii) *All recyclable materials should be quickly removed to avoid nuisance/run-off problems and a list of the main disposal routes should be compiled.*
- (iii) *Is a fuel storage facility to be provided at the site? All oil and fuel storage facilities at the site should be fully bunded and a proper disposal route for waste oils agreed. How will the baling unit and the on-site vehicles be powered?*
- (iv) *Clarification should be sought on the statement 'optimising the efficiency of McGrath's Waste Collection system which is concentrated in the Castlebar area'.*
- (v) *Adequate facilities (e.g. sanitary, changing, first-aid etc.) for workers should be provided.*
- (vi) *The proposed opening hours are excessive and the residents lives will be severely disturbed. Smells, flies, and nuisances will pertain at weekends and on long Bank Holiday weekends when massive amounts of waste will be stored. Traffic, traffic noise and noise from the yard are a concern and the opening hours should be limited. The opening hours and hours of business should be strictly regulated.*
- (vii) *Mr. McGrath's past record in managing the present facility gives the residents little confidence that the regulations will be adhered to or that adequate monitoring will take place. An independent body should be set up for carrying out monitoring of the facility. Also, the residents have no confidence in a system whereby complaints relating to the facility would be directed to McGrath Waste.*
- (viii) *Spraying facilities should be provided for lorries leaving the site and also for materials stockpiled. The size and nature of materials to be stockpiled should be quantified and conditioned. Excess materials stored for long periods could cause nuisance.*
- (ix) *To control odours and in the event of a prolonged breakdown in equipment, the operations should be closed.*

Comment

Having regard to the wastes which will be processed at the facility, the proposed decision requires the applicant to recover as a minimum 25% of all waste accepted. The applicant will also be required to submit proposals for increasing the separation and recovery of waste at the facility and regard should be had to the Government's 'Changing our Ways' policy. The financial viability of any proposed recovery of waste is a matter for the applicant. The recommended proposed decision will ensure that adequate waste handling capacity will be provided on site. The removal off-site of all waste will have to be agreed with the Agency. Environmental emissions and potential nuisances from the proposed facility will be adequately monitored and controlled and the hours of operation/waste acceptance are specified in the recommended proposed decision. The provision of adequate facilities for workers is a matter for the applicant but significant site infrastructure is required by the recommended proposed decision. A designated refuelling area will be provided on-site for waste handling vehicles and electricity will be the source of power for essential waste handling equipment (e.g. baler). All fuel/oil storage tanks are required to be appropriately bunded. The Agency will be the responsible authority for enforcement of the waste licence for this proposed development and it will carry out independent monitoring of the facility. All such monitoring will be available for public inspection at the Castlebar Regional Inspectorate.

In the event of complaints, third parties can direct them to the licensee or to the Agency. All waste vehicles exiting the facility must use the wheelwash. The only materials which are permitted to be stored external to the waste transfer building are processed construction and demolition waste (appropriately covered) and white goods. The recommended proposed decision permits the acceptance and processing of waste between the hours of 8.30 am and 7.00 pm (Monday to Saturday) while the facility can operate between 8.00 am to 8.00 pm. All wastes for disposal stored within the waste transfer building are required to be removed off-site within 48 hours (72 hours for Bank Holidays). Condition 9.4 of the recommended proposed decision requires the diversion of all waste away from the transfer station in the event of a complete breakdown of equipment or any occurrence which results in the closure of the transfer station building.

Ground 3: Surface Water/Groundwater

- (i) *The frequency of surface water monitoring in the stream at the site boundary should be initially set on a quarterly basis, and if contamination is detected, increased to weekly.*
- (ii) *There is huge concern over the impact on water courses in the area and the residents are not convinced that the planned monitoring is adequate or that proper sanctions will be put in place in the event of seepage.*
- (iii) *Blasting of rock at a quarry adjacent to the site will lead to an increase in seepage from the site into immediate water courses.*
- (iv) *This is the wrong place to continue with waste disposal as it is in the catchment of 2 good angling rivers and spawning areas.*
- (v) *In the event of a deterioration in surface water quality (e.g. arising from subsidence), a fully lined cut-off wall should be constructed and leachate pumped to the proprietary effluent treatment plant. The mitigation measure pertaining to hydrogeology in the original EIS are inadequate.*
- (vi) *The storm sewer which enters the site from the nearby quarry should be monitored prior to entry and as it exists the site.*

Comment

The applicant will be required to install an oil interceptor/silt traps and also comply with emission limit values for surface water discharges from hardstanding areas. This will ensure surface water emissions from the facility will have no significant environmental impact. Monitoring of treated foul water and ambient surface water is required under the terms of the recommended proposed decision. It is considered that the monitoring specified in the recommended proposed decision is adequate for the necessary control of all emissions from the proposed facility. The recommended proposed decision provides for increasing/decreasing the frequency of monitoring as the Agency sees fit. It is not considered necessary at this stage to impose conditions relating to the provision of a containment structure (e.g. cut-off wall) in the recommended proposed decision. The applicant has undertaken to request the adjacent quarry to prevent the contents of the storm drain from entering the facility. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to incorporate it into the monitoring requirement of the recommended proposed decision.

Ground 4: Foul Water Treatment

- (i) *The size of the foul water treatment system and the percolation area should be appropriately sized and monitored accordingly.*
- (ii) *Due to the likely presence of 'fill material' at the proposed percolation area, a raised percolation should be constructed of good quality imported clay soils.*
- (iii) *The Puraflo system should be installed/maintained in accordance with EPA guidance. The percolation area is located too close to the road and is limited.*
- (iv) *Clarification should be provided on the operation of the wheelwash and the measure to prevent shock BOD loadings to the treatment system. Vehicles should only be washed*

with water at the wheelwash and the use of detergent washing should only take place at a properly serviced washing facility.

- (v) *The grit and oil interceptors must be properly monitored and maintained.*

Comment

The foul water treatment will consist of a silt trap/oil interceptor, septic tank, Puraflo treatment system and associated percolation area. The licensee is required to have regard to EPA guidance when constructing the treatment system and all waste deposited in the proposed percolation area should be removed and replaced with imported soil having a T value of 15-30. The wheelwash and foul water treatment systems are Specified Engineering Works which have to be agreed with the Agency. The silt traps/oil interceptors are required to be in accordance with European Standard prEN 858 and the interceptors should be regularly maintained and desludged.

Ground 5: Location/Property

- (i) *There are at least 2 residents close to the facility and the large storage building will seriously damage their visual amenity and cause a blot on the landscape.*
- (ii) *The facility can be easily seen from certain points in Turlough especially in winter months*
- (iii) *The new National Museum of Folklife, the Turlough Round Tower and a 19th Century Church of Ireland are situated close to the proposed development. It is also planned that the village of Turlough will become a heritage village. Establishing a waste disposal depot in such a setting is inappropriate and not in keeping with such an environment.*
- (iv) *Property values in the area will be affected.*

Comment

The existing hedgerow network along the boundary of the facility is required to be retained by the licensee and a revised landscaping programme is required to be submitted to the Agency for its agreement under Condition 4 of the recommended proposed decision. This should minimise any negative visual impacts likely to arise from the proposed development. The issues in relation to the visual impacts will also be considered as part of the planning process. The presence of the National Museum of Country Life, Turlough Round Tower and a 19th Century Church of Ireland are noted. Compliance with the conditions attached to the recommended proposed decision will ensure that the proposed facility will have no significant impact on the local environment.

Ground 6: Traffic

- (i) *Increased vehicular traffic will result on the access road from the N5. This road is inadequate and any increase will not be in keeping with a quiet rural setting. This road runs by the old Church of Ireland which is an important landmark for locals.*
- (ii) *There will be an increased risk of fatal accidents.*
- (iii) *Mandatory standards should be in place to deal with vehicular traffic.*

Comment

The issue of traffic is outside the scope of the recommended proposed decision and is a matter for the roads authority.

Ground 7: Health impacts

- (i) *Concern was raised as to the effects of the proposed development on the health of residents in the area.*

Comment

It is considered that compliance with the conditions attached to the recommended proposed decision will ensure that the proposed facility will have no significant impact on human health or the local environment.

Ground 8: EIS

- (i) A detailed submission refers to the EIS under the following headings together with a summary of the main issues raised:
- (a) Existing Environment: Odours, pollution of surface water, extreme vulnerability of groundwater, historic landfilling of non-inert waste, slow recolonisation of plant life and reduced wildlife, increased scavenging birds, rats etc.
- (b) Proposed development:
- Air: Poor air quality will result from increased dust, there are no dust abatement measure mentioned. The nearby mortar mix plant/quarry will cause a substantial increase in air pollution.
 - Noise: Noise levels will increase substantially and the quarry development adjacent to the site will add to noise levels. Noise from traffic will also increase substantially.
 - Hydrogeology: Site investigations undertaken were not detailed enough. The groundwater is extremely vulnerability, the shallow groundwater is adversely affected and the site straddles a Regionally Important aquifer. Further development will release unknown substances into groundwater. The site should be closed and re-instated.
 - Ecology: Ecology of site has been irreparably damaged. A minimal impact on water quality cannot be guaranteed and seepage from the site cannot be controlled. The site should be re-instated.
 - Traffic: The access road to the facility to/from the N5 is entirely unsuitable.
 - Water: In view of the substantial water requirements of the new facility, the water supply proposed is entirely inadequate. The surface water/drainage system is inadequate and the potential for floods may mean the percolation drainage system would be inadequate. All leachate should be pumped off-site for treatment. No groundwater well survey was carried out and wells are still used to cope with supply cuts/poor quality in Group Water Scheme.
 - Significant Impacts: The transfer station will not be required for waste transfer to a thermal treatment plant in Galway as this has been rejected. Significant recycling capacity is already available and it can be expanded if required. There is no economic or social necessity for such a large scale project and the proposal should be rejected.
- (ii) Clarification should be provided as to what is meant by interaction between impacts?

Comment

The EIS submitted with the application was found to be in compliance with the EIA Regulations. The issues referred to have been considered and taken into account. The recommended proposed decision contains a number of requirements and control measures which will minimise the impact which the proposed development will have on the environment. The term 'interaction of impacts' relates to the interaction of the various likely significant impacts of the proposed development.

Ground 9: Fit and Proper Person

- (i) The applicant continues to operate unlicensed activities at the proposed location creating massive pollution with little regard for the environment. McGrath Industrial Waste cannot be trusted to abide by any regulations and will have disregard to all regulations once again. The operators licence should be refused.
- (ii) No discussion or attempt to involve local community to address concerns
- (iii) Applicant has carried out an unlicensed activity in Ballina, Co. Mayo which has only ceased due to threat of prosecution.

- (iv) *A permit issued by Mayo Co. Co. in 1986 was subsequently withdrawn due to breaches of conditions.*
- (v) *Any waste transfer station which is set up in Mayo must be operated by Mayo Co. CO. or by a reputable operator with a good track record. Otherwise this will lead to increased waste disposal and illegal dumping.*

Comment

The issue of the unauthorised waste activities currently taking place at the site has been dealt with earlier. As stated above, the applicant has not been prosecuted to date under the Waste Management Act 1996. Once licensed, the responsible enforcement authority will be the Agency. The recommended proposed decision requires the applicant to prepare a communications programme to allow members of the public to obtain information regarding the environmental performance of the applicant. Compliance with the conditions of the recommended proposed decision will ensure that the proposed development will have no significant environmental impact.

Ground 10: Noise

- (i) *Noise levels emanating from the site at the moment are causing great nuisance and disturbance to people living close to the site. A family nearby is seriously considering re-locating and this will have serious financial implications for them. It requests that the plant currently in operation is shut down.*

Comment

The local authority were informed of noise complaints relating to the current activities at the site. The issue of noise has been dealt with earlier in this report. The recommended proposed decision prohibits the acceptance of waste at the facility until the proposed waste transfer building and associated infrastructure are in place. Thereafter, noise emissions from the facility will be adequately controlled.

Ground 11: General issues

- (i) *Why there is no public notice placed on the site along the roadside?*
- (ii) *Is McGrath Waste the full owner of the proposed site?*
- (iii) *What are the time frames within which a submission/objection can be made?*
- (iv) *Legal action was threatened against a local resident who wished to raise legitimate concerns about the project. A copy of legal correspondence between a local resident and McGrath Industrial Waste was included as a submission.*
- (v) *Monitoring information should be sent to the Local Authority. Will McGrath Waste carry out all the monitoring required?*

Comment

The Agency confirmed (on 18/10/00) that a site notice had not been maintained in accordance with the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 2000. The Agency subsequently wrote to the applicant informing it of this and requesting that a site notice be erected as provided for in the regulations. This was carried out and the site notice was deemed to comply with Article 8 of the regulations on 5/12/00. The waste licence application stated that the land to which the application relates is owned by the applicant. A copy of the Waste Management Licensing guidelines which set out the guidelines for making submissions/objections were sent to person making the submission. The issue of legal actions/correspondence between the applicant and third parties is a matter for the parties involved. As the Agency is the licensing authority, copies of all information relating to the waste licence will be made available at the Agency's Regional Inspectorate at Castlebar. The recommended proposed decision also requires the development of a Communications Programme together with the erection of a site notice board. The applicant will be required to comply with the conditions of the waste licence and failure to do so will result in the Agency taking necessary enforcement action.

Signed _____

Dated:

Dr. Michael Henry
Inspector, Environmental Management & Planning

APPENDIX 1
LOCATION MAP & LAYOUT PLAN