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PREAMBLE

SWS Environmental Services have prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on behalf of AVR – Environmental Solutions Ltd. to submit as part of a planning application to Cork County Council and a waste licence application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

AVR – Environmental Solutions Ltd. propose to develop a Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility in the townland of Foxhole, Youghal, Co. Cork. The site of the proposed development is located off the R634 (former N25 Cork to Waterford Road) adjacent to the existing Youghal Landfill and Civic Amenity Centre.

The area of the proposed development is zoned Industrial/Enterprise in the Cork County Development Plan, 2003. The existing site has Planning Permission (ref: S/00/7093) for “the construction of a waste transfer station” and also holds a Waste Management Permit (ref: CK(S) 23/03) for a “Waste Recycling/Transfer Station”.

Best Available Technique (BAT) was used in the design of the proposed development and the EIS was prepared using national guidelines and regulations on the information to be contained therein. A pre-consultation process was undertaken as part of the design, scoping and environmental assessment.

This EIS provides the community, government, non-government bodies and other interested parties with information regarding the existing environment, potential impacts associated with the proposed development during the construction and operation phases, and any mitigation measures required to ameliorate these impacts.

No significant difficulties were encountered during the preparation of this EIS.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

SWS Environmental Services have prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on behalf of AVR – Environmental Solutions Ltd. to submit as part of a planning application to Cork County Council and a waste licence application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility located in the townland of Foxhole, Youghal, Co. Cork. Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan shows the location of the proposed development in relation to Youghal town and the N25.

This EIS is divided into two volumes:

EIS Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary,
EIS Volume 2: Main Report and Appendices.

The EIS was prepared as per the requirements set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA) [European Communities (EIA) Regulations, 1989] (SI No. 349 of 1989), and EIA Regulations [European Communities (EIA) Regulations, 1999] (SI No. 93 of 1999). The EIS was also prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001).

The area of the proposed development is zoned Industrial/Enterprise in the Cork County Development Plan 2003. The existing site has Planning Permission (ref: S/00/7093) for "the construction of a waste transfer station" and also holds a Waste Management Permit (ref: CK(S) 23/03) for a "Waste Recycling/Transfer Station".

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Figure 1.1 Site Location Map

1.1 Cork County Development Plan

The Cork County Development Plan 2003 main requirements are:

- *Proper planning and sustainable development,*
- *Consistent as far as possible with National Plans, Strategies and Policies which relate to proper planning and sustainable development,*
- *Include objectives for the conservation and protection of the environment.*

The proposed development has been planned with due consideration to these requirements.

The proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility is located adjacent to Youghal town and the area is zoned Industry/Enterprise, I-04, refer to Figure 1.2 Cork County Planning Zones.

The proposed development is in accordance with one of the Strategic Principles of the Cork County Development Plan 2003, to Youghal is classified as a ring town in the County Development Plan and special emphasis is placed on encouraging service industry and employment in the town and its hinterland and "encourage development in established areas" with the appropriate zoning characteristics.

Similarly, County Development Plan proposes a number of objectives with regard to appropriate uses for industry and enterprise areas are set out which include the following:

- *To promote the development of Industrial areas as the primary locations for uses including manufacturing, repairs, warehousing, distribution, open-storage, waste materials treatment and recovery, and transport operating centres.*
- *Subject to local considerations, civic amenity sites and waste transfer stations may be suitable on industrial sites with warehousing and/or distribution uses.*
- *To ensure that, normally, new buildings in primarily industrial areas are single storey with high ceilings to provide versatility and adaptability to accommodate a broad range of types of plant, machinery and delivery vehicles throughout their design life.*
- *To ensure that the likely demand for car-parking and delivery vehicles are fully met within the site, to apply the highest standards design, hard and soft landscaping and to ensure that pedestrian and public transport access is provided.*

All of these objectives have been fully complied with in the site selection and design of the proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility.

In Section 5.3 Waste Recovery and Recycling of the County Development Plan it is stated that it is an objective to implement the provisions of the County Council's approved Waste Management Plan and in particular, to promote the development of facilities for the prevention, minimisation, re-use/recycling or disposal with energy recovery of waste material. The proposed development is a waste recovery and transfer station which meets this objective clearly.

The site of the proposed development has full Planning Permission (ref: S/00/7093) for *the construction of a waste transfer station* and also holds a Waste Management Permit (ref: CK(S) 23/03) for a "Waste Recycling/Transfer Station".

Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the proposed development is in its proper place and in keeping with the policies and strategies of the Cork County Development Plan 2003.

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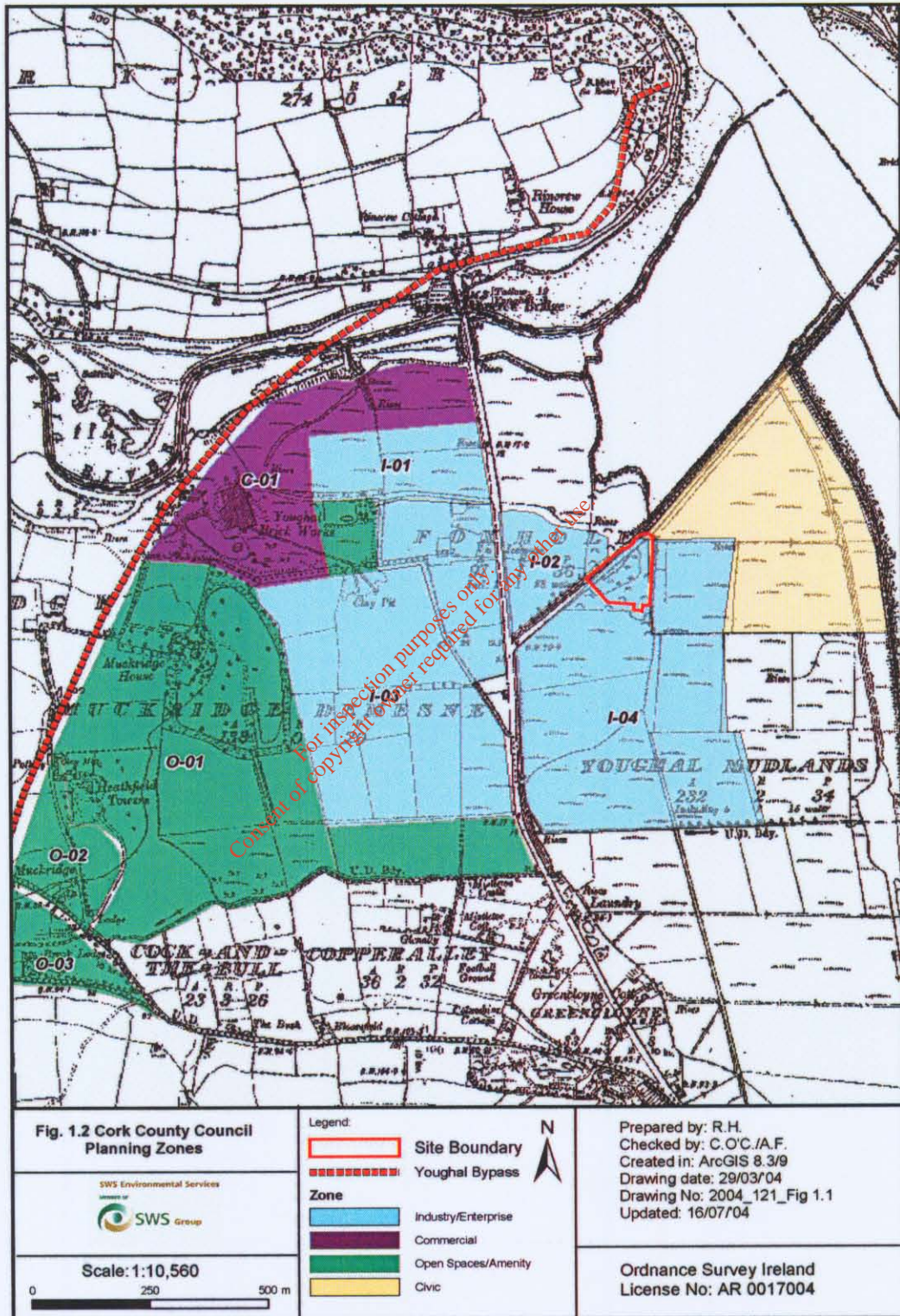


Figure 1.2 Cork County Planning Zones

1.1.1 Youghal Town Council Development Plan

Youghal Town Council Development Plan 2002 is the most recent publication of the development plan however, it is currently under review. The Development policy for waste and refuse in the existing Youghal Town Council Development Plan includes the following objectives:

- *To ensure refuse is disposed of in an acceptable manner,*
- *To encourage minimisation, segregation and recycling of waste,*
- *To ensure the town is kept clean and tidy.*

The proposed Waste Recover/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility adheres to these objectives.

1.2 National and Local Waste Management

1.2.1 National Waste Management Policy

As a Member State of the European Union (EU), Ireland's most significant waste policies were drawn up in the 1990's and were derived from laws, policies and strategies adopted by the EU. The foundation of EU waste management policy (Waste Framework Directive 75/442/EEC) is the Waste Management Hierarchy and states that the prevention and reduction of waste production is the most preferable option however, if waste is produced inescapably, then re-use and recycling is necessary. Disposal is the least favoured waste management option. The Proximity Principle is one of the founding principles in this Directive and based on this waste should be handled as close to where it was generated as possible. This will aid in establishing sufficient infrastructure and disposal facilities in all areas.

The Waste Management Acts, 1996 to 2003 provide a framework for the necessary environmental legislation nationally. The Acts have brought into force many EU Directives on waste management and the implementation of Statutory Instruments on waste management. The Acts, most recently The Protection of the Environment Act 2003, places the responsibility on each local authority to formulate a Waste Management Plan according to the Waste Management (Planning) Regulations, SI No. 137 of 1997. Changing Our Ways published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DOELG) in 1998 now forms the cornerstone of all waste management planning in Ireland. This document has established national targets for recovery, recycling and diversion from landfill.

The National policy commitment to the environment is well reflected in a range of documents, including Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, Making Ireland's Development Sustainable, Waste Management: Changing Our Ways, Preventing and Recycling Waste: Delivering Change, National Climate Change Strategy, and Litter Action Plan.

Another national policy, Preventing and Recycling Waste: Delivering Change 2002 highlights the most important waste management practices from the Waste Management Hierarchy - prevention, re-use and recycling. In conjunction with this, a National Waste Management Board will be set-up to ensure Ireland meets the targets established in Changing Our Ways. This report (Delivering Change 2002) is committed to:

- *Prevention and Minimisation,*
- *To increase levels of Reuse,*
- *To support Recycling,*
- *To increase Producer Responsibility,*
- *To support the Biological Treatment of Organic Waste,*
- *To support the Public Service Waste Management Programme.*

The proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility promotes these aims and targets by assisting in diverting waste from landfill and in providing waste for recycling.

1.2.2 Waste Management Plan for County Cork

The Waste Management Plan for Cork County, 2004 reinforces Cork County Council's commitment to a system of waste management that will see the least amount of waste going to modern engineered landfills and that this will be achieved through the use of bring sites, civic amenity sites and material recovery and treatment facilities. The proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer and Sludge Drying Facility supports the principles and objectives of the Waste Management Plan for Cork County, 2004.

The Waste Management Plan for Cork County, 2004 also states that the plan is governed by governmental policy that must be strictly adhered to in local government waste management planning including:

- *The dramatic reduction in reliance on landfill in favour of an integrated waste management approach, utilising a range of treatment options to deliver ambitious recycling and recovery targets,*

- *Increased participation by the private sector in the provision of waste management services.*

It is proposed to recover Commercial and Industrial type waste including sludge, leachate from Youghal Landfill and washings at the proposed facility. Commercial waste is defined in the Waste Management Acts 1996 to 2003 as *waste from premises used wholly or mainly for the purpose of trade of business or for the purposes of sport, recreation, education, or entertainment but does not include household or agricultural or industrial waste.*

Industrial waste is defined likewise in the Acts as *including waste produced or arising from manufacturing or industrial activities or processes.* Industrial waste also includes sludge from wastewater treatment plants from these sectors.

The Waste Management Plan for Cork County 2004, states that in 2002 there was approximately 130,000 tonnes of sludge type waste produced in Cork County and that *reduction of sludge to landfill is an objective of both industry and the local authority.* The proper introduction of EU directives on land spreading of sludge will mean that the current spreading of waste water treatment sludge will be limited. The proposed Sludge Drying facility will ensure that sludge is treated to current EU preferred methods and reduce the volume of sludge currently being landfilled.

Table 1.1 Commercial Waste Recycling Rates 2002 – 2003 demonstrates that the levels can be higher. The proposed Waste Recovery/Transfer facility will improve these waste recycling rates.

Waste Type	2002	2003
Non-Segregated Commercial	34,111	41,406
Segregated Commercial	19,594	22,665
Total Commercial Waste Collected	53,705	64,071
% Recycled/Recovered	36.5 %	35.4 %

Table 1.1 Commercial Waste Recycling Rates 2002 - 2003

The Waste Management Plan proposes that the industrial and commercial sectors are suited to separate waste stream collection. For example large quantities of paper produced by these sectors is likely to support separate collection as this results in a higher quality waste stream, with better recycling potential.

This facility incorporates mechanical separation and a baling/compaction facility, to provide for the more efficient haulage of the recovered/residual components as per the policies of the Waste Management Plan.

In addition synergies between the adjacent Youghal Landfill and Amenity Centre can be established, such as the treatment of landfill leachate which is currently transported to Carrigtwohill waste water treatment plant and disposal of residual material from the actual proposed development means that a level of sustainable development is achieved in transport terms.

Finally the site of the proposed development has full Planning Permission (ref: S/00/7093) for *the construction of a waste transfer station* and also holds a Waste Management Permit (ref: CK(S) 23/03) for a Waste Recycling/Transfer Station. The site is listed in Table 4.1 Cork County Waste Permit Holders of the Waste Management Plan for Cork County 2004. Therefore the activity of waste treatment has been established in principal at the site.

1.2.3 Sludge Management Plan for County Cork

In March 2000, a Sludge Management Plan was prepared for Cork County Council. This plan calculated the sludge arising within the county and based on this, it recommends different treatment solutions for different regions including thermal treatment. The proposed development is proposing a system of indirect drying. As non-hazardous sludge is part of the waste stream to be managed at the proposed facility the proposed development is in agreement with the policies set out in the Sludge Management Plan for Cork County 2000.

The majority of industrial sludge produced in County Cork is generated from the treatment of industrial process wastewater. Of the 80,000 tonnes of industrial sludge produced in 2002, 50% arises in the South Cork Region, with 78% of this originating from industries in the Cork Harbour Region. The majority of this sludge is transported to and landspread in north and west Cork, treatment at the proposed facility in Youghal just off the N25 is more sustainable in the medium to long term with regard to EU policy, transport and the policies of both the Sludge Management Plan for Cork County 2000 and the Waste Management Plan for Cork County 2004.

In the future restrictions in disposal to landfill, landspreading and exporting sludge for recovery/incineration will increase. It is an aim of industry and the local authority, to reduce the amount of sludge sent to landfill and exported, in adherence with the proximity principle. Therefore the proposed Sludge Drying facility is consistent with the Sludge Management Plan for Cork County 2000.

1.3 Layout of EIS

This EIS has been undertaken having regard to the Environmental Protection Agency's 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements' (EPA, March 2002). The format of this EIS is designed to ensure that standard methods are used to describe all sections of the EIS. The proposed development is assessed and described in terms of:

- Methodology,
- The existing environment, including any proposed developments,
- Description of the proposed development, including any potential impacts associated with the development,
- Proposals to mitigate against likely adverse impacts,
- Conclusion.

The scope of work associated with the development was determined following consultation between the developer and SWS Environmental Services. This scope of work, which outlines the range and aspects of the development, was determined through the following:

- A review of existing information,
- Legislative requirements and guidelines,
- An assessment of the nature and scale of the proposed development,
- Consultation with local residents and other interested parties.

1.4 Contributors to EIS

Specialist subcontractors were employed to undertake some sections of the EIS. Their details including those of the SWS Environmental Services project team are outlined in Appendix 1 Report Authors and Associate Consultants. These reports are referenced accordingly in the relevant sections of this report, with the full report attached in its relevant appendix.

1.5 List of Consultees

A number of public organisations and special interest groups were consulted regarding the proposed development. Table 1.2 List of Organisations and Groups contacted during the Public Consultation details the consultees contacted during the scoping of the project. A copy of the consultation material is included in Appendix 2 Public Consultation Document. Copies of responses received to date are included in Appendix 3 Public Consultation Responses of the EIS.

Organisation	Contact Name
Aer Rianta	Mr. Noel Hanlon
An Taisce	Mr. Ian Lumley
Birdwatch Ireland	Mr. Paul Galvin
Bord Failte Éireann	Mr. Niall Reddy
Coastal Zone Management Division	Ms. Laura Coveney
Cork County Council Environmental Department	Ms. Katherine Walshe
Cork County Council Planning Department	Mr. John Ronayne
Cork Kerry Tourism	Maura Moynihan
Department of Agriculture and Food	Mr. John Malone
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Ms. Helen Francis
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. Pat Fenton
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. John Sadlier
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. Fergus Doyle
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. Philip Buckley
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. John Fraher
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. Seamus Gallagher
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. John O' Keeffe
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr. Tom Burke
Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism	Mr. Fionn O Grady
Dept. of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	Mr. Thomas Tobin
Environmental Protection Agency	Mr. Gerry Byrne
EPA Regional Inspectorate	Mr. Tadgh O Mahony
Geological Survey of Ireland	Mr. Ronnie Creighton
IBEC Cork Regional Office	Ms. Dearbhail McCarthy
IBEC Head Office	Ms. Lynn Frost
Irish Wildlife Trust	Ms. Louise Dufficey
National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health	Mr. John Colreavy
National Heritage Council	Mr. Paddy Mathews
National Roads Authority	Mr. Brian Cullinane
National Parks & Wildlife Service	Ms. Teresa Longford
Southern Regional Fisheries Board	Mr. Alan McGurdy
Teagasc	Mr. Gerry McCarthy
Youghal Chamber of Tourism and Commerce	Ms. Anne Murray
North Youghal Environmental and Development Association	Mr. Frankie Keane
Youghal Town Council	Mr. Liam Ryan

Table 1.2 List of Organisations and Groups contacted during the Public Consultation