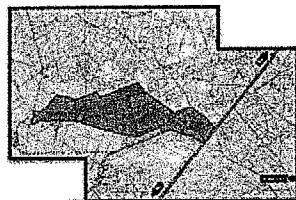


### €6 million to be invested in Westmeath's First Compost Manufacturing Facility



Thorntons Recycling, a 100% Irish owned, family run firm with more than 25 years' experience in recycling and waste management is to invest €6 million in the development of a new, state-of-the-art compost manufacturing facility at Kilbride near Enniscorthy. The new facility will play a vital role in meeting the region's waste reduction and recycling targets over the coming years. More importantly, the Kilbride Compost Manufacturing Facility will create 20 new permanent jobs in the locality.

According to the latest figures available from the Government, municipal waste from the Midlands region will reach 237,000 tonnes per annum by 2010. Some 65% of this will be made up of biodegradable waste such as kitchen wastes (potato peelings etc) and garden wastes (grass clippings, hedge trimmings etc.). Under EU Directives increasing amounts of this waste - 35% by 2006, 50% by 2009, and 75% by 2016 - will have to be diverted from landfill.

Composting is proven to be the most effective means of diverting organic waste from landfill. Not only does composting reduce the level of waste being disposed but it also creates an environmentally friendly product which can be used as a garden fertiliser.

The proposed compost manufacturing facility at Kilbride will have a composting capacity of 90,000 tonnes annually. With the Midlands Region set to generate approximately 150,000 tonnes of biodegradable waste by 2010 the facility will make a major contribution to the overall waste strategy for the Region. It will also provide local employment during construction of up to 30 jobs and will create up to 20 new jobs when fully operational.

Great care has been taken in choosing a location for the new facility. It is situated adjacent to a large commercial forestry site, is more than 500 metres from the nearest house, and is well screened by trees and the natural landscape from both houses, roads and other vantage points in the locality. The composting site itself will only occupy about 10 acres of the overall site of 350 acres, with the rest of the site used as a buffer zone (see map above).

The project is at an advanced design stage at present, and planning permission will be sought from Westmeath County Council over the summer. The facility will also require a licence from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and this will also be sought in the near future.

Thorntons Recycling has a long history of operating EPA licensed facilities including a major recycling centre at Dublin's Killeen Road. The company is committed to working closely and in partnership with its neighbours and relevant local authorities to ensure that its facilities meet the highest possible standards and cause the minimum level of disruption to local people.

An environmental impact assessment has been carried out by independent consultants and includes studies and predictions on issues such as traffic volumes, dust and odours, and suggests mitigation measures or design features for control of any potential impacts on the local community.

The design team is incorporating these measures in the final design of the proposed facility and the development will only be allowed to proceed if there is minimal impact on the local community. We are confident that by locating this facility at the proposed site it will be well removed from local houses and can operate without negatively impacting on the surrounding neighbourhood.

The proposed location for the Kilbride Compost Manufacturing Facility is close to the N6 and the rapidly developing M4 and, as a consequence, will not significantly increase traffic volumes in the area. Furthermore, the size of the site and its natural characteristics, including extensive tree planting, will ensure that there will be no abnormal odours or noises arising from the operation.

This newsletter outlines the processes which will be used at the Kilbride Compost Manufacturing Facility and attempts to answer some of the questions you may have in relation to it. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact John Conway at Thorntons Recycling tel 01 623 5133 Mobile 086 381 1122 Email info@thorntons-recycling.ie

[www.thorntons-recycling.ie](http://www.thorntons-recycling.ie)

### Your Questions Answered

**Q. Will the facility result in traffic congestion in the immediate vicinity?**

All indications are that the increased traffic levels will not have a significant impact on existing patterns. However, it is proposed to put in place a traffic management plan to ensure that the routes chosen to access the site are those that will have the least impact on the surrounding area.

**Q. Will the process produce dust?**

As with any composting process some dust will be produced. The amount of dust generated will be minimised by using good operational practices such as dampening road surfaces and monitoring the moisture content of all stages of the composting process to prevent material drying out and forming dust. These measures, combined with the distance of the facility from the nearest homes as well as the natural tree screening will ensure that any dust created will be confined to the site.

**Q. What about noise?**

The only noise generated from the Windrow composting system will be from vehicles as they occasionally move the compost around from one process area to another. The tunnel system will generate very low levels of noise from fans, pumps and so on. All research indicates that the noise levels from the site will be very low but nevertheless acoustic barriers will be used to ensure that the plant is inaudible at the nearest houses to the site. Indeed at full operation, the noise level when standing next to the fans would be equivalent to the noise from a car engine.

**Q. Why are two different composting systems being used?**

The outdoor composting system is suitable for garden materials such as grass and hedge clippings and is free from other materials. This composts naturally and doesn't give rise to any unpleasant odours. However, as we all know kitchen wastes such as peelings and so on can be odorous. For this reason the tunnel system is used for materials from this source. The system accelerates the composting process to break down the materials more quickly and is carried out in a sealed building with biofiltration systems to eliminate any odours which may arise during the process. As soon as the composting process has advanced to a stage where the materials are no longer odorous they are moved outside and the process is finished in the normal way.

**Q. What about dust from trucks?**

All materials will be transported to and from the site in sealed trucks thus ensuring that there will be no dust emissions arising from this source.

**Q. Will there be bagging or baling operations on the site?**

No. There is no proposal for a bagging or baling operation on the site at this time. Should this be considered in the future it would have to be the subject of a separate planning application.

**Q. When will construction start on the facility?**

Thorntons is determined to build the facility to the highest environmental and planning standards. We are currently completing an extensive environmental impact statement. Once this has been finalised we will be applying to Westmeath County Council for permission to build the compost manufacturing facility at Kilbride. We envisage that construction will commence towards the end of the year.

**Q. How do I apply for a job at the facility?**

Recruitment for jobs at Kilbride Compost Manufacturing Facility will not commence until mid 2006. Jobs will be advertised in the local newspapers at that time.

**Q. How can I find out more about composting and the Kilbride facility?**

To find out more about composting and the Kilbride facility, or indeed to find out more about environmentally friendly waste management solutions or recycling generally, please contact John Conway at (01) 6235133 Mobile 086 381 1122

### Your Questions Answered

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## The Processes

The Kilbride Compost Manufacturing Facility will employ two different composting processes. Both of these technologies are widely used internationally and are proven to deliver a high quality compost for use in a variety of applications including garden fertiliser and large scale landscaping.

## Green Waste Composting

The first process is known as Green Waste Composting. This is a relatively simple technology whereby garden waste such as branches, hedge clippings, Christmas trees, leaves and grass are shredded and placed in open 'windrows' on a concrete pad. Air is drawn through the compost using a specially designed aeration system. This prevents odours, allows aeration and thus encourages the natural decomposition of this organic matter. The composting process using this method takes approximately six months to complete. At the end of the cycle the material is screened with a large proportion being bagged and sold as high grade compost.

Emissions to air from this composting operation will be limited. The existing trees around the composting area will ensure that any dust will be kept within the site boundary. The materials handled in the green waste composting will not include food wastes so there will be no smells or odours arising from the operation.

This form of composting is best carried out in the open air as water from rainfall assists in the process. To ensure that there is no risk to the water environment, any excess run-off will be contained and collected in a tank and re-circulated onto the green material to further enhance the composting process.

## Tunnel Composting

The second type of composting will be for the treatment of both food and green waste using a tunnel composting system. Some 70,000 tonnes of this material will be composted each year in a state-of-the-art plant.

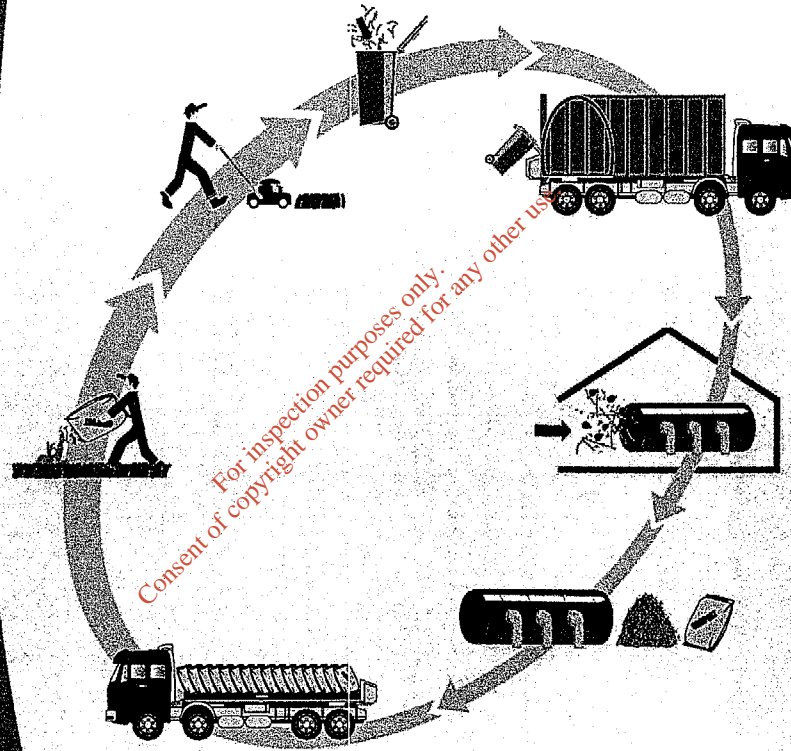
This part of the process will be carried out in a fully enclosed building. The waste will be off-loaded from sealed trucks indoors and after initial sorting and removal of unsuitable material, the compostable waste will be mixed and placed in the tunnels for a period of two weeks.

The 'tunnels' are vessels where the temperature, air-flow and moisture content are fully controlled using specially designed computer software. The air emitted from the process will pass through bio-filters that will actively remove any odours. After the two week period, the stabilised material will be placed on a concrete pad where air will be drawn through it for up to six weeks to complete the composting process. The material will then be screened and sold as compost.

It is expected that up to 20 new jobs will be created for local people in the compost manufacturing facility which will create compost for use in a variety of applications.

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What comes from nature goes back to nature...



Garden and organic kitchen waste is collected from households in sealed Thorntons delivery trucks and brought to the hi-tech manufacturing plant where it is made into compost before being sold to customers throughout Ireland.

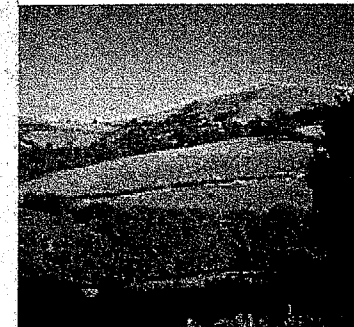
## Composting is beneficial for the environment

The term "waste" is grossly misused in today's world. In its truest sense the word should only be used to describe something which has no further use. It is probably true to say that the majority of waste produced is not waste at all and has many further uses.

This is especially true of garden and kitchen wastes. Already, many keen gardeners have developed their own home composting systems and have all but eliminated their need for fertiliser. Clearly, in this context, what they are composting is not waste at all but a valuable material with further uses.

This has been recognised by both the Irish Government and the EU and the various targets set for waste reduction are firmly focused on solutions such as recycling and composting. Composting is an environmentally friendly solution which reuses materials which would otherwise become waste and be destined for landfill.

Thorntons Compost Manufacturing Facility at Kilbride will be one of the most advanced in Europe, manufacturing high grade compost for markets in Ireland.



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