

SUB (10)  
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Office of Minister Trevor Sargent TD,  
Department of Agriculture,  
Agriculture House,  
Kildare St,  
Dublin 2.

Ms. Catherine O'Keefe  
Licencing Unit,  
Office of Climate, Licencing and Resource Use,  
PO Box 3000,  
Johnstown Castle Estate,  
County Wexford

11 October 2007

**RE: Proposed decision on Waste Licence for Fingal Landfill Ref No. W0231-01**

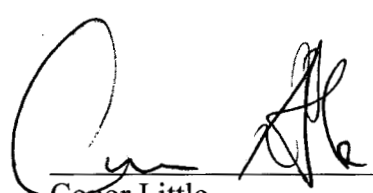
Dear Ms O'Keefe,

I enclose herewith payment on behalf of Minister of State Trevor Sargent TD in connection with his objection and request for an oral hearing in relation to the proposed decision to grant a Waste Licence for Fingal Landfill at Nevitt in Co Dublin.

Mr Sargent's objection and request for an oral hearing will follow by fax or email on Wednesday 17 October.

I should be most grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this payment by email to [conor.little@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:conor.little@agriculture.gov.ie)

Yours sincerely,

  
Conor Little

Personal Secretary  
Trevor Sargent TD  
Minister of State for Food and Horticulture

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
AGENCY  
17 OCT 2007

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**Catherine O'Keeffe**

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**From:** Little, Conor [Conor.Little@agriculture.gov.ie]  
**Sent:** 17 October 2007 16:47  
**To:** Catherine O'Keeffe  
**Subject:** Ref No. W0231-01 - Minister Trevor Sargent objection and request for oral hearing - Fingal Landfill  
**Attachments:** Nevitt objection 17. Oct 2007.doc

Dear Catherine,

I would be most appreciative if you would acknowledge receipt of the attached objection and request for an oral hearing from Minister Trevor Sargent TD.

Regards.  
Conor Little

Personal Secretary  
Trevor Sargent TD  
Minister for Food and Horticulture

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\*\*\*\*\* Department of Agriculture and Food \*\*\*\*\*

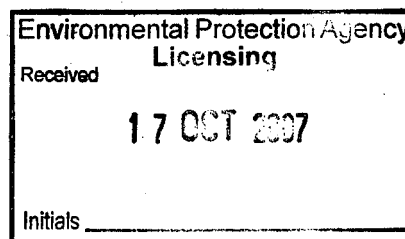
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\*\*\*\*\* An Roinn Talmhaíochta Agus Bia \*\*\*\*\*

Tá an t-eolais san ríomhphost seo, agus in aon ceangláin leis, faoi phribhléid agus faoi rún agus le h-agaigh an seolaí amháin.

17/10/2007

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D'fhéadfadh ábhar an seoladh seo bheith faoi phribhléid  
profisiúnta nó dlíthiúil. Mura tusa an seolai a bhí beartaithe  
leis an ríomhphost seo a fháil, tá cosc air, nó aon chuid de,  
a úsáid, a chóipeál, nó a scaoileadh. Má tháinig sé chugat de  
bharr dearmad, téigh i dteagmháil leis an seoltóir agus scríos an  
t-ábhar ó do ríomhaire le do thoil.

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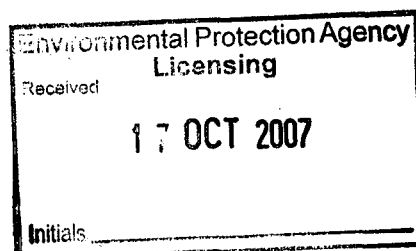
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Agriculture House,  
Kildare St,  
Dublin 2.

Licencing Unit,  
Office of Climate, Licencing and Resource Use,  
PO Box 3000,  
Johnstown Castle Estate,  
County Wexford



17 October 2007

**RE: Proposed decision on Waste Licence for Fingal Landfill Ref No. W0231-01:  
Objection and Request for Oral Hearing**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept this correspondence as an objection to the EPA's proposed decision on the landfill at Nevitt, Co Dublin and as a request for an oral hearing on the issue.

This objection and request for an oral hearing will not concentrate on those costs identified by the Environmental Impact Statement but will rather concentrate on issues which, I believe, the assessment has not fully taken into account.

This objection should be read while bearing in mind Government policies on the protection of groundwater; Government waste policy which places landfill at the bottom of the waste hierarchy; and the precautionary principle, which is a cornerstone of environmental law.

I believe that any decision by the EPA should not compromise the Government's and the EPA's aims of protecting groundwater and achieving best practice in relation to waste disposal, nor compromise the Government's aims concerning the development of the horticultural industry.

Furthermore, the experience of those living near Inagh Landfill, Co Clare, should be borne in mind while reading this objection. Nine leaks have been identified at this 'modern' landfill, amongst other faults. Such leaks and other faults, when they are experienced in Fingal, will have a profound effect on water quality and the quality of life of those in surrounding areas.

**Fingal Aquifer**

The Fingal Aquifer, as part of the North Leinster Aquifer, is the biggest, cleanest food-producing aquifer in Ireland. The Fingal Aquifer covers 250km<sup>2</sup> within Fingal, and the broader aquifer covers a total area of 2500 km<sup>2</sup> in North Leinster. I understand

that, in the face of rising demand and diminishing supply, the aquifer could yield tens of millions of litres of clean water per day, supplying much of Fingal's needs. Already, it helps to support north County Dublin's horticultural industry.

My information is that leachate of approximately 100 litres per day will leak from the landfill. I contend that the EIS does not deal adequately with the danger that the landfill poses to the aquifer, particularly in the context of water supply problems which will be experienced by Dublin due to climate change and increased demand. The EIS refers only to the supply at the Bog of the Ring, rather than to the North Leinster Aquifer more generally and does not adequately recognise or value its potential as a clean water source.

In many EU countries, groundwater constitutes the major part of the public water supply. In Ireland, we are overdependent on surface water, which is especially prone to contamination. Groundwater use will need to be increased in future this resource, close to population centres, must not be put at risk.

I further understand that, despite five senior hydrogeologists agreeing that the area represents a future public water supply, the North Leinster Aquifer has not even been surveyed by the applicant to investigate its potential output capacity as a public water source. A survey must be undertaken by the applicant and its results taken into account before this groundwater resource is put at risk by a landfill.

#### Horticultural industry

North County Dublin and surrounding areas has developed an excellent reputation for producing high quality fruit and vegetables and has developed an industry of national importance. In 2006, the value of farm gate output of the fresh vegetables sector alone was estimated at €60m. Despite competitive pressures, those involved in this sector have worked hard to ensure that production has remained steady. North County Dublin now accounts for 50% of the country's vegetable production (a verifiable fact which does not seem to be recognised as such by the inspector) and 75% of the country's protected crops.

The industry depends on a complex of private and industrial wells for its production processes, and thereby depends on a clean water supply from the North Leinster Aquifer. Supermarkets regularly test the wells and will not continue to buy from these producers if they are found to be polluted.

I understand that Mr Conrad Wilson has already testified that there would be major impacts on nine farms up to and including forcing them to close. I contend that this landfill will impact on both the reputation and the operation of the horticultural industry in the region, affecting up to 100 businesses in the region, putting several growers out of business in the short-term and affecting many more in the long-term. In accordance with the EPA Act 1992, I suggest that the impact on the horticultural industry needs to be given further consideration.

I believe that a full cost-benefit analysis needs to be undertaken, bearing in mind not only the impact on this national industry's operation, but also on its reputation and the marketability of its produce and the future value of clean water.

Further to this, I contend that, contrary to the EIS, which states that the landfill will not have national impact, the destruction of a large part of a national industry is indeed a national issue and will have national impact in the context of increased transport, energy and food prices due to Peak Oil.

Finally, the horticultural industry in Ireland is not only an economic asset, but also a cultural asset, a fact that EIS does not give sufficient prominence. The Irish food industry, and by extension, the Irish tourism industry, will suffer if there is not a sufficient supply of Irish produce.

#### Bottom Ash

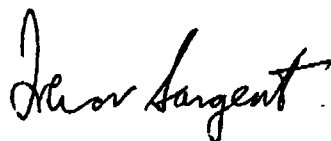
I note that further to the main activity of the landfill of non-hazardous waste at the landfill, toxic bottom ash from incinerators in the region will also be stored there. In particular, An Bord Pleanála's recent decision to increase the capacity of the incinerator at Carranstown must be taken into account, as this will most likely increase the amount of toxic ash arriving at the Fingal Landfill, further endangering water quality.

There should be a moratorium on the planned landfill for Nevitt until an EIS concentrating on the North Leinster Aquifer and the economic, horticultural and human effects of pollution thereof. An independent technical committee should be brought in to review it if necessary.

All of the above facts risk litigation by those affected by the landfill. I note also that the matter of compensation to groundwater users has not been settled.

Thus, I am objecting to the proposed decision of the EPA to grant a waste licence to Fingal County Council in connection with the Fingal Landfill at Nevitt and I am requesting an oral hearing on the issue.

Le gach dea-ghuí,



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Trevor Sargent TD

Minister for Food and Horticulture