

of the unit to the northwest. The city represents a significant change in land-use and land-cover and therefore is in itself a distinct physical unit.

9.2.1.1 Landform

Landform is the term used to describe the spatial and formal arrangement of landscape components as a natural product of geological and geomorphologic processes in the past, and refers primarily to topography and drainage. The site of the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station is located on the northwest edge of the area known geologically as the Limerick Volcanics. This complex is underlain by limestone. The topography of the area encompasses flat agricultural land and rolling hills. Occasional abrupt changes in slope are due primarily to the differential weathering of volcanic rock in comparison to limestone, which weathers more easily. The principal soil type in the area is derived from Limestone Glacial Till.

The waste transfer station is located on the southern slopes of a hill known as Boughilbreaga. This hill measures 170 metres 0.D. at its highest point, with the upper parts of the Mr. Binman Ltd. site lying at approximately 140 metres 0.D. and the lower boundary at approximately 100 metres 0.D. Plate 9.1 presents a view towards the peak of Boughilbreaga from the northern boundary of the site. A radio mast is located on the peak of the hill.



Plate 9.1 View northwards beyond the northern boundary of the site, to the peak of Boughilbreaga hill

To the east of the Mr. Binman Ltd. site is a flat valley floor, which is approximately 500 metres wide and lies at an elevation of 90 to 100 metres O.D. Moving further eastwards, the topography of the land rises abruptly to an elevation of 204 metres O.D at Knockroe hill, a view of which is shown in Plate 9.2. This hill is a dominant feature in the local landscape. Much of Knockroe hill is covered with gorse scrub, and areas of exposed rock are visible close to the peak.



Plate 9.2 View of Knockroe hill to the east of the wasterransfer station

There are no lakes or areas of open water located within or close to the site of the proposed development. The Camoge River flows in an east-west direction approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the site, but is not visible from the waste transfer station. Two small tributaries flow southwards from Knockroe hill through the townlands of Ballybricken West and South before joining the Camoge.

9.2.1.2 Land-cover

Land-cover is the term used to describe the combinations of vegetation and land-use that cover the land surface. It comprises the more detailed constituent parts of the landscape and encompasses both natural and man-made features. Land-cover in the Luddenmore area is primarily agricultural. Field size ranges from small to large, and field shape is relatively irregular. Field boundaries are marked by mature hedgerows and trees, such as Sycamore and Ash.

The southwards-facing view presented in Plate 9.3 was taken from the northern boundary of the proposed development site. The waste transfer station occupies the centre of the image, while the background presents an overview of the surrounding rural landscape. Plate 9.4 shows a closer view of the agricultural fields that lie adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The fields surrounding the site are currently used for grazing by cattle. The site of the waste transfer station was also used for agricultural purposes prior to the setting up of the waste transfer station in 1994 and some agricultural sheds remain onsite.





Plate 9.4 Agricultural fields adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd. - Planning and Environmental Consultants Fragmented pockets of coniferous planting are interspersed around the local landscape, as shown in Plate 9.5. This photograph was taken from the eastern boundary of the waste transfer station and shows the view to the southeast. The house in the centre of the image is located adjacent to the local road through Luddenmore from which the waste transfer station is accessed.



Plate 9.5 View of young coniferous planting to the southeast of the waste transfer station

A quarry operated by Roadstone is located approximately 500 metres northeast of the site and is partially visible from the eastern part of the waste transfer station, as shown in Plate 9.6. The site itself is a commercial premises, with land-cover comprising waste-sorting sheds, agricultural sheds, an office and canteen building and a concrete yard, as shown in Plate 9.7. The weighbridge is visible in the right-hand side of the photograph, while the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) Plant is visible to the left. A full description of each component of the waste transfer station is provided in Chapter 3 of this EIS. Plate 9.7 also shows that the landscape to the west of the proposed development site is screened from view by the transfer station and adjoining trees.

An area of hillside towards the northern section of the site has been excavated in recent years, which has resulted in the exposure of the bedrock, as shown in Plate 9.8. This area is currently used for the storage of waste collection vehicles and skips.

In terms of built development within the wider landscape, there are several residential properties located adjacent to the local roads in the Luddenmore area and the Ballybricken area to the south. Farm buildings are also a common feature in landscape. A row of electricity pylons is routed in a north-south direction, approximately 150 metres east of the site boundary. Planning permission has been granted by Limerick County Council for the construction of a new entrance roadway and car park at the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer and recycling centre (Planning Reference 05/3128), as detailed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this EIS. Construction of the roadway and car park has not yet commenced.



Plate 9.6 View towards the Roadstone quarry located northeast of the waste transfer station



Plate 9.7 View of waste transfer station yard and sorting sheds

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd. - Planning and Environmental Consultants



Plate 9.8 Northern part of the waste transfer station sites the owner the test pection P

9.2.2 Visual Unit

Visual landscape units are defined by spatial enclosure and pattern – in other words by landform and land-cover. The limits of the views that are available from one particular area are therefore determined by the physical land range primarily the topographical and vegetation boundaries. Figure 9.4 depicts the boundaries of the visual landscape unit as perceived from the most elevated area of the proposed development site. Views to the north and west are restricted by Boughilbreaga hill on which the site is located, while to the east the boundary of the visual unit is marked by Knockroe hill. The longest visibility range from the site of the waste transfer station is available to the south and southwest, as shown in Plate 9.9. The hill of Skoolhill, which lies approximately 3.2 kilometres southwest of the proposed development site, is visible in the righthand side in the background of the photograph. This steep hill rises to an elevation of approximately 130 metres 0.D.

9.2.3 Image Unit

An image unit is a feature of such dominance that it acts as a major focal point within the landscape. Such features contribute significantly to the creation of a strong identity or sense of place. Knockroe hill, as shown in Plate 9.10, is a highly visible feature in the Luddenmore and Ballybricken landscape. The hill is visible from most of the local roads in the vicinity of the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station. It is recognised locally for its rich cultural heritage, due to the presence of a hillfort, a standing stone and ring forts. At a regional level however, there is no one single feature in the wider landscape that contributes significantly to the identity of the area. The rolling agricultural landscape that surrounds the site of the waste transfer station is a common feature in much of central and eastern County Limerick.

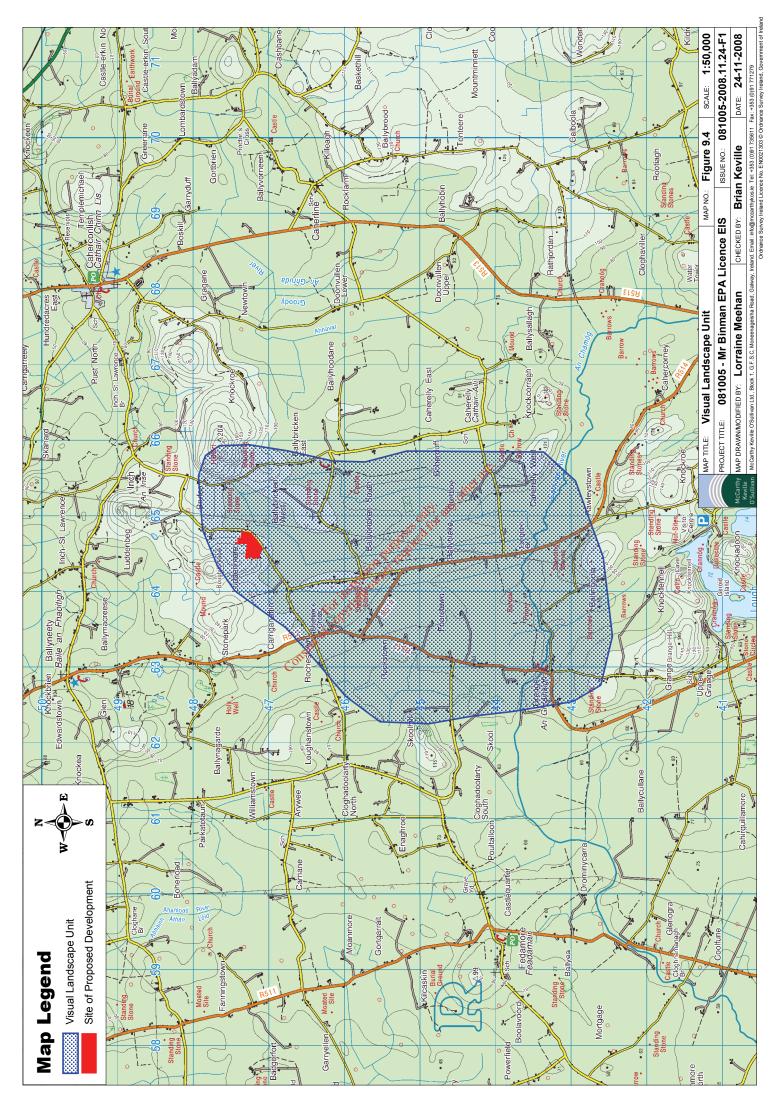




Plate 9.9 View to the southwest from the northern boundary of the waste transfer station

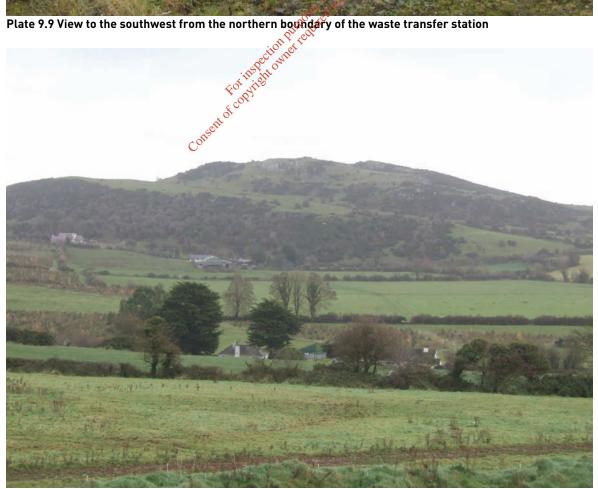


Plate 9.10 View towards Knockroe hill, east of the waste transfer station

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9.3 Landscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of a landscape to development and therefore to change varies according to its character and to the importance that is attached to any combination of landscape values. The sensitivity of a landscape is derived from consideration of designations such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), National Parks, from information such as tourist maps, guidebooks and brochures, and from the evaluation of indicators such as uniqueness, popularity, distinctiveness, and quality of the elements of the area

An assessment of landscape sensitivity in the vicinity of the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station was carried out during a site visit by McCarthy Keville & O'Sullivan Ltd. personnel in November 2008. The methodology for this assessment was based on that set out in the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DoELG) guidance document 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment - Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2000). The document recommends an assessment of landscape sensitivity based on an evaluation of individual features, such as the quality and integrity. The results of the assessment are presented in Table 9.1.

In general, the landscape in this area was found to be of moderate sensitivity. The level of built development in the wider landscape has been relatively low, and agriculture remains the primary land-use. The hilly topography of the area screens the waste transfer station from view from most of the surrounding landscape. Houses in the area are similarly screened from view by changes in only any other topography and by roadside hedgerows and trees.

Feature	Description
Quality	Landscape character in the vignity of the proposed development site is relatively
	unspoiled due to the low intensity of land-use to date. The settlements located closest to
	the site are the villages of Ballyneety and Caherconlish, which are located approximately
	three kilometres northwest and four kilometres northeast of the site respectively.
	Pastoral farmland bound by hedgerows and mature trees is the most common landscape
	element in this region, thereby creating a strong rural character. The quality of this
	landscape would be vulnerable to insensitive development. The proposal to increase
	waste tonnage accepted at the facility will not have an adverse impact on the quality of
	the landscape. Planning permission has been granted by Limerick County Council for the construction of a new entrance and car park at the facility, and for the covering of the
	Opti-Bag and timber storage areas. These developments are in keeping with the
	character of the site and will not affect the quality of the landscape.
Integrity	The landscape of the Luddenmore area has not been interfered with by unsympathetic
integrity	structures and therefore displays a high level of integrity with regards to landscape
	sensitivity. The level of built development in both the local and the wider landscape has
	been low. Small, fragmented pockets of coniferous forestry are interspersed throughout
	the area. Neither the waste transfer station nor the Roadstone quarry to the northeast
	form highly visible features in the landscape. The hilly topography of the area and
	presence of mature hedgerows and trees provides significant screening to both
	operations.
Distinctiveness	Knockroe Hill forms a distinctive landscape feature at a local level. In terms of the wider
	landscape however, there are few distinctive or unique features that contribute
	significantly to the identity of this area. Pastoral agricultural land forms the most
	common landscape element.
Popularity	There are no landscape features within the site of the proposed development or its
	immediate vicinity that attract a significant amount of interest due to their perceived
	amenity value. Within the wider landcape, the Lough Gur visitor's centre and picnic area,
	which are located approximately 5.5 kilometres south of the waste transfer station, are
	popular with both visitors and members of the local community alike. The lake is valued
	for its recreation value and is often used for water sports during the summer months.

Table 9.1 Features of Landscape Sensitivity

Feature	Description	
Rarity	The landscape that is characteristic of this area is not considered to be rare on a regional or national scale. Much of central and eastern County Limerick consists of the rolling agricultural land that is typified by the Luddenmore and Ballybricken area. There is one area designated for protection within a five-kilometre radius of the waste transfer station; Skoolhill Natural Heritage Area (NHA), which is located approximately three kilometres southwest of the site. This designated area occupies approximately 0.18 square kilometres.	
Cultural Meaning	The Luddenmore and Ballybricken areas have a strong cultural heritage, as detailed in Chapter 10 of this EIS. The hills of Knockroe and Boughhilbreaga feature standing stones and ringforts, while the remains of castles and churches have been found in the wider area. Lough Gur to the south is often described as one of Ireland's most important archaeological sites, due to the numerous megalithic remains in this area. Stone circles, ring forts and the remains of crannogs and stone age houses are present in the area surrounding Lough Gur.	
Sense of	A sense of public ownership typically arises due to ease of accessibility, visibility or a	
Public	widely shared meaning. The site of the proposed development is privately owned and is	
Ownership	screened from view from much of the surrounding landscape and therefore is not associated with a strong sense of public ownership. Members of the general public may access the site during specified hours in order to deposit recyclable waste in the civic amenity area.	
Social	Over two hundred people are employed at the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station in	
Importance	Luddenmore, which contributes significantly to the social importance of the site. The site regularly accepts groups of primary and secondary school pupils for educational tours of the waste transfer station. Employment and tour site proposed development site.	
9.4 Landscape & Site Context This section of the EIS describes the views of the surrounding landscape that are available from the site of the proposed development of the also describes the views that are available towards the		

9.4 Landscape & Site Context

This section of the EIS describes the views of the surrounding landscape that are available from the site of the proposed development? Talso describes the views that are available towards the site from the surrounding landscape with particular reference to views from roads, houses and areas of amenity value. con

9.4.1 Views From the Site

Views to the north and west of the site are limited by Boughilbreaga hill, on which the waste transfer station is located. This hill rises to an elevation of approximately 170 metres 0.D. to the north of the site, thereby restricting views of the landscape further north. The sides of the hill similarly restrict views to the west. Knockroe hill is visible to the east from within the site, as shown in Plate 9.11. This hill rises abruptly from the surrounding flat countryside, and forms a significant focus of attention.

Wide views over the agricultural lands to the south and southwest of the Mr. Binman Ltd. are available from the northern boundary of the site, which lies at approximately 30 metres higher than the southern boundary. These views encompass flat to undulating agricultural grassland, bound by mature trees and hedgerow. The topography of the land rises to the south. Houses and farm buildings are interspersed throughout the landscape. There are no rivers or areas of open water visible in this area. The limits of the views available from within the waste transfer station are also detailed in Section 9.2.2 of this EIS.



Plate 9.11 Views to the east from within the waste transfer station are terminated by Knockroe hill LOWINET TEL tionP

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9.4.2 Views Towards the Site

9.4.2.1 Views from the Surrounding Road Network

The site of the waste transfer station is accessed from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, which adjoins the 2512 Regional Road at Sheahan's Cross. The R512 travels in a north-south direction approximately 1.3 kilometres west of the site. Travelling eastwards towards the site on the local road, the waste transfer station is not visible until passing the entrance gates. It is screened from view by roadside trees and houses and by changes in the topography of the land. Travelling westwards towards the site, the waste transfer station is similarly screened from view until one is in the vicinity of the site. A significant amount of screening is afforded to the waste transfer station by the trees planted around the southern boundary of the site.

There are two other Regional Roads within a five-kilometre radius of the waste transfer station. The R514 lies approximately 1.7 kilometres southwest of the waste transfer station, at its nearest point. This route connects the R512 with Herbertstown to the southeast. The third Regional Road, the R513, travels in a north-south direction approximately 3.8 kilometres east of the proposed development site, at its nearest point. This route links the N24 Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road to the north with Mitchelstown to the south. The waste transfer station is not visible from any of the three Regional Roads in the area. It is screened from view by the hilly topography of the Luddenmore and Knockroe areas and by the mature trees and hedgerows that mark roadsides and field boundaries.

Views towards the waste transfer station were considered from five locations on the local road that lies adjacent to the site. Photo locations were identified that could be easily accessed by members of the public. The number of people who have access to privately owned agricultural lands in the vicinity of the site is insignificant compared to the daily volume of road users in the area. Where possible, photographs were taken from outside residential properties, in order to give an indication of the views available towards the site from these houses. Photo locations are listed in Table 9.2 and shown in Figure 9.5. The views available from these locations are shown in the following pages as Plates 9.A to 9.E. A description of the view presented in each photograph is included on the relevant plate.

Location	Description	Grid Reference Co-ordinates
1	View from the local road through the townland of Brufea, 1.11 kilometres	E 165,061
	northeast of the waste transfer station	N 148,145
2	View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, 700 metres	E 164,840
	northeast of the waste transfer station	N 147,852
3	View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, 330 metres	E 164,812
	northeast of the waste transfer station	N 147,410
4	View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, 340 metres	E 164,357
	southwest of the waste transfer station	N 146,947
5	View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, 530 metres	E 164,179
	southwest of the waste transfer station	N 146,830

Table 9.2 Photo Locations

9.4.2.2 Views from Other Buildings

The views presented in Plates 9.A to 9.E depict, where possible, the views towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station from houses in the vicinity of the site. With regards to other buildings, there are no schools or commercial buildings in the area. Ballybricken Church is located approximately 0.8 kilometres south of the waste transfer station. The Mr. Binman Ltd. facility is not visible from here however due to the screening effects of trees and changes in the topography -Citon 9.4.2.3 Views from Areas of Amenity Value Difference

Limerick County Golf & Country Club is located approximately 2.1 kilometres northwest of the proposed development site, outside the village of Ballyneety. The waste transfer station is not visible from the golf course due to changes in topography of the land and the screening effects of roadside houses and trees that lie in the intervening landscape. There are no views of the proposed development site available from any hotels or other amenities in the Luddenmore or Ballybricken area such as parks, nature areas or sports fields. There are no designated walking routes in the area.

9.5 Impacts and Mitigation

9.5.1 'Do-Nothing' Scenario

If the proposed development were not to proceed, the existing levels of activity at the waste transfer station would continue and no significant changes or impacts on landscape character or site visibility are envisaged within the foreseeable future. Limerick County Council has granted planning permission for the construction of a new entrance roadway and car park at the waste transfer and recycling centre (Planning Reference Nos. 05/3128 and 07/2466) and for the covering of the Opti-Bag and timber storage areas (Planning Reference No. 08/245). The construction of the new entrance and car park and the covering of the timber storage area have not yet been carried out. If the proposal to increase the waste tonnages accepted at the facility does not proceed, these developments will still be carried out, in line with improving access to the site and further reducing dust emissions from the facility. These developments will assimilate well into their receiving

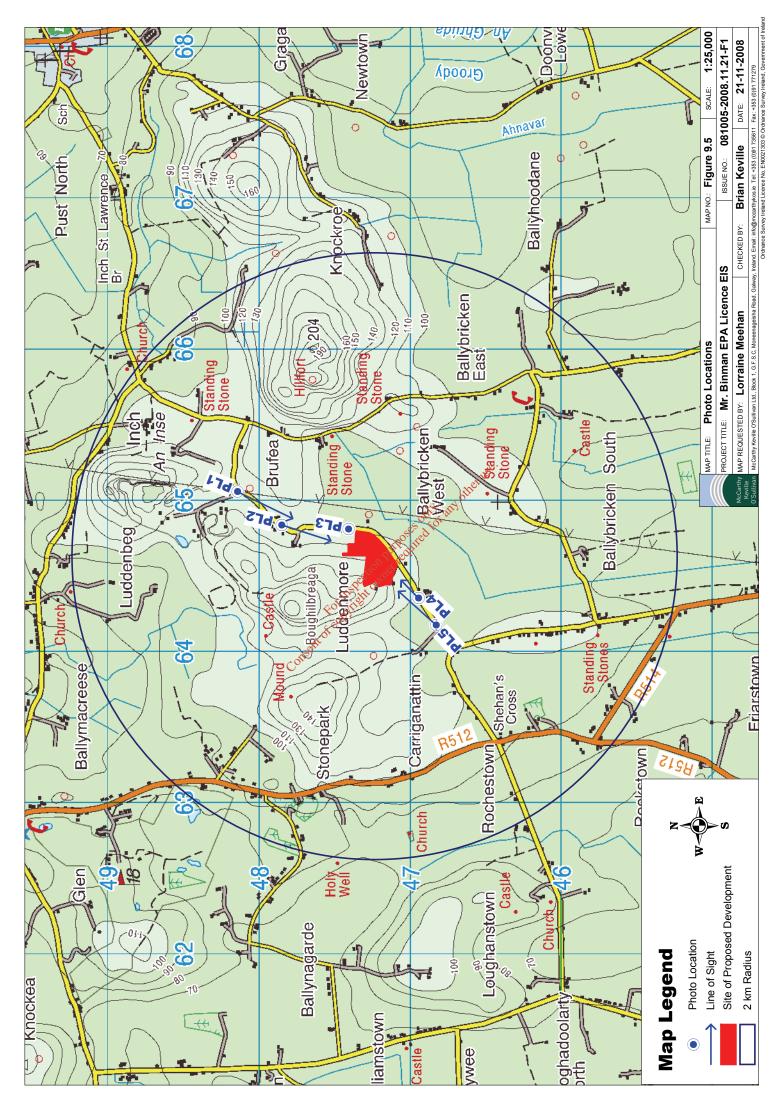




Plate 9.A

Photo Location: View from the local road through the townland of Brufea.

Distance from photo location to site: 1.11 km

Photo location grid reference: E 165,061 N 148,145

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View from northeast of the waste transfer station

The photograph in Plate 9.A presents the view towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station and recycling centre from the local road through the townland of Brufea, approximately 1.11 kilometres northeast of the site. This photograph depicts the agricultural landscape and hilly topography of the area. Boughilbreaga hill on which the waste transfer station is located is shown in the right-hand side of the photograph. The facility however is screened from view from this location by trees and hedgerow vegetation and the hilly topography of the area. The guarry operated Roadstone lies in the intervening landscape between the photo location and the site of the proposed development, and is similarly screened from view by trees and changes in the topography of the land.

The waste transfer station is not visible to motorists travelling on this part of the local road and activities at the site therefore have no impact on views of the surrounding landscape, which are from this location. The proposed increase in waste tonnages to be accepted at the site will likewise have no impact on the existing view presented in this photograph.



Plate 9.B

View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore.

Distance from photo location to site: 700 m

Photo location grid reference: E 164,840 N 147,852



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View from northeast of the waste transfer station

The photograph in Plate 9.B presents the view towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station and recycling centre from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, approximately 700 metres northeast of the site. This photograph was taken outside a house that is located adjacent to the roadside. The waste transfer station is not visible from this photo location, as it is screened from view by the trees that lie in the intervening landscape between the photo location and the site. Changes in the topography of the land also assist in screening the facility from view from this location.

Current activities at the waste transfer station have no impact on the views available from this road. The proposal to increase the tonnages of waste accepted at the site will have no impact on existing views.



Plate 9.C

Photo Location: View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore.

Distance from photo location to site: 330 m

Photo location grid reference: E 164,812 N 147,410



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View from northeast of the waste transfer station

The photograph in Plate 9.C presents the view towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station and recycling centre from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, approximately 330 metres northeast of the site. This photograph was taken outside a house that is located adjacent to the roadside. The waste transfer station is partially visible in the background of the photograph, but does not form a significant focus of attention in this view. The sorting and storage buildings on the site are partially screened by the surrounding trees and the rising topography of the hill on which the facility is located.

The waste transfer station is set back from the road and does not immediately attract the attention of the viewer. Motorists travelling on this local road in the immediate vicinity of the site have partial views of the waste transfer station. The facility lies outside the direct field of vision of motorists however and neither impedes nor blocks views of the surrounding landscape from the road. The proposal to increase the amount of waste that is handled at the Mr. Binman Ltd. facility will have no impact on the view presented in this photograph. The proposed development will not result in increased visibility of the site within the surrounding area.



Plate 9.D

Photo Location: View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore.

Distance from photo location to site: 340 m

Photo location grid reference: E 164,357 N 146,947

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View from southwest of the waste transfer station

The photograph in Plate 9.D presents the view towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station and recycling centre from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, approximately 330 metres southwest of the site. This photograph was taken at a point where the roadside vegetation is lower than at other points, in order to allow a clearer view towards the proposed development site. The waste transfer station however is screened from view by the trees that lie in the intervening landscape between this photo location and the site. The hilly topography of the area also plays a role in screening the facility from view. The house that lies adjacent to the western boundary of the waste transfer station is partially visible through the gap in the roadside vegetation.

The waste transfer station is not visible to motorists travelling towards the site at this location and has no impact on views of the surrounding landscape. The proposal to increase the quantities of waste accepted at the site will not result in increase to the visibility of the site and will therefore have no impact on the existing view as presented in this photograph.



Plate 9.E

Photo Location: View from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore.

Distance from photo location to site: 530 m

Photo location grid reference: E 164,179 N 146,830

Prepared by

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View from southwest of the waste transfer station

The photograph in Plate 9.E presents the view towards the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station and recycling centre from the local road through the townland of Luddenmore, approximately 530 metres southwest of the site. This photograph was taken outside a house that is located adjacent to the roadside and depicts the agricultural landscape and hilly topography of the Luddenmore area. The waste transfer station is not visible from this photo location, being screened from view by trees and the hilly topography of the area. Activities at the site have no impact on existing views of the surrounding landscape from the road.

The waste transfer station is not visible to motorists travelling westwards towards the site at this photo location. It is visible from the road only when passing the entrance gates to the site. The proposal to increase the quantity of waste handled at the transfer station will have no impact on visibility of the site in the landscape.

environment, and will have no impact on landscape character or visibility of the waste transfer station within the wider area. The new roadway and car park will be visible only from their immediate vicinity.

9.5.2 **Predicted Impacts**

9.5.2.1 Impacts During Construction Phase

No Impact

There is no construction phase associated with the proposal to increase waste tonnages accepted at the facility, and therefore there will be no landscape or visual impacts resulting from construction works at the site as part of this application. The construction of the new entrance roadway and car park at the site form part of a separate application, which has been granted planning permission by Limerick County Council. With regards to that development, the negative visual impact resulting from the construction of the new roadway and car park will be short-term and slight only. These construction works will be visible only in the immediate vicinity of the site entrance, and will have no impact on local landscape character. No cumulative impact will therefore result from the construction phase of the roadway or car park with this current proposal.

9.5.2.2 Impacts During Operational Phase

No Impact

150. There will be no increase in visibility of the site as a result of the proposed development. No built development will take place as part of the proposed development and therefore there will be no changes to the existing views of the waste transfer station that are available from the surrounding road network or houses in the vicinity of the site. Similarly, there will be no changes to the existing views of the surrounding landscape that are available from within the waste transfer station. OWNET كۈنى

No Impact

There are no designated Scenic Routes of Protected Views located within a five-kilometre radius of the proposed development site. The Seenic Route located closest to the site is that found at Lough Gur, approximately 5.5 kilometres, south of the waste transfer station. The proposed development will have no impact on this or any other Scenic Route or Protected View in the wider landscape, due to distance from the site and the screening effects of the intervening topography, vegetation and houses and other buildings.

No Impact

There will be no changes to land-use or land-cover within the site of the proposed development. The site will continue to be used as a waste transfer station and recycling centre.

Long-term Slight Negative Impact

The proposal to increase waste tonnages accepted at the Mr. Binman Ltd. waste transfer station will result in additional traffic movements on the local road adjoining the site, as detailed in Chapter 11 of this EIS. This increase in traffic will have a slight negative impact on the rural character of the Luddenmore area. In addition, larger volumes of waste will be handled on-site, thereby resulting in increased activity within the waste transfer station. At a local level, this increased activity will also have a slight negative impact on landscape character. This impact will be perceivable from the immediate surroundings of the site only, due to the screening effects of topography and vegetation.