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Figure 11-1 Site Folios & Surrounding Land Use

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INTRODUCTION

- 11.1 This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addresses the impact on material assets of the proposed backfilling and restoration of an existing quarry void using imported inert soils by Roadstone Wood Ltd. at the Old Quarry in Brownswood, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.
- 11.2 It is prepared as part of an Environmental Impact statement providing supporting information to accompany an application for planning permission to Wexford County Council and a waste licence application (WLA) to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the proposed inert waste recovery facility at Brownswood
- 11.3 In undertaking this study, due regard has been had to aspects such as infrastructure, economic activities and property values in the vicinity of the application site, and the impact of the backfilling and restoration of the worked-out quarry. The study has also had regard to the EPA publication '*Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statement*' (March 2002).

RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Outline of Baseline Study and Methodology

- 11.4 The baseline study of the area with regard to material assets involved a general assessment of the local road network around the application site, economic activities, commercial properties and housing in the area. Information presented is based primarily on observations made during site visits to the area in June 2010 and information obtained from local sources, including the internet.

Site Context

- 11.5 The existing worked out quarry is located in the centre of Brownswood townland, Co. Wexford approximately 2.5 km south of Enniscorthy and is operated by Roadstone Wood Ltd. Rock extraction activities ceased at the quarry in the late 1980's / early 1990's.
- 11.6 The former quarry (Old Quarry) is located in close proximity to an established aggregate extraction facility to the south (Murphy's Quarry) which is also operated by Roadstone Wood. Ltd. Rock excavated at this quarry is used for the continued production of readymix concrete, concrete blocks and asphalt products within the Old Quarry.
- 11.7 The current Wexford County Development Plan (2007-2013) does not include any land zoning or development objectives for the lands within Roadstone Wood Ltd.'s existing landholding at Brownswood.
- 11.8 The landholding at Brownswood lies immediately outside the development area identified by the Enniscorthy Town and Environs Development Plan

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(2008-20014). The lands immediately north of the landholding lie within the Zone 2- Drumgold/Salville development area and are zoned as open space and amenity. Lands at a further distance north are zoned for new low density residential development.

Infrastructure

- 11.9 The application site is located close to the N11 National Primary Road which currently carries a large volume of inter-urban and commuter traffic daily from Dublin City and the Greater Dublin Area to Wexford Town and Rosslare Harbour.
- 11.10 The international E-road network is a numbering and identification system for roads in Europe developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The network is numbered from E01 up and its roads cross national borders. The N11 National Primary Road south of Enniscorthy is part of European Route E01 running from Larne, Northern Ireland to Seville, Spain.
- 11.11 Traffic access to the application site is obtained directly off the existing N11 National Primary Road. Traffic turning off the N11 runs for a short distance onto the access road leading into the Old Quarry.
- 11.12 At Brownswood, a relatively high proportion of the traffic which runs for short distances along local roads leading to and from the N11 comprises HGV traffic generated by concrete production and ancillary activities at the Old Quarry at Brownswood and at Murphy's Quarry immediately to the south.

Utilities

- 11.13 Overhead electricity transmission cables run along the N11 immediately west of the application site at Brownswood and across predominantly agricultural land immediately north and east of Roadstone Wood Ltd.'s property boundary.
- 11.14 Electricity cables also run from the N11 to the existing transformer located to the east of the existing site office. Telephone cables run along the N11 and a connection is provided from there to the site office. Potable water is provided to the application site via a local authority water main. The application site is not served by mains sewerage, but has two existing septic tanks, one each at the office and canteen facility. The plan layout of existing sites services is shown on Figure 2-3.

Land Use

- 11.15 The area immediately beyond Roadstone Wood Ltd.'s property boundary is largely rural and undeveloped in character except for some limited isolated or low density clusters of residential housing and occasional rural employment / enterprise facilities (including the quarries at Brownswood)

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- 11.16 Lands to the east and south of the application site are largely rural in nature, with a mixture of farm land and isolated residential units.
- 11.17 Lands to the north, closer to Enniscorthy Town, hold clusters of rural housing and at the edge of the urban area, there is a greater concentration of retail and employment facilities and higher density residential development.
- 11.18 The River Slaney Valley candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC Site Ref. 000781) lies immediately west and the existing N11 National Primary Road and is contiguous to Roadstone Wood Ltd.'s landholding. The site is protected as it contains a number of designated habitats listed in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive, including alluvial wet woodlands, estuaries, mudflats and old oak woodlands. It also supports populations of several species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive.
- 11.19 Most of the tourist interest in the area is associated with the natural beauty of the River Slaney valley and/or historical tourist attractions and mostly is focussed on the town of Enniscorthy, which benefits from "day-tripper" and/or "stop off" visitor markets. The River Slaney contains stocks of wild brown trout, sea-trout and salmon which attract anglers from overseas. Local land use is indicated on Figure 11-1.

Housing

- 11.20 The housing market in the Brownswood area is effectively part of the larger market of the Enniscorthy Town area. Most housing in the vicinity of the existing quarries has been established for several (>5) years.
- 11.21 The proximity of the Brownswood area to Enniscorthy Town (2.5 km) and the future development and projected population increase of the town will exert significant influence over the future development of housing in the local area. As indicated in Section 3, the population of Enniscorthy Environs grew at a moderate rate during the inter-censal period 2002 to 2006.
- 11.22 At the present time, the area around Brownswood Quarry is not considered for development over the short term by either the Wexford County Development Plan (2007-20013) or the Enniscorthy Town and Environs Development Plan (2008-20014).

IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED WASTE FACILITY

Short Term Impact

- 11.23 Roadstone Wood Ltd. has operated a hard rock quarry at and in the immediate vicinity of the application site for more than 50 years. Over that time, associated traffic levels, to and from the quarry are likely to have grown in line with economic activity and demand for construction materials.
- 11.24 The commencement of quarry backfilling and restoration activities will generate an increase in HGV traffic levels across the existing road network, primarily along the existing N11 National Primary Road. The level of increase in HGV traffic will be intermittent and variable, depending on the

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size and scale of future excavation and development works in the Wexford area which generate and forward inert soil waste to the facility.

- 11.25 Given the existing high level of HGV traffic along the N11 National Primary road (approximately 8,000 AADT, with 9-10% HGV), its design capacity and the likely recent short-term decrease in traffic levels (both to and from Roadstone Wood Ltd.'s quarries and more generally in response to a fall in national economic activity), the operation of an inert soil recovery facility at the application site will have no detrimental impact on existing road network.
- 11.26 The increase in traffic levels over the short section of local road network leading to and from the application site could result in increased volumes of mud and soil being carried onto the local road network.
- 11.27 The overall impact is assessed as being temporary, minor and negative. An assessment of the likely traffic impacts arising from the operation of the proposed waste recovery facility is presented in Section 12 of this Environmental Impact Statement.
- 11.28 The proposed quarry backfilling activity at the site presents a number of risks to groundwater including fuel spillage, increases in suspended solids in run-off and placement of a rogue load of soils. Overall, these risks are likely to constitute a minor to moderate negative impact. They are addressed in more detail in Section 6 of this Environmental Impact Statement.
- 11.29 There may be some short-term impact on residential amenity at the properties located immediately north of the application site when active backfilling is progressing. The most likely short-term impact will be a minor increase in ambient noise and dust levels. These impacts are classified as minor and temporary in nature and are discussed in more detail in Sections 7 and 8 of this Environmental Impact Statement.

Long Term Impacts

- 11.30 At the end of the quarry backfilling operations, there will be a reduction in traffic movements over the local road network leading to and from the site, with consequent improvement of the local environment, its overall amenity value.
- 11.31 The proposed backfilling and restoration of the former quarry will substantially restore the landscape to its original agricultural land-use and create a landform more in keeping with the surrounding landscape. Backfilling activities will not impact on, or interfere with, any established agricultural activities at surrounding landholdings.
- 11.32 The backfilling of the former quarry will have little or no long-term impact on the local public road network. There will be no impact on the existing electricity, telecoms or water supply infrastructure.
- 11.33 In the long-term, draining and backfilling of existing pond on the former quarry floor with a significant depth of inert impermeable, cohesive soil (predominantly glacial till) will increase protection to, and reduce the

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vulnerability of, the existing groundwater aquifer to contamination risks associated with accidental chemical spills and agricultural or animal wastes.

- 11.34 Given that all materials used to backfill the existing quarry void will be completely inert and that specific measures will be implemented to ensure this, there will be no long term risks of soil or groundwater pollution and no detrimental impacts on land values or residential property value. It is arguable that the infilling of a large and unsightly void may actually enhance property values in the immediate vicinity of the site in the longer term.

Interaction with other Environmental Receptors

- 11.35 All environmental factors ultimately impact upon, and interact with material assets. These impacts are discussed in detail in the relevant sections of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

MITIGATION MEASURES

- 11.36 Mitigation measures to be adopted during this restoration project will relate primarily to minimising any impacts of the project on surrounding sensitive receptors. These measures are discussed elsewhere in this Environmental Impact Statement, in the sections to which they relate.
- 11.37 Where required, warning notices, speed restriction signs and construction traffic signposting will be established along the existing local road network to direct traffic to the existing quarry / proposed inert waste recovery facility.
- 11.38 Signposting will also be erected along paved and unpaved roads within the application site in order to maintain a safe and orderly traffic regime at the site. All HGV traffic exiting the waste recovery facility will pass through a wheelwash, thereby minimising amount of mud and soil carried onto the internal haul roads and the local public road network.
- 11.39 Measures to minimise groundwater, noise and dust impacts at nearby residences will be implemented when waste recovery and active backfilling operations are under way: refer to Sections 6, 7 and 8 of this Environmental Impact Statement.
- 11.40 Mitigation measures for environmental indicators are already in place at the site and included in the site Environmental Management Plan. The effective application of these mitigation measures will continue to be monitored.

FIGURES

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