ATTACHMENT K1- REMEDIATION, DECOMMISSIONING, RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE

The principal activity which will be undertaken at the application site is backfilling and restoration of lands within an existing hard rock quarry. As previously noted, the application site will be backfilled to original ground level and restored to a heathland / grassland habitat, refer to the proposed site restoration plan showing final ground level contours in Drawing K-1 and proposed final cross-sections through the final landform in Drawing K-2.

On completion, the restored quarry will better integrate into, and be more in keeping with, the surrounding natural landscape and will improve the overall visual quality and coherence of a scenic landscape which is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the current Wicklow County Development Plan 2011-2017.

Final Ground Profiling and Seeding

Topsoil will be imported to the site on a continual basis and shall not be used immediately in general backfilling of the worked-out quarry. The topsoil will be stockpiled separately pending re-use toward the latter stages of the quarry backfilling works, when the top surface of the backfilled ground approaches the planned final ground levels envisaged by the restoration scheme. These materials shall be stored separately within the application site, away from the active backfilling area and in such location and manner as not to create any temporary adverse visual impact or dust nuisance.

During and after the final phase of the quarry backfilling works, ground contours will be modified as necessary to ensure that surface water run-off across the restored site is intercepted close to the western site boundary and diverted / channelled (via unlined channels excavated in natural soils) to the existing discharge point and/or modified natural drainage network which runs along the north-western property boundary and R755 Regional Road.

A cover layer comprising 150mm of topsoil and approximately 300mm of subsoil shall be placed over the inert backfilled materials on completion of the backfilling activities. This will initially be seeded with a native grass mix in order to promote stability and minimise soil erosion and dust generation.

Decommissioning

On completion of the quarry backfilling and restoration works, all mobile plant and equipment associated with the waste recovery activities will be removed off-site. Any dedicated site accommodation, infrastructure and/or services will also be progressively decommissioned, excavated and/or removed off-site.

Wherever necessary, sealed concrete surfaces will be broken up using a hydraulic breaker and transferred-off site to a nearby authorised construction and demolition waste recovery facility.

Aftercare

Following completion of backfilling and restoration works and decommissioning, the restored lands will be left largely unattended, to be naturally recolonised by native vegetation. A short aftercare period of between 12 and 24 months will follow in order to ensure that vegetation becomes well established and that any bare or exposed soils are re-seeded. Provision will be made for further, short-term environmental monitoring of air, surface water and groundwater.

Over time, the backfilled site will return to a heathland / grassland habitat in keeping with that of the surrounding rural landscape.

Costed Closure Plan

A more detailed closure and aftercare management plan in respect of the proposed recovery facility is provided in Attachment L1. This plan has been prepared and costed to assess the likely financial provision which will need to be put in place by the Applicant to provide for the sudden and unexpected closure of the planned facility.



