

ATTACHMENT L3 - WASTE HIERARCHY

The waste hierarchy set out by national and European legislation requires that the following priority apply in the development and implementation of waste management policy:

- (i) prevention
- (ii) re-use / preparation for re-use
- (iii) recycling
- (iv) recovery
- (v) disposal.

The waste recovery facility at Huntstown Quarry provides for recovery of excavated inert, uncontaminated soil and stone waste through backfilling of existing quarry voids.

Recovery is defined in the Waste Framework Directive as *'any operation, the principal result of which, is waste serving a useful purpose by replacing materials which would otherwise have been used to fulfil a particular function, or waste being prepared to fulfil that function, in the plant or in the wider economy'*.

The inert soil waste imported to the waste recovery facility at Huntstown Quarry is excavated at construction / development sites or for utilities installation / maintenance. Given that excavation and handling of such materials incurs a cost, it can be implicitly assumed that engineering designers and/or works contractors will avoid or minimise, insofar as possible, the volume of excess soil material excavated in order to execute the planned development or maintenance works.

It can also be implicitly assumed that excess excavated soil material will only be exported off-site where it is not possible to re-use it within the development site or to backfill temporary excavations.

Where soil waste is inert, it can be re-used at off-site locations for practical and beneficial purposes without the need for treatment, processing or other form of recycling.

It is therefore evident that where excess inert soil is generated by development or utilities related works and requires to be exported off site, the highest tier activity on the waste hierarchy to which it may be assigned is a waste recovery activity. The proposed backfilling of the worked out quarry void(s) at Huntstown Quarry to former ground level using inert waste soils will

- facilitate their long-term restoration to a grassland habitat, similar to that which existed prior to quarrying;
- better integrate the site into the surrounding natural landscape and will improve the overall visual quality and coherence of the surrounding (semi-rural / urban fringe) landscape;
- mean that the lands can be made available for possible long-term future development in accordance with the zoning of the site under the current or future Fingal County Development Plans, should that be considered appropriate; and
- provide for better protection of the underlying groundwater resource, which is currently vulnerable due to the absence of any protective soil cover.

In so doing, it will achieve a desirable outcome which would not otherwise be possible or would require extensive use of natural soil resources.

As outlined in Chapter 1 of the Environmental Impact Statement which accompanies this waste licence application, the further development of, and increased intake to, the inert soil waste recovery facility at Huntstown Quarry is consistent with the objectives of the Eastern Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015 -2012 and will be an important component of regional waste infrastructure for the Greater Dublin Area and wider Eastern Midlands region.