

This Chapter presents an overview of the relevant planning policy objective and national and regional waste policies and demonstrates how the proposed development is consistent with these. It is based on the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010 -2016; the Nenagh Town and Environs Development Plan 2013-2019, National Waste Policy Statements and the Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region (2015).

1.1 Planning

1.1.1 Tipperary County Development Plan

Tipperary has at present two County Development Plans, these are:

- South Tipperary County Development Plan 2009, adopted in February 2009.
- North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010, adopted in July 2010.

The existing County Development Plans both had their lifetimes extended (11A Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended)), and will remain in effect until a new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy is made by the Southern Regional Assembly, thereafter a new Tipperary County Development Plan will be made.

Nenagh is in the former functional area of North Tipperary County Council. The North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010-2016 sets out the development strategy (policies and objectives) for the sustainable future growth of the county and Chapter 9 addresses waste management. This states that the Council seeks to implement the policies and recommendations of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021. It is policy of the council to ensure that waste disposal facilities are in compliance with all appropriate waste legislative requirements.

1.1.2 Nenagh and Environs Development Plan 2013-2019

The facility is just outside and adjacent to the Nenagh and Environs Boundary, immediately to the west of an area zoned for commercial use. In relation to waste management it is policy to provide, maintain and improve infrastructure for re-use, recycling and disposal of residential waste.

1.2 Site Planning History

In 1990 planning permission (5120932) was granted for the retention of an existing sorting/compactor building and septic tank. In May 2000 permission (5121876) was granted for the extension of the site boundary to provide for hardstanding for vehicles and the erection of a canopy to the workshop and recycling area. In 2002, permission (5124144) was granted for the extension of the existing waste sorting and compacting building to provide a bring centre, to install weighbridge with portakabin, pay station, alterations to workshop, new office and road signage.

1.3 Waste Management & Planning Policy

1.3.1 National Waste Management Policy

The foundation policy statement on waste management “*Changing Our Ways*” was published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in September 1998. This statement firmly bases national policy on the EU Waste Management Hierarchy. In descending order, the current preference is: -

- Prevention;
- Preparing for Reuse;
- Recycling;
- Other Recovery (including energy recovery);and
- Disposal

The 2002 policy statement ‘*Preventing and Recycling Waste - Delivering Change*’ identified initiatives to achieve progress at the top of the Waste Hierarchy to prevent waste arising and increase recycling rates.

In ‘*Waste Management – Taking Stock and Moving Forward*’ 2004, the significant improvement in recycling rates achieved since 1998 were recognised, but the need for further expansion was emphasised. The statement confirmed that Ireland’s national policy approach remained ‘*grounded in the concept of integrated waste management, based on the internationally recognised waste hierarchy, designed to achieve, by 2013, the ambitious targets set out in Changing Our Ways*’.

In 2006, the National Biodegradable Waste Strategy was published. Its primary focus was to achieve the targets set for the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste that can be landfilled under the Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC). A key element was the collection of source separated household and commercial food waste or “brown bin” material and its treatment, primarily biological treatment.

In 2008, the Government initiated a review of waste policy, to identify possible changes to policy at national level that would assist Ireland to move towards a sustainable resource and waste policy, including minimising the creation of waste and self-sufficiency in the reuse and recycling of materials. The review also addressed the application of alternative technologies for waste management.

The EU Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC was introduced to coordinate waste management in Member States with the objective of limiting the generation of waste and optimising the organisation of waste treatment and disposal. The Directive, which also established the first EU wide recycling targets, was transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 (S. I. No. 126 of 2011).

In response, the Government initiated a further review of national waste policy, one of whose objectives was to provide the necessary measures to ensure that waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Articles 4 and 13 of the Directive. A consultation document issued by the Department stated that classification of a treatment process as a recovery

activity depends on the level of success in recovering material or producing heat and/or power.

The most recent Policy Statement '*A Resource Opportunity Waste Management Policy In Ireland 2012*' is also based on the EU Waste Management Hierarchy and encompasses a range of measures across all tiers namely, prevention and minimisation, reuse, recycling, recovery and disposal.

The Statement sets out how the higher tiers can reduce Ireland's reliance on finite resources, virtually eliminate reliance on landfill and minimise the impact of waste management on the environment. It is a policy objective that when waste is generated the maximum value must be extracted from it by ensuring that it is reused, recycled or recovered.

1.4 Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015-2021

The region covers 42% of the land mass of the country with a population of over 1.5 million people. The settlement pattern is evenly split between urban and rural areas, with the four cities of Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Kilkenny having the highest population and the strongest centres of economic activity.

Nationally the total quantity of municipal waste managed has decreased year on year since 2007. In the Southern Region 860,425 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste was collected in 2012. Of this 59% percent was recovered which was in line with the national rate. Unmanaged waste remains a problem in the region which local authorities intend to tackle over the period of the plan.

Plan targets are to achieve a recycling rate of 50% for all managed municipal waste by 2020 and to reduce to 0% the amount of untreated municipal waste to landfill in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery processes.

The region appears to have significant available capacity for most waste streams but there appears to be a shortfall in some areas for example the recovery of municipal solid waste and biowaste.

Policy E1. Future authorisations by the local authorities, the EPA and An Bord Pleannála of pre-treatment capacity in the region must take account of the authorised and available capacity in the market while being satisfied the type of processing activity being proposed meets the requirements of Policy E2.

Policy E2. The future authorisation of pre-treatment activities by local authorities over the plan period will be contingent on the operator demonstrating that the treatment is necessary and the proposed activities will improve the quality and add value to the output materials generated at the site.

Consideration of pre-treatment authorised and available capacity at existing sites in the region prior to authorisation of future pre-treatment activities may have a positive effect on the environment in terms of potentially reducing the scale of development of new greenfield sites.

The waste plan does not identify specific technologies and/or locations for future waste related activities. Rather it has highlighted capacity need, and so guidance on proper siting of future waste-related activities (including expansion of existing facilities) is the most appropriate method at this stage of the planning hierarchy to address the potential for impact on the environment.

The role of the waste industry is discussed in Section 17.2.8 of the Plan and includes *inter alia* to:

- Cooperate with designated lead authorities and local authorities to implement the objectives, policies, actions and targets contained in the plan;
- Provide sustainable waste management infrastructure/technology in keeping with the waste hierarchy and the principle of self-sufficiency;
- Communicate with the public to encourage better waste management behaviours and better quality recycling.

The proposed changes are consistent with current and proposed national and regional waste policy objectives, as it will increase the treatment capacity in the Southern Region to get the maximum value from the waste and will contribute to the achievement and maintenance of national and regional recycling targets.

1.4.1 Compliance with Policy Objectives

The proposed development is consistent with objectives of the County Development and Plan and current national and regional waste policy objectives, as it will increase the treatment capacity for municipal solid waste to get the maximum value from the waste and will contribute to the achievement and maintenance of national and regional recycling and recovery targets.

1.5 Energy Policy

EU Directive 2001/77/EC sets Ireland a national target of sourcing 16% of all energy consumption from renewables by 2020. Potential energy sources, such as non-recyclable combustible waste, can be processed to produce alternatives to fossil fuels and assist in achieving the target.

1.6 Climate Change

The National Climate Change Strategy charts the way to achieve and maintain reductions in greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol. In 2009, the EU Commission agreed a package of proposals to deliver on the EU's commitments to fight climate change and promote renewable energy up to 2020 and beyond. The package seeks to achieve a 20% reduction in total EU greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (relative to 1990 levels) and at the same time, to increase to 20% the amount of renewables in energy consumption.

To meet the 2020 target, it is essential that greenhouse gases emissions are reduced at a national level and the waste sector must contribute to this reduction. The diversion of biodegradable

waste from landfill reduces methane emissions, while the fuel manufactured from non-recyclable wastes replaces fossil fuels.

1.7 Need for the Development

The existing facility is a key element of the AES waste management infrastructure in the Southern Region and the waste acceptance limits set in the current planning permission and EPA Licence prevents AES from expanding its waste recovery and recycling capacity in its customer catchment area.

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