

# Attachment 4-3-2

## Need for Development

The following report was included as Appendix 5.1 of the EIAR which accompanies the application. The report addresses how the proposed soil recovery facility at Garryhesta will contribute to Ireland's obligation to establish an integrated and adequate network of waste recovery installations at a national, regional and local level. The report also includes consideration of the Waste Hierarchy with respect to the Soil Recovery Facility at Garryhesta.

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## 5 APPENDICES

### 5.1 NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT

#### 5.1.1 GOVERNMENT POLICY

The unsustainable levels of resource utilisation and waste generation within the EU have made waste management a central issue for policy makers in the EU (EPA 2012). Consequently, the EU passed the Waste Framework Directive in 2008. One of the main objectives of the Directive is to provide a framework to transform Europe into a society with high levels of recycling and resource efficiency. The Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC established a legal framework for the treatment of waste within the EU, through the prevention of the harmful effects of waste generation, and through waste management. In order to effect this transformation, Member States are required to implement legislation in accordance with a hierarchy for the treatment of waste.

Of particular importance is Article 11.2 of the Directive, which states that "Member States shall take the necessary measures designed to achieve that by 2020 a minimum of 70% (by weight) of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste excluding naturally occurring material defined in category 17-05-04 in the List of Wastes shall be prepared for re-use, recycled or undergo other material recovery (including backfilling operations using waste to substitute other materials)".

The Government's strategy for the construction sector, Construction 2020, sets out a cross-government action plan to help support a sustainable construction sector over the longer term.

The Government has through the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy made clear its objective to facilitate more balanced social and economic growth throughout the State. Such balanced regional growth will result in an increased requirement for social and economic infrastructure with a consequential increase in demand for recovery and re-use of inert Construction and Demolition waste.

There are two main documents which underpin the direction of spatial development in the County. Firstly, at a National level the National Spatial Strategy and secondly at a Regional level, the South West Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022).

The economic development of Cork can no longer be viewed in isolation from adjoining counties and regions. Ireland as a country has become an open economy and as a result the economic development of Cork must now be considered in the context of regional, national and global influences.

### 5.1.1.1 National Context

#### 5.1.1.1.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) was launched by the government in late 2002 and is designed to provide a framework for balanced social, economic and physical development between the regions for the next 20 years (DoELG, 2002). The strategy is based on a hierarchy of settlement; Gateways, Hubs and County Towns along with the need to support the role of smaller towns, villages and diverse rural economies.

The NSS provides a framework to promote and balanced regional development and sustainable growth. It also guides policies, programmes and investment. The strategy emphasises continued strong growth in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), but with significant improvement in the regions outside the capital and more particularly in the nine gateway cities and nine hub towns.

The NSS recognises that quality of life is increasingly important to people and that unbalanced development affects quality of life. The growing trend of long distance commuting, and the dislocation between centres of employment and residential development are economically, socially and environmentally unsustainable. The NSS recognises that the solution lies in balanced regional development, whereby the potential of each area to contribute to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the State is developed. Ireland's growing population can be accommodated within existing settlements, by renewing and developing our cities, towns and villages, and ensuring that urban land is used sensitively and efficiently in order to provide attractive, sustainable compact, public transport friendly forms, whilst avoiding urban sprawl.

County Cork is within the South-West Region (incl. Cork City and counties Cork and Kerry). The strategy emphasises the critical role of 'Gateway' and 'Hubs' in delivering future economic growth, with Cork as the only city in the region, being the Gateway. There is a network of sizable urban settlements in the Region, including Hubs and County towns, each with its own hinterland and sphere of influence, and extensive services, including the presence of third and fourth level education institutes. There are the three Hubs of Mallow, Killarney and Tralee, and numerous County towns with populations over 5,000, including Ballincollig Carrigaline, Cobh, Middleton, Youghal, Bandon, Cobh, Carrigtwohill, Glanmire, Fermoy, Kinsale, and Blarney, all of which are in County Cork.

The NSS 2002-2020 was revoked in 2013, as it had failed to meet its objectives, largely due to: (1) designation of too many hubs and gateways; (2) a lack of resources due to poor fiscal position; (3) weak political buy-in, as revealed by the decentralization plan; and (4) lack of a statutory footing, which meant it received 'due regard' as opposed to 'compliance'. The Government has made clear its objective to facilitate more balanced social and economic growth throughout the State and announced it would seek a successor National Spatial Strategy. This would take account of both the need to acknowledge changed national and international circumstances and continue to set long term national planning and development aims.

#### 5.1.1.1.2 Infrastructure & Capital Investment Plans

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013 was revoked in 2010, at the height of the recession, and was succeeded in 2011 by the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2012-2016 (DoPER, 2011). The Government agreed an exchequer capital programme amounting to €17 billion for the 5-year period 2012-2016. This large exchequer investment was directed at addressing critical infrastructure investment gaps in order to aid economic recovery, social cohesion and environmental sustainability. The sectors prioritised for investment in the Framework include education, health, jobs and enterprise.

The focus of the capital spending is to be on supporting those sectors and projects which will best contribute to sustainable job creation. The review of Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2012-16 (DoPER, 2011) assessed the existing capacity of Ireland's infrastructure and identified remaining gaps which must be addressed to aid economic recovery, social cohesion and environmental sustainability.

The approach identifies four main components of the investment strategy, namely:

- Economic infrastructure – encompassing transport networks, energy provision and telecommunications capacity.
- Investment in the productive sector and human capital – such as capital investment in education infrastructure.
- Environmental infrastructure – including our waste and water systems.
- Critical social investment – such as the health service and social housing programmes.

In September 2015, the Government launched a second Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021 (DoPER, 2015), whose principal stated goal is "Building on Recovery". With steadily improving public finances, the Government was able to commit to increasing the level of expenditure on capital infrastructure gradually over the programme period, in a way that is sustainable and long term. The plan represents a €42 billion framework for infrastructure investment in Ireland over the period. The plan combines direct investment by the Exchequer of €27 billion, a third phase of PPP investments of about €500 million and State-owned sector investment of around €14.5 billion. In total, this State-backed investment package represents over 3.5 percent of GNP each year between 2016 and 2021, and it will support more than 45,000 construction-related jobs.

The Plan prioritises spending on those areas of greatest need as the economy continues its strong recovery. The considerable improvement in the public finances has allowed the Government to increase the level of expenditure on capital infrastructure gradually over the course of the next six years, in a way that is sustainable and long term in its design and focus. Economic growth is dependent on the capacity to move people and goods around the country quickly and easily, and significant strides had been made since 2000 in improving Ireland's national transport infrastructure. Nonetheless, transport is allocated the largest sectoral share of 29% of

the Exchequer Capital Envelope under the Plan. In particular, the national, regional and local road network is allocated €591 million in 2016, progressively increasing to €1,082 million in 2022, and totaling €6 billion over the period of the Plan.

Continuation of the public capital programme will have beneficial effects on the construction industry, and on the wider economy in terms of employment, continued recovery and national competitiveness. In their report Building a Better Ireland, the Construction Industry Council (2010), state that as the economy continues to grow and the population increases towards its projected 2020 level of 5,000,000, real planning for the future is vital. No successor national spatial plan has been adopted, but on February 16<sup>th</sup> 2018, the government published “Project Ireland 2040”, the new draft National Planning Framework to replace the revoked NSS.

#### 5.1.1.1.3 Project Ireland 2040

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Project Ireland 2040 is the Government’s new overarching public policy initiative, which emphasises “social outcomes and values consistent with prudent economic and budgetary policy” (DoHPLG, 2018). Project Ireland 2040 consists of the National Planning Framework to 2040 and the National Development Plan 2018-2027. These will essentially replace the revoked NSS and the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021, respectively. The key difference with all previous spatial planning policies is that it represents an alignment of the investment strategy with the strategic planning policy, to create a unified and coherent plan for the country. Insofar as the Plan is underpinned by investment and placed on a statutory footing that it will receive ‘compliance’ as opposed to ‘due regard’ it will have the force of both funds and law.

The objective of Project Ireland 2040 is to provide a “comprehensive social, economic and cultural infrastructure for all our people to flourish”. The policy seeks to achieve ten strategic outcomes, building around overarching themes of wellbeing, equality and opportunity. The ten shared priorities will ensure a consistent approach between planning objectives under the National Planning Framework and investment commitments under the National Development Plan. These are:

1. Compact Growth
2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility
3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
4. Sustainable Mobility
5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
6. High-Quality International Connectivity
7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage
8. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources
10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

#### 5.1.1.1.3.1 National Planning Framework to 2040

The new draft National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country. The NPF sets out a spatial strategy for Ireland, to accommodate in a sustainable and balanced fashion, the significant projected changes in demographics, such as a population growing by an extra million, and which is increasingly aging and living in smaller family units. The NPF will guide development and investment over the next two decades and will empower each region to lead in the planning and development of their communities, based on a common set of national objectives and key principles.

The above vision will be achieved by:

- Developing a new region-focused strategy for managing growth;
- Linking the NPF to a new 10-year investment plan, the National Development Plan;
- Using state lands for certain strategic purposes;
- Supporting the NPF with more environmentally focused planning at local level;
- Backing-up the NPF in law with an Independent Office of the Planning Regulator.

Some of the key provisions are as follows:

- A roughly 50:50 distribution of growth between the Eastern and Midland region, the Southern, and the Northern and Western regions, with 75% of the growth outside of Dublin and its suburbs.
- The five cities in terms of population size (pop. > 50,000): Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, will be targeted for 50% of overall national growth between them, with Ireland's large and smaller towns, villages and rural areas accommodating the other 50% of growth.
- Major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements rather than continual expansion and sprawl of cities and towns into the countryside, with a target of at least 40% of all new housing to be delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on infill and/or brownfield sites.
- Implementation of the NPF will be fully supported by the Government's investment strategy for public capital investment and investment by the State sector in general, as outlined in the National Development Plan.
- The State owns key parts of our cities and towns, the development of which can play a vital role in reshaping those urban areas, providing homes, places of work and recreation, and a new national Regeneration and Development Agency will be established to harnessing public lands as catalysts to stimulate regeneration and investment.
- The future planning and development of our communities at local level will be refocused to enable a national transition to a competitive low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, through harnessing the country's prodigious renewable energy potential.

- More strategic and co-ordinated planning of our cities and large towns across local authority boundaries will be introduced, including statutorily backed Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans in the five cities.
- The NPF will be given full legislative support within the planning system, including regular reviews and updates to reflect changing circumstances as necessary. The legislation underpinning the Framework will create a new independent Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) to monitor its implementation of the NPF.
- For each of the three regions, the Regional Assemblies will prepare their own strategy in accordance with the framework, and these will be completed by early 2019 and will be known as Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. County and City Development Plan review cycles will then fall in to line with their respective regional strategies, ensuring that the shared vision is carried through to the local planning level.

The NPF includes 75 National Policy Objectives, of which the following are considered particularly relevant here:

**National Policy Objective 1a**

*The projected level of population and employment growth in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area will be at least matched by that of the Northern and Western and Southern Regional Assembly areas combined.*

**National Policy Objective 2a**

*A target of half (50%) of future population and employment growth will be focused in the existing five cities and their suburbs.*

**National Policy Objective 3a**

*Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.*

**National Policy Objective 3b**

*Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints.*

**National Policy Objective 3c**

*Deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints.*

**National Policy Objective 4**

*Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.*

**National Policy Objective 5**

*Develop cities and towns of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally and to be drivers of national and regional growth, investment and prosperity.*

### **National Policy Objective 6**

*Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.*

### **National Policy Objective 12**

*The Government will establish a National Regeneration and Development Agency to work with local authorities, other public bodies and capital spending departments and agencies to co-ordinate and secure the best use of public lands, investment required within the capital envelopes provided in the National Development Plan and to drive the renewal of strategic areas not being utilised to their full potential. The Government will consider how best to make State lands available to such a body to kick-start its development role and to legislate for enhanced compulsory purchase powers to ensure that the necessary transformation of the places most in need of regeneration can take place more swiftly and effectively.*

### **National Policy Objective 32**

*To target the delivery of 550,000 additional households to 2040.*

### **National Policy Objective 35**

*Increase residential density in settlements through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights.*

### **National Policy Objective 56**

*Sustainably manage waste generation, invest in different types of waste treatment and support circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, to support a healthy environment, economy and society.*

### **National Policy Objective 75**

*Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the National Planning Framework are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate.*

Key future planning and development and place-making policy priorities for the Southern Region include:

- Developing and implementing comprehensive and strategic metropolitan area spatial plans for Cork, Limerick and Waterford cities that secure long-term rejuvenation-focused city development, with a special emphasis on underutilised and publicly owned, centrally located sites to boost the population and economic output levels of city centre areas as drivers for wider regions.
- Allied to strategies to deliver more compact urban development in the main cities, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of transport links between the cities



to enable them to function in concert and harness their complementary strengths in an increasingly networked manner.

- Measures to support the integrated development of remoter parts of this region, including the ongoing investment in the transport and communications area, and further promotion and development of the underutilised potential in the tourism and local enterprise.
- More emphasis on consolidating the development of places that grew rapidly in the past decade or so with large scale commuter driven housing development with a particular focus on addressing local community and amenity facility provision in many of the larger commuter towns.
- Preparing and implementing a regional rejuvenation priorities programme, to shape and inform delivery of the Regeneration and Development Fund and identifying significant ready-to-go city, rural town and village and rural rejuvenation priorities harnessing publicly owned land and other assets that are not being used at presently, which together with community and wider private and public sector support and investment, could deliver the transformation of both urban and rural areas in an integrated manner.
- Integrated planning, management and development of the areas along the Wild Atlantic Way to maximise the quality and integrity of the visitor experience as well as the economic benefit, especially for rural and local communities.
- Harnessing the potential of the region in renewable energy terms, including wind, solar, biomass, and wave energy, focusing in particular on the extensive tracts of publicly owned peat extraction areas in order to enable a managed transition of the local economies to the economic benefits of greener energy.
- Developing a more integrated network of greenways, blueways and peatways to support the diversification of rural and regional economies and promote more sustainable forms of travel and activity-based recreation.

As Garryhesta is located on the periphery of Cork City and Metropolitan Area (CMA), and the proposed SRF will primarily serve the construction industry within the CMA, it is noteworthy that the key future growth enablers for Cork include:

- Delivering ambitious large-scale regeneration projects for the provision of new employment, housing and supporting infrastructure in Cork Docklands as integrated, sustainable developments.
- Progressing the sustainable development of new greenfield areas for housing, especially those on public transport corridors, such as Monard.
- Identifying infill and regeneration opportunities to intensify housing development in inner city and inner suburban areas, supported by public realm and urban amenity projects.
- Development of a new science and innovation park to the west of the City, accessible by public transport.

- The continued expansion of and integration with the City's third level institutions.
- The development of a much-enhanced Citywide public transport system.
- M8/N25/N40 Dunkettle Junction upgrade and improved Ringaskiddy Port access.
- Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road.
- Improved traffic flow around the City, which could include upgrade of the N40, and/or alternatives, possibly including enhanced public transport.
- Ensuring water supply and waste-water needs are met to enhance Corks water supply and increase waste water treatment capacity.

Improving sustainability in terms of energy, waste management, resource efficiency, and water, to include district heating and water conservation.

#### 5.1.1.1.3.2 National Development Plan 2018 to 2027

The National Development Plan (NDP) is the companion document to the NPF and is a ten-year strategy for public capital investment of almost €116 Billion. This equates to almost €12 Billion annually and represents a substantial increase in the average annual capital budget over that envisaged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021. The NDP will underpin the NPF and drive its implementation, as well as driving long-term economic, environmental and social progress across all parts of the country over the next ten years.

The future success of Ireland rests on ensuring readiness for a changing world and the continued successful development of the knowledge economy, and as such on also adopting a strongly strategic approach to public capital investment in the NDP. The NDP represents a response to significant deficits in Ireland's public infrastructure and identifies the strategic priorities for public capital investment for all sectors.

There are many major challenges that form the context for the NPF and the NDP's strategic investment priorities, and these include:

- Demographic change.
- Need for Ireland to become a low-carbon, climate-resilient society.
- Brexit.
- Realising sustainable growth.

The NDP is a blueprint, setting out a strategic framework for public capital investment over the next ten years with a particular focus, beyond simply underpinning the NPF, but on achieving the following over-arching objectives:

- Meeting Ireland's infrastructure and investment needs over the next ten years through a total investment of an estimated €116 Billion over the period.
- Reforming how public investment is planned and delivered by shifting to integrated regional investment plans, stronger co-ordination of sectoral strategies to secure mutually reinforcing outcomes, and more rigorous selection and appraisal of projects to secure value-for-money.

Substantial growth is planned in public capital investment over the coming years, but this must be consistent with the fundamental requirements of overall economic and fiscal sustainability. Over the period 1995 to 2015, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Ireland was comparable to the EU15 average of 3% over the same period. This indicates that a value of 3% of national income can be considered as an appropriate target for the long-term average level of public capital spending. Under the NDP, it is projected that public capital investment will reach 3.8% of Gross National Income (GNI) in 2021 and 4% by 2024, with sustained investment averaging 4% on an annual basis over the period 2022 to 2027. Public capital investment in Ireland will therefore become among the highest in the EU and will also ensure that public investment underpins the sustainability of economic growth but avoids contributing to economic instability and exacerbating any risks of unbalanced and inflationary growth.

Exchequer funding allocated for public capital investment over the ten-year period will amount to €91 Billion and will be supplemented with State-backed investment by commercial State owned enterprises to generate a total 10-year investment programme estimated at €116 Billion. The Exchequer resources allocated for investment under the NDP are based on projected nominal growth in national income (GNI) averaging 4% over the period 2022-2027. This is consistent with long term growth forecasts for the Irish economy produced by various international organisations. The total annual capital expenditure will thus increase from €8.4 Billion in 2018 to €14.0 Billion in 2027 under the Plan.

Indicative resource allocations for delivery of the National Strategic Outcomes, and for named Strategic Investment Priorities under each Outcome, over the period ten-year period are detailed in the Plan (See Table 3.2, p. 21-22 of NDP). These allocations will be updated and adjusted where necessary as the Plan is implemented, in light of:

- Progress achieved in relation to public capital investment priorities currently underway or planned.
- Ongoing assessment of longer-term infrastructural priorities across sectors underpinning the implementation of NPF priorities.
- Different planning horizons applying to different types of capital expenditure.

This will allow for appropriate flexibility and responsiveness of capital allocations to changing circumstances and priorities.

#### 5.1.1.1.4 National Waste Policy

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The waste policy statement entitled “Taking Stock and Moving Forward” published in April 2004 reiterates a commitment to the implementation of the internationally recognised waste management hierarchy. The integrated waste management approach is to implement maximum recycling, recovery of energy from residual waste and moving away from landfill disposal.

A policy direction WIR 04/05 was issued on 3rd May, 2005 in relation to the movement of waste. This was unforeseen in “Taking Stock and Moving Forward” and was

intended to address concerns that relevant regulatory authorities were taking an unnecessarily restrictive approach regarding the inter-regional movement of waste. This guidance is intended to provide greater clarity regarding the appropriate application of the proximity principle to facilitate the provision of environmentally sustainable and economically viable waste infrastructure in accordance with national policy.

Section 21A. (1) of the amended Waste Management Acts 1996 to 2011 states that:-

The following waste hierarchy shall apply as a priority order in waste prevention and management legislation and policy:

- (a) prevention;
- (b) preparing for re-use;
- (c) recycling;
- (d) other recovery (including energy recovery); and
- (e) disposal.

Measures at the top of the hierarchy have the inherent potential to be more environmentally beneficial and resource efficient. It implies that higher order strategies should be considered first and used where practicable.

Waste prevention is the top priority and when this has been exercised to its full potential then one should attempt to get the maximum benefit from the remaining waste at minimum environmental cost. This is the basis of the '**3 Rs**' which take account of the next steps in the hierarchy:

**Reduction (Minimisation)** is top of the list since it is the only complete way to reduce environmental impacts.

**Reuse** is generally better than recycling since there is no processing stage which would use energy and create its own waste.

**Recycling** is generally better than recovery of secondary materials or energy since it achieves a greater reduction in the demand for primary resources.

To increase the likelihood of applying the Reuse, Recycling, Recovery and Treatment strategies to the best potential it is usually important that the various components in the waste stream are segregated as much as possible to minimise contamination. This usually requires segregation at source and systems to prevent the mixing of different waste streams.

A new National Waste Management Policy was adopted in 2012, and the new Regional Waste Plans are required to reflect this new National Policy (DoECLG 2012). A key objective of waste management plans is to "*ensure self-sufficiency of waste management infrastructure within the State*". The Plan incorporates several key obligations imposed by the 2008 Waste Framework Directive:

- Application of the Waste Hierarchy as a priority in legislation and policy

- Recovery of waste where practicable, or disposal without risk to environment or human health
- Prohibition of the abandonment or uncontrolled disposal of waste
- Establishment of an integrated network of waste disposal installations and of installations for the recovery of mixed municipal waste - aiming for self-sufficiency
- A system of permits and registration for all those involved in collecting, disposing of, preparing for the recovery of, or recovering waste
- Cost of waste management borne by original waste producer, through adoption of the polluter pays principle

#### 5.1.1.2 Regional Context

The *National Spatial Strategy (NSS)* for Ireland set out the basis on which all areas of the country will have the opportunity to develop to their potential within a national spatial planning framework for the period up to 2020 (DoEHLG, 2002). The Regional Authorities were entrusted with the important responsibility of implementing the NSS and successor spatial plans at regional level.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 conferred on the Regional Authorities the power to make RPGs for their functional areas. The RPG, which also incorporate a socioeconomic development strategy, are intended to constitute a strategic planning framework for the period 2010-2022 for the development of each region and for inter-regional cooperation. The strategic policies and objectives set out in the RPG will form the backdrop for socio-economic planning by national and regional agencies and will constitute the policy framework within which county, city, town and local area development plans will be made. Thus, although the NSS has been revoked, its legacy persists in the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs), which remain in effect until 2022 or until otherwise replaced by new Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies (RSES).

In 2010, the South West (SW) Regional Authority produced Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's) 2010-2022 (South West Regional Authority, 2010). These set out a strategic planning framework for the region consisting of counties Cork and Kerry, and these guidelines will remain in force until 2022, unless replaced by new Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies in early 2019 as proposed.

The Southern, the Northern and Western, and the Eastern and Midland Regional Assemblies were established on 1st January 2015, following on from the dissolution of the BMW and Southern & Eastern Regional Assemblies, under the Government's regional reform process as enacted in the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

5.1.1.2.1 South-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

The South-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 were adopted by the South-West Regional Authority (SWRA) in 2010 to cover counties Cork and Kerry. The South-West Regional Authority was subsequently dissolved in 2014 and its functions and responsibilities have been transferred to the Southern Regional Assembly. These Guidelines set out a series of recommendations to local authorities, which are clearly linked to and support national investment priorities and are designed to strengthen integrated approaches to policy making and planning at a local level, in line with regional and national planning frameworks. The South-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 shall continue to have effect until a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy is prepared and adopted by the Southern Regional Assembly.

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) extend the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) down to the regional and local levels, by linking national spatial policy with planning by local authorities.

The RPGs are influenced by a wide range of international, national and regional level plans, programmes and legislation, and in turn form a framework for lower level plans and programmes (e.g., County Development Plans, Local Area Plans, etc.).

The SWRA Guidelines acknowledge the need to develop material waste recovery facilities at sustainable locations.

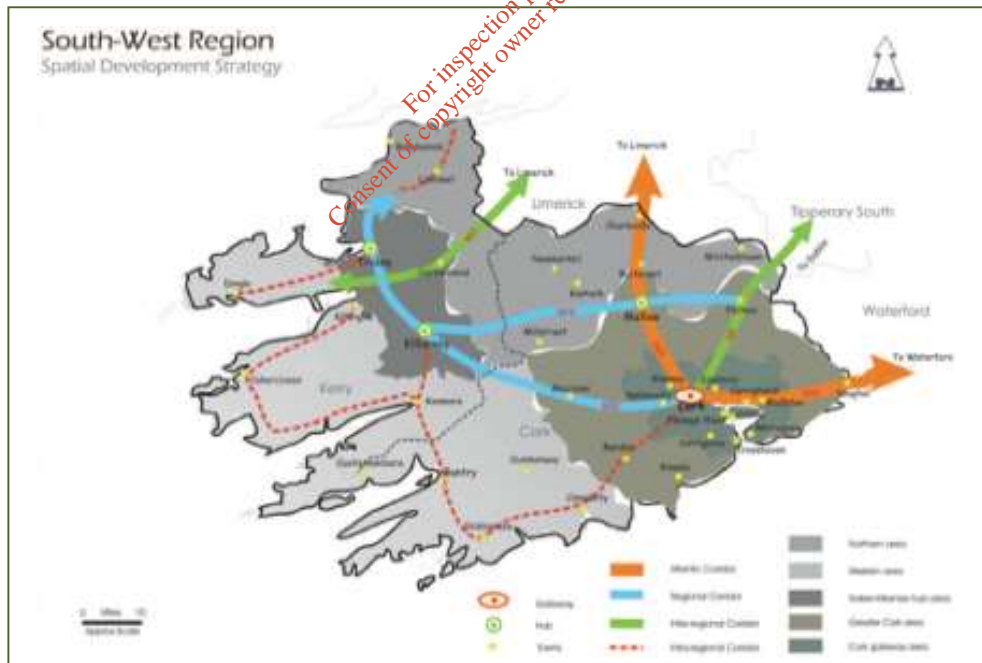


Figure 5.1-1 Extract from SWRPG (2010)

Whilst not directly relevant to this proposal it is noted in the SWRA Guidelines that:-

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Details</b>
3.2.22	The mineral resources of the region, especially aggregates, contribute largely to the economy and operational aspects of the construction industry (buildings and infrastructure). Where appropriate, local authorities should identify and protect important strategic mineral reserves in their development plans,
3.2.23.	In relation to all natural resources there is a need to protect the sustainability of these assets against inappropriate development in order to maintain the region's high quality agricultural land and sea and fresh water resources, including biodiversity.
RTS-08	It is an objective to encourage the delivery of an effective and efficient waste management service in line with the Waste Management Acts and promote local authorities to review their respective Waste Management Plans (WMP's) during the lifetime of the guidelines.

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### 5.1.1.2.2 Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021

The Southern Region (SR) is a new region in terms of managing wastes and merges a number of smaller historical waste regions.

The new region stretches from Wexford in the east to Kerry in the west and in total consists of 10 local authorities including Cork County Council.

The economic recession impacted on the generation of wastes in the region, specifically wastes from the building sector, with annual records showing a steady decline in quantities for major waste streams. Since the beginning of 2014 the economy has shown signs of sustained recovery, and this is expected to continue, which will likely lead to growth in waste generation over the period of the plan. The continued management of wastes in a safe and sustainable manner will be a real challenge into the future.

The national policy document, Changing Our Ways (1998), set a target of 85% recycling of C&D waste by 2013. More recently the 2008 EU Waste Framework Directive (WFD) set a target of 70% by weight for C&D waste, excluding natural soils and stones and hazardous C&D wastes. In 2012 the EPA reported that Ireland has exceeded this target by a considerable margin with a recovery rate of 97%.

The C&D waste arisings for the region have been consistently reported at slightly less than 1 million tonnes annually from 2010 to 2012. The national figures show a major decline over a longer period, with quantity of C&D waste collected falling from a high of almost 18 Mt in 2007 to 3 Mt by 2011. The C&D waste figure includes waste collected and deposited at permitted infill sites in the region. As the construction sector begins to recover in the region it is imperative that construction and demolition plans for developments in excess of the specified thresholds are put in place and enforced. The appropriate processing facilities need to be in place to facilitate increased reuse, recycling and recovery of this waste stream.

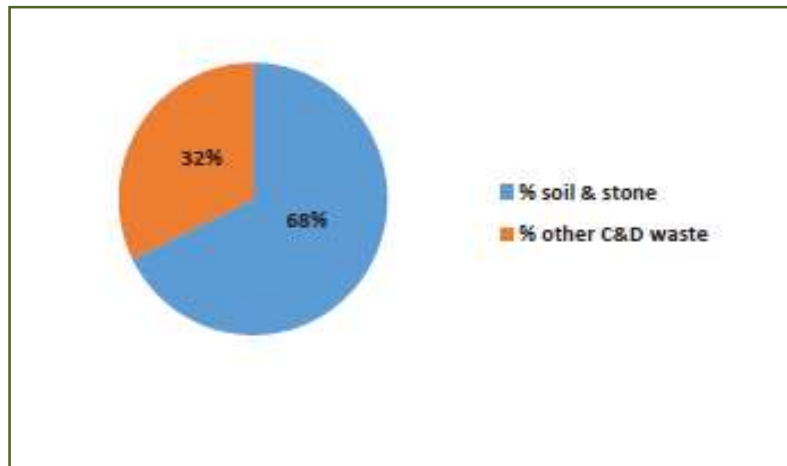


Figure 5.1-2 C&D Wastes Collected in the Region in 2012 (Source SRWMP)



The bulk of the C&D waste collected in the region is soil and stones, accounting for approximately 68%, with the remaining 32% consisting of materials such as rubble, metals, timber, plastic, glass, wood, contaminated soils and mixed C&D waste.

The soil and stone waste collected within the SR is primarily managed at local authority permitted infill sites, with the other C&D waste types primarily managed at EPA licensed activities.

Traditionally, the recovery of much of the C&D waste stream has been managed by placing it in a variety of land use applications. This treatment, collectively known as backfilling includes land reclamation, improvement or infill works. The largest fraction of the C&D waste stream arising is soil and stones, which (if uncontaminated) typically undergoes little if any treatment prior to recovery at these sites. Many sites selected for infill facilities are considered marginal agricultural land; these may include wetland habitats or lands subject to flooding. There is increasing recognition of the potential ecological and biodiversity value of these types of wetland sites. There is also a sense that at many of these sites, the deposition of waste material was the primary purpose of the activity rather than improvement or development of the land.

Given the sharp decrease in the number of operational landfills nationally, which have been a significant outlet for C&D waste in the past, alternative recovery options will be required in future years. It needs to be considered whether the placement of inert waste at many of the types of infill sites used in the past is an appropriate land use strategy or use of a potentially recyclable material. Concrete, stone and other masonry type waste can be crushed and screened and used as a substitute for virgin quarried stone material in a variety of engineering applications, if the appropriate technical criteria have been met, e.g. road construction and access tracks for agricultural or forestry holdings.

#### Recovery – Backfilling (SRWMP 16.4.4)

Backfilling activities (of inert waste), which meet the recovery definition and are in compliance with Articles 4 and 13 of the WFD, sit on the other recovery tier of the waste hierarchy. Local authorities in the region authorise such activities through the award of Waste Facility Permits (WFPs) and Certificate of Registrations (CoRs). Similarly, the EPA authorises significant backfilling of inert waste at large sites such as old quarries for restoration purposes.

Local authority authorised sites generally have a shorter lifespan than EPA licensed sites and operations can often cease at these sites within the life of the permit, i.e. five years. EPA authorisations cover more substantial operations with a longer lifetime capacity. Utilisation of active local authority capacity at backfilling/land improvement sites was 48% in 2012. This relatively low level of utilisation reflects the depressed activity in the construction sector in Ireland and as a result supply of capacity exceeding current demand. Activity in the sector is expected to increase over the plan period as economic recovery continues to build nationally.

In the face of increased demand for backfilling authorisations, there is a need for better coordination between local authorities in the region. This is to ensure that facilities are

planned and developed at suitable sites and do not present a risk to European designated sites and existing biodiversity and habitats. It is recommended that lead authority liaise with relevant stakeholders (including the EPA and the DAHG) to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for the control and spread of invasive alien species at backfilling sites in the region where necessary.

**Policies:**

- E13. Future authorisation by the local authorities, the EPA and An Bord Pleanála must take account of the scale and availability of existing backfilling capacity
- E14. The local authorities will co-ordinate the future authorisations of backfilling sites in the region to ensure balanced development serves

**Environmental Protection Criteria (SRWMP 16.5)**

It is strongly recommended that developers and operators consult with the regional waste office and the relevant planning and regulatory authorities prior to submitting an application for development consent. As a minimum, the criteria set out in this section must be applied in order to ensure that the impact on communities, human health, ecology and the wider environment can be avoided where possible and minimised, managed and mitigated where necessary.

**Policy:**

- G3. Ensure there is a consistent approach to the protection of the environment and communities through the authorisation of locations for the treatment of wastes

The environmental protection criteria are divided into (1) general environment and (2) European Sites (SPAs and SACs). In general future waste activities requiring consent will need to consider the following.

**General Environment**

- Avoid, as far as possible, siting waste infrastructure or related infrastructure in areas protected for landscape and visual amenity, geological heritage and/or cultural heritage value. Where it is unavoidable, an impact assessment should be carried out by a suitably qualified practitioner and appropriate mitigation and/or alternatives must be provided.
- Avoid siting waste infrastructure or related infrastructure in proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature

Reserves, Refuges for Fauna and Annex I Habitats occurring outside European designated sites;

- To prevent the spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS), where waste material is transported from one location to another, an IAS survey of source and receptor sites will be conducted by a suitably qualified person. If IAS are found, preventative measures will be implemented to prevent the onward spread of the plant/animal material including: employment of good site hygiene practices for the movement of materials into, out of and around the site; ensuring that imported soil is free of seeds and rhizomes of key invasive plant species; adherence to any national codes of practice relating to prevention of the spread of IAS (including both Ireland and Northern Ireland Codes of Practice)
- In order to protect habitats which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (e.g. rivers and their banks) or their contribution as stepping stones (e.g. ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species, these features will be protected as far as possible from loss or disruption through good site layout and design;
- To protect river habitats and water quality, ensure that no development, including clearance and storage of materials, takes place within a minimum distance of 15 m measured from each bank of any river, stream or watercourse;
- Ensure that a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) is applied to any development and that site-specific solutions to surface water drainage systems are developed, which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plans;
- Avoid development of waste management infrastructure in flood risk areas. Reference should be made to the Planning System and Flood Risk Management for Planning Authorities (DECLG/OPW, 2009), the National Flood Hazard Mapping (OPW) and the relevant Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP);
- Ensure that riparian buffer zones (minimum of 15 m) are created between all watercourses and any development to mitigate against flood risk. The extent of these buffer zones shall be determined in consultation with a qualified ecologist and following a Flood Risk Assessment. Any hard-landscaping proposals shall be located outside of these buffer zones;
- Avoid geologically unsuitable areas including karst where practicable, and areas susceptible to subsidence or landslides. Due consideration should be given to the primary water source of the area and the degree of surface water/groundwater interaction;
- If there is an airport within 13 km of the proposed waste facility, the airport shall be consulted at an early stage of planning.
- Impact from a transport perspective will be assessed including road access, network, safety and traffic patterns to and from the proposed facility in

accordance with road design guidelines and/or relevant LA guidelines in relation to roads; and

- There are existing, closed or uncommenced landfills which could be used for alternative waste activities as they are considered brownfield sites; also, suitably zoned, other brownfield sites could be used for alternative waste activities. Sites that offer opportunities to integrate differing aspects of waste processing will be preferred choices. This will ensure maximum efficiency of waste processing.

### **European Sites**

The protection of European Sites has been included in the form of environmental protection criteria which must be applied to waste related activities required to implement the policies of the waste plan.

#### **Policy:**

- G5. Ensure the implementation of the regional waste management plan does not prevent achievement of the conservation objectives of sites afforded protection under the EU Habitats and Bird Directives.

The proposed site is not within a European Site, including Special Protection Area (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). Appropriate Assessment Screening has been carried out with respect to the proposed development. There is no likelihood of significant ecological effects from this development on any of the sites in the Natura 2000 network or on their conservation objectives.

## 5.1.2 REFERENCES

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