

Attachment A.1.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Whitegate landfill site is located approximately 800m to the north of Whitegate village, off the R352 Scariiff to Portumna road on lands owned by Clare County Council. The site is located c2.5km to the west of Lough Derg.

The site covers c8ha and is fenced off and are densely covered with gorse. The landfill is bound on all sides by forestry. On the western boundary of the site there is a local road access from Whitegate village. The landfill area is raised c4-5m above the surrounding natural ground and slopes from west to east across the site. The site is located in a rural area and the surrounding land use which is predominantly forestry. The closest dwelling is c600m north of the site.

The landfill operated from the 1960s and closed in 1998. While the site covers 8ha it is estimated based on site investigations that only c1.1ha was ever used for landfill.

Clare County Council completed a Tier 1 Assessment of the closed Whitegate landfill in early 2009 in accordance with the "Code of Practice Environmental risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites (CoP)" published by the Environmental Protection Agency (the Agency).

The Tier 1 Assessment concluded that the site was provisionally a Class A – High Risk Site due to the risk of leachate migration to the Slieve Donard Special Protection Area (SPR-9). All other pathways were deemed to be Low Risk.

Later in 2009 the Council completed a Tier 2 Site Investigation. The site investigation works included:-

- Trial pit survey to assess the thickness and nature of the capping material and the waste;
- Collection and analyses of groundwater, surface water and leachate samples;
- Ground gas monitoring;

Both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessment programmes were undertaken as part of a Pilot Project to Support the Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008 and were supervised by Steering Committee comprising officers from the Environmental Protection Agency, The Department of the Environment and Local Government and an Environmental Consultant. Each phase of assessment was reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee.

OCM completed the Tier 3 Risk Assessment based on the findings of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Site Investigations completed by the Council in 2009 and two rounds of surface water monitoring completed in 2021. OCM inspected the site in 2021 with the Council to evaluate the site conditions.

Based on the site observations and the 2021 monitoring, the Tier 3 Risk assessment findings were that the site remains a High Risk site based on leachate migration to the surface water drains and stream downstream of the landfill site.

The Tier 3 Risk assessment also concluded that some attenuation of leachate impacts are occurring downstream but there are also other potential sources of surface water impacts in the catchment downstream of the landfill associated with intensive agricultural practices

The Slieve Aughty SAC which is up hydraulic gradient of the site was considered to be not at risk from the landfill.

Remedial measures are required to mitigate the risk posed by the landfill site. This will include the placement of a landfill cap to divert rainfall away from the landfill, sealing of the landfill sides to prevent leachate break out and the installation of landfill gas vents in the cap.

A risk screening for the proposed remedial measures indicates that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment would be required to assess the risk posed to the Lough Derg (Shannon) SAC.

Surface water monitoring is recommended in downstream water courses to establish the effectiveness of the remedial measures when these are implemented.

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