



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY DECEMBER 2022

Whitegate landfill site is situated approximately 800m to the north of Whitegate village and is located off the R352 Scariff to Portumna Road on lands owned by Clare County Council. The site is located c2.5km to the west of Lough Derg. The landfill operated from the 1960s and closed in 1998. The footprint of the landfill covers an area measuring 1.19Ha.

The landfill body is demarked by a fence along the southern boundary, a forestry road on the eastern boundary and a surface water course on the north boundary. On the western boundary of the site is a local access road that provides access from Whitegate village. The landfill is bounded on all sides by mature commercial forestry, while gorse and other pioneer plant species have colonised much of the surface of the landfill body. The closest dwelling is c600m north of the site.

The topography of the general area is of gently undulating land with an eastern aspect towards Lough Derg. The natural elevation of the surrounding area sits between 40 to 50 metres above sea level. The landfill body is raised approximately 4 to 5 metres above the surrounding natural ground level to form a ridge on the landscape.

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 Aughty 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 depth and composition of waste within the landfill body, in conjunction with confirming the thickness and nature of the capping material.
- Collection and analyses of groundwater, surface water and leachate samples.
- Ground gas monitoring.

An Roinn Chomhshaoil
An Stiúirthóireacht Forbairt Fhisiceach

Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2

Environment Department
Physical Development Directorate

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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.

O' Callaghan Moran (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 is 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 hydraulically up-gradient of the site was 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 using low permeability clay to divert rainfall from the surface of 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.

December 2022 update

To correct some inaccurate terminologies used and some inaccuracies in submitted drawings the Council have now corrected those and issued clarifying remarks in our cover letter and have also prepared revised drawings to accurately reflect the on-site conditions.

The responses and drawings now provided in December 2022 should assist the EPA in deciding on Clare County Councils application.