



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-321572-25

Development	Pre-Application Consultation – Expansion of the existing landfill void space.
Location	Knockharley Landfill, Knockharley, Brownstown, Navan, County Meath
Prospective Applicant(s)	Knockharley Landfill Limited
Type of Application	Pre-Application Consultation under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.
Planning Authority	Meath County Council
Date of Site Inspection	24.02.2025
Inspector	Fiona Fair

1. Introduction

An Coimisiún Plealála received a request dated 23rd December 2024 to enter into pre-application consultations under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, in relation to a proposed development consisting of the expansion of the existing landfill void space. The expansion of the existing landfill void is proposed to be accommodated by the relocation of ESB overhead power lines to the west, the proposed diverting of the Knockharley Stream and the eventual capping of the proposed expanded void space upon its exhaustion at the Knockharley Landfill, Knockharley, Brownstown, Navan, County Meath, C15 FX09. The prospective applicant sought closure of the pre-application consultation process by correspondence dated 18.08.2025.

I note that the existing Knockharley landfill facility operates under an IE licence (No. W0146-04) issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

2. Site Location

The site occupies 135.2 hectares of land located within the Meath County Council (MCC) administrative area at Knockharley, Brownstown, Navan, County Meath, C15 FX109. The site is accessed from the N2 Road between Ashbourne, County Dublin and Slane, County Meath.

The permitted Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) Application (ABP Ref. 303211-18) permits the development of a berm surrounding the east, west and north of the Knockharley Landfill Facility (which dates to 2002 Granted planning permission on foot of MCC 01/5006) and this, in combination with the forestry surrounding the site, serves as a means to screen the Knockharley Facility from the surrounding landscape. There are a number of residential dwellings surrounding the site (predominantly to the north and east), however, the land uses of the surrounding area are chiefly agricultural. There is also the Knockharley Stream.

The site is zoned objective 'RA' ('Rural Area') - "To protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture, forestry and rural-related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage" within the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

3. Description of Proposal

- **Increase the capacity of the landfill via construction of additional active void space of 4.12 million m3 (volume) for landfilling.**

No Increase in the permitted annual tonnage of 440,000 tonnes;

The Applicant is seeking to increase the capacity of the landfill via construction of additional active void space of a stated 3.38 million m3 (volume) for landfilling as per the First Pre-App Meeting and 4.12 million m3 as per the second Pre-App Meeting.

The initial proposal sets out that the volume of the void for the piggyback cell will be 807,000 m3. In terms of volumes (aside from the total volume of proposed landfill cells), the volume for:

- i. Cut for the proposed expanded Void space will be 1.64 million m3
- ii. Fill for the west cells embankments will be 116,732 m3
- iii. Fill Clay Liner – Cell Construction for the proposed Void Space will be 149,700 m3
- iv. Capping of the proposed west cells / expanded Void Space will be 149,900 m3.
- v. Fill for existing landfill waste cells capping is 120,000 m3
- vi. Fill for new north, west and south berms will be 450,000 m3; and
- vii. Fill for piggyback capping will be 79,000 m3.

The existing greenfield lands to the west of the site will serve this purpose.

- **‘Capping’ of proposed Expanded Void Space on exhaustion of cells**
Landscaping of capped cells and enhancement of biodiversity measures over operational and closure phases.
- **Diversion of the Knockharley Stream**
It is proposed to divert the course of the existing stream to the north. The diversion will not be culverted except where road crossings are required and where the stream traverses the alignment of the permitted Screening Berm.
- **Relocation of existing overhead ESB lines**

In order to facilitate this expansion, the existing 220kV ESB line at the western site boundary will need to be relocated. The applicant proposes to divert this ESB overhead line to along the western boundary of the site.

The replacement of the existing overhead ESB line is necessary to allow the expansion of the Knockharley Landfill Facility Void Space to the west of the site.

- **Removal of a portion of planted forestry along the northern and western boundary to accommodate expansion.**
- **Amendment and extension of permitted berming along the western boundary and associated landscaping.**

4. Planning History

On the 30th April 2021 Permission was Granted for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) Application ABP Ref. 303211, comprising:

- The acceptance of up to 435,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous waste, which will include up to 150,000 tonnes per annum of incinerator bottom ash (IBA) as well as household, commercial and industrial waste including residual fines, non-hazardous contaminated soils, construction and demolition (C&D) waste and baled recyclables. It is also proposed to accept 5,000 tonnes per annum of stable non-reactive hazardous waste. Permission is sought for the acceptance of the waste until the landfill cells are full.
- The increase in height of the landfill body from the current permitted post settlement final contour height of 74 mOD to a post settlement contour height of 85 mOD. The proposed height increase will apply from the active landfill phase at the time of grant of permission.
- The construction and operation of a dedicated Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) facility. The facility would be located to the east of the existing landfill and to the north of the site access road. It would consist of 5 no. cells (29-33) which will be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Landfill Directive for non-hazardous waste and have a final post settlement contour height of 85 mOD. It would also include 1 no. portal frame building (76m x

76m x 15.5m) to facilitate weathering and recovery trials and processing. Facilities for leachate storage would be provided. Permission is sought for the operation of the IBA facility until the cells are full and subsequent aftercare activities, as may be required, are complete.

- The IBA facility would accept up to 150,000 tonnes per annum and permission is sought to store the IBA until recovery outlets are identified and for trials to prepare IBA for recovery and removal off site. The development includes additional perimeter (haul) roads and screening berms.
- The construction and operation of a building for the biological treatment of the organic fraction of MSW (fines material) and for contingency storage of baled recyclables and baled MSW. The building would have a portal frame construction (108m x 50m x 17m). It would have 12 no. concrete composting tunnels (6m x 25m x 5m) located within the building and a covered bio-filtration unit with a stack height of 20m. Leachate storage would be provided in an underground tank. A bio-treatment system would be provided for sanitary wastewater. It is proposed to accept up to 25,000 tonnes per annum of MSW fines material at the biological waste treatment facility and to continue to operate this facility post filling of the landfill cells on the site. The biological treatment facility would be located to the east of the landfill footprint and to the south of the leachate lagoons.
- The construction and operation of a leachate management facility comprising 3 no. additional floating cover leachate storage lagoons (L2, L3 and L4) of c. 3000 m² each; 5 no. bunded above ground tanks for raw leachate from IBA cells (S1 and S2), treated leachate from the landfill (S3), treated leachate from IBA (S4) and leachate concentrate (S5); a modular plant unit, and articulated tank loading areas. Permission is sought for the continued operation of this plant post filling of the landfill cells to facilitate leachate management. The leachate management facility would be located to the east of the landfill footprint, adjacent to existing leachate lagoon.
- Construction of screening berms along the western boundary to a maximum height of 10m, on the eastern boundary to a maximum height of 10m and on the northern boundary to a maximum height of 6m, with a total berm footprint

of c 11.3 ha. Haul roads for construction will be in or immediately adjacent to the berm footprint.

- Construction of surface water management infrastructure with discharge to Knockharley Stream at the northern end of the permitted landfill footprint and proposed IBA cells to include (i) holding pond for surface water run-off; (ii) storm water attenuation lagoon to maintain green field surface water discharges to Knockharley stream and to facilitate suspended solids management; (iii) wetland, (iv) flood compensation culvert to provide equivalent 1:1000-year flood plain storage and (v) permitted stream diversion around permitted development.
- The felling of approximately 12.5 hectares of commercial broadleaf/conifer mix plantations to facilitate the construction of the screening berms along the western boundary, to the north of the proposed IBA facility, the construction of Phase 7 (Cells 27 and 26) of the permitted landfill and the proposed northern surface water attenuation lagoon. Replanting and planting totalling approximately 16.8 hectares is proposed at the following locations (i) replanting over the proposed screening berms and (ii) new planting on the cap over cells 25, 26, 27 and 28 in the currently permitted landfill body.
- The relocation of an existing 20 kV powerline serving the facility administration buildings that will be impacted by the development of the screening berm to the east of the IBA cell.
- The construction of two additional ESB sub-stations (4.4m x 4.8m x 2.9m) in the following locations (i) new ESB sub-station and overhead ESB supply at the north-western corner of the permitted landfill footprint to serve pumps and other infrastructure and (ii) new ESB sub-station adjacent to proposed biological treatment building with ESB connection to adjacent 20 kV power lines.
- The extension of existing and provision of new below ground infrastructure (power, water, telemetry, leachate rising mains, drainage) and extension of the existing car park for the administration area to provide 40 no. additional car parking spaces.

The waste types to be accepted at the facility would be similar to those currently accepted, with the addition of two new waste types; stable non-reactive hazardous waste (maximum 5,000 tonnes per annum) and baled recyclable waste. The waste activities to be undertaken at the facility will be;

- Placement of waste within lined cells
- Biological treatment of residual MSW fines
- Management of leachate
- Storage of water for attenuation prior to discharge
- Storage of unsuitable waste in quarantine area prior to removal off-site
- Contingency storage for baled recyclables
- Contingency storage of baled MSW
- IBA recovery trials (screening and washing and recovery of metals).

The changes proposed to the operation of the landfill include intensification of landfilling, increase in final contour height and operation of 2 no. active faces in the permitted landfill and a working face in the IBA cells. Residual non-stabilised waste will be placed in a south to north direction reflecting current practice. Stabilised and inert waste will be accommodated in the most northerly cells and filling will progress in a southerly direction. IBA will be placed in cells 29 to cell 33 and filling will progress in a westerly direction.

An application will be made to the EPA to facilitate the licencing of the proposed development.

The application was supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), a Stage 1 Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Reg. Ref. 23/60296: On 17 November 2023, Meath County Council granted Planning Permission for the replacement (“restringing”) of the existing overhead line circuit corridor with a new higher capacity conductor; the strengthening of up to 25 No. tower foundations; and the replacement of hardware and fittings such as insulators.

The overhead lines, subject of MCC Reg. Ref. 23/60296, traverse through the Knockharley Landfill Facility site. (This is the overhead cable, proposed to be relocated as part of the proposed development subject of this SID Pre-planning Request.)

MCC Reg. Ref. 23/576: On 25 July 2024, Meath County Council decided to grant Planning Permission for a solar farm on a 188.9ha site to the east of the subject facility. That Permission is for a 35-year operational lifespan.

MCC Reg. Ref. 24/60842: On 01 August 2025, Meath County Council granted a 10 year planning permission for a 80 Megawatt gas fired peaking power plant on a site comprising 7.87 ha to the west of the subject facility. It is currently subject to appeal, at the time of writing this report.

5. Precedent Decisions

ABP 317292-23 Permission Granted for SID Application for an extension to the existing Drehid Waste Management Facility- to provide for acceptance of up to 440,00 TPA of non-hazardous waste material in the townlands of Timahoe West, Coolcarrigan, Killinagh Upper, Killinagh Lower, Drummond, Drehid, Kilkeaskin, Loughnacush, and Parsonstown, County Kildare

6. Pre-Application Consultation Meetings Held

Two Pre-Application Consultation meetings took place between An Coimisiún Pleanála (the Commission) and the prospective applicant on 26th February, 2025 and the 31st July, 2025.

The presentations made at the meetings, and the minutes of the pre-app meetings are attached to the file. The most significant revision to the proposal made at the second meeting was an increase in the void space proposed from the original 3.38 million m³ (set out in the first meeting) to 4.12 million m³. The maximum annual tonnage is proposed to remain at 440,000 tonnes in line with the proposal as outlined at the first meeting and the currently permitted intake at the site (granted

planning permission on foot of ABP 303211-18). Further diversion of the Knockharley Stream and the relocation of the existing 220kv power lines that cross the site remain part of the proposal. The subject proposal seeks a lifespan of 17 years.

At the First Meeting the applicant provided an overview of the current landfill context in Ireland, noting Knockharley Landfill to be one of three existing operational landfills and stating that one of the other two facilities (Drehid) is expected to close in 2027/2028. It was explained that with pretreatment and change in density of deposited material, the nature of waste has changed in Ireland in the past 10 years and has increased in volume. Without further expansion, Knockharley is projected to reach its current permitted capacity by 2028/2029. The justification and need for the proposed expansion is stressed, citing that the sustained economic growth combined with population growth of Ireland, which results in an overall increase in generation of waste which requires landfilling.

It was also stated that landfilling of waste has diminished as more municipal solid waste (MSW) is diverted to incineration / Energy from Wastes (EfWs) but explained that landfill remains the appropriate destination for non-combustible, non-recyclable and non-biodegradable wastes. It is submitted that refuse and recycling of waste within the state has increased and highlighted that although the percentage of waste going to disposal will continue to be reduced in line with EU mandatory requirements, there will still be a requirement for certain wastes to be landfilled.

This project will seek to develop existing lands that form part of the landfill site as additional active void space for the Knockharley Landfill. This will provide increased capacity and the continued operations of Knockharley. The increase in landfill void will also provide sufficient contingency for the state to cater for waste whilst meeting certain targets to reduce reliance on landfill.

It is contended that the proposed development includes no provision for an increase in the volume of tonnage accepted per annum, but rather an expansion of the site's operational footprint in the form of active void space.

At the Second Meeting the applicant indicated that having consulted with ESB in relation to tower relocations and overhead line diversions required to facilitate the proposed development, the applicant has been advised of the necessity for seven

additional towers, all of which are indicated on the drawing provided. The location of each tower, tower height and access to the tower locations has been agreed with ESB. A letter of consent from ESB to making the application is attached to the presentation presented at the second meeting.

Matters discussed included an overview of the proposed Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). An update on the key environmental considerations, such as: ecological surveys undertaken to date. Updates on stormwater pathways and flood zones, stormwater runoff, traffic generation, routing were also discussed. Investigation of ground conditions and groundwater was discussed.

Issues raised in the previous decision (ABP 303211-18) were focused upon. Importance of clarity on the nature and extent of the proposal was stressed. The removal of the bio-degradable plant / building / use as permitted under ABP Ref. 321769-25 Section 146b amendment was discussed in tandem with issues of landscaping and visual, tree removal, consultation with prescribed bodies, consideration and compliance with the Water Framework Directive, restoration and biodiversity.

The applicant submits that the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure development, stating that the development falls within the scope of criteria set out in the section 37A(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. It is submitted:

- The proposed development would provide a significant addition to Ireland's eastern waste disposal infrastructure, providing landfill capacity for non-hazardous waste and alleviating the capacity issue for Ireland. The proposed development would be classified as a strategic application status under the Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan. Due to its scale, the project would be of strategic economic and social importance to the Region and the State.
- The proposed development is in keeping with the National Development Plan, which recognises the need for investment in waste treatment capacity and the need for capacity to continue to be built in waste facilities, including hazardous waste treatment and landfill and landfill remediation.
- The site is within the administrative area of Meath County Council.

The applicant submits that the proposed development at the Knockharley Landfill Facility falls within Strategic Infrastructure Development under the heading ‘Environmental Infrastructure’ (Class 3) of the Seventh Schedule of the Act, which states:

- “3. – Development comprising or for the purposes of any of the following:
 - A waste disposal installation for –
 - (c) The landfill,
 - of hazardous waste to which Council Directive 91/689/EEC applies (other than an industrial waste disposal installation integrated into a larger industrial facility.)”

The following class of development in the Seventh Schedule, under *Environmental Infrastructure*, which is inserted into the Planning and Development Act 2000 by section 5 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, is also of relevance:

An installation for the disposal, treatment or recovery of waste with a capacity for an annual intake greater than 100,000 tonnes.

The Commission’s representatives gave the preliminary view that the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure development but advised that the ultimate determination on the issue is for the Commission.

7. Legislation

7.1 Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended

Section 2(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (‘the Act’), defines ‘strategic infrastructure’ as including, inter alia:

- (a) any proposed development in respect of which a notice has been served under section 37B(4)(a),

Section 37A

Section 37A refers to the Commission’s jurisdiction in relation to certain planning applications and refers as follows:

- (1) An application for permission for any development specified in the Seventh Schedule (inserted by the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006) shall, if the following condition is satisfied, be made to the Board under section 37E and not to a planning authority.*
- (2) That condition is that, following consultation under section 37B, the Board serves on the prospective applicant a notice in writing under that section stating that, in the opinion of the Board, the proposed development would, if carried out, fall within one or more of the following paragraphs, namely –*
- (a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate,*
 - (b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Spatial Strategy or in any regional planning guidelines in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situate,*
 - (c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.*

The current SID thresholds are set out within the 7th Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Seventh Schedule – Infrastructure Developments for the Purposes of Sections 37A and 37B

It is considered that the proposed development at the Knockharley Landfill Facility falls within Strategic Infrastructure Development under the heading ‘Environmental Infrastructure’ (Class 3) of the Seventh Schedule of the Act, which states:

- “3. – Development comprising or for the purposes of any of the following:
— A waste disposal installation for –
(c) The landfill,
of hazardous waste to which Council Directive 91/689/EEC applies
(other than an industrial waste disposal installation integrated into a
larger industrial facility.)”

The following class of development in the Seventh Schedule, under *Environmental Infrastructure*, is inserted into the Planning and Development Act 2000 by section 5 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, is also of relevance:

“An installation for the disposal, treatment or recovery of waste with a capacity for an annual intake greater than 100,000 tonnes”.

7.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

Section 37E(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended requires that an application for permission for development in respect of which a notice has been served under section 37B(4)(a) shall be made to the Coimission and shall be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment report in respect of the proposed development. Therefore, the submission of an EIAR is mandatory.

As set out above, environmental considerations were discussed in detail at the Pre-application consultation meetings, see minutes attached to the file. The prospective applicant has indicated that they intend to prepare and submit an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). An update on the key environmental considerations, from the previous application to date, was discussed at both meetings. The prospective applicant set out biodiversity and ecological survey work carried out and on-going, updates on stormwater pathways and flood zones, stormwater runoff, traffic generation and routing.

7.3 Appropriate Assessment

The following Natura 2000 sites are within a possible zone of influence of the proposed development.

- River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC (Site code 002299) c. 4.3km to the north
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (Site code 004232) c 4.4km to the north

- Boyne Estuary SPA (Site code 004080) c. 14.6 km to the north.
- Boyne Coast and Estuary cSAC (Site code 001957) c 18.7 to the north east,
- River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (Site code 004158) c 22km to the east,

Note: The findings of the Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment in the case of 303211-18 found that there was potential for significant effects on one European site, namely, the conservation interests of the **River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA**, in the absence of mitigation. A Natura Impact Statement was submitted with the application to assist in the assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the site in light of its conservation objectives.

I note that the applicant intends to submit a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared based on the precautionary principle, due to potential hydrological connectivity to the Irish Sea via the River Nanny.

8. Assessment

8.1 Seventh Schedule Development

I note that the proposed development i.e further expansion of the Knockharley Landfill facility, comprising an increase in the existing landfill by construction of an additional active void space of 4.12 million m³ (volume) for landfilling, which would accept up to 440,000 tonnes of waste per annum with a maximum of 435,000 tonnes of non-hazardous waste / 5,000 tonnes of stable non-reactive hazardous waste and, thus, it would fall within the class of infrastructure set out in the Seventh Schedule that is referenced above under paragraph 7.0 Legislation.

It is my opinion the proposed development would comply with the Seventh Schedule under Class 3 Environmental Infrastructure as the volume is clearly above the threshold of 100,000 tonnes, i.e the latter part of Class 3 (c).

“An installation for the disposal, treatment or recovery of waste with a capacity for an annual intake greater than 100,000 tonnes”.

The applicants have set out in their SID Pre-application consultation request that it is their opinion that the proposed development at the Knockharley Landfill Facility falls within Strategic Infrastructure Development under the heading 'Environmental Infrastructure' (Class 3) of the Seventh Schedule of the Act.

“3. – Development comprising or for the purposes of any of the following:

— A waste disposal installation for –

(c) The landfill, of hazardous waste to which Council Directive 91/689/EEC applies (other than an industrial waste disposal installation integrated into a larger industrial facility.)”

As stated above, the permitted Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) Application (ABP Ref. 303211-18) permits a landfill with the acceptance of up to 435,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous waste, which will include up to 150,000 tonnes per annum of incinerator bottom ash (IBA) as well as household, commercial and industrial waste including residual fines, non-hazardous contaminated soils, construction and demolition (C&D) waste and baled recyclables. It is also proposed to accept 5,000 tonnes per annum of stable non-reactive hazardous waste. See the full description of the parent permission set out under section 4.0 of this report. I note that since the subject pre-application consultation request was submitted a Section 146b Application (ABP-321769-25) was granted permission by the Commission, on the 9th May 2025, for proposed amendments to the previously approved (ABP-303211-18 SID) Knockharley Landfill. The S.146b amendment granted a change of use from a permitted bio-stabilisation / composting building to a building for purposes of construction and demolition (C&D) fines washing operations, as well as minor internal and external building modifications. It has been strongly highlighted to the perspective applicant that the waste stream volume and nature needs to be clearly set out in any perspective application. As the permitted Knockharley landfill has a permitted input for 5,000 tonnes of stable non-reactive hazardous waste, the proposed development would, in my opinion, comply with the seventh schedule Class 3 (c) comprising development for the purpose of waste disposal installation for the landfill of hazardous waste to which Council Directive 91/689/EEC applies (other than an industrial waste disposal installation integrated into a larger industrial facility).

8.2 Section 37A(2) Criteria

Having regard to the provisions of section 37A(2) of the Planning and Development Act, my considerations are as follows:

(a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situated

The proposed waste facility would provide waste management capacity for the Greater Dublin Area and beyond, ensuring compliance with EU and national targets and obligations for municipal solid waste processing, as well as providing increased capacity for landfill. The expanded Void Space will ensure that the deposition of waste to landfill can be accommodated within the State into the 2040s and it will reduce the need for the State to export the waste abroad. It is, therefore, recognised that a development of the nature proposed, i.e. expand the site's operational footprint in the form of additional active void space would expand waste management infrastructure within the State to assist in meeting EU and national obligations, and would be of strategic economic importance to the State.

Therefore, having regard to the national and regional policy context and the details of the subject proposal outlined above, I am satisfied that the development **would** be of strategic economic importance to the State and the Region and **would**, therefore, comply with the condition set out in section 37A(2)(a) of the Act.

(b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Planning Framework or in any regional spatial and economic strategy in force in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situated,

The further development of the waste management facility is consistent with national and regional policy. The proposed development could reasonably be viewed as being consistent with the fulfilment of the policies and provisions of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024 – 2030, National Planning Framework (NPF) 2025, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019 - 2031, including the following:

- (a) The NPF recognises that additional investment in waste management infrastructure, and in particular different types of waste treatment, are required and that that prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling and recovery are to be prioritised (Section 9.2);
- (b) National Policy Objective 76 of the NPF seeks sustainable management of waste generation, including construction and demolition waste, 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.
- (c) Section 10.4 of the RSES promotes local authorities achieving waste reduction, increases in material re-use and recycling, and reductions in waste going for disposal by complying with the strategic objectives, targets and goals set out in the Eastern and Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 and any subsequent waste management plans and promoting a more circular economy;
- (d) Regional Policy Objective 10.25 of the RSES requires development plans to identify how waste will be reduced, in line with the principles of the circular economy, and to take account of the requirements of the Eastern and Midlands Region Waste Management Plan; and
- (e) The Eastern and Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 places a strong emphasis on preventing wastes as well as material reuse activities, focusing on enhancing the collection of quality materials from discarded waste and further reducing the role of landfilling in favour of higher value recovery options.

Having regard to the foregoing, I am satisfied that the development **would** meet relevant national policy objectives of the NPF and **would** serve to fulfil the relevant regional policy objectives of the RSES for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly 2019 - 2031. The development would, therefore, satisfy the requirement set out in section 37A(2)(b) of the Act.

(c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

The further development of the Knockharley waste management facility is intended to serve the Greater Dublin Area and the Eastern Region and would, therefore, have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

I am satisfied that the proposed development **would** have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority. Accordingly, I am of the opinion that the proposal **would** come within the scope of this requirement to be considered as complying with section 37A(2)(c) of the Act.

Conclusion:

Having regard to the above considerations, I am satisfied that the proposed development falls within the class of environmental infrastructure relating to a waste installation as set out in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Furthermore, I am of the opinion that the proposed development would satisfy the conditions contained in section 37A (2) (a), (b) and (c) of the Planning and Development Act. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development constitutes a strategic infrastructure development for the purposes of the Planning and Development Act.

8.3 Prescribed Bodies

In view of the scale, nature, and location of the proposed development, as described in this report, it is recommended that the prospective applicant should consult with the prescribed bodies listed in the attached Appendix in respect of any future application for approval.

Note: The prospective application should be advised to submit a standalone document (which may form part of the EIAR) with the planning application, which outlines the mitigation measures, in the interest of convenience and ease of reference.

9. Recommendation

Based on the foregoing assessment, it can be concluded that the proposed development **would** exceed the threshold set out in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and therefore satisfies Section 37A(1) of the Act. It can also be concluded that the development **is** of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a), Section 37A(2)(b) and section 37A(2)(c) of the Act.

I recommend that the Commission serve a notice on the prospective applicant, pursuant to Section 37(B)(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, stating that it is of the opinion that the proposed development **constitutes** a strategic infrastructure development within the meaning of Section 37A of the Act for the reasons and considerations set out below.

REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Having regard to the size, scale and location of the proposed expansion of the existing Knockharley landfill and related development and to the policy context, it is considered that the further proposed development, comprising an increase in the existing landfill by construction of an additional active void space of 4.12 million m³ (volume) for landfilling at Knockharley Landfill, Knockharley, Brownstown, Navan, County Meath constitutes development that falls within the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, thereby satisfying the requirements set out in Section 37A(1) of the Act.

The proposed development is also considered to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a), 37A(2)(b) and section 37A(2)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

An application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Act.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Fiona Fair

Senior Planning Inspector

Date:

Appendix 1 – Prescribed bodies

- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister of Climate Energy and the Environment
- Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Irish Water / Uisce Eireann
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
- Dublin City Council
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
- Fingal County Council
- South Dublin County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Meath County Council
- Any other relevant Local Authority
- The Heritage Council
- Failte Ireland
- An Taisce
- Inland Fisheries
- Waterways Ireland
- Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine
- Department of Culture, Communications and Sport
- Office of Public Works (OPW)
- ESB
- EirGrid