



An
Bord
Pleanála

Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

Observer's details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's name

Paudie Galvin

(b) Observer's postal address

Gheel Autism Services CLG
1 – 2 Marino Mart, Fairview, Dublin DO3 T3P1

Agent's details

2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please **also** write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

Click or tap here to enter text.

(b) Agent's postal address

Click or tap here to enter text.

Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1

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The agent at the postal address in Part 2

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Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Bord Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**
(for example: 300000)

Click or tap here to enter text.

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

Irish Rail Development Dart West

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Laraghbyran East/Ballycurraghan, Maynooth Co Kildare

Observation details

5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word** limit as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

It is with some dismay that I read by happenstance the new development in Ballycurraghan. Gheel autism services is an adult autism service providing support to autistic adults in Dublin and Kildare. As part of these supports Gheel provides residential services to autistic people who need individual support and are not capable of living independently. One of Gheel's residential services has been in Ballycurraghan, Maynooth for the past 20 years and is adjacent to the planned new Irish Rail development Dart West. Some autistic people have a sensory profile whereby loud noise or increased activity cause them severe distress. In providing support to these autistic people with such a sensitive sensory profile Gheel sources facilities in a low sensory stressful area. i.e., a quiet country residence. We look for our residential service to be close to community activities so that we provide an inclusive community support service. Ballycurraghan provides this balance of community access to Maynooth yet a quiet low stress inducing environment.

The flood risk is increased as evidenced by Irish rails own flood risk assessment. Our present right of way is being extinguished without consultation. The size of the development is totally out of keeping for a rural setting and will affect the therapeutic benefits of the present quiet country environs. The sheer scale of the works and the final development is massive and it will result in our service not being suitable to support autistic people. We have had no formal contact by Irish Rail on this development.

We became aware of this development through our good neighbours contacting us.

We have concerns about the following:

1. Rights of Way

Gheel's Right of way to use existing lane is being extinguished and new road arrangement is being put in place. However, our right of way is not acknowledged or included in Railway orders and no consultation has taken place with Gheel service in Ballycurraghan about this. New entrance to new link road being provided which will have increase traffic in this quiet area and there has been no consultation on this with Gheel.

2. DEPOT

The size of this development is enormous with all the sundry activities of such a site works bring will cause our resident's severe distress. A few hundred meters from Gheel's residential service in Ballycurraghan there will be a new entrance directly accessing the compound with what looks like a road network and a parking bay for a

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large number of cars. This will bring a large increase in traffic and activity on a small country lane and cause our residents deep distress and upset with this increased activity. With such an increase in Ballycurraghan the privacy and security of our residents **will be unacceptably compromised** with their access to walking a country lane severely restricted if not completely extinguished. The residents in Ballycurraghan service due to their autism from time-to-time display self regulatory behaviours that in a built-up area would bring unwanted attention and increased stress to them by such attention being brought, while in a quite country area such behaviours go largely unnoticed and allows the autistic person to safely self-regulate their behaviours without a loss of dignity or increased distress. With the increased traffic their long-held access to walking the country lane outside their door will be removed and loss of their privacy with this increase traffic and its accompanying driver's gaze. Such loss of privacy and quality of life will be heightened especially if as outlined they are displaying self-regulatory behaviours.

Many autistic people have difficulty in developing community acquaintances or engaging in normal social interaction that non autistic people take for granted. The autistic people living in Ballycurraghan over a long period of time have developed good relationship with their neighbours as they walk along the lane or stand at the gate to say hello to their neighbours, this is fantastic support to the people residing in Ballycurraghan that they have developed these relationships, this will all be removed by the Irish rail development due to increased traffic and noise on this quite country lane.

The development will also attract unwelcome attention from possible criminal and antisocial elements and while Dart West will have 24hr security with lights, fencing, security patrols, CCTV cameras, etc.. Gheel would not be able to provide or would indeed welcome such security in what up to now is a quiet country residence in a sylvan setting. The height of the development will tower over our property with lights, noise, activity causing our resident's severe distress.

3. Development Works

The closeness of the development to Gheels residence with its incumbent building works, noise and intense activity will be very distressing for the autistic residents in our Ballycurraghan service. The activity is planned to last for over 30 months if not years resulting in our Ballycurraghan service being rendered unsuitable for supporting autistic people. This **may result in Gheel having to close this service** causing the existing resident's great distress and upset having to move from their home. It will also mean from an autistic service provision that the **Ballycurraghan property will be of no use and will mean that the accompanying lands will be of no further use to Gheel and be greatly devalued for resale due to the scale of** and flood risk caused by this development.

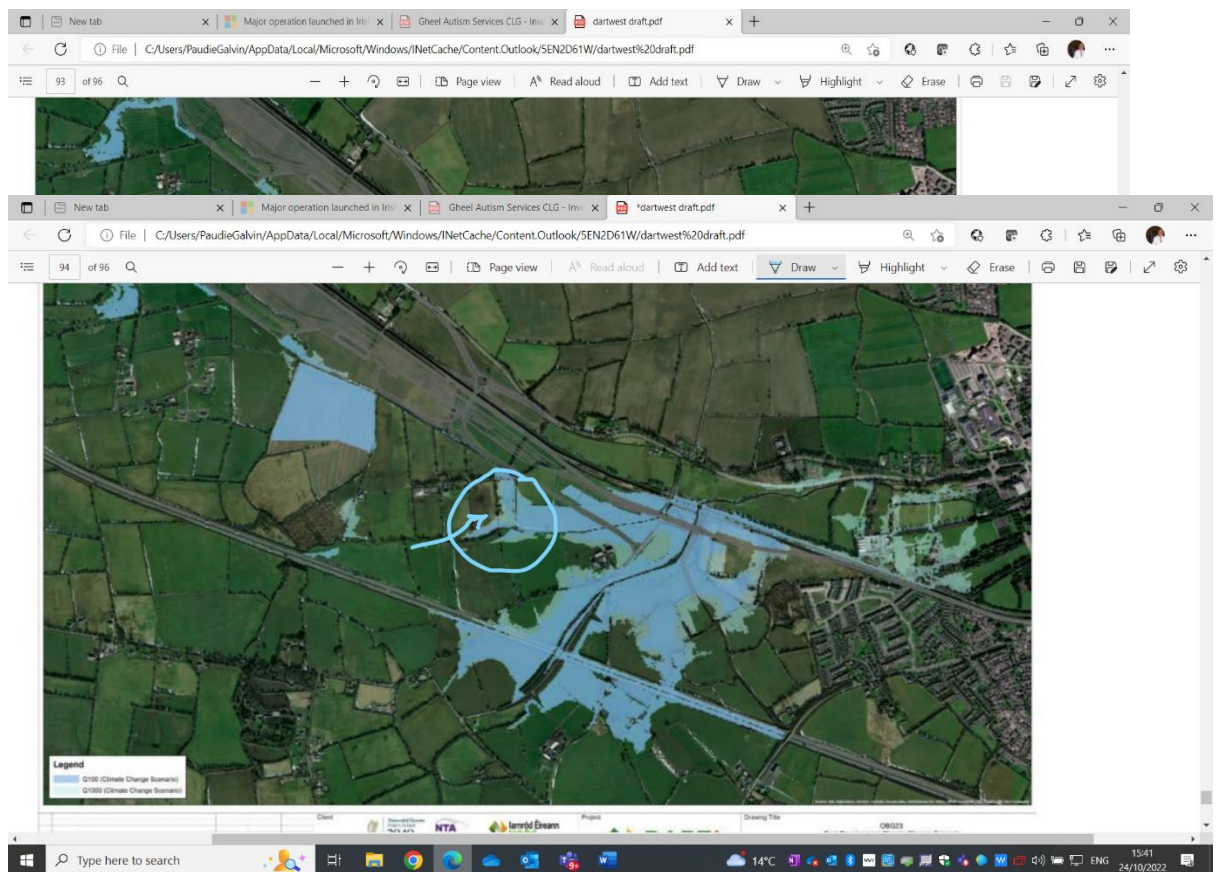
4. Flooding.

It is difficult to assess flooding impact in absence of proper drawings. Again you will note that a provision is being made for ponds to provide additional capacity for water at Jacksons Bridge but these ponds are located in areas that flood already so no additional capacity is essentially being provided. Irish Rail own **flood projections all show that our service in Ballycurraghan will be flooded** (pages 29-30 of their report and flooding diagram page 116-117 of their report, please see attached) and no real effort have been included in design to deal with this fact. Indeed, the new link road is going to compound

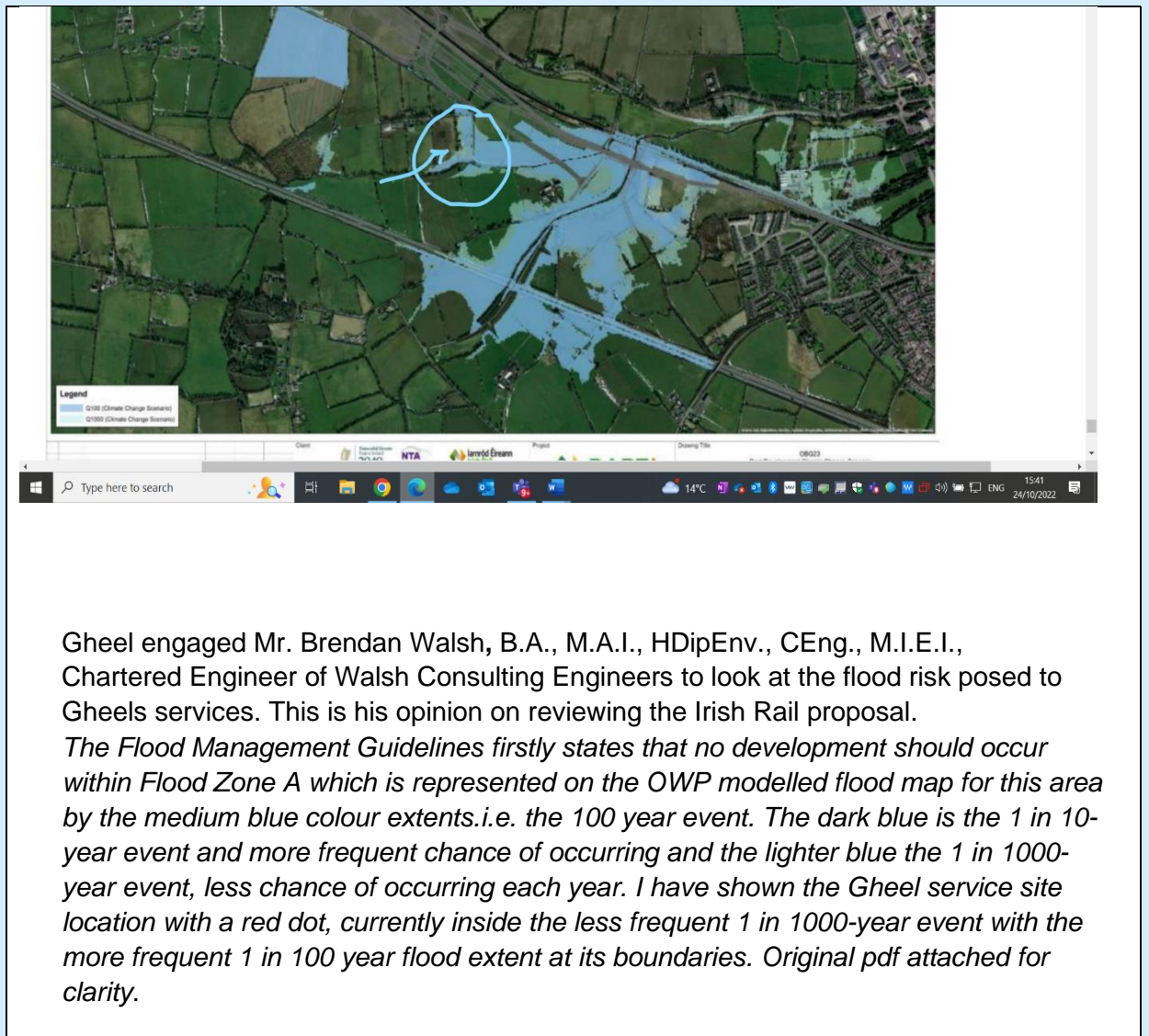
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flooding further in so far as the flood plain on right hand side of lane is being considerably reduced and water is being trapped between new road and Gheels Ballycurraghan service which is totally unacceptable.

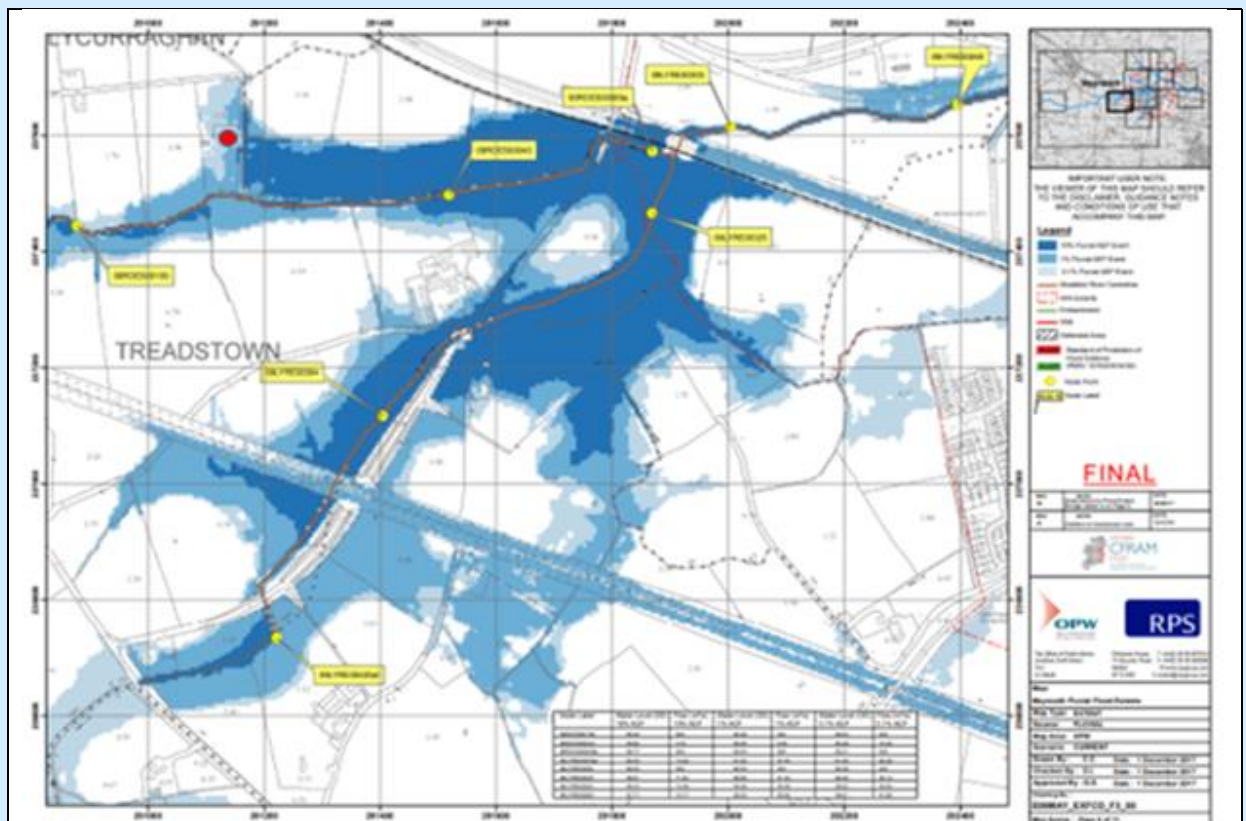
Our service in Ballycurraghan has experienced flooding approximately every three years since 2000. It is incorrect to say in application that events are a one in 100-year events. Flooding in the year 2000 blocked M4 for a week and in 2017 blocked the lane for a period of a week, where our service in Ballycurraghan was only accessible via neighbours tractors. In the Irish Rail drawings there is no plan to increase culvert under canal and railway at Jacksons bridge which will result in water being trapped and the risk of flooding increased (Flooding projection diagram pages 116 – 117 see attached diagrams). The M4 was built without any holding ponds to help prevent flooding and a similar situation is occurring here in so far a designed holding ponds are located in areas that are a flood plain already.



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5. Grounds



The flood management guidelines state that one should not build inside these flood areas because it will displace the flood water and change the shape of the flood. Now Irish Rail are proposing compensatory storage, which means the flood volume they are displacing can be catered for within specifically engineered locations as shown on Irish Rail map extract from their flood risk assessment below represented by green areas. However, upon review, it is clear that some of the proposed areas for compensation lie within existing flood zones and this is not good practice.

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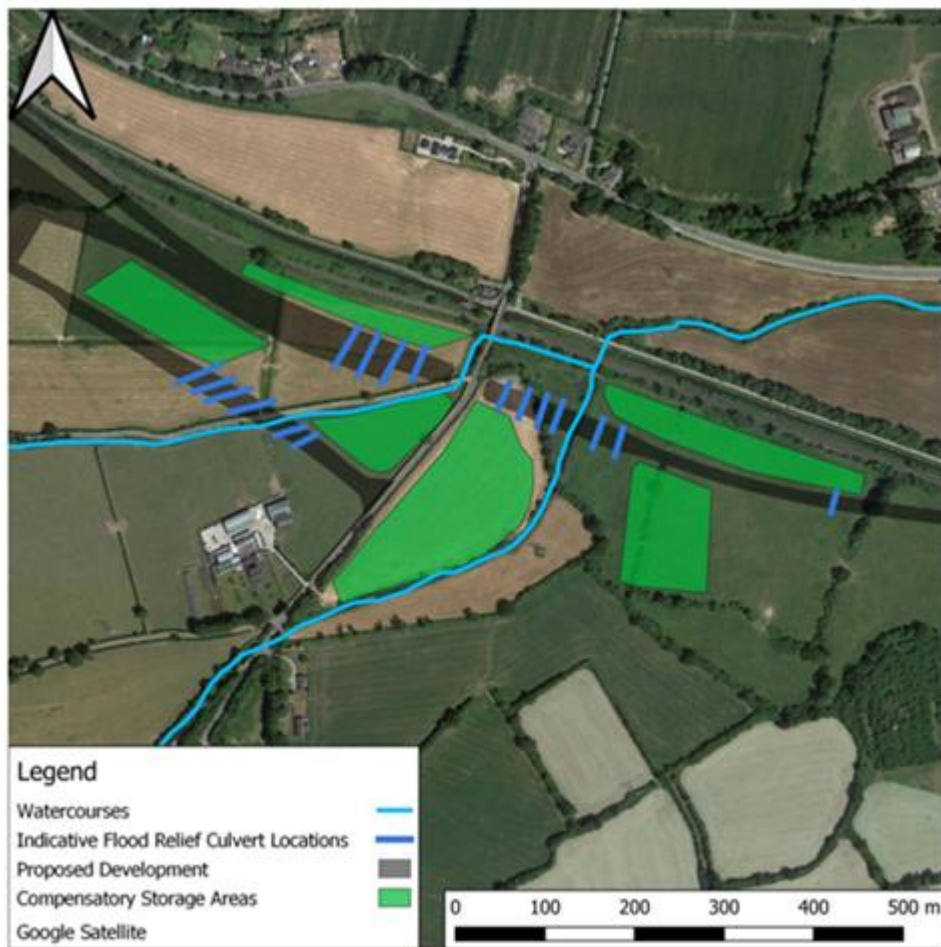


Figure 6-1 Proposed Compensatory Storage Area - Jackson's Bridge

In this regard, the proposed works could impact on the existing “shape/extents” of the current modelled flood, causing locations to perhaps flood that never flooded before and indeed, as in the case of the Gheel service which is currently in a less frequent 1 in 1000-year flood zone, pushing flood waters further west and rendering the Gheel service within the more frequent flood zone A, 1 in 100-year event. This, in accordance with the Flood Management Guidelines and planning policy is not acceptable.

5. Noise Pollution.

The Depot is projected to take 30 months to complete, and the finding is that it will not impact the residents of Ballycurraghan is without any evidence as the autistic people supported in Ballycurraghan have heightened sensory needs and this development **will cause** them distress. With the development and following its completion there will be ongoing noise with train movements going forward from early hours to late at night meaning that our service in ***Ballycurraghan will not be suitable*** to provide residential supports to autistic people into the future thereby rendering the property in Ballycurraghan as unsuitable.

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6. Increased road activity

Activity along the lane with its access to the new depot will be vast and cause our resident's unacceptable distress. These enormous works with its trucks, noise, and sheer volume will result in the up to now quite country road being very busy and hazardous. The people we support require road access to attend hospital and medical appointments, social activities, families etc.. and this will be severely curtailed by the sheer volume of activity and size of the lorries, diggers etc.. accessing the site. Just to illustrate this 250,000 m3 of soil are projected to be moved along road L5041 that now has a weight limit to not exceed 7.5 ton. How is this possible. This is 25,000 lorry loads and probably the same returning along what up to now had been a quiet country road such activity will make the Ballycurraghan residential service practicably inaccessible and unusable.

Autistic people are a marginalised group and finding suitable accommodation such as Ballycurraghan is near on impossible.

I request that sincere and considered consideration be given to Gheels concerns.

Gheel reserves the right to provide engineering and other professional reports to support our concerns outlined above

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation.

Observers (except prescribed bodies)

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to [request the Board to hold an oral hearing](#), please tick the “Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing” box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the “No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing” box.

Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing

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No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing

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Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

For Office Use Only

FEM – Received		SIDS – Processed	
Initials		Initials	
Date		Date	

Notes