

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the above Assessment, I consider that the proposed development should be refused, for the reasons set out in the Schedule of Reasons below.

SCHEDULE

1. By reason of:-

- a) Lack of sufficient data necessary to identify and assess the main effects of the proposed development,
- b) Inadequate consideration of the interactions between the factors, and
- c) Inclusion of technical terminology within the non-technical summary,

it is considered that the Environmental Impact Statement submitted with the application is inadequate and fails to comply with the mandatory requirements as to content, contrary to the provisions of the 1999 European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, and applicable European Directives, and the Board is not satisfied, on the basis of the information provided in the submitted E.I.S., that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant adverse impacts on the environment.

2. It is considered that the proposed development of a hazardous waste incinerator facility, prior to any progress on the achievement of the waste prevention targets set out as a priority and first step in the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan, would be premature and, because of its scale, which is considerably in excess of the scale envisaged for thermal treatment in that Plan, would tend to inhibit the achievement of the Prevention Programme as provided for in the Plan. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to national policy in relation to hazardous waste management and disposal.
3. It is considered that the development of a hazardous waste incinerator facility, in the absence of the concurrent or prior provision of hazardous landfill capacity, would be premature, and would conflict, in a material way, with the provisions of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan, in that no provision would be made for hazardous waste generated by the proposed development.
4. It is considered that the development of an incinerator facility for the treatment of non-hazardous industrial waste is contrary to the provisions of the Cork Waste Management Plan 1999, which makes no provision for thermal treatment to deal with this type of waste.
5. Having regard to its nature and location, it is considered that the proposed development would contravene materially the development objective ZON 3 – 13, indicated in the Cork County Development Plan 2003, for the use of the site primarily for the development of industry/enterprise, but not including the development of “contract incineration”, in that the proposed development constitutes contract incineration.

6. Having regard to its nature and limited employment content, it is considered that the proposed development would contravene, in a material way, the development objective I –15, indicated in the County Development Plan 2003, which specifies the lands, of which the site forms part, as suitable for large stand alone industry.
7. Having regard to its nature and purpose, and its location adjacent to Cork harbour and to port-related activities in Ringaskiddy, it is considered that the proposed development would contravene, in a material way, the development objective I-22, indicated in the County Development Plan 2003, which states that it is an objective to safeguard lands in the vicinity of ports and harbours against inappropriate uses that could compromise the long term potential of the port and harbour. It is considered that the proposed development is not port-related and hence is an inappropriate use that would be inconsistent with the Council's policy of promoting Ringaskiddy as the appropriate location for the future development and expansion of the Port of Cork, and uses that are complementary to that purpose.
8. It is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its bulk, scale, height, design and location, would be visually obtrusive and seriously injurious to the visual amenities of the area, would constitute a visually discordant feature within the harbour landscape, and would detrimentally impact on the preservation of views and prospects obtainable from scenic routes nos. A53 and A54 indicated in the County Development Plan 2003, which it is necessary to preserve. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.
9. Having regard to the scale, nature and purpose of the proposed development, it is considered that the site, by reason of its topography, its climatic conditions, its geological and hydrogeological characteristics, and the risk of erosion and flooding of parts of the site, would be fundamentally unsuitable to accommodate the proposed development, and the applicants have not demonstrated that the proposed site is suitable, on the basis of objective criteria in a rational site selection process based on international best practice.
10. The proposed development, because of its nature and function, its location in close proximity to high density housing development at Ringaskiddy, and the resultant noise and disturbance arising from its construction and operation, would be seriously injurious to residential amenity, and would be likely to depreciate the value of residential property. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.
11. Having regard to the location of the proposed development at the end of the peninsula of Ringaskiddy, with a single road access and no rail access, on the southern coast of the State, and to the scale of the development which is designed to source waste from all parts of the State, it is considered that the proposed development would involve excessive movement of vehicular traffic through urban areas, and hence would give rise to conditions that would be

prejudicial to public safety and amenity. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.

12. The existing road infrastructure in the vicinity of the site, particularly along the N28 national primary route at Carr's Hill, the Shannonpark and Shanbally roundabouts, and along the LP2545 local road within Ringaskiddy, is currently the subject of serious traffic congestion, and is inadequate to accommodate the extra volume of traffic and traffic movements that would be generated by the proposed development, both during construction and operational phases, particularly the significant H.G.V. content. It is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a serious traffic hazard and obstruction of road users.
13. The proposed development would be premature by reference to the existing deficiencies in the road network serving the area of the proposed development, which it is not likely will be rectified within a reasonable period.
14. The Board is not satisfied, on the basis of the evidence submitted to it and heard at the oral hearing, that the proposed development would not pose significant risks to public safety in the event of major accident hazard, particularly in view of the proximity of the site to the National Maritime College, and to nearby Seveso II establishments, and having regard to the inadequacy of emergency infrastructure in the area and to the location of the site at the end of the peninsula, with limited road access.

Philip Jones,
Senior Planning Inspector,
5/1/04