

Dublin Waste-to-Energy - Aquatic ecology Brief of Evidence

Prepared for:

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Qualifications and experience

My name is John Brophy and I am an ecologist working with EcoServe. I hold a degree in Natural Science (Zoology) from Trinity College Dublin and a Masters degree in Fisheries Management, Development and Conservation from the National University of Ireland, Cork. I am a member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM). I have been working with EcoServe since 2004 and have completed Ecological Impact Assessments for numerous projects including bridge developments, waste water treatment plants and quarry developments.

1.0 Introduction

Ecological Consultancy Services Ltd (EcoServe) was commissioned by M.C. O’Sullivan Ltd in 2003 to conduct a baseline marine and estuarine ecological study of the area. In March 2006, EcoServe was commissioned by Arup Consulting Engineers to review this baseline study and write the EIS chapter on marine and estuarine ecology for the proposed waste to energy development.

2.0 Response to objections

2.1 European Union Habitats Directive

In the objections to the Proposed Decision, it was stated that the licence would breach European Union regulations protecting habitats and species.

Response:

The European Union Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) deals with the protection of aquatic and terrestrial habitats and species by means of designating Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) for their protection. SACs in the vicinity of the proposed development include South Dublin Bay (000210) and North Dublin Bay (000206). The boundaries of both of these sites are formed by the Bull Wall and the Great South Wall, which enclose the Liffey and Tolka estuaries. Any effect of the proposed cooling water discharge, in terms of thermal effects and biocide, is limited to the vicinity of the outfall and does not extend into the SACs; therefore there will be no impact on the conservation status of these sites as a result of this discharge.

While the cooling water discharge was considered the main potential source of impact on aquatic ecology, the stack emissions also held some potential for impacting on ecology. The stack emissions will be strictly regulated by legislation

aimed at protecting human health and the environment; therefore there will be no negative impact on the conservation status of the designated sites.

2.2 Biocides and fisheries

The issue of potential contamination from the cooling water discharge was raised in objections, particularly with regard to the issue of biocides as referred to in the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board submission (28th August 2008)

Response:

The potential impact of the operation of the proposed facility on the aquatic ecology of the Liffey Estuary, including fisheries was addressed in the EIS. An investigation assessing the most suitable biocide for use in the proposed development was completed by DHI. In addition to the EIS, further clarification of the modelling was presented at the Bord Pleanála oral hearing. The conclusion of this assessment was that there would be no significant negative impact upon the estuary as a result of the cooling water discharge. Condition 6.19/6.20 of the EPA's Proposed Decision on the Waste Licence requires thermal and biological monitoring to be carried out within twelve months of commencement of activity and the development of a survey programme to the satisfaction of the EPA. This addresses the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board's recommendation that monitoring should be carried out as suggested in the relevant chapters of the EIS to protect the local and transient fish population. This monitoring survey will aim to identify any negative impact potentially related to the proposed discharge and will identify, in consultation with the ERFB, appropriate remedial action.

Condition 3.13 of the Proposed Decision relates to Surface Water Management and Condition 3.13.2 refers specifically to the ERFB document *Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites*, which takes into account the ERFB's recommendation that this document be consulted.

Condition 3.14.2 of the Proposed Decision requires the installation of silt traps and a Class I full retention oil separator for treatment of storm water prior to discharge during the construction phase, which satisfies the requirement for such infrastructure by the ERFB.

Therefore the concerns raised in relation to potential contamination from the cooling water discharge have been addressed during the planning process and in the Proposed Decision.