
Appendix 23.1

Relevant Waste Policy

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Waste Management Hierarchy

Waste management in Ireland takes place in accordance with a defined policy framework which is outlined below. The key components of EU, national and local policy, legislation, and guidance which have influenced the Proposed Scheme are summarised as follows:

- Prevention of waste is the preferred option such that any surplus materials generated are reused within the Proposed Scheme. This means that products, materials, and resources are maintained at their highest value in the economy for as long as possible, the generation of waste is minimised, and the principles of circular economy are implemented.
- Where construction waste is generated, it should be source-separated to facilitate reuse, recycling and maximise diversion of waste from landfill.
- Where operational waste is generated, it should be source-separated to facilitate reuse, recycling and maximise diversion, including biodegradable waste, from landfill.
- Where waste cannot be prevented, reused, or recycled, it should be transported and disposed of in accordance with the Waste Management Acts 1996 to 2016, as amended.
- Waste may only be transferred from site by a waste collection permit holder and delivered to an authorised waste facility i.e. a facility which holds a Certificate of Registration, Waste Facility Permit or Waste Licence.

The principal objective of sustainable waste management is to use material resources more efficiently, to reuse, recycle and recover material and to reduce the amount of waste requiring final disposal. The value of products, material and resources should be maintained in the economy for as long as possible such that the generation of waste is minimised. However, where residual waste is generated, it should be dealt with in a way that follows the European Commission (EC) waste hierarchy, illustrated in **Figure A23.1**, showing the order of preference for actions to reduce and manage waste as set out in the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 126 of 2011).



Source: EC (2008), https://ec.europa.eu/environment/topics/waste-and-recycling/waste-framework-directive_en

Figure A23.1: European Commission Waste Hierarchy

Waste prevention is seen by the EC as the key factor in any waste management approach. If the arisings of waste can be reduced in the first place, or the use of dangerous substances in products reduced, then disposal automatically becomes simpler.

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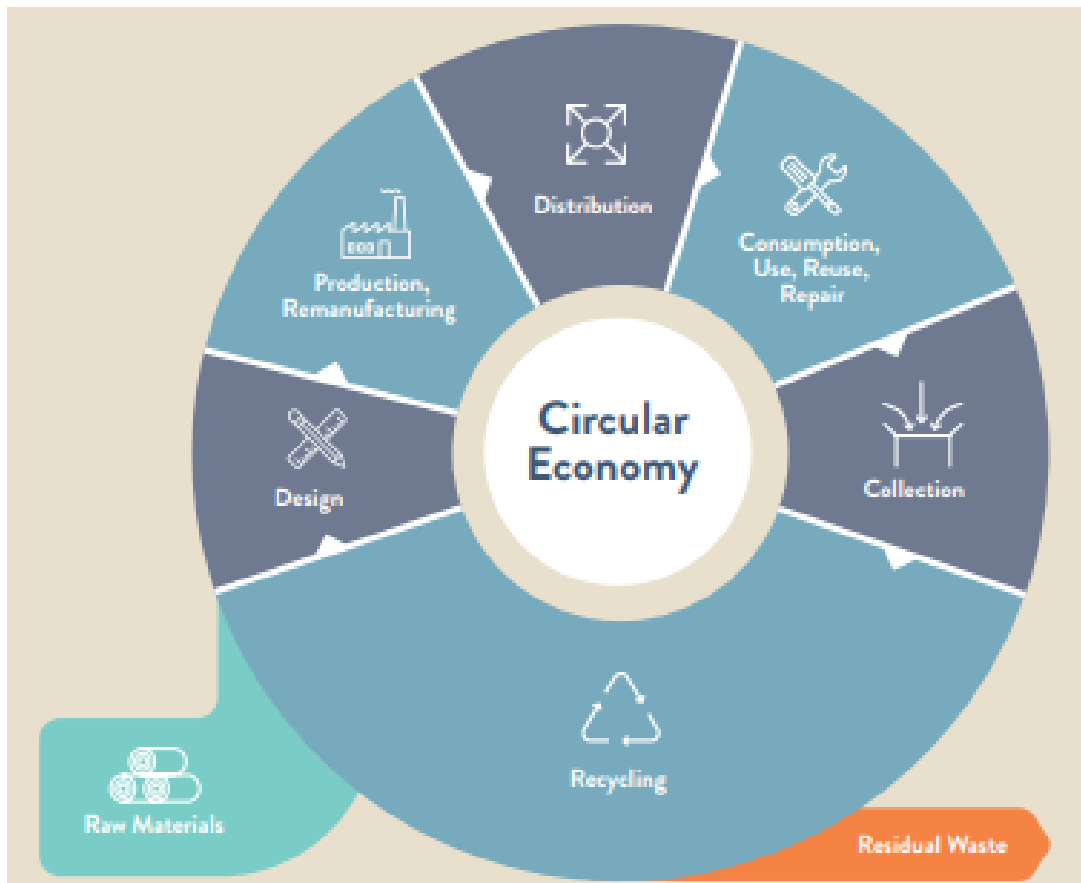
If waste prevention cannot be achieved, recovery of as many of the materials as possible should be encouraged. The EC has defined several specific 'waste streams' for priority attention, the aim being to reduce their overall environmental impact. This includes packaging waste, end-of-life vehicles, batteries, electrical and electronic waste. Where possible, waste that cannot be recycled or reused should be recovered by incineration with energy recovery, with landfill used only as a last resort. Both these methods need close monitoring because of their potential for causing severe environmental damage.

The EC adopted a Circular Economy Action Plan in March 2020 which is one of the main blocks of the European Green Deal, Europe's agenda for sustainable growth. The Circular Economy Action Plan identifies buildings and construction as a key area where there are opportunities for resource efficiency and circularity (EC, 2020).

Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy (DECC, 2020)

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) published the Irish Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy in September 2020. An illustration showing how a circular economy works is included in the action plan; refer to **Figure A23.2**.

The plan contains over 200 measures across various waste areas including Circular Economy, Municipal Waste, Consumer Protection and Citizen Engagement, Plastics and Packaging, Construction and Demolition, Textiles, Green Public Procurement and Waste Enforcement.



Source: DECC, A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy - Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025

Figure A23.2: The Circular Economy

Draft National Waste Management Plan (2023)

The Proposed Scheme is located within the administrative area of Meath County Council, which is part of the Eastern-Midlands Region (EMR). Regional waste management is guided by the Eastern Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 which was published in 2015. A successor waste plan is in preparation which is focused nationally and was published in draft for consultation in May 2023 by the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices (RWMPOs). This new, single, National Waste Management Plan will direct waste policy across all three regions, but the three regional management structures remain in place. The

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plan will set policy direction for the next six years in common across all three regions. The final published plan may add additional target(s) but it will not materially change how waste management facilities are operated. Volume II Policy Responses and Actions of the draft Plan is divided into three parts. Part A of the draft Plan sets out the core positions that underpin the Plan as follows:

- **“Collaboration:** *Collaboration has been central to the development of the Plan and to the determination of targets policies and actions. Continued collaboration will be a feature of the implementation of the Plan and Volume III sets out how this will be achieved.*
- **Circularity:** *This Plan commits to the transition to a circular economy and will actively contribute to this goal through the implementation of the Plan ambition, targets, policies and actions.*
- **Ambition:** *The ambition of this Plan is 0% waste growth (total) over the lifetime of the Plan to be achieved through a combination of interventions by key partners and stakeholders.*
- **Plan Targets:** *This Plan presents consumption related targets for the reduction of rMSW¹ and C&D² waste as mandated by the WAPCE and sets out supporting targets for waste contamination, reuse and repair/remanufacturing.*
- **EU Targets:** *This Plan commits to the continued compliance with existing and pending EU Waste targets.”*

Part B sets out 13 Core Policies “to guide the operation and development of the wider waste and circular economies”. These Core Policies build upon the objectives as presented in the three 2015-2021 Regional Waste Management Plans and comprise the following:

- **“CORE POLICY 1 Protection of the Environment**
Oversee waste activities and litter control measures to ensure they do not pose a risk to the environment and human health and make a positive contribution to circularity.
- **CORE POLICY 2 Climate Action**
Support the delivery of the measures and actions prescribed in the Climate Action Plan to contribute to achieving the national climate targets.
- **CORE POLICY 3 Policy and Legislation**
Implement and enforce EU and national waste policies and plans and translate into actions that enable the transition to a circular economy and the achievement of national recycling targets.
- **CORE POLICY 4 Collaboration**
Collaborate with key partners and stakeholders on the delivery of core and targeted policies and priority actions to ensure appropriate financial and human resources are provided.
- **CORE POLICY 5 Changing Behaviours**
Influence and encourage behavioural improvements in business and households through Local Authority and external networks and coordinated multi-agency awareness campaigns, including mywaste.ie, to prevent waste and manage resources to increase the value and circular potential of materials.
- **CORE POLICY 6 Organisational Structures**
Ensure that the planning, regulatory and enforcement functions of the local authority sector are appropriately aligned, coordinated and supported by central government to respond to existing challenges.
- **CORE POLICY 7 Innovation**
Encourage and support further research and innovation in the transition to a circular economy across the waste sector with a particular focus on the management of non-kerbside waste streams.
- **CORE POLICY 8 Monitoring**

¹ rMSW – Residual Municipal Solid Waste

² C&D – Construction and Demolition

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Monitor the provision of waste infrastructure to ensure that there is adequate appropriate infrastructure in place and where deficits exist to support solutions in line with the waste hierarchy, self-sufficiency, proximity and circularity.

- **CORE POLICY 9 National Development Plan**

Support the National Strategic Objectives, Sectoral Strategies and Strategic Investment Priorities set out in the National Development Plan 2021-2030.

- **CORE POLICY 10 Green Public Procurement**

Reinforce the consistent application of Green Public Procurement criteria in local authority contracts to ensure that public spending is aligned with the policies of this Plan.

- **CORE POLICY 11 Data Quality**

Assist all stakeholders to ensure the availability of timely quality data and projections to inform policy development and to enable the monitoring of progress against policies and targets.

- **CORE POLICY 12 Nationally Important Infrastructure**

The Plan recognises and supports the need for nationally important waste infrastructure, including infrastructure of the type, scale and proximity essential to maintain waste services and infrastructure that contributes to the ambition and policies of the Plan.

- **CORE POLICY 13 Funding this Plan**

The Plan seeks to attract funding and support for initiatives and projects that underpin business continuity, core and targeted policies and priority actions. Any project or initiative arising from the implementation of this Plan will take account of appropriate principles including the polluter pays principle."

Part C sets out 16 Focus Areas "identified for the assignment of targeted policies and priority actions to support the achievement of the Plan ambition and targets". These 16 Focus Areas are grouped under three headings of operational, material stream, and infrastructural, as follows:

Operational

- *FOCUS AREA 1 Municipal Commercial Waste*
- *FOCUS AREA 2 Municipal Household Waste*
- *FOCUS AREA 3 Compliance Schemes (EPR's)*
- *FOCUS AREA 4 Collection Systems*

Material Stream

- *FOCUS AREA 5 Food Waste*
- *FOCUS AREA 6 Packaging Waste*
- *FOCUS AREA 7 Single Use Plastic (SUP)*
- *FOCUS AREA 8 Construction And Demolition Waste*
- *FOCUS AREA 9 Textiles*
- *FOCUS AREA 10 Hazardous Waste*

Infrastructural

- *FOCUS AREA 11 Infrastructure (Regulatory)*
- *FOCUS AREA 12 Reuse/Repair Infrastructure*
- *FOCUS AREA 13 Recycling Infrastructure*
- *FOCUS AREA 14 Recovery Infrastructure*
- *FOCUS AREA 15 Disposal Infrastructure*
- *FOCUS AREA 16 Hazardous Waste Infrastructure*