

Newcastle West WwTP Redevelopment

Pre-Application Meeting with ACP – Wednesday 25/03/2026

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Background & Need for Scheme
3. Proposed Development
4. Site Context / Designations
5. Appropriate Assessment & EIA
6. Policy Considerations
7. Strategic Infrastructure Assessment
8. Next Steps
9. Q&A and AOB

1. Introductions

Introductions

Uisce Éireann (Applicant)

- Angus Hall (Uisce Éireann Programme Manager)
- Martin Keane (Uisce Éireann Project Manager)
- Eamon Hutton (Uisce Éireann Planning Specialist)

AECOM (Consultant)

- Michael McConnell (Water, AECOM Project Lead)
- Dean Atwell (Associate Director – Planning)
- Brendan Kemp (Environmental Specialist)

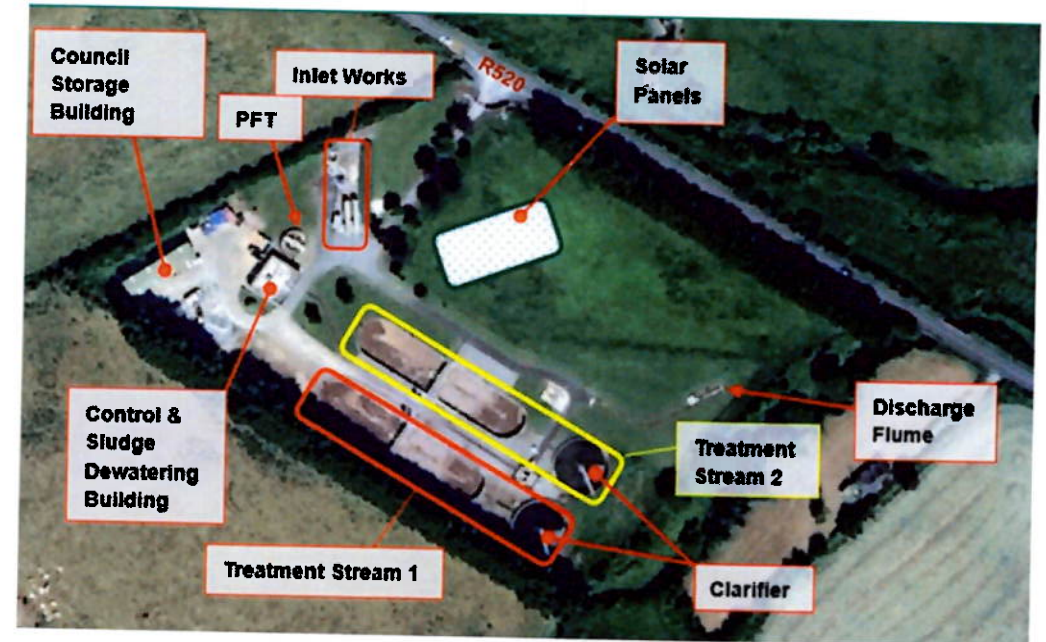
2. Background & Need for Scheme

Site Location



Site Description

- Accessed via R520 (access to be retained)
- Mix of grass and hardscaped land
- Occupied by existing structures (to be demolished) and 2no. rows of solar panels
- Treated sewage is discharged via a gravity 900 mm diameter pipeline into the River Deel, approximately 250 metres southeast of the existing WwTP site
- Fields within redline boundary are grassed agricultural fields, with hedged boundaries – no built structures.
- Current WwTP was built in the late 1980s and has a current Population Equivalent of 12,368, serving the Newcastle West agglomeration / catchment area.



Need for Scheme

- Population Equivalent (PE) serviced by Newcastle West WwTP is projected to increase from **12,368 PE** to **23,700 PE**, over the 25-year design period (supported in regional and local policy).
- The existing WwTP is operating over capacity
- Wastewater Assimilative Capacity (WAC) calculations have also determined a more stringent discharge consent is required.
- WwTP needs to be upgraded to ensure compliance with the Wastewater Directive.
- The Proposed Development will ensure effluent compliance for a 10-year design horizon and a 25-year design horizon. UÉ policy requires provision for growth and 20% operational headroom.

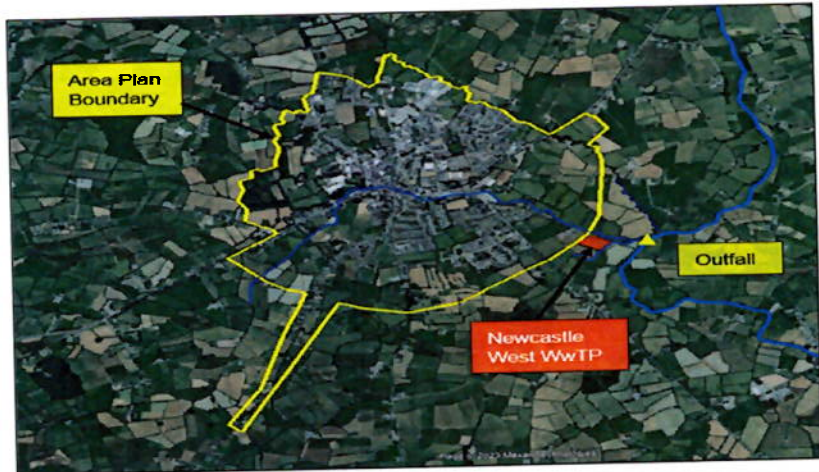
3. Proposed Development

Proposed Development

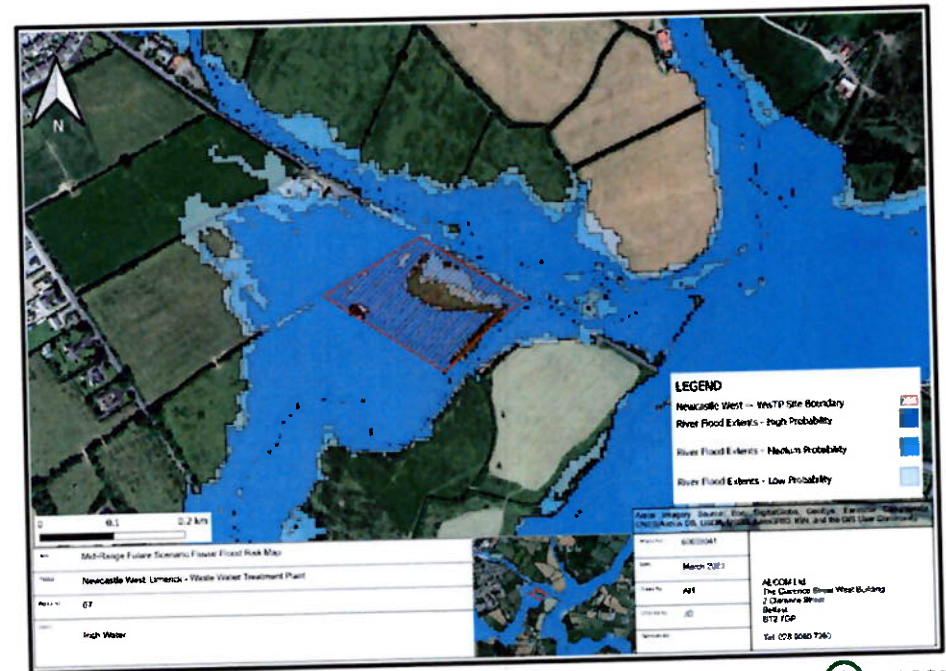
The redevelopment of the WwTP will include the following works:

Proposed Development	
New inlet works (c. 42x10m)	Refurbished control building
New storm tank (c. 42x18m)	New Final effluent/storm pumping station
New Activated Sludge Plant (ASP) tank (c. 30 x55m)	Compensatory flood storage on an adjacent site
Two new Final Settlement Tanks (c. 34m diameter)	A new 1200mm 350m outfall to the River Deel (replacing existing)
New picket fence thickener (c. 12m diameter)	Relocation of existing solar panels and new solar panels within the site boundary
New sludge dewatering building (c. 20 x10m)	All associated works

Current Site and Outfall



- Treatment works just outside of the Development Limits of Newcastle West.
- Nearest residence approx. 330m to the west of the site boundary.
- Outfall to River Deel approximately 300m east of the site.
- Site located within Fluvial Floodplain.



Compensatory Flood Storage

- Current scenario with climate change
- **Dark blue** is Q10
- **Light blue** is Q100
- **Lightest blue** is Q1000
- Design flood level is 45.02mOD
- Stage 3 FRA Assessment Completed
- In order to protect the existing site and not increase or alter the existing flooding, compensatory storage required.



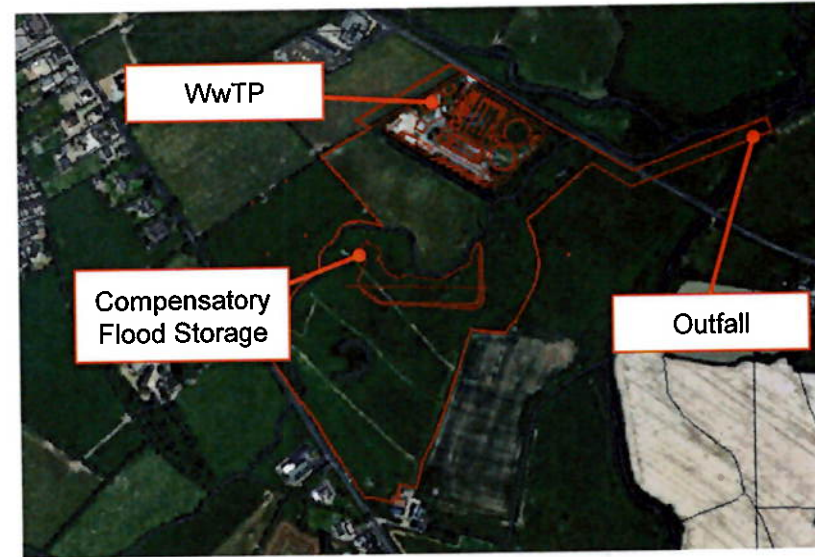
Compensatory Flood Storage



Based on **Newcastle West Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2023)**;

“Compensatory Storage should be provided on a level for level basis to balance the total volume that will be lost through infilling where the floodplain provides static storage. There should be no overall loss of floodplain storage volume as a result of the development in the 1%AEP event and impacts of the amended storage should be tested for the 0.1%AEP event to ascertain no significant increase in risks associated with the extreme event.”

Compensatory Flood Storage

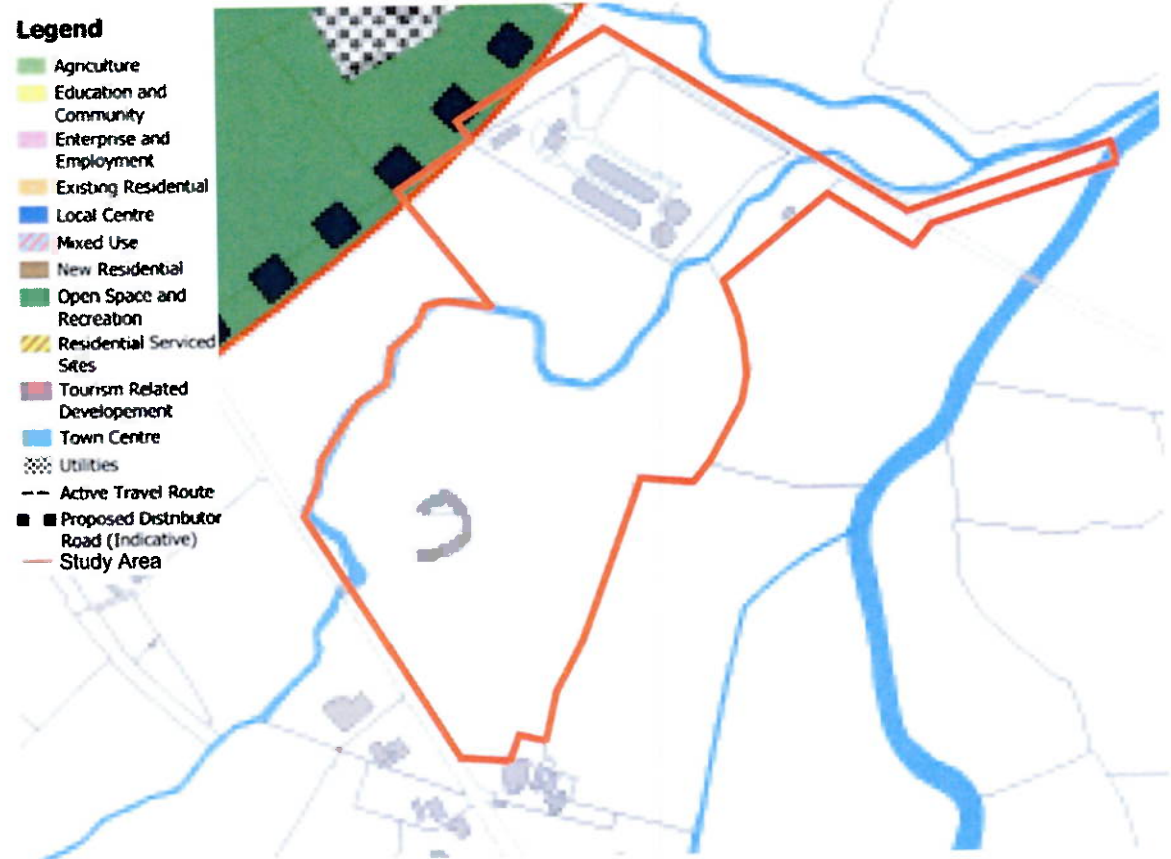


- SuDS Nature Based Solution - No pipes / tanks anticipated.
- Land proposed to be purchase by UÉ, fenced and maintained by UÉ.
- The proposed compensatory storage at Newcastle West has an area of 8,295 m² and a maximum depth of 1.1m.
- Indicative location shown, location to be fixed based on further modelling and landowner negotiations.

4. Site Context / Designations

Land Use Zoning

- The Site is predominantly located outside of Newcastle West's settlement boundary and is, therefore, unzoned
- **Outfall route** also unzoned
- Part of the Site's north-western area is within '**Open Space and Recreation**' zoned land, however, no development is proposed within the zoned land
- Route of **Proposed Distributor Road** directly north of the Site Proposed Development will not impact the delivery of the Distributor Road



Planning History

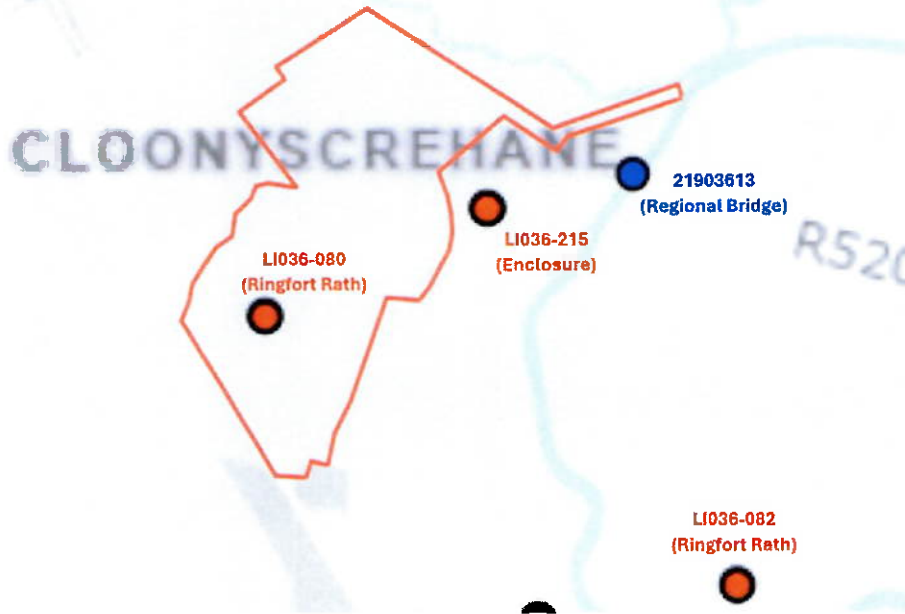
Only one relevant planning application was identified on the Site.
This application has been fully implemented:

Planning Ref.	Site Address	Development	Decision Date	Proximity to Subject Site
171207	Clooneysrehane , Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.	30 KW of ground mounted solar panels and all associated works	27/03/2018	On Site

Archaeological, Architectural and Built Heritage

Study Area

● LI036-079
(Ringfort Rath)



- One Monument (red dots) and associated Zone of Notification (ZoN) within the site boundary. No Protected Structures (blue dots) within Site Boundary
- Additional monument located adjacent to the Site in adjacent field. It's ZoN extends within the Site Boundary.
- ZoNs are areas of archaeological potential associated with recorded monuments. Any proposed groundworks within a ZoN must be notified to the National Monuments Service at least 2 months in advance
- Protected Structure (bridge) c.220m south-east, crossing the Deel River on the R520
- Archaeological Screening Assessment (ASA) undertaken setting out requirements / mitigation that informed final design

Landscape and Visual

- Within the '***Agricultural Lowlands***' Landscape Character Area.
- A relevant objective of the LCA, as set out in Table 6.1 of the LDP, is to:

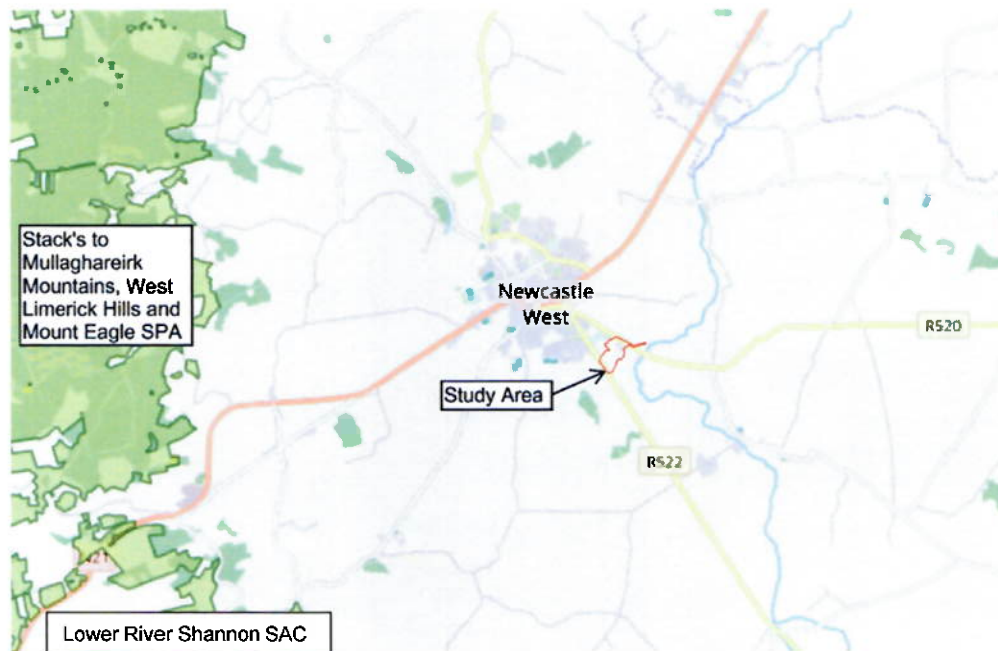
“Encourage retention of existing landscape features such as hedgerows and trees and their incorporation into landscaping for new developments”.

- Existing boundary hedging and internal trees are planned to be retained. Some non-native trees at the access road may be replaced
- There are no views or prospects designated within the CDP or LAP situated on or across the site.



5. Appropriate Assessment & EIA

Natural Heritage / Appropriate Assessment



- The Site is not located within any SACs, SPAs, NHAs or pNHAs
- Closest are 5.9km to the west / south-west (as per image)
- Due to the potential for hydrological connections and the proximity of Ehernagh Stream / Deel River, an Appropriate Assessment Screening is to be undertaken on the current design which will determine the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment.

EIA Approach

- An EIA Screening Report has been completed which concluded that an EIA is required for the Proposed Development:

*The Proposed Development is an **upgrade of an already executed development** which would result in it being of a class listed in Schedule 5, Part 2, 11(c) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)(i.e., a WwTP with a **capacity greater than 10,000PE**). To reach the target capacity of 23,700PE, **an increase of 11,322PE is proposed**, which is more than 50% of the appropriate threshold (i.e., 5,000PE).*

- An EIA Scoping Report has been completed.
- An EIAR will be completed.

EIA Scoping

Topic Area	Scoping Conclusions Summary
All topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decommissioning phase: At the end of the Proposed Developments design life, the Applicant might seek to refurbish the facilities to extend their operating life. Should the Applicant decide to decommission the Proposed Development, decommissioning works would be similar in nature to those of the construction and operational phases. Therefore, the decommissioning phase is proposed scoped out of the EIAR.
Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Amenities, human health, employment and economic activity and land use patterns.• Scoped out: Settlement patterns.
Land and Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Land, soil, and geology.• Scoped out: Agricultural capability whilst hydrology and hydrogeology will be addressed in the water chapter.

EIA Scoping

Topic Area	Scoping Conclusions Summary
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Habitat surveys, breeding birds, badger and otter surveys, Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) for bats, bat activity surveys; habitat assessment for amphibians and terrestrial invertebrates; aquatic surveys (including macroinvertebrate sampling, crayfish trapping, macrophyte surveys, fish habitat assessment, electro-fishing and invasive non-native species assessment).• Scoped out: Wintering bird surveys, detailed habitat assessment (e.g. Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC) survey).
Water (Hydrology and Hydrogeology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Water (quantity and quality), ground, surface, estuarine and marine water bodies, physical characteristics, chemical characteristics based on publicly available information only, Q value's based on EPA data, beneficial uses, flooding (Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment). Hydromorphological changes and standalone WFD assessment.• Scoped out: Water sampling for chemical characteristics.

EIA Scoping

Topic Area	Scoping Conclusions Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in – Screening of the construction phase traffic data following the criteria in the IAQM ‘Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction’.• Scoped out:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction Phase – Dust and Non-Road Mobile Machinery and Small Plant Emissions• Operational Phase – Odour Assessment
Noise and Vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Demolition and construction noise, demolition and construction vibration, demolition and construction traffic noise. Operational plant noise emissions.
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in lifecycle of project, macro climate change trends.• Scoped out: Acid rain, thermal pollution, micro-climate changes trends.

EIA Scoping

Topic Area	Scoping Conclusions Summary
Traffic and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Traffic surveys (JTCs and ATCs), future scenarios, cumulative developments, network disruption impact analysis, road safety issues, site visit, public road drainage prevention, CTMP.• Scoped out: Detailed assessment of the operational phase traffic.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Archaeology, Architectural heritage.• Scoped out: Folklore and history (intangible heritage).
Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Construction waste.• Scoped out: Operation and decommissioning waste.
Major Accidents and Disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Flooding, flood defence failure, roads, land pollution, water pollution, cyber-attacks, infrastructure failure, utility failure.

EIA Scoping

Topic Area	Scoping Conclusions Summary
Landscape and Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction Phase - Temporary change to Landscape, landscape Character or designation and temporary disruption of views from construction infrastructure.• Operational Phase - Longer term and/or permanent change to the physical conditions of the landscape, change to perceptual aspects of the landscape character and/or landscape designation permanent change to the composition, balance of features and nature of views as a result of the proposed development.
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoped in: Built services (foul water network, surface water network, public water network, gas network, electricity network and telecommunications network).• Scoped out: Traffic and transport and waste management (both discussed in separate chapters).

6. Policy Considerations

Policy Compliance: National & Regional Policies

Document	Relevant Policies
<p>National Planning Framework (NPF)</p>	<p>National Strategic Outcome 9: Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources includes the sustainable management of water.</p> <p>National Policy Objective 92: Ensure the alignment of planned growth with the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure, in order to manage and conserve water resources in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development requirements and a cleaner environment</p> <p>Strategic Investment Priority 9: Water Services Infrastructure is a Strategic Investment Priority of the NPF which the Proposed Development will deliver.</p>
<p>Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle West is categorised as a 'Key Town' in the RSES with its own sub-chapter. Wastewater treatment and water services improvements are identified as 'Key Infrastructural Requirements'. There is an additional level above this in the settlement hierarchy (Cities – Metropolitan Area) <p>Other relevant Objectives of the RSES include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 22 Support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. • RPO 211 Support the implementation of Irish Water (Uisce Éireann) Investment Plans. • RPO 212 Support investment and the sustainable development of strategic wastewater treatment facilities. • RPO 214 Eliminate untreated discharges from settlements in the short-term, while planning strategically for the long-term...increasing compliance with the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

Policy Compliance: Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Policy / Objective	Compliance
<p>Policy CS P7: Seek to promote the creation of sustainable places and healthy communities, while ensuring that development occurs at an appropriate pace and that infrastructure is delivered in tandem to support this growth.</p>	<p>The Proposed development will deliver upgrades required to accommodate an additional 11,322 PE, aligning with Newcastle West's population growth targets / estimates (additional 706 homes) as a Level 2 Key Town.</p>
<p>Objective CGR O11 d): Support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;</p>	<p>The Proposed Development will act as key upgrades to wastewater network within Newcastle West and is subject to all environmental and ecological assessments.</p>
<p>Objective CGR O12: It is an objective of the Council to monitor and review the Local Area Plan for Newcastle West to align with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, which will recognise the role of Newcastle West as a Key Town for growth within Limerick.</p>	<p>The LAP supports the 'required infrastructure upgrades set out in the RSES' which includes upgraded wastewater infrastructure for Newcastle West. It also supports 'infrastructure and utility development that will support socio-economic growth'.</p>
<p>Objective IN O12: Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters, in accordance with the National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and the associated Programme of Measures and any subsequent River Basin Management Plan.</p>	<p>The Proposed Development will provide effluent compliance for a 10-year design horizon and a 25-year design horizon.</p>
<p>Policy CAF P2: It is a policy of the Council to support the transition to a low carbon climate resilient economy.</p>	<p>Proposals will include relocation of existing solar panels and installation of new solar panels on site to provide onsite energy generation.</p>

Policy Compliance: Newcastle West Local Area Plan

Policy / Objective	Compliance
<p>Strategic Development Objective: Support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified in the RSES for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>The Proposed Development supports the '<i>required infrastructure upgrades set out in the RSES</i>' which includes upgraded wastewater infrastructure for Newcastle West. It also supports 'infrastructure and utility development that will support socio-economic growth'.</p>
<p>Objective CHO1: (a) Ensure climate-proofing measures are incorporated into the design, planning and construction of all developments, including utilities and their networks. The use of green infrastructure as a mechanism for carbon offsetting and surface water management is encouraged.</p>	<p>Proposals will include installation of solar panels on site to provide % of onsite energy generation.</p>
<p>Objective CH O3: Ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument or which is seriously injurious to its cultural or educational value</p>	<p>Archaeological Screening Assessment (ASA) undertaken setting out requirements / mitigation that informed final design to ensure impact on monuments in adjacent field.</p>
<p>Objective IUO2: Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Uisce Éireann, avoiding any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and ensuring discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WwTP needs to be upgraded to ensure compliance with the Wastewater Directive. • Proposed Development will ensure effluent compliance for a 10-year design horizon and a 25-year design horizon.
<p>Objective IUO4: Ensure that future developments in flood prone areas is generally limited to minor developments in line with the Circular PL 02/2014 and the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and ensure future development of lands within Flood Risk Zone A/B is in accordance with the plan-making Justification Tests in the SFRA.</p>	<p>Proposed Development has been subject to Justification Test and Stage 3 FRA (with modelling). Compensatory flood storage will be provided in adjacent field, away from built infrastructure.</p>

7. Strategic Infrastructure Assessment

Strategic Infrastructure Assessment

The Proposed Development is an Infrastructure Development for the Purposes of sections 37A and 37B

Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended

Seventh Schedule

*'Development comprising or for the purposes of the following: A **waste water treatment plant with a capacity greater than a population equivalent of 10,000**'*

Planning and Development Act 2024

Planning and Development Act 2024 Section 82(1)(b)(i) confirms that “*strategic infrastructure development means a development specified in Schedule 1*”. The relevant provision in the First Schedule of the 2024 Act is Part 3(f) under the heading of Environmental Infrastructure which states:

*'a **waste water treatment plant with a capacity greater than a population equivalent of 10,000** and, for the purpose of this provision, “population equivalent” shall be construed in accordance with paragraph 6 of Article 2 of Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste water treatment;'*



Strategic Infrastructure Analysis

Tests under s.37A(2) of the PADA, 2000 (as amended)	Commentary
<p><i>(a) Whether the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proposed Development will be of strategic economic and social importance to the Region, aligning with the required housing and population growth identified in national, regional and local policy. • Within the NPF, National Strategic Objective 9 includes the sustainable management of water. The NPF also sets regional population growth objectives for the southern region. The Proposed Development will support the NPF objective and allow for growth in line with population objectives.
<p><i>(b) Whether 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 situate</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of general objectives within the RSES that relate to water and wastewater facilities, including RPO 211, RPO 212 and RPO 214. None of these objectives make specific reference to Newcastle West. • Newcastle West is classified as a 'Key Town' within the region's settlement hierarchy (primary location for employment and population). Newcastle West has its own sub-chapter within the RSES. "Wastewater treatment and water services improvements" are identified amongst its 'Key Infrastructural Requirements'. • The NPF does not, however, include any specific policies or objectives in relation to Newcastle West. • RPO22 of the RSES directly sets out a Policy requirement "<i>To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</i>".
<p><i>(c) Whether the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Site is wholly contained within the boundary of County Limerick and is >12km from the boundary of the nearest Local Authority (Cork). • It is not likely that the Proposed Development will have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority

Strategic Infrastructure Analysis – Comparison with Nenagh Precedent

Assessment Factor	Nenagh WwTP	Newcastle West WwTP
Type of Development	Upgrade of existing 12,000 PE WwTP to 22,042 PE (+10,042 PE increase)	Upgrade of an existing 12,368 PE WwTP to 23,700 PE (+11,332 PE increase)
Strategic Economic or Social Importance (s.37A(2)(a) to the State or Region	Compliance driven upgrade; facilitates local growth in a sub-regional town	Compliance driven upgrade; will facilitate growth in a ' Key Town ' which is identified as a County town, significant employment location with significant synergy with North Kerry towns in the RSES.
Contribution to NPF / RSES Objectives (s.37A(2)(b))	<p>NPF: General consistency with NPO 63 / NSO 9 (water compliance)</p> <p>RSES: Identified as 1 of 9 infrastructure requirements for Nenagh</p>	<p>NPF: General consistency with NPO 63 / NSO 9 (water compliance)</p> <p>RSES: <i>Wastewater Treatment and Water Services Improvements</i> Identified as 1 of 4 key infrastructural requirements for Newcastle West.</p> <p>Newcastle West is identified as a "<i>strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context...</i>"</p> <p>It is a specific objective of the RSES (RPO 22) to support the delivery of infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West</p>
Location / Effect on multiple planning authorities (s.37A(2)(c))	Nenagh, Co. Tipperary (single local authority area)	Newcastle West, Limerick (single local authority area)
Settlement Hierarchy Role	Nenagh = Key Town with sub-regional influence	<p>Newcastle West is 1 of 4 Key Towns in the Mid-West of Ireland.</p> <p>There is an additional level above this in the settlement hierarchy (Cities – Metropolitan Area)</p>
Overall ACP Conclusion	Does not fall within s.37A SID provisions	TBC

8. Next Steps

Next Steps

- Confirm SID status following pre-app process with ACP.
- Pre-planning meeting with LCCC and stakeholder notification (as required)
- Public consultation if required
- **Planned submission date:** December 2026
- **Planned tender process date:** October 2027
- **Planned construction date:** Mid 2028



Planning Particulars Status

Plans & Particulars	Status
Statutory Plans & Particulars (Application Form, Public Notices, Planning Fee, Drawings)	Ongoing
Supporting Planning Statement	Ongoing
AA Screening	Ongoing
EIA Screening	Completed
Archaeological Screening Assessment	Ongoing
Stage 3 FRA and Modelling	Completed, comp. storage location being finalised
EIA Scoping Report	Completed
EIA preparation	Ongoing




9. Questions & AOB



AECOM

Thank you.

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