

Our Case Number: ACP-323980-25



**An
Coimisiún
Pleanála**

Shane Mathews
Rathrobin
Tullamore
Co. Offaly

Date: 04 August 2026

Re: Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region
in the counties of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Offaly, Kildare, and Dublin.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your submission in relation to the above-mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

The Commission will revert to you in due course in respect of this matter.

Please be advised that a copy of all submissions/observations received in relation to the application will be made available for inspection on the Commission's website at the following link:
<https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/323980>.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission. Please quote the above mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,


Eimear Reilly
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737184

PA09

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AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	_____
ACP-	_____
22 JUL 2026	
Fee: €	_____ Type: _____
Time: 9:15	By: R. O'Sullivan

Rathrobin
Blueball
Tullamore
Co. Offaly

20 July 2026

Submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála

ACP Reference No. ACP-323982-25

**Uisce Éireann Compulsory Purchase (Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region)
Order, 2025**

Submission on behalf of Shane Mathews, Rathrobin, Blueball, Tullamore, County Offaly

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to the above matter and to the response furnished by Uisce Éireann dated 5 May 2026.

Having considered that response, I wish to maintain my objection to the confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order and make the following observations.

1. Failure to Demonstrate that the Compulsory Acquisition is the Least Intrusive Option

While Uisce Éireann states that alternative options were considered over a lengthy period and that more than 1,100 unconstrained options were assessed, the response does not address why the compulsory acquisition of my lands is necessary in circumstances where significant uncertainty remains regarding future demand projections, technological developments, water conservation measures and alternative regional water solutions.

I respectfully submit that the Commission should be satisfied not merely that a preferred engineering option exists, but that the interference with private property rights is necessary, proportionate and justified having regard to constitutional property protections and the principles governing compulsory acquisition.

2. Escalation of Project Costs

The response acknowledges that current estimated costs are in the region of €4.6 billion to €5.9 billion.

I remain concerned that a project of this scale presents substantial financial risk to the State and taxpayers. While references are made to expert review and cost-benefit analysis, no detailed response has been provided to concerns regarding continued cost escalation or the possibility that final costs may substantially exceed current estimates.

The Commission should carefully consider whether the scale and cost of the project remain proportionate to the objectives sought to be achieved.

3. Continued Concerns Regarding Alternative Water Supply Solutions

I note Uisce Éireann's position that alternatives such as desalination, groundwater development and regional reservoir schemes were considered.

However, the response does not demonstrate why a diversified strategy involving:

- expanded rainwater harvesting,
- groundwater development,
- additional reservoir infrastructure,
- treated water reuse,
- continuing leakage reduction, and
- smaller regional supply projects,

could not collectively provide a more flexible and resilient solution while avoiding the extensive land acquisition required for the present proposal.

I remain unconvinced that a single major transfer scheme from the Shannon represents the optimum long-term solution.

4. Agricultural Biosecurity Risks

I acknowledge the mitigation measures outlined by Uisce Éireann.

However, the practical reality is that construction activity across productive agricultural lands inevitably carries risks which cannot be entirely eliminated.

The proposed route crosses farming lands and the movement of machinery, personnel and materials creates continuing concerns regarding:

- livestock disease transmission,
- contamination of agricultural lands,
- disruption of farming operations,
- interference with drainage systems, and
- damage to soil structure and productivity.

The assurances contained in the EIAR and Construction Environmental Management Plan are largely based upon predicted outcomes. I respectfully submit that these assessments do not entirely remove the real risks faced by landowners.

5. Water Quality Concerns

I note Uisce Éireann's response regarding historical mining activity and contamination issues.

Nevertheless, concerns remain regarding long-term water quality and the cumulative impact of historic industrial activities within the wider Shannon catchment. The fact that monitoring and remediation measures have been necessary at former mining locations demonstrates that contamination risks have existed and continue to require management.

Given the long design life of the proposed infrastructure, the Commission should be satisfied that future water quality risks have been fully assessed under a range of climatic and environmental scenarios.

6. Flooding and Climate Change

The response acknowledges the increasing challenges associated with extreme weather events and climate change.

As residents of the Shannon basin are aware, flooding events can significantly affect water quality and environmental conditions.

While Uisce Éireann contends that treatment systems will address these risks, I remain concerned regarding:

- increasing flood frequency,
- sewage contamination during flood events,
- resilience of infrastructure during extreme weather conditions, and
- future climate-related uncertainties not fully reflected in present modelling exercises.

7. Request for Oral Hearing

Given:

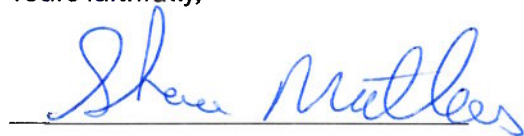
- the scale of the proposed development,
- the significant interference with private property rights,
- the environmental issues raised,
- the agricultural concerns arising,
- the substantial public expenditure involved, and
- the continuing public controversy surrounding the project,

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála exercise its discretion to convene an Oral Hearing so that these matters may be properly tested and examined in a public forum.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above and in my original objection, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order insofar as it affects my lands or alternatively require further detailed examination of the matters raised before any decision is made.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Shane Mathews", is written over a horizontal line.

Shane Mathews