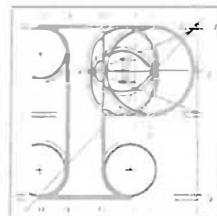


Our Case Number: ACP-323980-25



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Offaly County Council
Planning Department
Áras an Chontae
Charleville Road
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
R35 F893

Date: 08 April 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 copies of all submissions / observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the local authority and at the offices of An Coimisiún Pleanála when they have been processed by the Commission.

More detailed information in relation to strategic infrastructure development can be viewed on the Commission's website: www.pleanala.ie.

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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D01 V902 D01 V902

From: SIDS
Sent: Monday 30 March 2026 14:57
To: LAPS
Cc: Eimear Reilly
Subject: FW: ACP-323980-25 Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern & Midlands Region
Attachments: UISCE EIREANN SID OFFICIAL VERSION.pdf; Members View Meeting March 2026.pdf; Schedule of Costs SID022.xlsx

From: Planning External <planning@offalycoco.ie>
Sent: Monday 30 March 2026 14:44
To: 'lats@pleanala.ie' <lats@pleanala.ie>; SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Michael Duffy <MDuffy@offalycoco.ie>; Paula Hanlon <phanlon@offalycoco.ie>; James Condrón <jcondron@offalycoco.ie>; Caroline Dempsey <cdempsey@offalycoco.ie>
Subject: ACP-323980-25 Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern & Midlands Region

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached Offaly County Council's submission for the Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern & Midlands Region (ACP-323980-25).

I have also attached the views of the elected members, and our schedule of costs.

I would be most grateful if you could confirm receipt of this email.

Kind regards,

Ellen Cashen

Oifigeach Foirne | An Roinn Pleanáil
Staff Officer | Planning Department

Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

Áras an Chontae, Bóthar Bhaile an Bhóthair, Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí R35 F893
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19 March 2026

Cathaoirleach and Each Member of Offaly County Council

Re: Strategic Infrastructure Development Application: Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midland Region

Dear Cathaoirleach and Members,

Please find below Chief Executive report in relation to Uisce Eireann's proposed strategic water pipeline and associated works, providing for the abstraction of raw water from Parteen Basin on the Lower River Shannon in County Tipperary, through the midlands counties of County Offaly and County Kildare to Peamount in County Dublin.

The report forms part of the statutory procedure for Strategic Infrastructure Development, insofar as the development relates to the functional area of Co. Offaly, as set out within Section 37E(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

**CE Report to Elected Members
on Proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development
Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region
as required by Section 37E(4) of the Planning and
Development Act 2000 (as amended)**

Applicant:	Uisce Éireann
An Coimisiún Pleanála Case reference:	PA92.323980
Proposed Development (Summary):	An abstraction of raw water from Parteen Basin on the Lower River Shannon and various elements of water supply infrastructure and ancillary associated works, which collectively would extend from Parteen Basin in County Tipperary, through the midlands counties of County Offaly and County Kildare to Peamount in County Dublin.
Site Location:	Townlands within Co. Tipperary, Co. Offaly, Co. Kildare, Co. Dublin, Co. Limerick and Co. Clare
Associated Website:	www.watersupplyproject.ie

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1.0 Purpose of this Report

Following an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) (Case reference: PC0124), it was determined by the Commission at a meeting on the 13 November 2025 that the proposed development;

- falls within the definition of energy infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (PDA) (Section 37A of PDA),
- falls within the definition of environmental infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule due to the nature and scale of the proposed water abstraction, treatment and transfer development and related development (Section 37A(1), PDA) and is of
- strategic importance (Section 37A(2)(a), 37A(2)(b) and 37A(2)(c) PDA).

A Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application for permission for the proposed development was subsequently made by Uisce Eireann (UE) directly to ACP (Section 37E, PDA) on 19 December 2025.

The purpose of this report is to set out the Planning Authority's (PA's) views on the effects of the Proposed Development on the environment and on the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the authority, **insofar as it relates to the functional area of Offaly County Council**, having regard in particular to the matters specified in Section 34(2), PDA. The matters specified in Section 34(2)(a) are:

- (i) the provisions of the development plan
- (ii) any guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28
- (iii) the provisions of any special amenity area order relating to the area
- (iv) any European site or other area prescribed for the purposes of Section 10(2)(c)
- (v) where relevant, the policy of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government
- (vi) the matters referred to in Subsection [34](4) (Planning conditions)
- (vii) previous developments by the applicant which have not been satisfactorily completed
- (viii) previous convictions against the applicant for non-compliance with this Act, the Building Control Act 2007 or the Fire Services Act 1981, and
- (ix) any other relevant provision or requirement of this Act, and any regulations made thereunder.

This report shall be submitted for the consideration of ACP as required under Section 37E(4) of the PDA.

The members may, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations to this report (as per Section 37E(6)). The views expressed at the meeting of the Council on Monday 23 March 2026,

where this report is considered, shall also be attached to this report (Section 37E(6) PDA). This is known in the legislation as the “Meetings Administrators record” of the Council Meeting.

It should be noted that ACP has absolute discretion to request revised proposals or further information in advance of a decision being made under Section 37F(1), PDA.

1.1 Proposal and Site Location

1.1.1 Overall Proposal

The Proposed development would comprise an abstraction of raw water from the Parteen Basin on the Lower River Shannon and various elements of water supply infrastructure and ancillary associated works, which collectively would extend from the Parteen Basin in County Tipperary, through the midland counties of Co. Offaly and Co. Kildare to Peamount in County Dublin. A full list of townlands in which the proposed development will take place is provided within Appendix B of this report.

The overall route of the proposed main water pipeline encompasses a total distance of approximately 172 kilometres. Approximately 85.5 kilometres of the overall 170km of proposed treated water pipeline is to be hosted within Co. Offaly.

The proposed water supply project with an estimated cost of between €4.58 billion and €5.96 billion will provide for the transporting of treated water, which would be abstracted from the River Shannon at the Parteen Basin in Co. Tipperary to a new reservoir at Peamount, Co. Dublin, securing water supplies for Dublin and the region. It is estimated that the water project would abstract approximately 2% of the River Shannon’s average flow and that it could potentially support approximately 50% of Ireland’s population by 2044.

A Preliminary Business Case provided within this application outlines that the economic Net Present Value (eNPV) and economic Benefit Cost Ratio (eBCR) for the base case delivery cost of the project are €29.854bn and 12.25 respectively. In this context, the applicant puts forward that the benefits to Irish society are significantly higher than the cost associated with the delivery of the proposed infrastructure development (Section 1.5 ‘Financial & Economic Appraisals’, Preliminary Business Case).

1.1.2 Site Location (within Co. Offaly)

The location of the proposed water pipeline and associated works insofar as these works traverse lands within Co. Offaly is shown in Map 1, Appendix C attached to this report. In general terms, the proposed pipeline traverses a predominantly rural area from the Tipperary-Offaly county boundary in the townland of Derrinclare in southwest Offaly and crosses the Little Brosna River north of Shinrone. Thereafter, the proposed pipeline continues in a north-easterly direction, meandering across lands between Birr and Kinnitty where it also crosses the Camcor River and across lands to the south of Kilcormac. It travels across lands located to

the north/north-west of the Slieve Bloom Mountains in the north-eastern extents of Offaly, the terrain begins to open up and is generally contained in extensive areas of flat peatland. The proposed pipeline also crosses streams and rivers including the Clodiagh River and the Tullamore River. It maintains its easterly course and crosses the Figile River south of Edenderry and then extends across the county boundary into County Kildare.

The proposed pipeline is a distance of approximately 500m (east) of Killeigh village (being the closest settlement within the County to the proposed pipeline works) and is approximately 7.66km (south) of Tullamore (a key town).

The study area which relates to the proposed infrastructure development lies outside of any areas designated as being of architectural significance (i.e. no protected structures, no Architectural Conservation Areas). It does however encompass lands which are designated as being of archaeological significance. The study area is also outside of any designated NHA, pNHA or any European site within Co. Offaly. The nearest European site is The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC (Site Code 000925) which is situated approximately 1.9km northwest of the study area (at its closest point). The Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (Site Code 004160) is the next closest European site, located approximately 2.5km south east of the study area (at its closest point).

1.1.3 Proposed Works (Within Co. Offaly)

The proposed development works within County Offaly and which are integral to the delivery of the proposed strategic water pipeline includes the following:

- Construction of treated water pipeline. The proposed water pipeline (1.6m diameter of underground steel pipe) would extend in a predominantly northeastern direction across an entire width of the County over a distance of c.85.5 kilometres from the townland of Derrinclare at the County's western boundary with Co. Tipperary to the townland of Cushaling at the County's eastern boundary with Co. Kildare.
- 27 line valves which allow sections of the pipeline to be isolated for operations and maintenance purposes
- 125 Washout Valves which allows sections of the pipeline to be drained down if required. 14 of which would have a permanent outfall pipework to watercourses. The remaining 111 will require a temporary discharge to watercourses, or would discharge locally.
- 166 Air valves which facilitates the removal of air from the pipeline
- 1(no) Booster Pumping Station (2,160m²) (2.6ha) and construction compound (temporary) (5.5ha) in Coagh Upper TD, c. 2.5km NE of Killyon Sraid
- 1(no) Construction Compound (temporary)(15.6ha) to be located along the R421 in Killananny TD, c.3km south of Killurin Sraid
- 6(no) Pipe Storage Depots at the following locations -

Toora	c.3.4km west of Shinrone village
Boveen	c. 2.75km north of Brosna Sraid (off N62)
Fortel	c.1.8km west of Clareen Sraid
Derrinboy	c.3.2km south of Kilcormac town
Derryweelan	c.1.65km west of Geashill village
Rathlumber	c.2.2km SW of Ballyfore sraid

The documentation which accompanies the application provides further details in relation to the above proposed project works, including in summary:

- 22(no) Road Access and Egress Points onto public roads located along the route of the pipeline
- The delivery of the pipeline would require 53 road crossings within Co. Offaly, which consists of 2(no) National Secondary roads, 9(no) Regional roads and 42(no) Local roads crossings
- In reviewing documentation and available map data, the delivery of the pipeline would also require the crossing of a number of rivers and streams within the County and the crossing of the Dublin-Galway railway line at a point located in the rural area between Killeigh village and Geashill village.

The documentation submitted with this application also provides an overview of the pipeline and proposed take-off points needed to facilitate transfers via future connections and future projects to deliver water within the Water Supply Area. This includes 2(no) future connection points to serve needs within Co. Offaly (Section 4.4.6 Water Supply Area, SID Planning Report, prepared by Tom Philips & Associates (December 2025).

2.0 Key Relevant Legislative Provisions and Policy

This section provides an overview of European, national, regional and locally adopted policies which are relevant to the Proposed Development.

2.1 International and European Legislation

The following is deemed relevant to the assessment of the Proposed Development.

The Recast Drinking Water Directive (EU DWD)

The Recast Drinking Water Directive (EU DWD) (2020/2184) of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 December 2020 sets the standards to govern the quality of water for human consumption across Member States.

The European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023

The European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 99 of 2023) transpose the EU DWD into national legislation. Under these regulations, Uisce Éireann must ensure that all water intended for human consumption supplied by them is wholesome and clean and does not present a risk to human health.

The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003

The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 772 of 2003) transpose the WFD into Irish Law.

The EIA Directive (as amended)

The Proposed Project requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), as required by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 (the 'EIA Directive').

The Habitats Directive

An NIS has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended); and in accordance with the requirements of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive).

2.2 National Legislation and Policy

The following is deemed relevant to the assessment of the Proposed Development.

The Water Services Acts of 2007-2022

The Water Services Acts of 2007-2022, set down the legislative code governing functions, standards, obligations and practice in relation to the planning, management, and delivery of water supply and wastewater collection and treatment services. It focuses on management of water "in the pipe", as distinct from broader water resources issues such as river water quality. The Water Services Act, 2013 and the Water Services (No, 2) Act, 2013 (as amended) also set out the governance arrangements, as well as providing for the transfer of water services functions and infrastructure assets from Local Authorities to Irish Water. The 2013 Act also sets out specific duties and functions of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), including those requiring the preparation of Irish Water's Water Service Strategic Plan (WSSP), and the time period for which Irish Water's Investment Plans apply.

The WSSP and the Investment Plans must take into account statutory spatial planning policy and the requirements of river basin management plans prepared under the Water Framework Directive

The Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022

The Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022 (WAA) requires abstractions of 25 cubic metres or more in any 24-hour period to be registered with the EPA, and all abstractions of 2000 cubic metres or more in any 24-hour period now require a licence from the EPA. The abstraction for the Proposed Project will be greater than 2000 cubic metres in any 24-hour period and as such, there will be an application for an abstraction licence.

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (PDA)

The PDA is the relevant legislative framework under which the proposed development is assessed, in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development. Uisce Éireann must comply with the statutory requirements of the PDA and associated Regulations when planning the development of water services infrastructure. [Note: The relevant sections of the Planning and Development Act 2024 in respect to SID Development have yet to be commenced, and no regulations have issued. Therefore, the proposed SID application continues to be assessed under the legislative provisions of the PDA 2000].

The National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 - First Revision (April 2025)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) which sets out the strategic vision for Ireland's growth and development up to 2040 was published in 2018 with its first revision in April 2025. The NPF provides the basis for the review and updating of regional strategies and local authority development plans to reflect matters such as updated housing figures, projected jobs growth and renewable energy capacity allocations, including through the zoning of land for residential, employment and a range of other purposes.

Since the publication of the NPF in 2018, research and modelling by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) forecasts substantial population growth over the next decade. The

NPF sets out an agenda to cater for a population of between 6.1 to 6.3 million people by 2040, and plan for approximately 50,000 units per annum over that period, doubling the previous 2018 first NPF goal.

The NPF notes the importance of the clean water to create a healthy society, and to support a growing economy and states that *“it is essential that we have a resilient water supply to serve the existing population and for the additional 1 million people projected by 2040.”*

The NPF highlights the importance of investing in water services infrastructure as it is critical to the implementation of the National Development Plan

Key priorities of the NPF include *‘...enhanced water and wastewater capacity through projects such as the Greater Dublin Drainage Project and the Water Supply Project, Eastern and Midlands Region.’*

Key future growth enablers for Dublin include: Ensuring that key water supply and wastewater projects needed to support long term growth within the metropolitan area are delivered, including the Greater Dublin Drainage Project and **Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project**.

The following National Strategic Outcome of the NPF is deemed relevant to the proposed SID:

National Strategic Outcome 9: Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources

Ireland has abundant natural and environmental resources such as our water sources that are critical to our environmental and economic wellbeing into the future. Conserving and enhancing the quality of these resources will also become more important in a crowded and competitive world as well as our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits.

(P.g 148)...Investment in water services infrastructure is critical to the implementation of the National Development Plan. The current Water Services Strategic Plan by Irish Water will be updated in the light of the policies in the National Planning Framework addressing the requirements of future development, while also addressing environmental requirements such as obligations under EU Water Framework Directive mandated River Basin Management Plans.

A new long-term water supply source for the Eastern and Midland Region, which includes the Dublin Water Supply Area (DWSA), is needed by the mid-2020s, to provide for projected growth up to 2050 and contribute to resilience and security of supply for the region. This requires infrastructure provision to be guided and prioritised in a manner that can benefit the greatest possible number of areas within the country.

National Development Plan, 2021-2035 (Updated July 2025) (NDP)

The updated National Development Plan (NDP) (July 2025) which underpins the NPF Plan, sets a framework for investment priorities which includes expenditure commitments to secure a wider range of Strategic Investment Priorities for example, *'significant continued investment in water and waste water infrastructure and services will also involve increased delivery of new connections, co-ordinated with the planning process to support economic growth and meet the needs of priority housing developments and urban renewal areas, while at the same time supporting implementation of national strategies in relation to public health, safety and environmental compliance.'*

National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030

Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) sets the national biodiversity agenda for the 2023-2030 period, taking account of the wide range of policies, strategies, conventions, laws and targets at the global, EU and national level that influence our shared environment in order to scale up biodiversity action. The NBAP sets out the following five objectives:

- Adopt a Whole-of-Government, Whole-of-Society Approach to Biodiversity
- Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs
- Secure Nature's Contribution to People
- Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity
- Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) 2021-2025 is a five-year roadmap that aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and the wider biodiversity. The AIPP has 186 actions spread across six objectives, funded by organisations that have volunteered and committed to taking action.

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019- 2031

The vision for the EMRA is as follows;

"To create a sustainable and competitive Region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all".

The EMRA RSES sets out 16 Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs), of which the following two are deemed to be relevant to the proposed SID application;

- **RSO. 7:** Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources
Conserve and enhance our water resources to ensure clean water supply, adequate waste water treatment and greater resource efficiency to realise the benefits of the circular economy.
- **RSO 10:** Enhanced Green Infrastructure Identify, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services in the Region and promote the sustainable

management of strategic natural assets such as our coastlines, farmlands, peatlands, uplands woodlands and wetlands.

The EMRA RSES sets out Regional Policy Objectives relating to water supply, of which the following are deemed relevant to the proposed SID application:

- **RPO 10.2:** EMRA supports the delivery of the strategic water services projects set out in Table 10.1, subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.
- **RPO 10.3:** The Regional Assembly and local authorities shall liaise and cooperate with Irish Water to ensure the delivery of Irish Water's Investments and other relevant investment works programme of Irish Water that will provide infrastructure to increase capacity to service settlements in accordance with the settlement strategy of the RSES and local authority core strategies, and provide for long term solutions for waste water treatment for the Region.
- **RPO 10.6** Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.
- **RPO 10.9:** Local authorities and Irish Water should work together to examine significant raw water sources which may be made redundant by the Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region with a view to preserving and protecting them for future back up or 'windfall' type economic development opportunities where high water use is required.

Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)

National guidance for planning authorities on Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects in Ireland was published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) in 2009. It was updated in 2010, by replacing the term "Statement for Appropriate Assessment" with "Natura Impact Statement" or "NIS".

This guidance is intended to assist and guide planning authorities in the application of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as it relates to their roles, functions and responsibilities in undertaking Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects. It applies to plans and projects for which public authorities receive an application for consent, and to plans or projects which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt.

The guidelines set out the different steps and stages that are needed in establishing whether a plan or project can be implemented without adversely affecting the integrity of a Natura 2000 site. The guidance addresses issues of mitigation and avoidance of impacts, and also the Article 6(4) derogation provisions for circumstances in which there are no alternatives and for which there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) requiring a plan or project to proceed.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Dept. of Housing, Planning & Local Government, August 2018)

The publication of these Guidelines coincided with the making of the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) and the coming into operation of the Regulations on 1st September 2018 in order to transpose the Directive into Irish planning law. The purpose of these Guidelines is to give practical guidance on procedural issues and the EIAR process arising from the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU and to assist with the achievement of a consistency of approach in the implementation of the Directive.

Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, May 2022)

These guidelines contain up to date references to other Irish and EU guidance and publications to be considered when preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The guidelines contain the systematic approach, standard descriptive methods and effect descriptions that can be used by developers. This ensures that all the likely significant effects are adequately considered and clearly communicated.

2.3 Local Policy – Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 (OCDP) is the current operative plan which sets out locally adopted policies and objectives of relevance to the assessment of the proposed SID application insofar as the proposed development works are located within the functional area of Co. Offaly.

Chapter 11 'Water Services and the Environment' of the OCDP recognises that the sustainable growth of the county is dependent on the provision of services and infrastructure and stated their intention to work closely with Uisce Éireann to facilitate the timely provision of water services infrastructure within the county in line with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy.

The OCDP recognises the impact climate change has on the water cycle and seeks to 'ensure the effects of climate change are mitigated in the delivery of water services infrastructure, in association with Irish Water'. Relevant policies and objectives are as follows:

- **WSO-03:** It is an objective of the Council to co-operate with Irish Water in the delivery of the Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project and to ensure the maximum benefit from this project to County Offaly, in particular with respect to economic development potential and security of supply.
- **WSO-04:** It is an objective of the Council to engage with Irish Water to examine significant raw water sources which may be made redundant by the Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region with a view to preserving and protecting them for future back up or 'windfall' type economic development opportunities where high water use is required.

- **WSP-01:** It is Council policy to ensure 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, a cleaner environment and climate change mitigation.
- **WSP-02:** It is Council policy to liaise and co-operate with Irish Water in the implementation and delivery of the 'Water Services Strategic Plan' (2015, under review in 2020), the 'Irish Water Business Plan 2015-2021', the 'Irish Water National Water Resources Plan' (expected in 2021) and the 'Irish Water Investment Plan 2020-2024' (or any amendment thereof) and other relevant investment works programmes of Irish Water, to provide infrastructure to service settlements in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy.
- **WSP-03:** It is Council policy to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water supply and wastewater infrastructure, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water supply and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate future growth in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy.
- **WSP-07:** It is Council policy to ensure the delivery and phasing of services in the county is subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.
- **WSP-09:** It is Council policy to collaborate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its role as the lead authority for water services to provide an adequate and appropriate drinking water supply that complies with the EU (Drinking Water) Regulations and the Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended), and any future amendments. In this respect, Offaly County Council will have regard to the Environmental Protection Agency 2019 publication 'Drinking Water Report for Public Water Supplies 2018' (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the county, and in conjunction with Irish Water, undertake recommendations made by the EPA arising from any failure to meet drinking water standards and any enlistment on the EPA's remedial Action List.
- **WSP-13:** It is Council policy to protect the Irish Water Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project pipeline corridor from inappropriate development that would prejudice the delivery of the project and to refer any planning applications within the development corridor to Irish Water for comment.
- **WSP-22:** It is Council policy to ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan and to promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- **WSP-25:** It is Council policy to promote the use of green infrastructure, for example green roofs, green walls, planting and green spaces for surface water run-off retention purposes, in the interests of flood mitigation and climate change adaptation.

Chapter 3 Climate Action and Energy

- **CAEP-07:** It is Council policy to support and facilitate European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the following documents, taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage);
 - Climate Action Plan (2019 and any subsequent versions);
 - National Mitigation Plan 2017 (or subsequent editions);
 - National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions);
 - Relevant provisions of any Sectoral Adaptation Plans prepared to comply with the requirements of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, including those seeking to contribute towards the National Transition Objective, to pursue, and achieve, the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the end of the year 2050; and
 - Offaly Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
- **CAEP-19:** It is Council policy that planning applications for development on or immediately adjacent to peatlands shall be accompanied by assessments considering the following issues where relevant; peatland stability, hydrology, carbon emissions balance and ecological impact assessment.
- **CAEP-33:** It is Council policy to ensure that any proposed projects do not conflict with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

Chapter 4 Biodiversity and Landscape

- **BLO-16:** It is an objective of the Council to encourage the preservation and enhancement of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees, not listed in Table 4.13 and 4.14;
 - (a) in particular, on the grounds of Country Houses, Gardens and Demesnes and on approaches to settlements in the county; and
 - (b) as part of the development management process, require the planting of native, deciduous, pollinator friendly trees in all new developments where possible.
- **BLO-17:** It is an objective of the Council to encourage pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the management of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

- **BLO-18:** It is an objective of the Council to encourage the retention, wherever possible, of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatment in the county. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, provision of the same type of boundary will be required of similar length and set back within the site in advance of the commencement of construction works on the site (unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority).
- **BLO-19:** It is an objective of the Council to require all new developments to identify, protect and enhance ecological features by making provision for local biodiversity (for example, through provision of swift boxes or towers, bat roost sites, green roofs, etc.) and provide ecological links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process.
- **BLP-24:** It is Council policy to support the protection and management of existing networks of woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to strengthen local networks.
- **BLP-39:** It is Council policy to seek to ensure that local landscape features, including historic features and buildings, hedgerow, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the local landscape and character of an area, whilst providing for future development.
- **BLO-12:** It is an objective of the Council to maintain a riparian zone for larger and smaller river channels based on the Inland Fisheries Ireland updated guideline document, 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment, a Guide to the Protection of Watercourses through the use of Buffer Zones, Sustainable Drainage Systems, Instream Rehabilitation, Climate / Flood Risk and Recreational Planning'
- **BLP-20:** It is Council policy to preserve riparian buffer strips free from development by reserving a minimum of 10 metres either side of all watercourses (measured from top of bank) with the full extent of the protection determined on a case by case basis by the Council, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities.
- **BLO-26:** It is an objective of the Council to protect Key Scenic Views and Key Prospects contained in Table 4.21, and Key Amenity Routes as listed in Table 4.22 from inappropriate development.
- **BLO-27:** It is an objective of the Council to ensure that proposed developments take into consideration their effects on views from Key Scenic Views and Prospects and Key Amenity Routes and are designed and located to minimise their impact on this views and prospects.
- **BLP-41:** It is Council policy to require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany significant proposals, located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes. This assessment will provide details of proposed mitigation measures to address likely negative impacts.
- **REDP-16:** It is Council policy to encourage the development of environmentally sustainable practices with a low carbon footprint, particularly agriculture, to ensure

that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the open countryside and that groundwater, watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.

Chapter 13 sets out the general development management principles and standards for the County.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 Planning Applications in the Vicinity of the Proposed development

The following planning history applications of significant developments in Offaly located within the vicinity of the site boundary are provided within the submitted documentation:

- **Pl. Ref. 16/144:** Permitted upgrade to Birr Water Supply Scheme (Clonoghil Upper and Seefin, Birr) (Planning application boundaries overlap near the Camcor River on the R440).
- **Pl. Ref. 16/177:** Permitted development for infilling lands and crushing of concrete prior to its removal for reuse at Shean, Edenderry. (Planning application boundaries meet at the road crossing of the R401 at Shean, Edenderry).
- **Pl. Ref. 19/606 (ACP Ref. 306924):** Application approved following an appeal for up to 8 wind turbines at Ballykilleen Shean Kilcumber Cloncant & Cushaling, Edenderry. (Planning application boundaries overlap in the townlands of Ballykilleen, Kilcumber, Cushaling).
- **Pl. Ref. 21/598:** Permitted a 40years Solar PV Development (c. 117.47 ha) at Ballinowlart North Ballykillen Kilcumber Cloncant and Cushaling, Edenderry. (Planning application boundaries overlap around Kilcumber TD crossing the River Cushaling).
- **Pl. Ref. 22/494:** Permitted Development at Cushaling Windfarm (Roads, underground cabling etc.) (Ballykilleen, Shean, Kilcumber, and Ballinowlart North). (The planning application boundary overlaps with the boundary of the Proposed SID development crossing the River Cushaling).
- **Pl. Ref. 25/60115:** Permitted a recreational shared cycle and walkway located on Bord na Móna lands in the townlands of Knockballyboy, Clonad, Rathfeston, Gorteenkeel, Island, Clonarrow or Riverlyons, Drumcaw or Mountlucas, Esker Beg, Killeen, Ballyhugh, Mullalough or Cavemount, Coole, Toberdaly, Newtown, Ballycon, Esker More, Colgagh, and Clongarret. (Planning application boundaries overlap in the townlands of Gorteenkeel, Clonarrow or Riverlyons, at Mountlucas Windfarm and Eskerbeg crossing the R402).
- **Pl. Ref. 25/60189:** Permitted 4 wind turbines in Clonarrow or Riverlyons TD, and Killoneen TD. (Planning application boundaries overlap at Clonarrow or Riverlyons at a power connection for the proposed SID development).

As part of the application, Uisce Éireann confirmed that the proposed wind energy development would not impede the delivery of the proposed SID development.

- **ACP Reg. Ref. PA0047 (SID Application)** Permitted up to 21 wind turbines at Cloncreen Wind Farm (Planning application boundaries overlap in the townlands of Rathlumber, Ballynakill, Ballykilleen).

Comment: The Planning Authority has updated the planning status of more recent planning applications listed within the submitted application and which have been decided since the application details were undertaken by the applicant, as shown above.

It is suggested that the provision of a map which clearly denotes all referenced planning applications within the vicinity of the study area would provide for greater clarity and assist the Commission in its overall assessment of this application.

3.2 Planning Enforcement

There is no record of any planning enforcement case(s) within the subject site boundary.

4.0 Statutory Designations

4.1 Ecological Designations

4.1.1 European Sites

The proposed development is located outside of any European Site(s). The nearest European site to the proposed SID development works within Co. Offaly is The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC (Site Code 000925) which is a distance of approximately 1.9km north west of the subject SID lands. The Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (Site Code 004160) is the next closest European site, located approximately 2.5km south east of the subject SID lands.

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Stage 1) which accompanies the SID application outlines that there is the possibility for the proposed SID to have likely significant effects, either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, on a number of European sites across the full extent of the proposed development.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (Stage 2) dated December 2025 and prepared by Jacobs Tobin Consultants also accompanies the SID application. It states that 8(no) European Sites are of relevance to the SID project works proposed within the functional area of Co. Offaly notably:

- Sharavogue Bog SAC (Site Code 000585)
- River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code 002162)
- Charleville Wood SAC (Site Code 000571)
- River Shannon Callows SAC (Site Code 000216)
- Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (Site Code 004160)
- Dovegrove Callows SPA (Site Code 004137)
- River Little Brosna Callows SPA (Site Code 004086)
- Middle Shannon Callows SPA (Site Code 004096)

Following examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, the submitted NIS concluded *'that the Proposed Project would not adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) the integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion'*.

In this case, An Coimisiún Pleanála are the competent authority for the purposes of assessing this application and associated documentation, including the submitted NIS and making a determination on appropriate assessment.

4.1.2 Natural Heritage Areas

Chapter 8 - Biodiversity of the submitted EIAR examines the proposed development in terms of its potential to impact on Natural Heritage Areas (including pNHAs). The EIAR refers to 5(no) NHAs/pNHAs with potential for groundwater source-pathway-receptors to the proposed development. These include Screggan Bog NHA (Site Code 000921), Annaghmore Lough Fen pNHA, (Site Code 000413), Cloonlara House pNHA, (Site Code 000024), The Mount St. Joseph Woods pNHA (Site Code 000913) and Miltown, Shinrone pNHA (Site Code 2065).

The EIAR identifies potential impacts on these NHAs/pNHAs, including short-term localised lowering of the groundwater levels by dewatering of the soils and bedrock during the construction phase, water quality (silt-sediment loading/accidental spillage) and dust deposition. It further sets out a number of mitigation measures to address any potential impacts.

In regard to 4(no) pNHAs, notably Cloonlara House, Birr (Domestic Dwelling No. 1 Occupied), Birr (Domestic Dwelling No. 2 Occupied), Kinnitty (Domestic Dwelling, Occupied), and Bracken's Dwelling Near Whiteford pNHAs, the EIAR outlines that the potential loss of foraging habitat associated with the proposed development is unlikely to affect the conservation status of the local bat population and thus there are no likely significant negative effects on, or at any geographic scale on these sites.

4.1.3 Special Amenity Area Orders

There are no Special Amenity Area Orders within Co. Offaly.

4.2 Architectural Heritage and Archaeology

Chapter 17 of the submitted EIAR examines the potential for impacts on architectural heritage and archaeology.

The EIAR references that 'significant effects are predicted on one Records of Monument and Place site within Co. Offaly, notably an unclassified togher (RMP)'. The EIAR further confirms that the subject togher will be preserved, in accordance with proposed mitigation measures stated within this chapter of the EIAR.

5.0 Public Services

5.1 Water Supply

During construction stage, for the welfare facilities at the Construction Compound (to be located in Killananny TD) and 6(no) Pipe Storage Depots (located in Toora, Boveen, Fortel, Derrinboy, Derryweelan & Rathcumber townlands), the applicant outlines that a service connection would be made to the potable water supply in public roads, where possible. It states that where a service connection is not possible, water will be brought to the compounds and pipe storage depots via mobile tanker containing water (bowsers).

5.2 Sanitary Facilities

During the construction phase, temporary welfare facilities and office are proposed to be installed on each of the construction compounds and pipe storage depots. In chapter 9 (Water) of the submitted EIAR, the applicant advises that foul water from welfare facilities would be contained and disposed of to a licensed Wastewater Treatment facility.

6.0 Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) including flood modelling was completed and is attached as Appendix A9.4 of the submitted EIAR.

It is noted that the pipeline was not subject to a detailed assessment as the flood risk to, and arising from, the pipeline sections was considered to be neutral, as it would be buried below ground with no potential to impact overground or groundwater flooding processes.

No significant changes in ground level are proposed along the length of the pipeline sections and all watercourse crossings would be below the bed level.

In regard to the proposed Booster Pumping Station (BPS) at Coagh Upper, there are no records of flooding from any source recorded in the OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping for the BPS site or its access road, however according to the maps published under the PFRA, the BPS site is at potential risk of fluvial flooding from a tributary of the River Camcor.

The fluvial flood modelling shows the site is located in Flood Zone C – Low risk of flooding. The risk of fluvial flooding to the proposed BPS site can be concluded to be low.

7.0 Water Framework Directive

It is Council policy to ensure that any proposed projects do not conflict with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (policy CAEP33).

A Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment is incorporated into a separate Water Status Impact Assessment Report (Appendix A9.2) which accompanies the applicant's EIAR. It concludes that the Proposed SID development would not compromise WFD objectives or cause a deterioration in the status of any surface water or groundwater WFD designated

water body and/or jeopardise the attainment of good surface water (or good ecological potential) or groundwater status.

8.0 Environment Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) Adequacy

In this case, An Coimisiún Pleanála are the competent authority for the purposes of carrying out and making a determination on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The submitted EIAR refers to the entirety of the SID as it traverses all administrative areas within the SID boundary. This section of the CE report gives the Planning Authority's views in relation to the adequacy of the EIAR submitted as part of the SID application, with a focus on Co. Offaly.

The EIAR is considered to be set out in a clear format and the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is considered generally adequate. Throughout the different chapters, the EIAR outlines the existing environment providing a description of the context, character, significance and sensitivity of the receiving (baseline) environment in order to predict the likely significant effects of the project and the likely evolution of the environment in the absence of the SID development.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The introduction (Chapter 1) indicates that this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) presents an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects and applicable mitigation measures associated with the proposed Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region. The structure of the EIAR is identified and the persons responsible for the preparation of the EIAR are identified

Chapter 2 - The Environmental Impact Assessment Process

In Chapter 2, the applicant outlines the legislation and guidance which governs EIA and describes the EIA process and how this has been applied to the Proposed SID development.

Chapter 3 - Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives

Chapter 3 outlines the site selection, and where applicable alternative technologies, relating to each of the key infrastructural elements of the Proposed SID development.

It outlines that the methodology for the initial development of pipeline route corridors was published for public consultation by UE in an Options Working Paper in June 2015 (Irish Water 2015b). Subsequently, a 5-step approach (Fig 1 below) was provided which sought to progressively refine the pipeline route corridor from an initial, unconstrained broad search area between the abstraction point at Parteen Basin and the termination point at Peamount in Dublin.

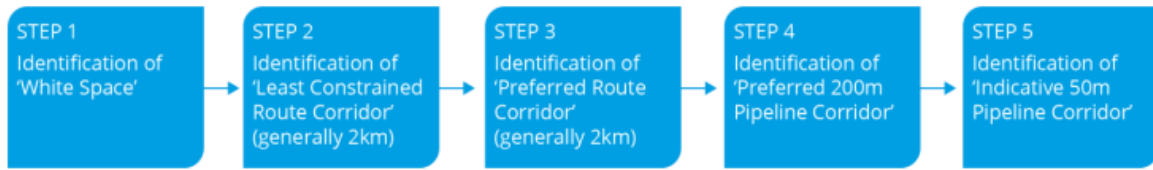
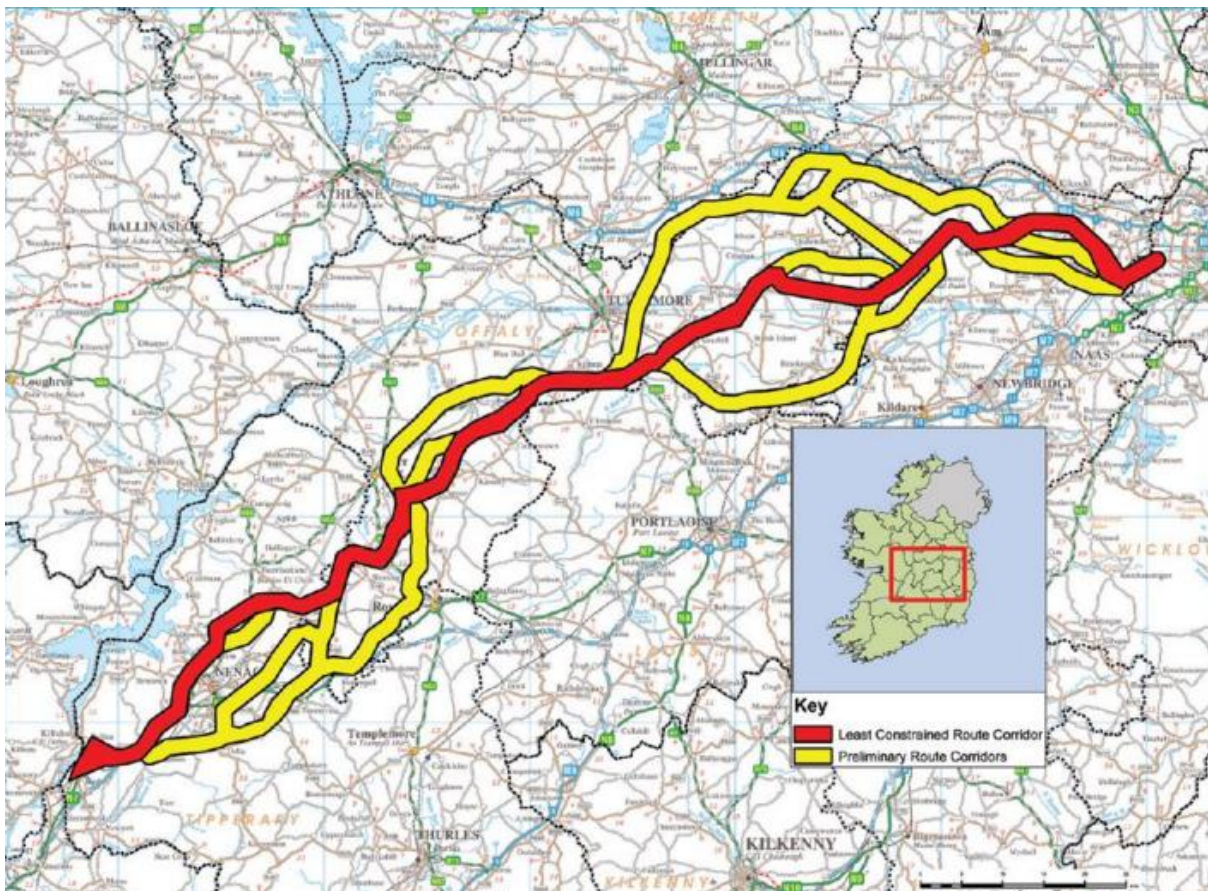


Fig 1: UE's Five Step Approach (as submitted)

The submitted EIA details that since the completion of stage 5, further route refinement was undertaken by UE through direct engagement with landowners and as part of the design development.



Map 2: Preliminary Route Corridors and Least Constrained Route Corridor (as submitted in EIA).

Subsequently for the purposes of reporting the consideration of alternatives (see Map 2 identifying alternative routes), the Pipeline Route Corridor was divided into four sections (with three of the four sections traversing Co. Offaly). The four sections are:

- Birdhill to Birr
- Birr to Tullamore
- Tullamore to Carbury
- Carbury to Peamount (outside of Co. Offaly).

In regard to the Birdhill to Birr section of pipeline corridor, the preferred route was selected as the other 2 routes were referenced by UE to not perform as well due to a number of reasons:

- Longer route alternatives, involving a higher degree of hedgerow clearance and associated disturbance on flora and fauna
- Greater impact potential on local, secondary and tertiary roads, and potentially poorer construction access from the national, regional road and local primary road network
- Higher potential for encountering ground with peat and alluvium
- Greater impact potential for watercourse crossings and WFD (as both alternatives required crossing of River Ollatrim).

In regard to the Birr to Tullamore section, the preferred route was selected as the other 2 routes were referenced by UE to not perform as well due to a number of reasons:

- Longer route alternatives, involving a higher degree of hedgerow clearance and associated disturbance on flora and fauna.
- Higher potential for encountering conditions where construction would be difficult, more crossings of major obstructions and a less acceptable elevation profile
- Higher number of cultural heritage constraints
- Higher presence of extensive areas of peat, and the potential to sterilise mineral resources (less suitable).

In regard to the Tullamore to Carbury section, the preferred route was selected as the other 3 routes were referenced by UE to not perform as well for a number of reasons:

- Longer route alternatives
- Additional impacts on locally important habitats
- Presented a higher risk to sensitive salmonid spawning areas in the River Boyne and Blackwater River SAC catchment
- Greater number of local secondary and tertiary road crossings and less beneficial construction access via the regional road network.

The proposed location of the Booster Pumping Station (BPS) at Coagh Upper, County Offaly, was determined by the level of pumping pressure required, which in turn dictates the power demand of the pumps, with a required connection to the 38 kV supply network. Following an initial assessment of requirements, the location of the BPS was based on the hydraulic envelope and access requirements. The EIAR states that the BPS site comprised a relatively level site requiring minimal earthworks, has a low visual impact giving less disturbance during construction and operation, has favourable ground conditions for construction and was least environmentally constrained. Whilst the power supply would represent a more significant cost compared to the other locations, it was determined by UE that this is outweighed by the benefits of the subject location.

Comment: The Planning Authority is of the view that the consideration of alternatives is clearly demonstrated within Chapter 3 and has no matters to raise in this regard.

Chapter 4 Proposed Project Description

In Chapter 4 of the EIAR a description of the Proposed Development is provided, including details on the proposed pipeline length and supported by six permanent Infrastructure Sites, of varying sizes and purposes.

The pipeline would traverse the administrative areas of Tipperary County Council, Offaly County Council, Kildare County Council and South Dublin County Council.

In addition, the works needed to provide power to two of the Infrastructure Sites (referred to as the 38 kilovolt (kV) Uprate Works) would cross Clare County Council and Limerick City and County Councils, (as well as Tipperary). Therefore, six Local Authorities are within the Planning Application Boundary.

Comment: The Planning Authority notes the contents of Chapter 4 which provides details on the proposed project description.

Chapter 5 Construction & Commissioning

Chapter 5 provides detailed information on the Construction & Commissioning for the following elements of the Proposed SID Development: working hours, number of workers, construction compounds and pipe storage depots, working in peat, construction access temporary construction roads, construction vehicles, temporary fencing, construction and commissioning materials, surplus excavated materials and volumes of waste, raw water intake and pumping station, water treatment plant, break pressure tank, booster pumping station, flow control valve, termination point reservoir, 38 KV, Uprates Works, pipelines, construction of crossings and the handover of the work.

The EIAR confirms that:

- all temporary works facilities (i.e. including construction compounds and pipe storage depots) would be removed, and the sites reinstated to their pre-existing condition and returned to landowners.
- The Construction Working Width/temporary works area required for the construction of treated water pipeline would typically be 50m in width (save for certain exceptions e.g. archaeology & water courses) and would be reinstated on completion of construction works.
- A 20m wide Permanent Wayleave within the construction working width would be required to facilitate access to the pipeline for operational purposes, post construction.
- No properties are required to be demolished in order to construct the pipeline itself.
- Where peat is encountered along the pipeline route, it is detailed that slightly different construction methods would be used.

- An assessment of peat stability (summarised in Appendix A5.3 (Methods of Working in Peat, EIAR) concluded that with the proposed construction management measures including specifically the measures to reduce water levels and try to create as 'dry' conditions as possible that there was not a risk of side slope collapse within the excavation.
- Access to the works areas would be via designated Haul Roads only (Refer Figure 5.21 for Haul Routes in Offaly). A pre-condition survey and post-condition survey of the haul routes will be conducted.
- The main construction activities including earthworks and building the Booster Pumping Station structure would take approximately 12 months.
- The general principles of the reinstatement of the Construction Working Width and the outcomes to be achieved are defined in Section 5.9.3 of the EIAR.
- In terms of road crossings, the method of construction would be determined with reference to the road standard and traffic volume, road width, availability of an alternative road diversion for the duration of the crossing, and topography where a road is at a much higher elevation to the surrounding land through which the pipeline is passing.
- Roads would be closed for between 24 and 48 hours in the majority of cases, with two types of closure, notably (1) Where a road can be closed with a diversion on the local road network, these diversions would be agreed in advance of works taking place at any road crossing with the Local Authority. (2) Where a road needs to be closed and there is no available diversion on the local road network, for example a dead-end access servicing one or more properties, an alternative route or diversion would be provided by providing a temporary road bypass (4m in width) across the Construction Working Width for the duration of the crossing.
- UÉ will work with IFI leading up to the Construction Phase to identify watercourse crossings where gravels could be reintroduced and to agree the works to be undertaken.

Comment:

Road stability on peat soils continues to be a significant engineering challenge for Offaly County Council along with an associated significant financial burden to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the public road network on a year-by-year basis. This is due to the high water content, high compressibility, and low shear strength of the peat soil which extends across vast areas of land within County Offaly.

In this context, given the large extent of peat soils onto which road crossings associated with the pipeline development are sought, significant concerns are raised that the 53(no) proposed road crossings will have an increasingly negative impact on the structural integrity of the County's road network, both at construction and at operational stage.

Further concerns are raised in relation to the potential negative impact of additional vehicle movements on the referenced haul routes required in the transport of materials required

to accommodate development works. The details provided relate to 13(no) haul routes on regional roads and 8 (no) haul routes on local roads within the County.

In recognising the strategic significance and need for the proposed water pipeline, the Planning Authority does not consider that the concerns raised in regard to structural roads/road condition is a matter that warrants a refusal of planning permission on its own.

The Commission is respectfully requested to refer to the internal report of the Council's Roads Design Section, which specifically refers to a number of local and regional roads that are deemed unsuitable for haul routes. The Road Design Section also set out a number of recommended conditions to be attached, in the event that permission was granted. Further, the Commission is requested to consider the attachment of conditions requiring a Special Development Contribution and a bond so as to ensure that any structural damage resultant from the proposed road crossings and haul routes on the regional and local road network and long-term maintenance requirements can be addressed, without additional undue costs being burdened on the Local Authority due to the subject development (both at construction and operational stage (peat stability)).

It is also put forward that ACP should ensure appropriate engagement is undertaken with TII in relation to proposed road crossings and haul routes on national secondary roads within the County and so as to assist in the assessment of this application and address matters on roads at the earliest opportunity.

In regard to construction stage, it is acknowledged that the proposed road crossings and required diversions and haul routes will give rise to traffic delays and local congestion. The importance of early communication on diversions/impacts on traffic flow should be clearly reflected within the updated CEMP.

ACP is respectfully requested to refer to the accompanying report of the Council's Roads Design Section which requests that a dedicated Resident Engineer per Municipal District (Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry) be appointed by Offaly County Council for the duration of the development phase and that all associated costs incurred in these appointment(s) be borne by UE (being the developer) for the duration of the project works.

In relation to river/stream crossings, it is requested that ACP considers the views and the recommendations of Inland Fisheries Ireland in regard to construction works over watercourse/river crossings, where feasible.

The need for consultation with Irish Rail in respect of the proposed trenchless crossing on the Dublin-Galway railway line between Killeigh and Geashill is also highlighted by the Planning Authority.

In terms of waste management, it is highlighted that all activities related to the collection, transport, recovery, and disposal of materials at construction stage, will be required to comply with the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended). This matter can be suitably addressed by way of a condition, in the event of a grant of permission.

Chapter 6 Noise and Vibration

This chapter details that during construction, key construction activities that would give rise to potential significant effects are groundbreaking, earthworks, earthworks haulage and trenchless crossings. It also makes reference to noise associated with the movement of machinery and materials within, to and from the Construction Compounds and Pipe Storage Depots. The Proposed SID development is stated as being designed to reduce impacts from noise through careful site selection away from noise sensitive locations, restricting night-time heavy goods vehicle movements and limiting construction durations where feasible. It is stated that even with these embedded design measures, there would be potential for significant effects due to noise from construction activities in the absence of mitigation measures. These include -

- Significant, temporary noise levels from the construction of one Construction Compound and five Pipe Storage Depots where noise sensitive locations are nearby
- Significant, short-term noise levels at one noise sensitive location along the pipeline where piling would occur due to working in peat
- Significant, short-term noise levels which would occur during night-time working that is required at 15 trenchless crossing locations where noise sensitive locations are nearby
- Significant, short-term vibration levels which would occur from piling, rock break out, and trenchless crossing activities, resulting in disturbance on occupants of homes.

During operation, there would be noise emissions (below noise level thresholds) at the Infrastructure Sites. This is due to machinery and equipment that would be required to serve the processes carried out within each site.

The following mitigation measure are proposed:

- Selection of quiet and low vibration plant, and locating noisy and high vibration generating plant and activities away from sensitive locations where feasible
- Controlling noise at source – for example localised screening and turning off plant when not in use
- Use of noise screening around site boundaries, and around noisy items of plant
- Limiting hours of work and reducing the duration of noisy and high vibration activities, where feasible
- Noise monitoring throughout the Construction Phase.

Comment: Overall, the Planning Authority finds no reason to dispute the details provided in this chapter and consider that any noise and/or vibration impacts resultant from the proposed development would be short-term and negligible. The Commission is requested

to refer to the internal report of the Council's Environment Section, in regard to the attachment of appropriate conditions (as recommended) in the event that permission was to be granted.

Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport

Chapter 7 provides information in regard to the traffic assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed SID development.

Section 7.3.5.1 of the EIAR details that the Haul Roads within the administrative area of Offaly County Council include the following:

- National roads: N52 and N80 (2 in total)
- Regional roads: R490, R491, R492, R440, R421, R420, R402, R400, R441, R442, R445, R401 and R419 (13 in total)
- Local roads: L7004, L3003, L4007, L4004, L1020, L4022, L2002 and L1014 (8 in total)

The haul routes put forward within Co. Offaly would provide access to the following:

- 1 (no) Temporary Construction Compound in Killananny TD
- 6(no) Pipe Storage Depots located in the townlands of Toora, Boveen, Fortel, Derrinboy, Derryweelan & Rathcumber
- Access to the Booster Pumping Station in the townland of Coagh Upper and
- 22(no) Access and Egress Points along the route of the proposed SID pipeline.

By way of clarity, it is stated within the EIAR that an access and egress point is an interface between the Construction Working Width and the Haul Roads. There are 22(no) access and egress points proposed in Offaly which are required for the duration of the construction works. Each point facilitates two-way vehicular movements during the Construction Phase. There is no provision for parking at the access points, but they would facilitate loading and off-loading plant and materials by allowing vehicles to temporarily stop along the Construction Working Width, rather than obstructing the public road. In addition, they would enable drop-off and collection for construction staff who would be bused to and from the Construction Compounds at the start and end of the working day, or at lunch time to use the canteen facilities at the Construction Compound(s).

Comment: The Local Authority's Road Design Section have provided a set of planning conditions in regard to:

- Pre/post full pavement analysis of all haul routes within the county
- Pre/post Structural Survey including load bearing Capacity analysis of all bridges/culverts, or any other load bearing infrastructure along the proposed hauls routes within Co. Offaly

- Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall undertake analysis of haul routes to ensure adequate width is available to accommodate the relevant plant that will utilise the routes.
- Due to peat based subgrades - the following routes are unsuitable for construction traffic, notably the L-1014-1 and R400-6,7,8,9,10.
- Deviation from haul routes submitted within this application is not permitted unless written agreement has been received in advance from Offaly County Council.

The requirement for a Traffic Management Plan to be submitted to the Planning Authority for agreement prior to the commencement of any development is also raised, and should be addressed by way of incorporating a condition into any grant of permission.

Subject to full consideration of the requirements set out within the internal report of the Council's Roads Design Section, the Planning Authority has no further comments to raise in regard to Chapter 7 of the EIAR.

Chapter 8 Biodiversity

Chapter 8 of the submitted EIAR assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development with regard to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protected Areas (SPAs), Ramsar sites, Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), and known records of protected species (such as badger, otter and bat).

The chapter begins by detailing the variety of habitat and flora surveys which have been undertaken and which informed the findings of this chapter. The information gathered from the desk studies and field surveys was used to evaluate the effects of the proposed development upon the identified ecological receptors on an importance scale ranging from international, down to national and local importance and high to low value on local importance.

In regards to Natura 2000 sites, the NIS concludes that the Proposed SID development, with the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, would not adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) the integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.

It is noted that 47 badger setts (Table 8.36) were recorded within the overall boundary of the Proposed Project. Of the 47, the Construction Phase would result in a direct permanent loss of 33 badger setts. Of the 33 badger setts (18 active and 15 inactive) two were considered main setts.

Additionally, the EIAR notes that 14 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) were recorded at 70 locations within the study area of the Proposed Development, such as Japanese knotweed.

In regard to otters, three otter holts were recorded within the Proposed Project. Two holts were recorded as active, while the other was recorded as inactive. In addition, signs of otter presence were recorded within the study area and in the wider surroundings along watercourses crossed by the Proposed SID development. Two of these otter holts are located within the county of Offaly (Little Brosna and Clodiagh River). However, it is noted that at both locations there will be no loss of riparian habitat at the river crossings due to it being located in an area where no loss of riparian habitat at the river crossing due to it being located in an area where trenchless construction is proposed.

The Proposed SID development examines the potential impacts on bat species. A derogation licence under Section 54 of S.I. 477 of 2011 may be required. A copy of Bat Derogation Licence application is included in Appendix A8.24 of the EIAR.

The following mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the Potential for Impacts to Aquatic Species, Habitats, and Water Quality;

- For watercourses within or adjacent to the Proposed SID development, but not crossed by the Proposed SID development, construction works will be set back and a buffer zone will be put in place between silt traps and watercourses, with the natural vegetation left intact.
- Refuelling of plant and vehicles will be done on impermeable and bunded areas with hydrocarbon interceptors, not within 10m from any surface water drain or watercourse or within 50m from a borehole or well (NRA 2008b).

Comment

The Planning Authority requests that ACP give due consideration in regards to the permanent loss of 2(no) active main badger setts and localised displacement of badger population.

The EIAR does not assess how the Proposed Project may influence the spread of invasive non-native species. However, measures to be brought forward to prevent the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species should be fully considered as part of any decision on this application,

Impacts on bats, which will be subject to a derogation license should also be carefully examined in informing the Commission's decision.

Chapter 9 Water

The impact on water on the receiving environment, as a result of the Proposed Development, is considered in Chapter 9 of the EIAR.

The proposed project traverses seven catchments, including four Lower Shannon catchments; the northernmost part of the Barrow catchment; the south-east tip of the Boyne catchment; and the western edge of the Liffey and Dublin Bay catchment. Within the boundaries of Offaly the proposed project traverses the following 3 catchments:

- Lower Shannon Catchment
- Boyne Catchment
- Barrow Catchment.

Appendix 8.1 -8.25 of the EIAR details the extent of river and stream crossings sought by the proposed pipeline. The crossings shown are all water bodies identified by the EPA.

Construction Phase impacts will be avoided or mitigated through the implementation of measures set out by the applicant in this section of the EIAR. It is stated that the proposed measures have been informed by an assessment and the methods outlined in Chapter 5.

Comment:

The Local Authority's Environment & Water Section have provided a set of planning conditions which are outlined in Appendix A of this report. The Planning Authority consider that subject to the full implementation of mitigation measures identified in the EIAR, that the proposed development will have a negligible impact in this regard.

Chapter 10 Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology

This Chapter examines the potential impacts on the Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology in respect of the Proposed Development.

A range of soil types are present throughout the Proposed SID development lands. Peat is a predominant soil group, comprising predominantly cutover peat with no active raised bogs and some degraded raised bog not capable of natural regeneration along the proposed pipeline route. Approximately 53km (25km of these is located between Geashill and the Kildare border) of the overall pipeline passes through peatlands, a substantial proportion of which are lands owned by Bord na Móna.

The pipeline is routed through eight bogs which are included in Bord na Móna's Rehabilitation Plans (4 of which are located in county Offaly, including some that have enhanced rehabilitation plans under the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme).

Borehole data reveal subsoils on the Booster Pump Station (BPS) which is predominantly made up of a layer of (slightly) gravelly (slightly) silty greyish brown CLAY with occasional cobbles, overlying a layer of brown, dense becoming very dense (very) silty and (very) sandy GRAVEL with occasional cobbles and boulders,

The chapter details that measures have been embedded into the design to reduce the impact of the proposed development on soils, geology and hydrogeology. These include avoiding sensitive features, such as active raised bog, during the site selection process for the Proposed SID development and development of discrete methods of working in peat.

Despite these design measures, the EIAR references that there is potential for significant short-term effects during construction from the following, prior to the implementation of mitigation measures:

- Compaction and loss of peat at small areas of degraded raised bog along the pipeline route.

- Potential temporary groundwater flow effects from dewatering (pumping of groundwater from excavations) during installation of the Treated Water Pipeline at Ballinagar Group Water Scheme (GWS).

Comment:

It is requested that the Commission in its assessment of this SID application ensures that any likely effects arising from the proposed development on established GWSs in terms of impacts on water volumes and/or water quality shall not pose a risk to public health.

In this context, it is noted that Chapter 18 of the EIAR states that the relevant water companies, the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and individual GWS would be consulted in advance to agree any diversions or outages and arrangements for alternative supplies. Further clarity is sought in regard to the extent of possible temporary effects which the installation of the proposed SID pipeline may have on the Ballinagar Group Water Scheme.

Subject to the undertaking of consultations to agree on matters pertaining to existing GWSs, as referenced within the EIAR, there are no further matters to raise at this time.

Chapter 11 Agriculture

This Chapter examines the potential impacts which the proposed development may have on agriculture. During construction of the Proposed Development, the agricultural sector may be impacted by the impacts listed in Fig 2 below.

List of Construction Phase Impacts	
1	Loss of use of land for duration of Proposed Project Construction Phase
2	Short-term loss of use of land on or adjacent to the Construction Working Width
3	Short-term loss of land at the Construction Compounds and Pipe Storage Depots
4	Loss of services (water, power, paddock fencing)
5	Disturbance caused by increased traffic volume due to construction
6	Disturbance caused by noise emanating from the Construction Phase works
7	Potential adverse impacts caused by dust emanating from the Construction Phase works
8	Impacts on shelter
9	Disturbance to farm operations
10	Effect on area-based payments
11	Interruption to drainage systems
12	Restriction on use of land for specialist crop production or animal husbandry adjacent to the construction works
13	Spread of noxious weeds and invasive species when soil is exposed
14	Spread of animal diseases
15	Spread of soil-borne diseases

Fig 2: List of Construction Phase Impacts within the Planning Application Boundary (Source: Application submitted).

These impacts primarily relate to the development of temporary Construction Compounds, Pipe Storage Depots, infrastructure sites, the RWRMs and Treated Water Pipeline and ancillary pipeline infrastructure. The applicant outlines that while no individual farm is expected to be significantly affected by all identified impacts, some holdings would experience a combination of effects. Detailed, farm-specific impact assessments are provided in Appendix A11.2 and Appendix A11.3 (EIAR). The majority of potential impacts applicable to affected farms are summarised in Table 11.18 (EIAR). Any impacts not listed in the table are those that are specific to individual holdings and are addressed directly within the appendices of the EIAR.

As part of the EIAR, the applicant has indicated that a number of mitigation measures will be in place in the interest of the protection of agriculture. The mitigation measures proposed include

- Confinement of construction to the Planning Application Boundary. The Construction Working Width area will be fenced off (with a stock-proof fence) during the Construction Phase
- If existing water and electricity supplies are disrupted during the Construction Phase, an alternative water supply and electricity supply will be made available such as water tanker or electric cable ducting
- A Traffic Management Plan has been developed and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor for the Construction Phase to reduce disturbance to landholders.
- Noise and vibration mitigation measures.
- Employ measures to prevent the spread of dust and mud onto adjoining lands.
- Any shelter removed during the Construction Phase will be reinstated, where appropriate. However, replanting will not include trees within the 20m wide Permanent Wayleave, in accordance with standard utility infrastructure requirements.
- Consultation and liaison with landholders during the Construction Phase will take place to inform the appropriate measures to be taken to reduce disruption and to enable proposed SID development activities to occur, as far as practicable, in conjunction with farming operations.
- Pre-construction liaison meetings with landholders will be held in relation to land drainage systems.
- Plant and equipment used during the Construction Phase will be thoroughly cleaned using a power washer unit prior to leaving site, to prevent the spread of invasive species.
- Disease prevention protocols and farm biosecurity measures will be observed as part of normal construction management procedures.
- All construction equipment will arrive on site clean and free from weeds, soil, and debris. Wash-down facilities will be provided where appropriate.

- Within the designated Construction Working Width, controls will be in place to ensure that machinery can move freely within defined working corridors without facilitating the transfer of soil material between landholdings.

Comment:

The Commission is requested to refer to the internal report of the Local Authority's Environment & Water Section with regard to requirements and recommended conditions (Appendix A).

The Planning Authority considers that the mitigation measures proposed in relation to the protection of agriculture are reasonable and robust. However, further consideration in relation to disease prevention protocols and farm biosecurity measures is requested by the Planning Authority prior to any issuing of a decision on this application. Please refer to Section 11.5 of this report. It has no further comments to raise in regard to Chapter 11 of the EIAR.

Chapter 12 Air Quality

Chapter 12 provides that dust emissions at construction stage are the greatest risk to air quality. Traffic emissions at construction stage and the resulting effects on air quality and air quality effects to sensitive designated ecology are also examined.

During the operational phase, operational traffic is the primary source of potential air quality impacts. No other sources of air quality impacts have been identified.

The chapter concludes that the effect on sensitive receptors, both human and ecological due to air quality and operational traffic emissions would be direct, localised, neutral and imperceptible using the EPA EIAR Guidelines effect descriptors (EPA 2022), which is Not Significant.

In relation to Construction Phase dust emissions, in the absence of mitigation there would be short-term, direct, negative and Slight effects to air quality from construction dust emissions, which is considered a Not Significant effect in the EPA, EIAR Guidelines terminology (EPA 2022).

Comment:

The Local Authority's Environment Section have provided a set of planning conditions which are outlined in Appendix A of this report.

Chapter 13 Climate

This Chapter examines the potential impacts on the climate in relation to the Proposed Development.

During construction, the main risk to climate is deemed within the EIAR to be from embodied carbon in construction materials, loss of carbon sinks such as forestry and peat, and the greenhouse gas emissions from construction vehicles. Design measures are embedded into

the Proposed SID development to reduce carbon emissions during construction, such as reducing the amount of materials, and therefore embodied carbon, required to construct the development and in turn reducing construction traffic to reduce carbon from vehicle emissions.

The following mitigation measures are put forward by the applicant to reduce the impact on climate:

- Use of a low carbon concrete to reduce embodied carbon from concrete
- Using hydrotreated vegetable oil in construction plant and equipment instead of diesel to reduce carbon emissions from construction vehicles, and using electric construction equipment where feasible
- Use of recycled materials to reduce the embodied carbon from new materials
- Using renewable energy for Construction Compounds connected to the electricity grid (rather than using diesel or petrol generators), and 100% renewable energy for operational power requirements
- Developing and applying a Carbon Management Plan to inform the detailed design, build and operation of the Proposed SID development.

Comment:

The Local Authority's Environment Section have provided a set of planning conditions which are outlined in Appendix A of this report.

There are no issues to raise, subject to the appropriate implementation of design measures and mitigation measures outlined by the applicant within the submitted documentation.

Chapter 14 Population

Chapter 14 examines the potential effects on population from the Proposed SID Development. The EIAR states that the proposed development has been designed to reduce the effects at construction stage on population as far as is feasible. It refers to the routing of the Proposed development away from urban areas and sensitive locations, and applying good practice measures for noise and vibration, traffic and transport, air quality, and landscape & visual. As a result, during construction, the EIAR outlines that the proposed SID development is not likely to have any negative significant effects on people or communities. It further makes reference to the positive, significant short-term effects on employment levels as a result of the proposed development and the creation of new jobs during construction.

Comment:

The Planning Authority, having reviewed Chapter 14 concurs with its findings that any potential adverse effects on population are temporary and reversible and that there would be no residual significant effects in relation to population in the event that permission was granted for the proposed SID development.

Chapter 15 Human Health

Chapter 15 summarises the potential effects of the proposed SID development on human health. The chapter outlines that the proposed SID is generally confined to agricultural land, therefore there is generally a very limited residential population, largely consisting of dispersed rural communities and the rural catchment of larger towns. Vulnerable groups within the Proposed Project are schoolchildren, residents and patients at nursing homes/healthcare facilities, isolated older people and the farming community.

It outlines that during construction, and in the absence of noise mitigation, the Proposed Development would have a negative significant short-term effect on employment and the economy in the farming sector due to health and wellbeing effects on the farming community. This would be due to impacts on farm businesses, such as temporary and permanent loss of land, and disruption of farm operations during construction.

Proposed mitigation measures aimed at reducing significant effects on health include noise screening and ongoing consultation and liaison with agricultural landowners to minimise disruption.

Comment: The Planning Authority has no reason to dispute the details provided in this chapter and have no further matters to raise in regard to human health.

Chapter 16 Landscape and Visual

This chapter describes the landscape context of the proposed SID development and assesses the likely landscape and visual impacts of the proposal on the receiving environment.

Referring to the Co. Offaly landscape sensitivity, paragraph 165 within the chapter states that *'although there is a degree of recreational and visual amenity within the study area, overall, it represents a typical, productive landscape in the midlands of Ireland that is not highly distinctive or rare. The study area is primarily contained in pastoral farmland and is heavily influenced by numerous human features such as linear transport routes and the nearby large settlement of Birr. On balance, for the reasons outlined above, the landscape of the study area is generally considered to be of medium sensitivity'*.

Within the jurisdiction of Co. Offaly, visual impact associated with the proposed Booster Pumping Station (BPS) at Coagh Upper; treated water pipeline corridor; temporary construction compounds; and pipe storage depots were considered as part of the assessment.

During the operational phase, the landscape containing the pipeline corridor sections and associated construction compounds and pipe storage depots will be reinstated to the relevant prevailing land cover including substantial replacement of hedgerows. The only permanently visible elements that may reveal the alignment of the pipeline corridor would be the line valve locations; therefore, it is considered that the operational phase would have an imperceptible impact on the rural landscape of the area.

With regard to the proposed BPS site, this will include a building with a floor area of 2,160m² with a height of 7.6m; a 38 kV electricity substation, two transformers, internal access tracks, a surge vessel plinth and an attenuation pond. The applicant states in this EIAR chapter that the design of the BPS structure was inspired by the barrel-vaulted roof design of typical barns which would present a modest-scale new building, similar to a large barn or rural shed archetype. The sections of hedgerow that would be removed during the construction phase would be replanted (behind the required sightlines) and once established this planting would screen the BPS from most angles. The applicant concludes that there would be no material direct impacts on any 'moderate sensitivity areas,' 'high sensitivity areas', or 'areas of high amenity'.

Comment:

The most notable above ground feature of the proposed development is the proposed BPS at Coagh Upper which the Planning Authority are satisfied will be suitably screened once the mitigation measures (including boundary planting) have established.

The landscape sensitivity of the subject lands at Coagh Upper, Co. Offaly are designated low within the operative County Development Plan and the majority of development works sought relate to the undergrounding pipeline.

For this reason, it is put forward that any likely impacts on the landscape and visual amenities of the area are deemed to be slight and/or imperceptible as a result of the proposed development, if permitted.

The Planning Authority finds no reason to dispute the details provided in this chapter.

Chapter 17 Cultural Heritage

This chapter contains a review of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage assets. As part of the review of cultural heritage, a study area measuring 250m from the planning application boundary of the proposed development to the upstanding remains of a cultural heritage site or structure was defined. There is no protected structure(s) or structure listed within the NIAH, located within the 250m study area lands within Co. Offaly.

In regard archaeology, the EIAR indicates 'significant effects are predicted on one Records of Monument and Place site within Co. Offaly, notably an unclassified togher (RMP).' The EIAR further confirms that the subject togher will be preserved, in accordance with proposed mitigation measures stated within this chapter of the EIAR.

Comment: The Council's Conservation Architect has reviewed the Cultural Heritage Section of the EIAR and provided their considerations in relation to potential impacts on heritage as a result of the proposed development as per below.

Archaeology:

The most significant constraint is the pipeline's direct intersection with the SMR zone of Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor, a Registered Historic Monument of considerable medieval and early ecclesiastical importance. Additional sensitivities exist around Killeigh village, and throughout peatland sections where wetland archaeology is present.

It is recommended that conditions be attached to any grant of permission which will:

- Ensure that all archaeological requirements are fulfilled where required by the Department. Preparation of a full Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the Offaly section, with a dedicated and detailed focus on the Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor area.
- Completion of a pre-construction peatland archaeological survey for all bogland sections.
- The developer shall comply with specific National Monuments Service requirements including:

(a) No construction or site preparation work may be carried out on the site until all archaeological requirements of the National Monuments Service are complied with.

Implementation of archaeological monitoring protocols for all intrusive groundworks, with preservation in situ undertaken wherever feasible. Implementation of archaeological monitoring protocols for all intrusive groundworks, with preservation in situ undertaken wherever feasible.

Archaeological Condition (On-site monitoring)

a) The developer shall retain a suitably qualified licensed archaeologist to supervise all sub-surface works on site. The archaeologist shall agree a programme of works with the developer and prepare a Method Statement on the finds retrieval strategy for agreement with the National Monuments Service.

b) In the event of archaeological features being located in the course of the archaeological monitoring, the developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in fully recording such features, including if necessary the archaeological excavation of such features. In the event of significant archaeological features on site, the archaeologist retained by the developer shall immediately contact the National Monuments Service. The National Monuments Service shall determine the further archaeological resolution of the site, including if necessary archaeological excavation or the preservation in situ of archaeological remains. A written report containing the results of the archaeological monitoring shall be forwarded on completion to the National Monuments Service.

Architectural Heritage:

The careful management of vibration, traffic, and compound siting to avoid indirect impacts on Protected Structures near Cangort Park and in Killeigh village along with the former Brewery outbuildings, and the wider industrial landscape of Offaly Mill is raised by the Council's conservation architect.

Subject to the attachment of appropriate conditions which would satisfactorily address the above matters, it is the view of the Planning Authority that any likely impacts on the cultural heritage of County Offaly as a result of the proposed development would be imperceptible.

Chapter 18 Material Assets

Chapter 18 assesses the impacts of the Proposed SID development at construction and operation stage on material assets, specifically utility infrastructure (gas and electricity transmission, communications infrastructure, surface and foul drainage, and communications infrastructure), transport infrastructure (roads, railways, and canals), and industrial land use. Table 18.20 of the EIAR provides a summary of the material assets with the potential to be directly affected by the proposed development. The construction flexibility for the vertical and horizontal alignment of the pipeline will be utilised to avoid impacting directly on existing infrastructure.

It is stated that the relevant water companies, the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and individual GWS would be consulted in advance to agree any diversions or outages and arrangements for alternative supplies. In this context, the EIAR references that three Group Water Schemes within Co. Offaly have been identified through engagement with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes for future engagement in preparation for construction, notably Ballinagar GWS, Mount Lucas GWS and Killeigh GWS. Impacts on infrastructure as part of the GWS will be managed in accordance with mitigation set out in this chapter.

The existing road network crossed by the Proposed SID development is shown in Figure 18.1 to Figure 18.59 inclusive within the EIAR. A trenchless construction method is proposed for crossings on National Roads and a mix of trenchless construction methods and open excavation on regional roads with the intention of short closure (e.g less than 7 days). The EIAR details that the undertaking of these crossings will have a temporary medium magnitude impact on a medium sensitivity receptor (regional roads), and therefore the effect would be slight adverse (Not Significant). There are 42 out of a total 104 local roads crossed by the Proposed SID development within Co. Offaly (Refer Appendix A18.1 (Schedule of Minor Crossings)).

It is outlined that the risk of settlement on road crossings will be managed through engagement with TII and embedded mitigation will be used to avoid an effect on the existing infrastructure. This will include a pre-construction assessment, design of the trenchless cutting face to balance ground pressure and using fast setting grout.

Haul Roads are part of the public road network which have been designated for the movement of construction materials, plant and labour at construction stage. They include national, regional and local roads (refer figure 5.21 of EIAR in regard to haul roads within Co. Offaly).

In regard to future baseline, it is noted that any risks of the Proposed SID development interacting with future material asset developments of scale are considered in Chapter 21 of the EIAR .

During construction, no existing utility infrastructure would be subject to major disruption in such a way as to interrupt end users of the material assets e.g. gas mains or electricity distribution network.

The permanent new power connection from the Birr Substation to the Booster Pumping Station would be a buried cable in the road and so would not have an impact on existing overhead lines.

The proposed alignment of the pipeline at Mount Lucas and Cloncreen will not intersect with existing wind farms, there is no interaction with the Edenderry power generation site and ongoing liaison with the operator of Cushaling wind farm is referenced. The conclusion reached within the EIAR is that there would no impact on industrial land use and consequently no environmental effects.

Mitigation relevant to the topic of material assets is set out as follows:

- The alignment of the pipeline was designed to avoid existing assets including, for example, houses and agricultural buildings as far as reasonably practicable
- The selection of sites for the Infrastructure Sites avoided/reduced the effect on existing assets (noting the utility connections would be required and therefore proximity to existing infrastructure was preferable)
- The use of trenchless crossings has been included to take the pipeline beneath existing assets such as railway crossings, major road crossings and power line crossings
- Select trenchless crossing techniques to reduce the risk of settlement including balancing the pressure between the cutting face and the surrounding ground, and using fast setting grout within the construction process
- Use appropriate back fill of open excavation to avoid settlement of ground under existing assets, specifically roads.

The EIAR outlines that during the Operational Phase there would be no impact on material assets (utility infrastructure, transport infrastructure, industrial landuse) and therefore, there would be no likely significant effects.

Comment

The Planning Authority having reviewed Chapter 18 concurs with its findings and are of the view that any potential adverse effects would be temporary and reversible. There would be no residual significant effects in relation to material assets in the event that permission was granted, subject to compliance with the plans submitted and attachment of conditions.

Chapter 19 Resource and Waste Management

This chapter assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed development in terms of resource consumption and the generation and management of waste on the environment at construction and operation stages.

At construction stage, materials required in order to construct the proposed development include soil, aggregates, asphalt, concrete, steel, plant, fuel, oils, material finishes, glass and wood. The magnitude of impacts for construction materials is considered to be 'minor' within the EIAR, referencing that consumption of one or more materials is between 1-5% by volume of the national baseline availability.

At operational stage, materials are all standard industry chemicals that are essential in controlling and maintaining operational process.

The EIAR outlines that the use of recycled materials or materials comprising sustainability features or benefits would be considered during the procurement of Operational Phase material supplies, subject to certain factors including economic, operational resiliency and external market forces to determine the exact material sourced. Additional key water treatment chemicals already supplied to Uisce Éireann may be needed each year to treat raw water, from the current market supply to the whole country.

The significance of potential effects has been assessed and is summarised in Table 19.31 & 19.32 of the EIAR.

The EIAR concludes that In the absence of mitigation measures, construction materials, operational materials and operational waste effects are Slight and Not Significant for the purposes of the EIAR.

Specific mitigation measures are proposed to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects.

The assessment of the effects on the environment of the waste impacts from construction, with mitigation is detailed within Table 19.39 and Section 19.5 of the EIAR. The assessment of the waste impacts from construction post mitigation and operational stage concluded the residual effects would be Slight and would not be significant for the purposes of EIAR.

Comment

The Planning Authority having reviewed Chapter 19 finds no reason to dispute its findings for the purposes of EIAR and findings of likely significant effects on the environment. Subject to implementation of proposals, including the implementation of mitigation measures outlined, and updating the project's Waste Management within the CEMP (as required), the proposed development if permitted, would have a negligible impact on the environment in terms of generation and management of waste and resource consumption.

Chapter 20 Risk of Major Accidents and Disasters

Chapter 20 outlines the assessment of the vulnerability of the proposed development to major accidents and/or disasters (MANDs) and also presents its potential to cause a MAND to the environment. It sets out the likelihood of these events, relevant mitigation and a conclusion on the likely significant environmental effects during both the Construction Phase

and Operational Phase. Table 20.2 of the EIAR presents the MANDs that were scoped into the assessment and which are the subject of this chapter.

The contents of this chapter make clear that four risks – C1c (service strike), C4a (spread of invasive species), C4b (livestock diseases) and C7 (accident during ground treatment) are covered in other EIAR chapters, notably Chapter 18 (Material Assets), Chapter 8 (Biodiversity), Chapter 11 (Agriculture) and Chapter 10 (Geology, Soils & Hydrogeology) and would have no remaining risk of MANDs.

The results from the evaluation of risk, once mitigation measures have been applied, is summarised in Table 20.9 of the EIAR. The assessment details that in the majority of cases, the existing design measures, legal requirements, codes and standards adequately control the potential MAND, resulting in 'Low' risks (as per the criteria in Table 20.4 of EIAR), with the exception of four 'Medium' risks in the absence of mitigation measures. These medium risk areas identified include (i) potential pollution event leading to environmental damage; (ii) Risk of mobilisation of silt during installation of secant piles and temporary piling platform and revetment matting; (iii) Risk of failure of silt curtain and (iv) Risk that during excavation of the trench for the pipeline severe rain, surface runoff or groundwater floods the excavations.

It concludes that following the application of the proposed mitigation measures for the four hazards with a 'Medium' risk, the potential risks associated with MANDs would reduce to a level below the threshold of significance (green zone or 'Low' risk event).

Comment

The Planning Authority having reviewed Chapter 20 notes that subject to implementation of appropriate mitigation (as proposed), the proposed SID is unlikely to result in a significant effect during construction, commissioning or operation, both in terms of its vulnerability to a MAND and also when considering its potential to cause a MAND. The need to further examine spread of disease within farm lands is reiterated. No further matters are raised in this regard.

9.0 Reports of Internal Departments

The Commission is requested to refer to Appendix A attached to this report which provides a copy of all internal reports received.

10.0 Third Party Observations/Submissions

At the time of writing, the Planning Authority received no correspondence(s) in regard to third-party submissions, or referrals from prescribed bodies which may have been submitted to the Commission. Notwithstanding, it is noted that 32(no) valid submissions are indicated on An Coimisiún Pleanála's website as being received by the Commission. It is respectfully requested that the Commission duly considers all matters raised within the submissions made by third parties, in informing its decision on the proposed SID Development.

11.0 Planning Authority's Assessment and Views

11.1 Principle of Development

The proposed development is supported by several key national and planning frameworks including the National Planning Framework (NPF) / Project Ireland 2040 (First Revision) and the National Water Resources Plan (NWRP). The NPF includes *National Strategic Outcome 9: Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources* while the NWRP identifies the 'New Shannon Source' as the preferred long-term solution to meet water demands up to 2050. In terms of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region, a number of regional policy objectives outline support for the proposed development. Such national and regional policies mandate the project to address the 2050 supply deficit, with Uisce Éireann's Regional Water Resources Plan - Eastern and Midlands (RWRP-EM) identifying the proposed project as crucial for reducing reliance on the River Liffey.

These policies are reflected in the County Development Plan (OCDP) which outline the Local Authority's support of the proposed development. Most notably, policy WSP-13 as contained in Chapter 11 Water Services and Environment of the Plan outlines the Councils policy '*to protect the Irish Water Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project pipeline corridor from inappropriate development that would prejudice the delivery of the project*'.

It is acknowledged in the outset that the proposed water pipeline would provide a water supply source that will be of significant strategic benefit to the Eastern and Midland Region, with the capacity to address supply water needs for up to 50% of the State's population. The inclusion of future off takes from the proposed SID pipeline within Co. Offaly notably from both Tullamore/Mountbolus and Dunkerrin/Moneygall/ Borriskane Water Resource Zones are further welcomed.

Whilst the proposed development is satisfactory in principle, there are a number of other considerations required to be addressed including environmental considerations, impacts on rural amenities and communities and other planning considerations, all of which are examined within Section 8 of this report, with further considerations made under appropriate subheadings below.

11.2 Environmental Carrying Capacity

In undertaking its assessment of the proposed SID development with regard to environmental carrying capacity, the Commission is referred to the considerations put forward by Offaly County Council under the relevant chapters of the EIAR which are detailed within Section 8 in this report. The Planning Authority acknowledges that the proposed development has been designed so as to avoid or reduce environmental effects where reasonably practicable and mitigation measures will be applied at construction stage, in accordance with an updated CEMP, which should be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The applicant's proposal for the agreement and supervision of an Ecological Clerk of works at project stage is

welcomed. Habitat reinstatement along the length of the Construction width of the pipeline along with a monitoring programme as outlined within the submitted documentation demonstrates the applicant's intentions in enhancing biodiversity, on completion of construction.

11.3 Roads and Transportation

The Commission is requested to refer to Section 8 of this report in respect of matters raised on impacts concerning the public road network and road safety. Please also refer to the report of Roads Design Section, Offaly County Council, contained within Appendix A of this report.

11.4 Visual Impact

The location of the Booster Pumping Station at Coagh Upper is not considered to be located in an area that would cause a negative visual impact on the surrounding landscape. Additionally, all landscaping commitments/boundary screening contained in the EIAR, if implemented in full would allow for the BPS to further assimilate effectively into the landscape.

In regard to the pipeline works, the landscape containing the Pipeline Corridor sections and associated Construction Compounds and Pipe Storage Depots will be reinstated to the relevant prevailing land cover including substantial replacement of hedgerows. The permanently visible elements that may reveal the alignment of the Pipeline Corridor relate to the Line Valve locations, which are 1m above ground level. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development, once completed and at operational phase, would have an imperceptible impact on the rural landscape of the area.

11.5 Agriculture and Spread of Disease

The proposed infrastructure development will extend across large tracts of farmland and will disrupt a number of badger setts at construction stage (Chapter 8, EIAR). The EIAR also makes clear that disease prevention protocols and farm biosecurity measures will be observed as part of normal construction management procedures (Chapter 11, EIAR). In the absence of certainty at this time, the Planning Authority raise concerns in respect of the potential for the proposed development to give rise to the spread of disease, in particular Tuberculosis (TB) and the potential for significant detrimental impacts on farm holdings and increased risks to public health. It is requested that ACP address these concerns as part of their overall assessment of the proposed development.

11.6 Procedural/Other Matters

11.6.1 Public Notices

An Coimisiún Pleanála is the statutory authority responsible for determining compliance with public notice requirements for strategic infrastructure development. The Planning Authority has no comments to make in regard to the sufficiency of public notices at this time.

11.6.2 Oral Hearing

The decision to hold an oral hearing lies at the absolute discretion of ACP. In acknowledging the strategic importance of the proposed pipeline development, its spatial extent across the functional areas of 6(no) local authorities and the need for an in-depth examination of all environmental and other planning issues, Offaly County Council will engage in an Oral Hearing, should the Commission deem it to be necessary and decide to undertake such a hearing.

12.0 Community Gain

The proposed Community Benefit Scheme outlines the details of the proposed scheme along with the research and stakeholder engagement which informed the development of the scheme.

It is noted that Section 1.3.2 outlines in Figure 1.1 the following 'Emerging Themes and Topics' which emerged from socio-economic and community policy research findings;



Figure 1-1 Community Development Policy Review and Engagement - Emerging Themes and Topics

It is noted from Section 3.1 'Research and Benchmarking' that Uisce Éireann commissioned specialist research to examine and benchmark community gain funds proposed for 10 previous strategic infrastructure developments in Ireland and the UK and found that there is no standard or common approach in the projects studied in relation to community benefit.

In relation to 'Governance and Administration', it is noted from Section 3.2.2 that Uisce Éireann will oversee the distribution of funding to the Local Authorities as Fund Administrators but do not intend to have a role in accepting or evaluating applications for funding or the decision-making process. As Fund Administrators, Local Authorities will have the primary responsibility of managing the distribution of funding to recipients in local communities in proximity to the proposed project.

It is noted that in Section 3.3.1 'Fund Amount' that Uisce Éireann proposes that the community benefit fund amount is benchmarked against similar largescale infrastructure

projects such as the case study highlighted in Section 3.1, Research and Benchmarking. Section 3.1 states in this regard that;

“The amount of funding to be provided is usually determined based on the technology used and construction impacts. EirGrid’s Celtic Interconnector project, for example - which involves delivering high voltage underground electricity cables in a rural setting and construction of substations - has implemented a €2.4m community fund during the construction stage. This represents approximately 0.15% of the projected construction project budget of €1.6bn”.

Section 3.3.2 ‘Weighted Allocations’ outlines that the community benefit fund is to be proportionately allocated to each host county based on the following criteria;

- Scale of permanent above ground infrastructure – the raw water abstraction, water treatment plant, break pressure tank, termination reservoir etc.
- Scale of construction - pipeline length, construction compounds, and access routes;
- Noise and temporary disruption during the construction stage;
- Landscape and visual amenity; and
- Duration of works at the location.

Having regard to the aforementioned criteria, Uisce Eireann propose the following weighted allocations per host county in Table 3.1;

Table 3-1 WSP Community Investment Fund - Weighted Allocations

Local Authority	Proposed % Funding Allocation	Assessment Details
Tipperary	52	Significant landtake, 3 elements of permanent infrastructure (Raw Water Abstraction, Water Treatment Plant, Break Pressure Tank). 26% of total pipeline length. Increased water treatment capacity in county. Potential future beneficiary of new water supply.
Offaly	25	Small Landtake required for 1 item of permanent infrastructure (Booster Pumping Station) and 50% of total pipeline. Potential future beneficiary of new water supply.
Kildare	8	Small landtake for 1 item of permanent infrastructure (Flow Control Valve) and 22% of total pipeline length. No operational impacts. Moderate beneficiary of new water supply.
South Dublin	5	Moderate landtake to extend an existing water site for 1 item of permanent infrastructure. 2% of total pipeline length. Significant beneficiary of new water supply.
Clare	5	No landtake required. No permanent infrastructure sited in County. Ancillary ESB works, minor visual amenity impacted at Parteen Basin. No pipeline elements.
Limerick	5	No landtake required. No permanent infrastructure sited in County. Ancillary ESB works.

Note Table 3-1 refers to the main permanent land takes required

In relation to 'Eligible Communities', it is proposed in Section 3.3.3 that funding will be targeted to priority areas within a 5 km radius of the proposed infrastructure.

It is stated in Section 3.3.4 'Fund Duration' that the fund duration is to be aligned with the proposed project construction period anticipated to be five (5) years.

In relation to the allocating of funds, it is envisaged in Section 3.3.5 'Funding Drawdowns and Carryover of Unallocated Funds' that funding will be allocated on an annual basis by Uisce Éireann and will be released to the Local Authorities upon receipt of a funding draw-down request once specific criteria have been met.

Appendix A – Community Benefit Study (RPS)

It is noted that Appendix A of the Community Benefit Scheme document contains sections on the Socio Economic Baseline of all host counties, Community Development Policy Review and the Emerging Scheme.

The 'Socio Economic Baseline' in Section One finds in relation to Co. Offaly that;

- Most of the county is categorised as marginally above or below average according to the Pobal HP Deprivation Index, with pockets of disadvantage in Birr, Tullamore, Edenderry and Shinrone.
- Offaly had the highest percentage of population with primary education only (12.95%) of all the host counties;
- Offaly had the highest unemployment rate for females (9.26%) and males (9.48%) of all the host counties.

It is noted that the 'Community Development Policy Review' from Section Two reviews the following policy documents in Co. Offaly in relation to the environment, economy and education;

- Offaly County Development Plan (it is noted that the plan period erroneously refers to 2024-2029 when it should be 2021-2027);
- Offaly Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029; and
- Offaly Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

In relation to Section Three: 'The Emerging Scheme' it is noted that the stages of stakeholder engagement which took place with all relevant local authorities and a summary of the main issues raised in feedback received are outlined.

Comments:

1. Community Benefit – Value based model rather than linked to Construction Costs

It is noted in Section 3.1 of the Community Benefit Scheme that the amount of funding to be provided is to be linked to construction costs with the precedent of Eirgrids Celtic Interconnector which implemented a €2.4 million community fund during the construction phase representing approximately 0.15% of the projected construction project budget of €1.6 billion.

It is considered that the Uisce Éireann Water Supply Project is **critical national infrastructure** with permanent benefits to the State and the Greater Dublin Area supporting:

- regional growth
- industrial development
- housing delivery
- climate resilience.

While this project delivers **regional and national benefits**, host counties such as Offaly carry the **localised impacts**, including:

- construction disturbance
- road and traffic impacts
- long-term operational presence
- constraints on land use

- cumulative impacts with other national infrastructure (energy, grid, peatlands transition)

The **value to the State from this project** is enormous. It is noted in this regard that Section 1.5 'Financial & Economic Appraisals' of the Preliminary Business Case for this Project states; *"The economic Net Present Value (eNPV) and economic Benefit Cost Ratio (eBCR) for the base case delivery cost of the project are €29.854bn and 12.25 respectively, meaning that the benefits to Irish society are significantly higher than the cost"*. A community benefit package based only on construction cost significantly **undervalues** the project's strategic importance.

Given the **national strategic value**, it is reasonable that the host counties receive a **proportionately enhanced community benefit** and that Community Benefit under this project should not just be based solely on construction costs but instead on a number of considerations such as capital construction cost, resource produced, overall benefit to the state etc, noting benefits to be derived through the extraction and passage of treated water through affected counties.

However, should the community benefit scheme remain calculated on the overall construction costs, it is considered that an increased allocation to 0.5% of the overall construction value to the State towards the Community Benefit Fund is considered fair and reasonable.

2. Weighted Allocation

The proposed weighted allocations from Table 3.1 are noted. However, having regard to the fact that Offaly will host almost 50% of the total length of the strategic pipeline along with a Booster Pumping Station, it is respectfully requested that **Offaly should receive at least 30% of the proposed funding allocation.**

The Water Supply Project will serve multiple counties, many of which have:

- stronger economic bases;
- more diversified employment;
- higher levels of private investment; and
- greater access to existing community infrastructure.

Offaly, by contrast, is still navigating the structural impacts of the Just Transition process, with levels of disposable income lower than other host or receiving counties (for pipeline and above ground infrastructure), as is evidenced by [Disposable Income by County County Incomes and GDP 2024 - Central Statistics Office](#) in addition to having the highest unemployment rate and lowest disposable income indicators of the host or receiving counties.

The Community Benefit Fund should reflect the need for long-term positive legacy outcomes that extend beyond the immediate scope of the project scheme. A **higher percentage allocation** of community benefit funding for Offaly would:

- support economic diversification;
- strengthen community resilience;
- address infrastructure deficits;
- help offset the cumulative impacts of multiple national projects; and
- ensure equitable distribution of national investment

It is considered that greater recognition of the acute and significant disruption to communities and businesses from the construction phase of the proposed development should be allowed to Offaly in Table 3.1 'WSP Community Investment Fund – Weighted Allocations' acknowledging;

- The impact of approximately 53 public road crossings with excavations averaging 3m deep will lead to extensive traffic management, detours, delays on all sectors of communities in the county. The number of crossings is approximately 3 times that of any other county and approximately half the overall total, leading to significant public disruption and inconvenience and given the linear nature of project it will be across the full extent of the county;
- Extensive haul routes, a total of approximately 300 km, will be used through the county, some of which will be on roads on peat subgrades to facilitate the near 80km of pipeline, and 6 No pipe storage depots which interface with the existing public road network; and
- Impacts on the residual road network from diversions, detours and motorists avoiding HGV's on identified haul routes.

3. Fund Duration

It is noted from Section 3.3.4 that the fund duration is to be aligned with the proposed project construction period is anticipated to be five (5) years. A **period of five years is considered too short** as community groups, sports clubs, voluntary organisations, and local development bodies require sufficient **time** to:

- identify suitable projects
- consult with local stakeholders
- prepare designs and feasibility studies
- secure planning permission and other consents where required
- raise match-funding (if applicable)
- procure contractors
- deliver works to a high standard.

Projects in relation to community centres, sports facilities, walking and cycling infrastructure, biodiversity, heritage and tourism initiatives typically can take a number of years to be realised. A community benefit scheme that ends when construction ends would **exclude many communities** from participating fully.

The Council therefore formally requests that Uisce Éireann adopt a minimum of a 10 year, operational-phase community benefit model, ensuring that local communities have the time and capacity to participate fully and deliver high-quality, compliant, and impactful projects.

4. Maximum allocation per Project

Having regard to the significant rise in construction costs and inflation, and the need to support projects of scale and long term impact in the host counties such as Offaly carrying the infrastructure and the **localised impacts** during construction, it is requested that the **maximum allocation per project under the Community Benefit Scheme be at least €100,000.**

5. Funding of position of Local Authority Fund Administrator

Whilst the Council agrees with the principle of each Local Authority being the Fund Administrator within their functional area, it is considered both reasonable and necessary that **Uisce Éireann fund the post of a dedicated Local Authority Community Benefit Fund Administrator** in each Local Authority.

13.0 Development Contributions

The Commission is advised that Offaly County Council's Development Contribution Scheme 2026-2032 is the relevant, applicable scheme to be applied in the event that permission was to be granted for the proposed SID development.

In this context, unless subject to any modification at the March meeting of Offaly County Council (23/03/2026), the Commission shall note that the applicable development contribution for the proposed development insofar as the proposed works are within the functional area of Co. Offaly is as follows:

Table 2 – Levels of Contributions – O: Uisce Éireann Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region (Shannon to Dublin pipeline): €100,000 per km

- Pipeline Length 85km x €100,000 per km = €8,500,000.

With regard to the proposed structure (Booster Pump Station) with an area of 2,160m², a rate of €19 per m² of floor area industrial / commercial development is applicable (ref. Table 1a: Level of Contribution – Residential & Industrial / Commercial Development in all other areas).

- 2,160m² x €15 per m² of floor area = €41,040.

Total Development Contribution = €8,541,040.00.

Further, the Commission is requested to consider the attachment of a Special Development Contribution so as to ensure that any structural damage resultant from the proposed road crossings and haul routes on the regional and local road network and long-term maintenance requirements can be satisfactorily undertaken, without additional undue costs being burdened on the Local Authority, noting also the predominant peaty subsoils which underlies the County's road network.

14.0 Bonds

It is recommended that a bond be attached (to the value of €1,092,000.00) in order to secure the reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged as a result of the proposed development works which incorporates 53 (number) road crossings within the public road network and also by the transport of materials required to accommodate development works along identified haul routes within the County.

15.0 Planning Authority's Recommendation

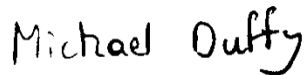
Subject to relevant environmental determinations for which An Coimisiún Pleanála is the Competent Authority and all matters raised by the Planning Authority, referenced in this report - sections 3.0 and 8.0 (with particular reference to EIA chapters 11 & 20), being addressed to the satisfaction of the Commission, the Planning Authority recommends that permission be granted, subject to conditions.

16.0 Planning Authority's View on Conditions

In the event that An Coimisiún Pleanála was minded to grant permission, the Planning Authority recommends the inclusion of conditions as follows:

- Mitigation measures in both the EIAR and NIS to be applied.
- Mitigation measures in regard to badger setts, bats and the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species to be applied
- disease prevention protocols and farm biosecurity measures
- Mitigation measures in relation to any possible temporary effects which the installation of the proposed SID may have on any Group Water Scheme.
- Appropriate conditions on roads and road infrastructure (including pre-construction & post construction surveys/reinstatement costs) [Please refer also to Road Design Section's report and recommended conditions].
- Appropriate conditions on Archaeology
- Appropriate conditions so as to avoid any impacts (indirect or otherwise) on Protected Structures in the vicinity of the site.
- Surface water
- Foul sewerage
- Waste management
- Environmental nuisance
- Biodiversity and landscape

- Updated Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Development contributions (General Contribution and Special Contribution)
- Community Benefit Scheme
- Appointment of a dedicated Local Authority Community Benefit Fund Administrator
- Bond(s)
- Timescale for completion and operation.



Michael Duffy (Executive Planner)

19th March 2026

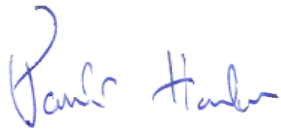
Date



James Condon (Senior Executive Planner)

19th March 2026

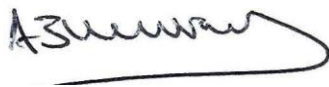
Date



Paula Hanlon (Senior Planner)

19th March 2026

Date



Andrew Murray
Deputy Chief Executive

19th March 2026

Date

Appendix A – Internal Reports

Internal Report 1

Roads Design Section (And on behalf of the 3 Municipal Districts)

Uisce Éireann – Eastern and Midlands Supply Project – SID Application – February 2026

Schedule of Conditions – Roads/MD

Project Management

1. The costs and associated costs of a dedicated Resident Engineer per Municipal District (Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry) to be appointed by Offaly County Council for the duration of the development phase shall be borne by the developer for the duration of the project. Agreements of such costs shall be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority a minimum of 9 months prior to commencement of the development.
2. Uisce Eireann shall appoint a full time Public Liaison Officer and Resident Engineer per Municipal District in Co Offaly (Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry) to plan and manage the works within each Municipal District and be a dedicated point of Contact for Offaly County Council and members of the public throughout the duration of the project. This contact person shall address issues raised by members of the public within 2 weeks of the date they are made aware of those issues. In any case where an issue cannot be resolved between UE and a member of the public, Offaly County Council shall engage with both parties to achieve a successful outcome.
3. The developer shall develop, manage/ update, and resource a dedicated website for the project which shall include project information, contact details for Key Personnel (Liaison Officer etc), complaints submissions procedures and facility, and other information that may be useful for members of the public. Details of such website, and contact details for key personnel shall be clearly displayed on a site sign located at each access point into the site from roads within Co. Offaly. The design and contents of such signage shall be agreed with the Planning Authority at least 6 months prior to commencement of the development.
4. The developer shall submit proposals for Community Engagement events and communications prior to and throughout the project duration. The developer shall consider engagement evenings, project update leaflets etc.
5. The Developer shall consult with Offaly County Council, An Garda Siochana, Emergency Services and Bus Operators in relation to each stage of the works.

Roads Conditions

6.a) Prior to commencement of development the developer shall submit a full pavement analysis of the haul routes within Co. Offaly terminating at the access points into the site that the haul routes service. The analysis shall include PSCI, FWD, RDP, SCRIM and a video survey of road surface condition. A schedule of required works to enable the haul routes shall be submitted to Offaly County Council for agreement with OCC's Resident Engineer (see point no. 1) at least 9 months prior to project commencement in Co. Offaly. Agreed works must be undertaken at the developer's expense and OCCs Resident Engineer must sign off on the completed works prior to utilisation of any haul routes to service the development. NOTE: Offaly County Council are responsible for the entire area between boundaries (hedges, tree lines, boundary walls etc.) and not just the roadway surface. The analysis to be carried out shall include roadside verges, footpaths, drainage and boundaries, in addition to the road surface. Where haul routes consist of narrow roads, junctions etc. appropriate measures must be taken to ensure verges, drainage and boundaries will not be affected by the use of those haul routes.

6.b) Within 12 months of the completion of the development the developer shall submit a full pavement analysis of the haul routes used within Co. Offaly terminating at the access points into the site that the haul routes service. The analysis shall include PSCI, FWD, RDP, SCRIM and a video survey of road surface condition. A schedule of required works to repair the utilised haul routes shall be submitted to Offaly County Council for agreement with OCC's Resident Engineer (see point no. 1). Agreed works must be undertaken at the developer's expense within 6 months of agreement with Offaly County Council.

7.a) Prior to commencement of development the developer shall submit a Structural Survey including load bearing Capacity analysis of all bridges/ culverts, or any other load bearing infrastructure along the proposed hauls routes within Co. Offaly. A schedule of required works to strengthen said infrastructure (if required) shall be submitted to Offaly County Council for agreement at least 9 months prior to project commencement in Co. Offaly. Agreed works must be undertaken at the developer's expense prior to utilisation of any haul routes to service the development.

7.b) Within 12 months of the completion of the development the developer shall submit a Structural Survey including load bearing Capacity analysis of all bridges/ culverts, or any other load bearing infrastructure utilised along hauls routes within Co. Offaly. A schedule of required repair works on said infrastructure (if required) shall be submitted to Offaly County Council for agreement. Agreed works must be undertaken at the developer's expense prior to utilisation of any haul routes to service the development.

7.c) Prior to commencement of development the developer shall undertake analysis of haul routes to ensure adequate width is available to accommodate the relevant plant that will utilise the routes. Analysis shall include determining the capacity of the roads and junctions to accommodate passing traffic, turning at junctions etc. e.g. AutoTracking. Where verges are required to accommodate haulage vehicles, they shall be suitably treated to provide hard standing and no muck or debris shall be deposited on the road as a result of haulage vehicles entering the verges. In any case where this occurs unexpectedly, the roadway affected shall be cleaned immediately.

7.d) The following proposed haul routes within Co. Offaly have been deemed unsuitable for construction traffic due to the peat based subgrades in place on these roads: L-1014-1 and R400-6,7,8,9,10. Should the

developer wish to utilise these routes to facilitate development, a proposal to upgrade these routes, shall be submitted to, and agreed with Offaly County Council, with upgrades completed at the developers expense, prior to utilising these routes for construction related activities. A full pavement re-construction design shall be submitted to Offaly County Council for agreement, including Geotechnical and Site Investigation analysis undertaken, pavement design details and relevant supporting calculations used to establish the design proposal.

8.0) Deviation from haul routes submitted under SID application is not permitted unless written agreement has been received from Offaly County Council. Un-authorized deviation from proposed haul routes submitted as part of the planning application, or otherwise agreed in writing with Offaly County Council, may result in a Notice to Cease transportation of materials on un-authorized roads within Co. Offaly, until such time as an assessment of the un-authorized haulage routes has been undertaken by Offaly County Council to establish defects.

9.0) Prior to commencement of the development, the developer shall submit to Offaly County Council, details of the proposed maintenance and inspection regime for roads being utilised as haul routes through Co. Offaly to facilitate the development. The proposed Inspection regime shall be at monthly intervals, shall record defects encountered, maintenance issues identified, contain geo-located photographic records, and shall propose interventions to be undertaken to rectify defects/ maintenance issues at the developer's expense and a timeframe for doing so. Such reports shall be submitted to Offaly County Council on a monthly basis for review and acceptance. The developer shall be responsible for any public liability claims that arise in connection with damage caused on haul routes by the developer or their agents.

Roads Bond

Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with Offaly County Council, a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or such other security as may be acceptable to Offaly County Council, to secure the reinstatement of public roads and associated structures, which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, coupled with an agreement empowering the relevant planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road or structure. The value of this bond shall be €1,092,000. Reason: To ensure the satisfactory reinstatement of the haul routes.

Prior To

10.0) Prior to the commencement of the development, the following shall be submitted to, an agreed in writing with Offaly County Council:

- a) A Transport Management Plan, including details of road network/ haulage routes, vehicle types to be utilised (including oversized loads), sources of materials, a programme of anticipated deliveries to the site to facilitate development, including no's of loads, arrangements for the protection of bridges, culverts and other structures to be crossed, as may be required.
- b) An updated Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in respect of the proposed development.
- c) Details of pipeline interactions with the public road network (crossings) at each interface location (public and non-public roads). The details shall include, construction details, construction programme, traffic management designs, reinstatement details and measures to protect existing public infrastructure during development works.

- d) Details of all access points from the public roadways in Co. Offaly into the site including access road tie in details, details of site boundary security measures adjoining public roads, wheelwash facilities, measures to mitigate dust and site material being deposited onto the public roadway, measures to mitigate impacts on existing roadside drainage, measures to control vehicle movements into and off of the site, maintenance of sightlines and security provisions at access points to site. Cleaning of Roads used as haul routes shall be carried out daily and as required at the developers expense.
- e) A phasing programme indicating the timescale within which it is intended to use each public route to facilitate construction of the proposed development.
- f) Details of Uisce Eireann appointed Public Liaison Officers for Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry
- g) Details of Uisce Eireann appointed Resident Engineer for Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry
- h) Where Road Closures are required to facilitate works, details of Road Closures, including; Road No, Townland, start and end points, detour routes, traffic management plans, proposed start and end dates and times and purpose of road closure must be submitted to Offaly County Council 8 weeks prior to required closure date.

NOTE: The developer shall be liable for all costs incurred by Offaly County Council relating to the advertisement of road closures. The developer shall inform Offaly County Council, An Garda Siochana, Fire and Rescue Services, Midlands Radio 3, The Midland Tribune, The Offaly Express and any other party/body Offaly County Council require on a weekly basis of road closures relating to the project.

- i) Detailed arrangements for temporary traffic arrangements / controls on roads.
- j) Details of location of works within public roads in Co. Offaly, anticipated programme of such works, methods of traffic control, anticipated durations of works and MSRA for the activities. Road Opening Licences (T1 and T2 licences) will be required at each and every location of works to be carried out on public roads within Co. Offaly. The conditions, set by Offaly County Council, applied to Road Opening Licences shall be accepted by the applicant prior to granting of a licence, and prior to any works being undertaken on the public road. Conditions must be complied with in full, throughout the duration of said licences, in order to satisfy the requirements of Offaly County Council and ensure satisfactory execution and reinstatement of the works. The acceptance of a Road Opening Licence, will be an acceptance of associated costs of the licence by the applicant, set by Offaly County Council, which will include the payment of all applicable Road Opening Licence charges to Offaly County Council, as through the Road Management Offices (RMO) process for monthly billing.
- k) Confirmation that abnormal load permits will be applied for as per Offaly County Councils requirements, a minimum of 6 weeks prior to anticipated load transportation to site.
- l) Details of Uisce Eireann's Project Management Structure for the project and points of Contact during the Management of the Project.
- m) The developer shall submit a proposed schedule of project update meetings to be held with Offaly County Council Management and Uisce Eireann Management at agreed intervals throughout the duration of the project.

11.a) Roads shall be kept free from vehicles and obstructions throughout the duration of the development. Unloading/ loading of materials on the public roadway is not permitted at any stage of the project. Parking of vehicles along the public roadway is not permitted and the developer shall include such unloading/ loading and parking provisions within the curtilage of the development site.

11.b) Traffic Management Plans for each stage of the project where there is an interface with the public road network are required a minimum of 4 weeks prior to commencement of such works. The developer shall maintain hedges and verges for the entire extent of traffic management signage and first sign forward sight distances for the duration of the traffic management. Where necessary, the developer shall provide a

report from a suitably qualified person, outlining mitigation measures for hedge and verge maintenance between 1st March and 30th September

11.c) Prior to commencement of development the developer shall submit detailed designs for the written agreement of the Planning Authority showing roadside drainage details at all site entrances within Co. Offaly.

11.e) Lines of sight at all proposed entrances to the site shall be constructed and maintained strictly in accordance with the requirements of Table 1.3: Design Speed Related Parameters of Tll Rural Link Road Design DN-GEO-03031, April 2017 in the interest of traffic safety.

Bond Calculation for UE SID WSP Project March 2026

- The calculation of the Bond is based on the areas of the Regional Road and the associated County Roads but the Bond covers all road classifications used to facilitate the scheme within County Offaly (National Secondary/Regional/County Roads).
- The rates below are extracted from our most recent tender rates and are indicative only and we have endeavoured to be fair and reasonable in applying same. Obviously, costs associated with any works that require the application of the Bond will be based on the outcome of a procurement process at the time of the works.
- The information below is solely for calculating the Bond amount and does not assign a specific treatment ethos to specific parts of the road. Therefore, the need for the bond and the application of the Bond if required shall be for any section of the road network within County Offaly. The treatment measures applied at said location will be based upon the requested requirements of the Municipal District Engineer and must be sufficient so as to return the road to a standard that meets the technical requirements and specifications for same and mitigates all issues and failures.

Calculation:

The length of haul route on regional and local roads identified in county Offaly is 212.5 km. The average width of these roads is 6.85m. A typical strengthening intervention (based on recent tendered rates) is approximately €25/m². For the bond calculation, 3% of the impacted network, 6.375km, is assumed to require remediation.

$$6,375\text{m} \times 6.85\text{m} \times \text{€}25 = \text{€}1,092,000$$

John Mitchell

Acting Senior Engineer

Roads Section

10/3/2026

Internal Report 2
Environment/Water Services

To: Planning

Planning Ref: PL2-SID022

Date: 16th February 2026



Application for: The proposed development comprises, inter alia: • A proposed Raw Water Intake & Pumping Station at Garrynatineel, Ballina, Co. Tipperary; • A proposed Water Treatment Plant at Incha Beg, Birdhill, Co. Tipperary; • A proposed Break Pressure Tank at Knockanacree, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary; • A proposed Booster Pumping Station at Coagh Upper, Birr, Co. Offaly; • A proposed Flow Control Valve at Commons Upper, Celbridge, Co. Kildare; • A proposed Termination Point Reservoir at Loughtown Upper, Peamount, County Dublin; • c. 172km of pipeline connecting the water infrastructure sites; • Uprating and associated works to the existing Ardnacrusha – Birdhill 38kv line and Ardnacrusha – Birdhill – Nenagh 38kv line, works at the existing Birdhill 38 kV electricity substation, power connections to infrastructure; and • all ancillary works above and below ground.

Applicant: UISCE EIREANN

Location: CO. OFFALY

Report sent to Uisce No X Yes FI Conditions Refusal

I refer to the documentation received in relation to the above application and comment as follows.

Grant Conditions:

General

1. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Construction and Environmental Management Plan shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the construction & operational phase of the development.

2. All recommendations as outlined in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the operational phase of the development.
3. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Natura Impact Statement Assessment Report shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the construction & operational phase of the development.
4. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Appropriate Assessment Screening Report shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the operational & construction phase of the development.
5. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Environmental Impact Assessment Report shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the operational & construction phase of the development.
6. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Water Impact Assessment Report shall be implemented by the applicant/developer for the operational & construction phase of the development.
7. All statutory consents and licences required to commence construction Works on-site shall be obtained prior to works commencing, including but not limited to; Site notices, Construction commencement notices, Licence to connect to existing utilities (including water) and mains sewers, where required, Abstraction and / or discharge licenses, where required, Road opening / closure licences, etc.

Surface Water

1. The applicant shall maintain/preserve any existing riparian corridor/drain present within and/or adjacent to the site by implementing a buffer zone where no development is permitted in accordance with Offaly County Council's, Development Plan 2021-2027.
 - As per Chapter 4 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, Policy BLP-20: It is Council policy to preserve riparian buffer strips free from development by reserving a minimum of 10 metres either side of all watercourses (measured from top of bank) with the full extent of the protection determined on a case by case basis by the Council, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities.
 - As per Chapter 11 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, Policy WSP-22: It is Council policy to ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan and to promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

- As per Chapter 11 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, Policy ENVP-03: It is Council policy to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and the Local Authority Waters Programme in achieving and maintaining at least good environmental status for all water bodies in the county. Development proposals shall not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands.

Foul Sewerage

1. Prior to construction commencing on site, the developer is requested to provide details of how effluent will be collected & treated during the construction phase.
2. In the event that foul waste is to be removed regularly from site by a contractor during construction phase, the developer shall submit a signed maintenance contract with an Authorised Waste Collector and all foul waste must be transported to an Authorised Waste Facility.

Waste Management

1. All wastes arising from/at the proposed development shall be managed in accordance with the Waste Management Acts 1996 as amended. While awaiting removal, all waste materials shall be stored in designated areas protected against spillage or leachate run-off.
2. The applicant is required to obtain an Integrated Pollution Control licence from the EPA prior to any extraction/excavation of peat and any associated Works such as drainage
3. All uncontaminated soil and stone imported onto the site shall comprise non-waste by-product, in accordance with Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, S.I. No. 126 of 2011
4. No development shall commence prior to registration with the Environmental Protection Agency of the material to be imported onto the lands, in accordance with Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, S.I. No. 126 of 2011
5. Prior to commencement of development, details regarding the origin/source of proposed soil & stone to be imported onto the site shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning authority

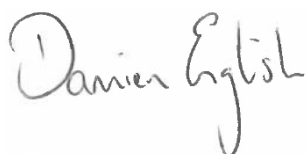
Environmental Nuisance

1. Noise emissions at the nearest noise sensitive location (such as dwellings, schools, places of worship or areas of high amenity) shall comply with recommendations set out in chapter 11 of EIAR and/or the EPA IPC licence requirements.
2. Audible tonal or impulsive components should be minimised at any noise sensitive location;
3. The Applicant shall take reasonable measures to mitigate any environmental nuisance (noise and dust) which may arise during construction. Construction shall take place during working hours 7am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1.30pm Saturday unless otherwise authorised by the Planning Authority.
4. Dust suppression shall be undertaken under dry and windy conditions to ensure that dust deposition does not exceed 350mg/m²/day. Details of a monitoring programme for the dust shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Planning authority prior to commencement of development. Details to be submitted shall include monitoring locations, the commencement date and the frequency of monitoring results.

Biodiversity & Landscape

1. The applicant shall maintain/preserve any existing hedgerow/woodland/trees present within and/or adjacent to the site in accordance with Offaly County Council's, Development Plan 2021-2027
 - As per Chapter 4 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, Policy BLP-24: It is Council policy to support the protection and management of existing networks of woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to strengthen local networks.

Report prepared and approved by:



Damien English

Acting Senior Executive Engineer

Climate Action, Environment & Rural Water

Internal Report 3

Heritage & Biodiversity Section

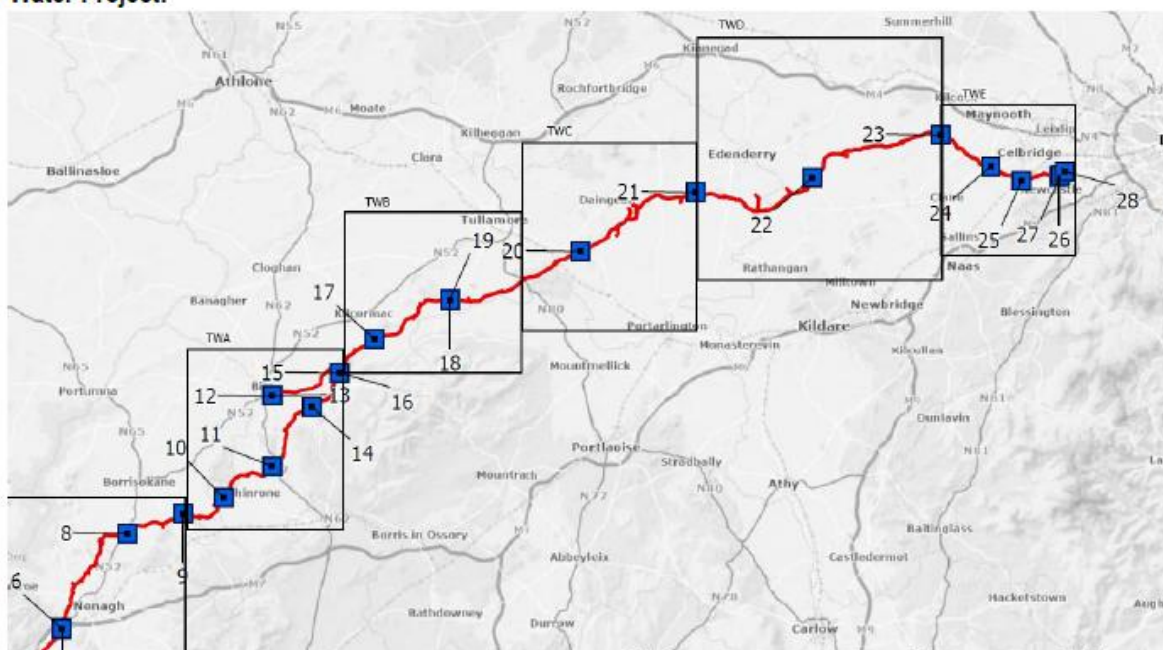
SID022 – draft report January 2026

26009_N01 SID022_Strategic Infrastructural Development - Eastern And Midlands Water Project.Docx

29 January 2026

Options Report – Architectural Comments

Conservation Comments for SID022 - Strategic Infrastructural Development - Eastern and Midlands Water Project:



The documentation submitted as part of the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID022) proposal have been reviewed, including the stated works within **County Offaly**, notably the proposed **Booster Pumping Station at Coagh Upper**, extensive linear pipeline corridors, temporary compounds, pipe storage areas, and associated civil and electrical works. Particular attention has been given to the potential impacts on:

- **Recorded Protected Structures (RPS)**
- **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) sites**
- **Recorded Monuments (RMP / SMR zones)**
- **Architecturally or archaeologically sensitive landscapes**
- **Historic settlement cores and demesne landscapes**

The proposal intersects a very extensive portion of Offaly's rural and historic environment, including lands around **Coagh Upper, Fortel, Boveen, Killananny, Killeigh, Clonoghil, Killyon**, and multiple peatland areas containing archaeological deposits.

1. Architectural Heritage

15. Development Details:

Please tick appropriate box:	If answer is yes please give details	YES	NO
Does the proposed development involve the demolition of a Protected Structure(s), in whole or in part?			✓
Does the proposed development consist of work to a protected structure and / or its curtilage or proposed protected structure and / or its curtilage?			✓
Does the proposed development consist of work to the exterior of a structure which is located within an architectural conservation area (ACA)?			✓
Does the application relate to development which affects or is close to a monument or place recorded under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994?		✓	
Does the application relate to work within or close to a European Site or a Natural Heritage Area?		✓	
Does the development require the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement?		✓	

As indicated in the application form under Question 15, the proposed development does not affect any Protected Structures directly. Following a review of the lands within County Offaly, the project only comes into proximity with a small number of heritage assets. The pipeline runs approximately 500 m from Cangort Park Former Stables (NIAH 14941003 / RPS 60-003) and passes near Birr, though at a substantial distance. The closest point of interaction occurs near Killeigh village, where the route lies relatively near the protected House (RPS 34-006), the former Brewery outbuildings (34-007), and the wider historic industrial setting including Offaly Mill.

While the pipeline itself is subterranean, construction activity—including vibration, vehicle movements, and the location of temporary compounds—should be carefully managed to ensure that works do not, in any way, adversely impact or disturb these Protected Structures or their settings.



Cangort Park Former Stables (NIAH 14941003 / RPS 60-003)



Killeigh village

2. Archaeology and SMR Zones

The proposed route passes through an area containing an exceptionally high concentration of SMR zones, including recorded archaeological sites, peatland deposits, timber structures, and a range of early settlement features. Due to the number and density of recorded sites, it is not feasible to list all individually; however, the archaeological sensitivity of the Offaly section is significant and warrants careful mitigation.

2.1 Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor



The pipeline passes directly through the SMR zone associated with Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor (SMR OF036-035002), a Registered Historic Monument. *This complex consists of the remains of a late medieval fortified house and bawn—constructed over an earlier ecclesiastical site traditionally attributed to St. Ciarán of Saiger. Surviving features including wall footings, turrets, and gun loops form a rare and vulnerable archaeological landscape.*

This area requires particular care, as works may impact medieval and early ecclesiastical features. No works should commence within the archaeological zone or its buffer until an Archaeological Impact Assessment has been completed and the Department has been formally notified.

2.2 Killeigh Settlement Core

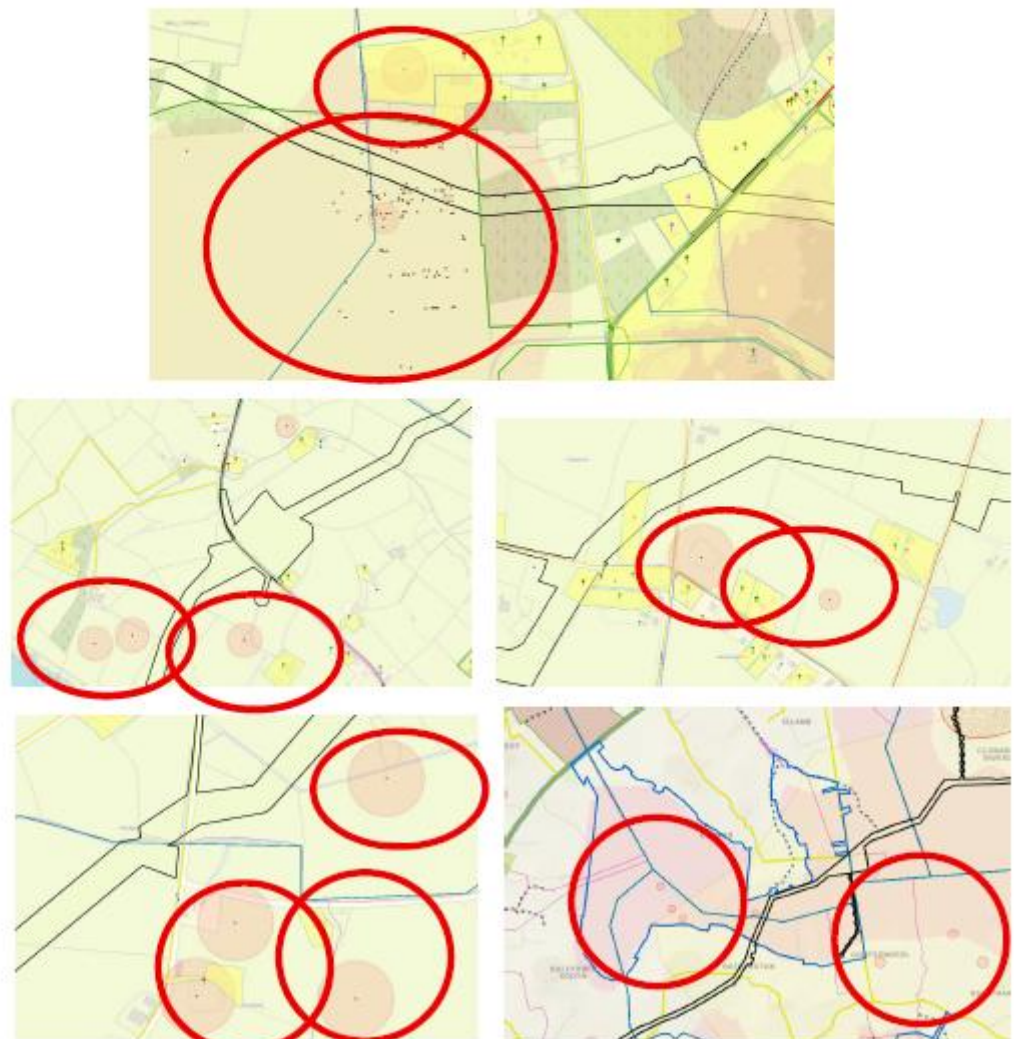
Killeigh village contains multiple archaeological sites, historic plots, early industrial remains, and protected structures. The pipeline passes near the historic village green and the wider SMR zone surrounding the settlement.

2.3 Peatland Archaeology and Wetland Deposits

Peatland sections of the route—particularly around Derrinboy, Derryweelan, Lugmore, and adjacent boglands—contain several recorded archaeological deposits, including:

- Brushwood and roundwood structures (e.g., OF04349),
- Linear timber deposits interpreted as possible trackway elements,
- Moderately preserved timber in Sphagnum peat.

These deposits represent fragile wetland archaeology that is highly susceptible to disturbance.



Some of SMR Zones along the pipeline in Offaly County Council

3. Summary

The proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development intersects a wide area of County Offaly that contains significant architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage assets. While the pipeline does not directly impact any **Protected Structures**, it passes in close proximity to several important buildings, including Cangort Park Former Stables within the historic demesne of Cangort Park House, the historic core of Killeigh village, the former Brewery outbuildings, and the wider industrial landscape of Offaly Mill. Appropriate management of construction activity, traffic, vibration, and compound placement is therefore essential to avoid indirect impacts on these structures and their settings.

Archaeologically, the route traverses an area of exceptionally high sensitivity, including multiple SMR zones, wetland archaeological deposits, timber structures, and early settlement remains. The most significant constraint is the pipeline's direct intersection with the SMR zone of Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor, a Registered Historic Monument of considerable medieval and early ecclesiastical importance. Additional sensitivities exist around Killeigh village, and throughout peatland sections where wetland archaeology is present.

In light of these findings, the following actions are required to protect the heritage of County Offaly:

- **Archaeological:** Ensure that all archaeological requirements are fulfilled where required by the Department
- Preparation of a **full Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA)** for the Offaly section, with a dedicated and detailed focus on the **Killyon Abbey / Killyon Manor** area.
- Completion of a **pre-construction peatland archaeological survey** for all bogland sections.
- The developer shall comply with specific National Monuments Service requirements including:
 - (a) No construction or site preparation work may be carried out on the site until all archaeological requirements of the National Monuments Service are complied with.
- Implementation of **archaeological monitoring protocols** for all intrusive groundworks, with preservation in situ undertaken wherever feasible.
- **Archaeological Condition (On-site monitoring)**
 - a) The developer shall retain a suitably qualified licensed archaeologist to supervise all sub-surface works on site. The archaeologist shall agree a programme of works with the developer and prepare a Method Statement on the finds retrieval strategy for agreement with the National Monuments Service.
 - b) In the event of archaeological features being located in the course of the archaeological monitoring, the developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in fully recording such features, including if necessary the archaeological excavation of such features. In the event of significant archaeological features on site, the archaeologist retained by the developer shall immediately contact the National Monuments Service. The National Monuments Service shall determine the further archaeological resolution of the site, including if necessary archaeological excavation or the preservation in situ of archaeological remains. A written report containing the results of the archaeological monitoring shall be forwarded on completion to the National Monuments Service.
- **Careful management of vibration, traffic, and compound siting** to avoid indirect impacts on Protected Structures near Cangort Park and in Killeigh village.

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Internal Report 4

Chief Fire Officer Report



**Central Fire Station
Tullamore**

Tel: 057 - 9327410
Fax: 057 - 93

Our Ref: EOC/NS

16 February 2026

The Planning Officer,
Offaly County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Charleville Road,
Tullamore.

RE: SID022 -

AT: , Uisce Éireann , Tullamore, Co. Offaly

APPLICANT:

A Chara,

With reference to yours received on the 16 February 2026 concerning the above, I have no objections to the GRANTING of planning permission to this development.

Please let me have a copy of the Councils final decision.

Nick Smyth
SENIOR ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

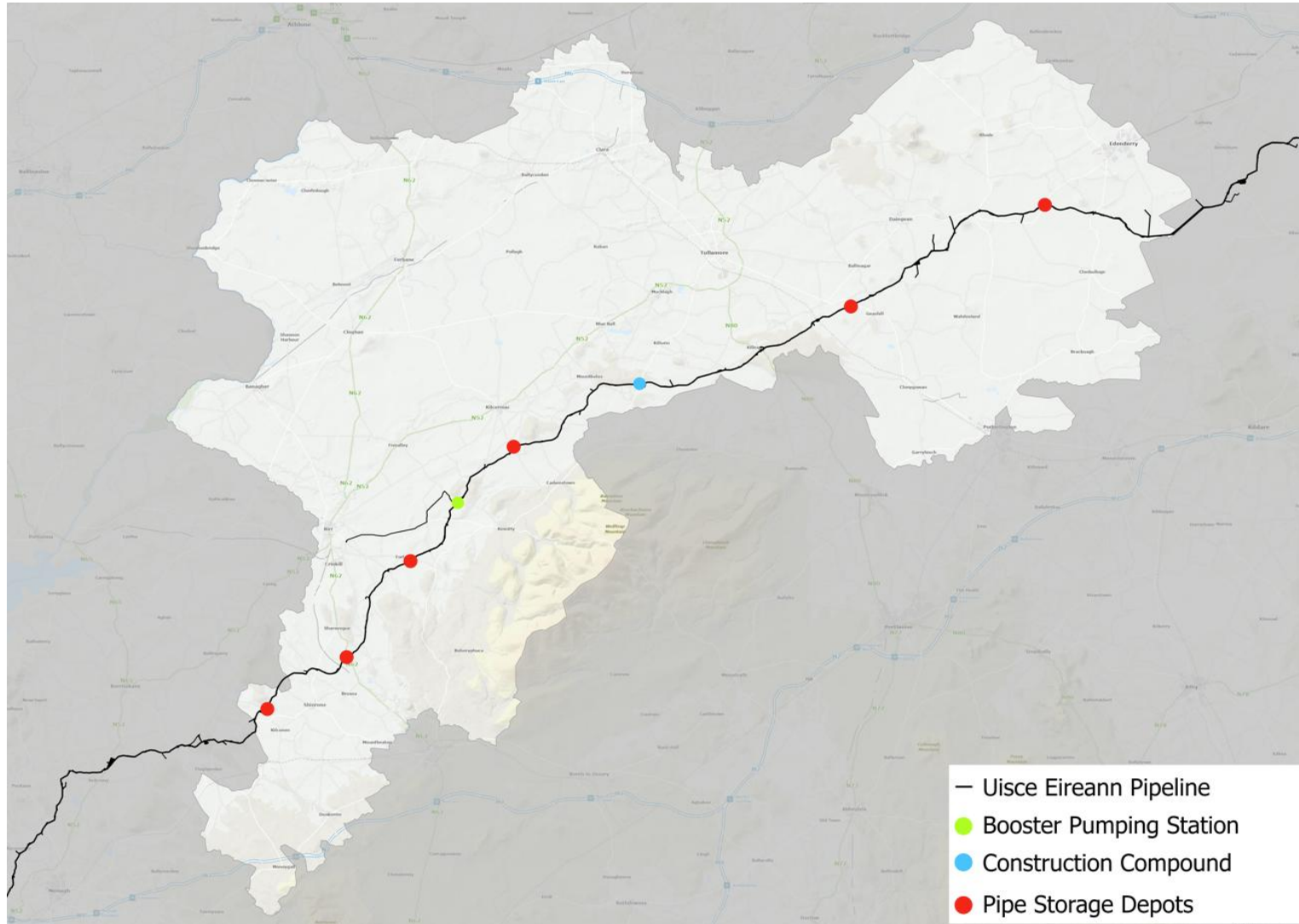
Appendix B List of all Townlands that the Proposed Development is sought within

The proposed SID extends across the functional areas of 6(no) County Councils notably: Co. Clare, Co. Limerick, Co. Tipperary, Co. Offaly, Co. Kildare & South Dublin. It encompasses an area of approximately 1,233 hectares (ha). The townlands included within the proposed development are listed within the table below.

Townlands which are included within the public notices with respect to the overall proposed SID application	
Townlands within Co. Limerick	Roo West, Lakyle, Roo East, Blackwater, Ballyglass, Coolderry, Dromintobin North, Knockbrack Upper, Monaskeha, Cappakea, Bartleystown, Aughboy and Ardataggle
Townlands within Co. Clare	Montpelier and Fairyhall;
Townlands within Co. Tipperary	Birdhill, Garrynatineel, Coolnadornory, Kilmaglasderry, Gortybrigane, Knockadromin, Lackenavea (Egremont), Incha Beg, Lackenavea (Dunalley), Greenhills, Kilmastulla, Boher, Cappadine, Ballinteenoe, Killalane, Gortnaskehy, Kilnacranra, Gortmore, Castlecranna, Ballycuddy More, Dromin, Carrigatogher (Abbott), Ballyhisky, Carrigatogher (Harding), Carrigatogher (Ryan), Kilcolman, Carrigatogher Bog (Harding), Carrigatogher Bog (Abbott), Monsea, Tullamore, Carrigatogher Bog (Ryan), Clareen, Belleen Lower, Ballycommon, Richmond, Boolagelagh, Ballyannymore, Ballyanny Lower, Knigh, Drumminascart, Loughourna, Ashley park, Ballythomas, Ardrony, Lisgarrieff, Ballylusky, Lisnasoolmoy, Drumroe, Corrowle, Eminiska, Hilton, Modreeny, Killurane, Knockanacree, Loughaun, Gortavalla, Cowbawn, Newtown (Hodgins), Newtown (Guest), Behamore (Hawkshaw) and Quakerstown;
Townlands within Co. Offaly	Toora, Derrinclare, Cangort Park, Ballaghboy, Kilmurryely, Galbally, Tonagh, Curralanty, Tubbrid, Boveen, Clonoghil Upper, Rath More, Clonoghil Lower, Gorteenafoly or Newhall, Cree, Kilcolman, Ballyatty, Clonbeg, Clonbrone, Nadneagh, Killeenbreaghan,

	Fortel, Killaun, Castletown, Ballinree, Oakleypark, Kilmaine, Killyon, Rathgibbon South, Rathgibbon North, Killinure, Streamstown, Breaghmore, Coagh Lower, Cloghanmore, Coagh Upper, Ballyroe, Pass, Kiltubbrid Island, Money, Laughil, Derrinboy, Coolfin Glebe, Killeen and Lugnaboley, Knockhill and Drinagh, Ballindrinnan, Ballynacarrig, Derries, Gortacur, Clonshannagh, Rathrobin, Clondonnell Glebe, Killananny, Annaghmore, Gorteen, Killeigh, Ballinvally, Millbrook, Finter, Raheenduff, Cloncoher, Killellery, Curragh, Derryweelan, Lugmore, Alderborough, Ballyduff South, Dalgan, Clonad, Rathfeston, Island, Gorteenkeel, Clonarrow or Riverlyons, Killoneen, Esker Beg, Drumcaw or Mountlucas, Ballyhugh or Springfield, Ballycon, Newtown, Esker More, Rathlumber, Rathvilla or Rathclonbrackan Ballinrath, Ballykilleen, Ballynakill, Kilcumber, Shean, Cloncant, Cushaling and Codd.
Townlands within Co. Kildare	Ticknevin, Kilpatrick, Ballybrack, Drummond, Kilkeaskin, Ballynakill Lower, Parsonstown, Loughnacush, Drehid, Timahoe West, Timahoe East, Coologmartin, Derryvarroge, Derrycrib, Newtownmoneenluggagh, Fanaghs, Cooltrim South, Donadea, Aghafullim, Clonshanbo, Belgard, Farranadum, Baltracey, Raheen, Barreen, Graiguesallagh, Johninstown, Baybush, Newtownmacabe, Barberstown Upper, Barberstown, Barberstown Lower, Castledillon Upper, Ardrass Upper, Reeves, Friarstown, Commons Upper, Kearneystown Upper, Dangan and Kearneystown Lower;
Townlands within Co. Dublin	Ringwood, Colganstown, Commons, Hynestown, Keeloges, Peamount, Loughtown Upper and Milltown.

Appendix C: Map delineating proposed infrastructure within Co. Offaly as part of the SID application (Source Offaly County Council)





**Views of the Elected Members
at the March Month Meeting of Offaly County Council
held on the 23 March 2026**

**Uisce Eireann Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region
Chief Executive Report - Strategic Infrastructure Development**

Background

The executive made a presentation to the elected members in respect of Offaly County Council's Chief Executive Report on the above Strategic Infrastructure Development, as required by Section 37E(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The elected members were informed that the Planning Authority report is to be submitted to An Coimisiun Pleanála no later than close of business on 30 March 2026. The application decision date is stated as 30 June 2026.

Views of the Elected Members

Cllr. Leahy: Thanked Uisce Eireann for meeting with the elected members on two occasions at the request of the Council prior to the submission of the proposed SID.

Cllr. S. O'Brien: Thanked the executive for their presentation and noted that there has been substantial discussion on the proposed SID and that the CE report contains a number of views which are shared by the Elected Members. In broad terms, Cllr. O' Brien referred to the positive considerations outlined within the report and referred to a strong focus on innovation shown in the report. Cllr. O' Brien welcomes the proposed project and highlighted the significant impact in which it will have on County Offaly by providing a reliable water supply and certainty for the delivery of housing and economic development within the County going forward.

The Councillor as referred to the substantial impact of the proposed development works on the County's roads, particularly peat-based roads and referred to the importance of a Special Contribution to cover the costs incurred in relation to road works/road enhancements arising from the proposed development.

Cllr. O' Brien considers that Uisce Eireann's proposed Community Gain Scheme is not comprehensive enough and advised that a fund which will leave an economic legacy on Co. Offaly and support economic diversification is required. The maximum fund allocation put forward by UE was also queried by Cllr. O' Brien. The Councillor referred to the €100,000 community gain figure with consideration suggested in the context of providing an industrial unit in each municipal district (and required financial supports). Cllr. O' Brien expressed his support for the project.

Cllr. P. Ormond: Thanked the executive for the comprehensive report. Cllr. Ormond queried matters in relation to roads and traffic and the need for a bond (including when a bond can be called in) and whether the stated bond figure as recommended by the executive is sufficient. In relation to take-off water points (Tullamore-Mountbolus and Dunkerrin-Moneygall), Cllr. Ormond sought confirmation on these take-off points. Finally, Cllr. Ormond queried whether the current 5 km limit for the Community Benefit Fund could be increased to 8 km to ensure that communities, particularly those in rural areas are able to avail of the scheme.

Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick: Thanked the executive on their work in relation to proposed SID. Concerns were expressed regarding lorries using narrow local roads (at construction stage) and the ongoing challenge of maintaining such roads due to damage caused by construction traffic. Cllr. Fitzpatrick put forward that the presence of badger setts should be carefully considered in advance of construction, noting in particular so as to assist in preventing the spread of TB on farms.

Cllr. S. Maher: Thanked the executive for their presentation. Cllr. Maher noted that it is a significant project for the Country and is very much welcomed within Co. Offaly. Cllr. Maher referred to the need for this development to accommodate future economic development within Offaly and shared the views that were previously expressed by Cllr. O' Brien.

The matters of community gain was queried. Cllr. Maher asked whether community gain fund should be increased from 30% to 50% for Offaly, given the extent of the project works within Co. Offaly.

Concern was expressed regarding impacts on roads, in particular in relation to impacts on the N52.

Cllr. Leahy: Commented on the proposal put forward in relation to Community Gain, the recommendations set out within the CE report along with the need for an administrator for the fund and attracting industry to the County.

Proposed Resolution

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. S. Maher, the elected members of Offaly County Council resolved to adopt the Chief Executive's Report - Uisce Eireann Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region in the counties of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Offaly, Kildare and Dublin - Strategic Infrastructure Development Application – Section 37E(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), subject to the increase in area of eligibility for the Community Benefit Scheme to 8 kilometres (as above).

Name	Position	Hours Spent	Hourly Rate	TOTAL
Andrew Murray	Director of Services	14.5	€71.05	€ 1,030.23
Michael Duffy	Executive Planner	105	€43.80	€ 4,599.00
Paula Hanlon	Senior Planner	35	€52.04	€ 1,821.40
Damien English	Acting Senior Executive Engineer	21	€35.39	€ 743.19
Wiktoria Stepczynska-Motyl	Technician Grade I	3	€26.97	€ 80.91
Rachel McKenna	Senior Executive Architect	4	€43.67	€ 174.68
John Mitchell	Acting Senior Engineer	8	€47.59	€ 380.72
Brian Keenaghan	Senior Executive Engineer	12	€47.07	€ 564.84
Niall Hogan	Executive Engineer	12	€40.20	€ 482.40
Pat Dermody	Executive Engineer	8	€45.86	€ 366.88
Joe Dunican	Executive Engineer	6	€37.80	€ 226.80
Brian Moyles	Assistant Engineer	4	€35.73	€ 142.92
Rory Moore	Senior Executive Engineer	13.5	€48.43	€ 653.81
Enda Daly	Executive Engineer	15.5	€37.80	€ 585.90
Deirdre McGrath	Technican Grade I	1	€31.96	€ 31.96
Joe Dooley	Senior Executive Engineer	8	€45.19	€ 361.52
Eoin Curran	Executive Engineer	8	€41.40	€ 331.20
TOTAL		278.5		€ 12,578.36