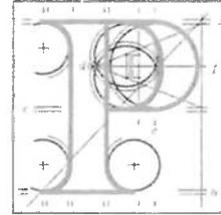


Our Case Number: ACP-323980-25



**An
Coimisiún
Pleanála**

Laois County Council
Aras an Chontae
Portlaoise
Co. Laois
R32 EHP9

Date: 06 March 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 note that local authorities are not required to pay a fee to make submissions/observations in relation to this case. Accordingly, please be advised that a refund for the €50 that you have paid (submission reference: SID-OBS-004645) will issue, in due course, to the debit/credit card used to make the submission.

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 authorities 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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COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Comhairle Chontae
Laoise
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R32 EHP9

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An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Rounda,
Dublin 1
D01 V902

25th February, 2026

RE: Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region –
Planning Application Lodged to An Coimisiún Pleanála

To Whom It May Concern,

Please find attached detailed assessment having regard to the opportunity provided to submit observations regarding the Shannon to Dublin Water Supply Project (SDWSP)

Laois County Council notes the significance of the SDWSP and the numerous positive impacts the Project brings to settlements and communities that benefit from this critical, nationally important, infrastructure project. As such, the Council wishes to express support for the project.

County Laois is somewhat unique in that all public drinking water supplies are sourced from groundwater aquifers. This type of source has several benefits, most particularly the quality of the untreated water sources. However, there are operational vulnerabilities, including;

- Vulnerability to drought - prolonged periods of drought will result in reduced aquifer levels and an associated risk to the provision of continuous, uninterrupted, water supplies from groundwater sources. Climate change and ongoing, increasing demand from the resource exacerbates this risk,
- Vulnerability to pollution incidents – pollution incidents to groundwater aquifers, including diffuse and/or point source pollution incidents present an ongoing risk to the uninterrupted supply of water from groundwater sources.

Provision of a new water mains, linking the SDWSP to the Portarlinton Public Water Supply and to the broader water supply network in County Laois, is, in our view, an obvious and necessary intervention to be added to the current proposals. There is a significant and strategic opportunity, presented by the SDWSP, to enhance resilience and to protect public health in the provision of public water services County Laois.

Tá Fáilte Romhat
Gnó a Dhéanamh
as Gaeilge


Midlands
IRELAND

'I bpáirt leis an bpobal'
Arna phríontáil ar pháipéar aid 100% athchúrsáilte – Do Chomhshaoil a cheadú





COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

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R32 EHP9

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The opportunity, if taken, fulfils key functions, including;

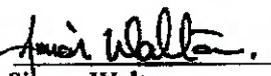
- The provision of a robust, reliable, alternative source into the water distribution system, in the event of an emergency issue (drought, pollution of boreholes) affecting Laois Public Water Supplies,
- The provision of extra capacity and resilience into the system to cater for the increasing water supply needs.

County Laois continues to grow. Having regard to recent Ministerial Guidelines, Laois County Council is planning to zone lands for an additional 8,250 dwellings over the next 5 years. The majority of these units will be located in Portlaoise, given its position in the settlement hierarchy. This equates to c.20,000pe or 4Ml/d. The figures provided make no allowance for commercial or industrial developments, some potentially requiring high water supply demands etc.

Continuing to rely on groundwater sources alone does not support resilience in public water supply for County Laois.

In conclusion the importance of the SDWSP, for the Greater Dublin Area and for other Counties benefitting from the proposals, is acknowledged. However it is recommended that consideration is given to enhanced resilience measures for County Laois and that these enhanced resilience measures are considered in greater detail and addressed.

Regards,


Simon Walton,
Director of Services,
Laois County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Portlaoise,
Co Laois.
R32 EHP9
swalton@laoiscoco.ie

Tá Fáilte Romhat
Gnó a Dhéanamh
as Gaeilge


Midlands
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Arna phriontáil ar pháipéar and 100% atchúlscráite -- Do Chomhaltasóil a chosú



**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

PLANNING REPORT



**ACP REFERENCE:
ACP- PA92.323980**

Applicant Name:	Uisce Eireann
Development Description:	<p>In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Uisce Éireann gives notice of its intention to make an application for permission to An Coimisiún Pleanála in relation to the following proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID)</p> <p>The proposed development will primarily consist of 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.</p>

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4.0	The Proposed Development	6
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1.0 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is in accordance with the requirements of Section 37E(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended (the Act) is to set out the views of Laois County Council on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and on the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, with particular regard to the matters specified in section 34(2) namely:

- i) The provision of the Development Plan
- ii) The provision of any special amenity area order relation to the area
- iii) Any European site or other area prescribed for the purposes of Section 10(2) (c)
- iv) Where relevant, the policy of the Government, The Minister or any Minister of the Government
- v) The matters referred to in subsection (4) (i.e. conditions)
- vi) Any other relevant provision or requirement of this act and any regulations made thereunder.

The deadline for the submission or observations to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the **Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region** is **5:30pm on 25 February 2026**.

2.0 Planning Application Submission

The planning application includes the following information, which, where necessary, is cross referred in this report:

- Statutory Documents
- Planning Documents including:
 - Planning Report
 - SID Engineering Report
 - Material Contravention Statement
 - Consultation Report
 - Community Gain Proposal
 - Draft Abstraction Document
 - Planning Drawings
- Environmental Documents
 - Appropriate Assessment Screening
 - Natura Impact Statement
 - Volume 1 (Non Technical Summary)
 - Volume 2 (EIR Main Report)
- Commission Documents
- Third Party Documents

3.0 Site Location

The project comprises 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 Parteen Basin in County Tipperary, through the Midlands, to Peamount in County Dublin.

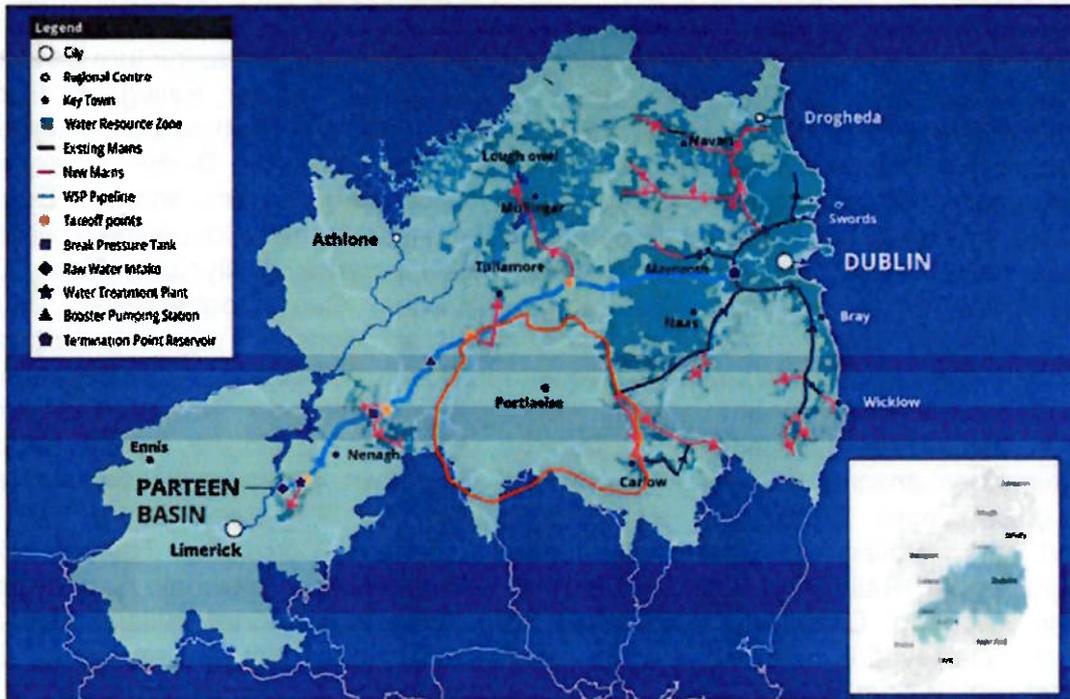


Figure 4.3 – Overview of the Pipeline and Proposed Take-off Points. (Source: Uisce Éireann)

The alignment of the application includes six Local Authorities, namely Tipperary County Council, Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Offaly County Council, Kildare County Council and South Dublin County Council.

However, it excludes County Laois.

4.0 The Proposed Development

4.1 Description of Development

The description of the proposed development as per the Site Notice to An Bord Pleanála is as follows:

In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Uisce Éireann gives notice of its intention to make an application for permission to An Coimisiún Pleanála in relation to the following proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) in the townlands of: Roo West, Lakyle, Roo East, Blackwater, Ballyglass, Coolderry, Dromintobin North, Knockbrack Upper, Monaskeha, Cappakea, Bartleystown, Aughboy and Ardataggle Co. Clare; Montpellier and Fairyhall, Co. Limerick; Birdhill, Garrynatineel, Coolnadornory, Kilmaglasderry, Gortybrigane, Knockadromin, Lackenavea (Egremont), Incha Beg, Lackenavea (Dunalley), Greenhills, Kilmastulla, Boher, Cappadine, Ballinteenoe, Killalane, Gortnaskehy, Kilnacrana, 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, Lisgarriff, Ballylusky, Lisnasoolmoy, Drumroe, Corrowle, Eminiska, Hilton, Modreeny, Killurane, Knockanacree, Loughaun, Gortavalla, Cowbawn, Newtown (Hodgins), Newtown (Guest), Behamore (Hawkshaw) and Quakerstown Co. Tipperary; 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, Killelery, 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 Co. Offaly; Ticknevin, Kilpatrick, Ballybrack, Drummond, Kilkeaskin, Ballynakill Lower, Parsonstown, Loughnacush, Drehid, Timahoe West, Timahoe East, Coolmartin, 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, Co. Kildare; Ringwood, Colganstown, Commons, Hynestown, Keeloges, Peamount, Loughtown Upper and Milltown, Co. Dublin.

The proposed development will primarily consist of 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. The proposed infrastructure sites and pipelines will consist of the following:

1. Raw Water Intake & Pumping Station site (RWI&PS) which will consist of: a Bankside Intake Chamber, Raw Water Pumping Station Building, 2 no. Microfiltration Buildings, Electricity Substation, (Totalling 3,165m² Gross Floor Area (GFA), maximum building height of 10.9m over finished ground level); 4 no. surge vessels; associated below ground tanks; 670m access road from the R494; 16 no. car parking spaces; telemetry mast (14.0m height); landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground works; on a c. 4.1 ha permanent site at Garrynatineel and Kilmaglassderry, Co. Tipperary, and associated re-profiling works to the Parteen Basin.

2. Raw Water Rising Mains (RWRM) which will consist of twin steel underground pipelines (each 1,500mm diameter) extending 2km from the pumping station at the RWI&PS site to the Raw Water Balancing Tanks at the head of the proposed Water Treatment Plant, laid at a minimum depth of cover of 1.2m above crown of pipe.

3. Water Treatment Plant site (WTP) which will consist of: 2 no. Raw Water Balancing Tanks, 3 no. Water Treatment Module Buildings, 2 no. Sludge Dewatering Buildings, 2 no. Sludge Storage Buildings, Chemical Dosing Manifold Building, Chemical Dosing Building, High Lift Pumping Station, an Electricity Substation, Washwater Settlement building, Control and Visitor Building (Totalling c. 53,300m² GFA, maximum building height of 15.6m over finished ground level); associated pumping stations, lagoons, attenuation pond, above and below ground tanks, 5 no. surge vessels; 640m access road from the R445; 50 no. car and 4 no. coach parking spaces; telemetry mast (14.0m height); ground and roof mounted PV panels; landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground structures and works; on a c.31 ha permanent site at Incha Beg, Knockadromin and Greenhills, Birdhill, Co. Tipperary.

4. A single 1,600mm diameter steel underground treated water pipeline (covering a distance of approximately 37km in County Tipperary) extending in a generally north-eastern alignment between the proposed Water Treatment Plant and the proposed Break Pressure Tank, laid at a minimum depth of cover of 1.2m above crown of pipe.

5. Break Pressure Tank (BPT) site which will consist of: a below ground covered Break Pressure Tank (volume 13,776m³); control building (c. 800m² GFA, 7.5m height); 794m access road from the L1064; 10 no. car parking spaces; telemetry mast (14.0m height); ground and roof mounted PV panels; Battery Energy Storage System (BESS); landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground works; on a c.7 ha permanent site at Knockanacree Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.

6. A 1600mm diameter underground steel treated water pipeline from the Break Pressure Tank extending approximately 133km in a generally northeastern direction passing through counties Tipperary, Offaly, Kildare and Dublin to a proposed Termination Point Reservoir, laid at a minimum depth of cover of 1.2m above crown of pipe.

7. Booster Pumping Station (BPS) which will consist of a Pumping Station building (2,160m² GFA, 7.6m height), electrical substation, 1 no. surge vessel; access from the adjacent L3003; 4 no. car parking spaces; telemetry mast (14.0m height); ground mounted PV panels and associated BESS; landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground works;

on a c. 2.6 ha permanent site at Coagh Upper, Birr, Co. Offaly, and associated power connection to existing 38 kV substation at Clonohill Upper, Birr, Co. Offaly;

8. Flow Control Valve (FCV) site which will consist of: an underground chamber, electrical kiosk, access from the adjacent L1016; 4 no. car parking spaces; telemetry mast (14.0m height); ground mounted PV panels and associated BESS; landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground works; on a 0.5 ha permanent site at Commons Upper, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

9. Termination Point Reservoir which will consist of: a c. 8.4 ha permanent extension of the existing Uisce Éireann site; a covered reservoir (capacity 75,000m³, maximum height 11.2m); below ground overflow storage tank (capacity 5,000m³); chlorine dosing building (1,600m² GFA, maximum building height of 8.4m over finished ground level); ground mounted PV panels and associated BESS; 342m access road from the R120; telemetry mast (14.0m height); landscaping, lighting, and other ancillary above and below ground works; on an overall 12.2ha permanent site at Loughtown Upper and Peamount, Co. Dublin.

10. Electrical works consisting of uprating of the existing Ardnacrusha – Birdhill and Ardnacrusha – Birdhill – Nenagh Line 38kV overhead line, between Lakyle, Co. Clare and Birdhill substation, Gortybrigane, Co. Tipperary; replacement of polesets/structures with a cable along a section of the Ardnacrusha – Birdhill – Nenagh Line at Gortybrigane, Co. Tipperary; works at the existing Birdhill 38 kV electricity substation, including the provision of a new 38kV gas insulated switchgear building (28m²) associated electrical equipment, and ancillary lighting, fencing and associated works; and a new underground cable connection from Birdhill substation to the RWI&PS along the R494 and to the WTP along the R445.

The proposed development will include the following ancillary elements: • Demolition of existing structures including: derelict petrol station structures at Greenhills, Co. Tipperary, a disused house at Inchabeg, Co. Tipperary, and a farm building at Kilpatrick, Co. Kildare; • 51 no. line valves installed along the RWRM and treated water pipelines, each with an associated above ground kiosk; • Provision of 43 no. lay-bys, to be constructed at line valve locations and the FCV site; • 236 no. washout valves located along the pipeline; • 321 no. air valves located along the pipeline; • 4 no. potential future connection points, at Greenhills, and Newtown (Guest), Co. Tipperary; and Killananny, and Ballyhugh or Springfield, Co. Offaly. • A generally 50m wide temporary construction corridor, along the pipeline route; • 8 no. temporary construction compounds located at the RWI&PS, WTP, BPT, BPS and TPR infrastructure sites, and at Lisgarriff, Co. Tipperary (12.2ha), Killananny, Co. Offaly (15.6ha) and Drummond, Co. Kildare (13.1ha); • 9 no. temporary pipe storage depots: at Carrigatogher, Co. Tipperary (6.5ha), Toora, Co. Offaly (1.9ha), Boveen, Co. Offaly (4.8ha), Fortel, Co. Offaly (2.4ha), Derrinboy, Co. Offaly (5.8ha), Derryweelan, Co. Offaly (6.2ha), Rathlumber (2.9ha), Co. Offaly, Graiguepottle, Co. Kildare (2.3ha) and Barberstown Upper, Co. Kildare (11.0ha). All ancillary development above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

Overall Purpose of Project

It is noted that the overall purpose of the project is to provide a new source of drinking water for the Eastern and Midlands Region and meet the deficit in supply.

5.0 Observations on aligning water supply with planning growth?

Laois County Council wishes to note the significance of the Shannon to Dublin Water Supply project and the myriad of positives that it will bring to the settlements and communities that are set to benefit from this critical piece of nationally important infrastructure, and as such, the Council wishes to express its support for the project.

There are a wide range of pertinent policies ranging from a national to local level. It is necessary to ensure that infrastructure, which includes a water supply is directed towards locations identified for existing and future growth.

The following sets out the chronological order in terms of emerging national, regional and local policy.

2021

National Water Resource Plan

Uisce Éireann's National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) represents the first such plan for the entire public water supply in Ireland. Laois County Council acknowledges that the objective of the NWRP is to implement a strategic plan to meet Ireland's water requirements over the short, medium and long term.

It is noted that the NWRP was delivered in two phases, namely:

- Phase 1: the NWRP Framework Plan (the "Framework Plan") set out the approach to identifying water supply needs and quantifying those needs up to year 2044. It also described the approach to identifying solutions to address the water supply needs across all of Uisce Éireann's water supplies. The Framework Plan, following public consultation, was finalised and adopted in Spring 2021.

2022

- Phase 2: comprised the development of four Regional Water Resource Plans to identify the optimal technical solutions (the "Preferred Approaches") required to address the needs outlined in the Framework Plan. The Regional Water Resource Plan – Eastern and Midlands Region (the "Eastern and Midlands Plan") following public consultation was adopted in Autumn 2022.

Its is noted that following the adoption of the NWRP Framework Plan in the summer of 2021, Uisce Éireann commenced with Phase 2 of the NWRP, involving publishing four Regional Water Resources Plans for public consultation. The Regional Water Resources Plan Eastern and Midlands ('Eastern and Midlands Plan') assesses the status of the Eastern and Midlands region in terms of population, development, and natural environment and identifies specific challenges within the Eastern and Midlands Region.

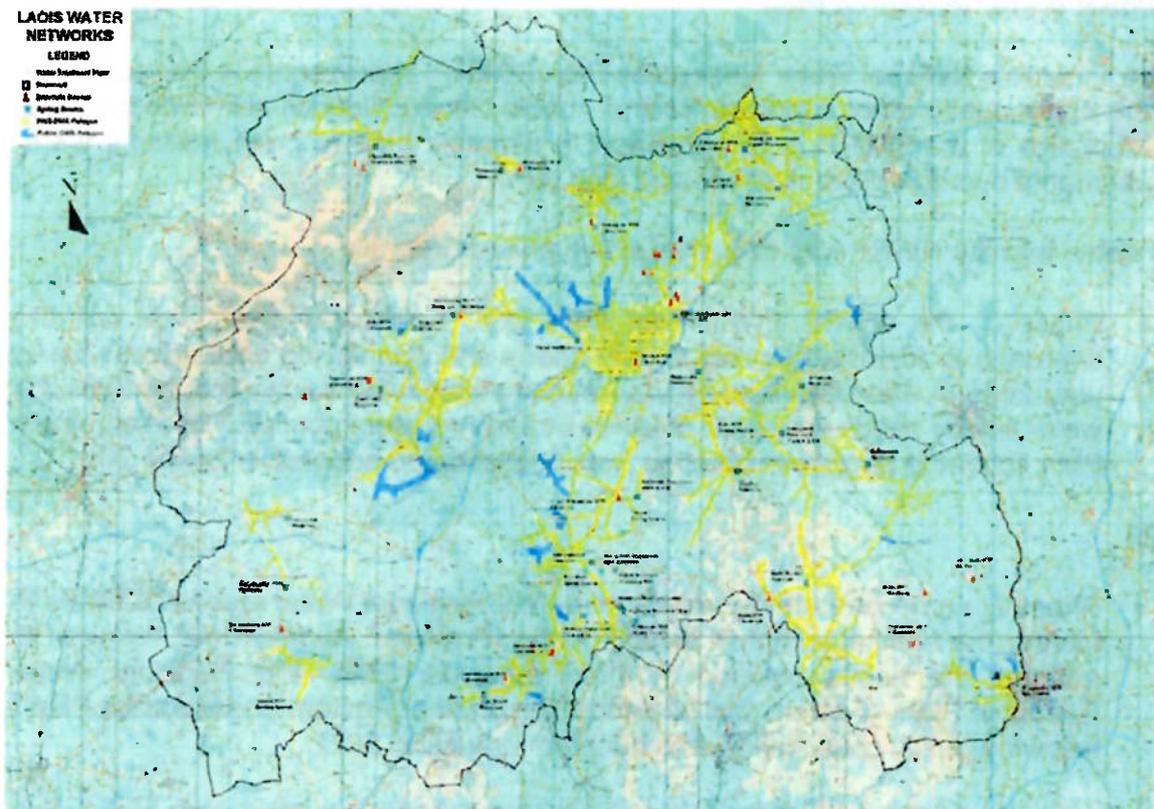
The Eastern and Midlands Region Plan assessed the public water supply requirements over a 25year planning period. The conclusion of the 8 stage Options Assessment determined that a New Shannon Source, comprising of an abstraction from Parteen Basin and a transfer of treated water to a termination point reservoir in Dublin was the

Preferred Approach to address the water needs for direct supply to the GDA Water Resource Zone (WRZ).

The pipeline route passes immediately to the north of the county and presents a vital opportunity for the provision of a strategic connection from the pipeline to either Mountmellick, Portarlinton and / or Portlaoise.

Almost three quarters of the population supplied by public water in Laois, live in the 3 north central towns of Portlaoise, Portarlinton and Mountmellick, comprising an area of less than one tenth of Laois.

Portarlinton is on the border of Offaly. Mountmellick and Portlaoise water networks are within 16km of the Offaly border. Whilst these three supplies are not yet fully integrated into one supply (Mountmellick is already joined to the Portlaoise network and served by the same groundwater aquifer), it would not require a substantial network upgrade to connect all three networks (mainly through the lands of Emo Court).



There have been no major upgrades to increase water supply by UÉ in Laois since its inception in 2014. Laois and UÉ have been able to maintain supply at existing levels for almost two decades now through investing in water conservation with multiple local find and fix teams and the additional support of UE framework contractors.

Laois is a particularly unique county in the regard that all of its public drinking water supply is sourced from groundwater aquifers. This approach has several benefits in that the quality of the raw water at source generally emerges from the ground at a very high level. However, there are operational vulnerabilities with this approach, the principle ones are summarised below;

- Vulnerable to drought; prolonged periods of drought will result in levels in aquifer water tables dropping and with an associated risk to the provision of continuous uninterrupted water supplies from groundwater sources.
- Vulnerable to potential pollution; pollution of groundwater aquifers from either diffuse or point sources also presents a risk to the continuous uninterrupted supply of water from groundwater sources.

Laois County Development Plan (2021-2027)

The Laois County Development Plan (2021-2027) (LCDP) includes an overall housing demand of 3,998 units for the 6 year plan period (average 666 per annum). From 2021 to Q3 2025, completions were 2895 dwellings, versus a demand of 2,662 dwellings. Therefore delivery is a head of expected demand within Laois.

2025

National Planning Framework – First Revision (April 2025)

Laois is located within the Eastern and Midland Region that is strategically important. The NPF recognises that the region's central location can be leveraged to include a sustainable pattern of population growth, including infrastructure development and strengthening of the urban cores of the county towns. The NPF includes 7no. policy priorities for the region which includes:

*More emphasis on consolidating the development of places that grew rapidly in the past decade or so with large scale commuter driven housing development **with a particular focus on identifying and prioritising infrastructure and local community and amenity facility provision in many of the larger commuter towns through targeted investment under relevant NPF National Strategic Outcomes.***

Ministerial Guidelines (July 2025)

Following the publication of new planning guidelines to facilitate additional zoning in support of accelerated housing delivery on the 29th July 2025.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/press-releases/ministers-browne-and-cummins-publish-new-planning-guidelines-to-facilitate-additional-zoning-in-support-of-accelerated-housing-delivery/>

The Guidelines replace the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, published in December 2020 as Ministerial Guidelines under Section 28 of the Act. This is at the following link:

https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/S.28_Guidelines_-_NPF_Implementation_-_Housing_Growth_Requirements.pdf

Further to approval of the Revised NPF in April 2025, which sets out a need to plan for the delivery of approximately 50,000 additional housing units per annum to 2040, the Minister set out that it is now necessary to replace the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities published in 2020, and to provide updated 'housing growth requirements' to local authorities in order to facilitate the review and variation of city and county development plans.

The following table provides a breakdown of the new housing targets for Laois.

Local Authority	Existing Annual Housing Growth Requirement (Housing Supply Target 2020)	Adopted Development Plan – Annual Housing Requirement (Housing Supply Target)	2025 to 2034	2035 to 2040
			New Annual New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034	New Annual New Housing Growth Requirement 2035 to 2040
Laois County Council	468	666	1,244	585

Policy and Objective 2 of the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements (Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) states that:

It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that **'additional provision' of up to 50% over and above** the housing growth requirement for each local authority set out in Appendix 1 is reflected within the relevant City or County Development Plan, subject to consistency with the policies and objectives of the National Planning Framework – First Revision (2025), relevant Ministerial Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), relevant Government policy, and the undertaking of necessary environmental assessments.

Table 5.1 below provides a breakdown of the ministerial guidelines housing growth figures and compares those planning authorities proportionate growth.

Ranking	Local Authority	Adopted Development Plan - Annual Housing Requirement (Housing Supply Target)	New Annual New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement to 2034
1	Monaghan County Council	330	751	128%
2	Mayo County Council	542	1111	105%
3	Laois County Council	666	1244	87%
4	Kildare County Council	1524	2755	81%
5	Wexford County Council	1072	1622	51%
6	Wicklow County Council	1411	2068	47%
7	Waterford City & County Council	804	1144	42%
8	Offaly County Council	663	891	34%
9	South Dublin County Council	2596	3270	26%
10	Kilkenny County Council	775	948	22%
11	Louth County Council	1380	1677	22%
12	Dún Laoghaire Rathdown	3085	3585	16%
13	Fingal County Council	2738	3153	15%
14	Galway County Council	1790	2008	12%
15	Galway City Council	739	790	7%
16	Meath County Council	2826	2942	4%
17	Clare County Council	960	985	3%
18	Cork County Council	3769	3837	2%
19	Donegal County Council	1280	1283	0%
20	Carlow County Council	518	518	0%
21	Cavan County Council	666	666	0%
22	Cork City Council	2706	2706	0%
23	Dublin City Council	8196	8196	0%
24	Kerry County Council	1167	1167	0%
25	Leitrim County Council	201	201	0%
26	Limerick City & County Council	2599	2599	0%
27	Longford County Council	428	428	0%
28	Roscommon County Council	392	392	0%
29	Sligo County Council	672	672	0%
30	Tipperary County Council	1008	1008	0%
31	Westmeath County Council	983	983	0%

Table 5.2 – Comparison of Ministerial Housing Growth Guidelines (Baseline - 2025 to 2034)

Table 5.2 above shows that proportionately, for the 2025 to 2034 period, County Laois has the **third** highest housing growth in the country. Within the Eastern and Midlands Region, it is ranked **first** in terms of proportionate growth (see counties coloured green above).

Following the publication of the Section 28 Guidelines, Laois County Council has had regard to the Guidelines and is planning positively by applying the maximum 50% additional provision to the baseline requirement of 1,244.

For the sake of comparison, Laois County Council has compared all planning authorities housing requirement, if, each applied the 50% uplift. This is set out in Table 5.3 below:

	Local Authority	Adopted Development Plan - Annual Housing Requirement (Housing Supply Target)	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement to 2034	New Annual New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034 plus 50% increase	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement to 2034
1	Monaghan County Council	330	127.58%	1127	241%
2	Mayo County Council	542	104.98%	1667	207%
3	Laois County Council	666	86.79%	1866	180%
4	Kildare County Council	1524	80.77%	4133	171%
5	Wexford County Council	1072	51.31%	2433	127%
6	Wicklow County Council	1411	46.56%	3102	120%
7	Waterford City & County Council	804	42.29%	1716	113%
8	Offaly County Council	663	34.39%	1337	102%
9	South Dublin County Council	2596	25.96%	4905	89%
10	Kilkenny County Council	775	22.32%	1422	83%
11	Louth County Council	1380	21.52%	2516	82%
12	Dún Laoghaire Rathdown	3085	16.21%	5378	74%
13	Fingal County Council	2738	15.16%	4730	73%
14	Galway County Council	1790	12.18%	3012	68%
15	Galway City Council	739	6.90%	1185	60%
16	Meath County Council	2826	4.10%	4413	56%
17	Clare County Council	960	2.60%	1478	54%
18	Cork County Council	3769	1.80%	5756	53%
19	Donegal County Council	1280	0.23%	1925	50%
20	Carlow County Council	518	0.00%	777	50%
21	Cavan County Council	666	0.00%	999	50%
22	Cork City Council	2706	0.00%	4059	50%
23	Dublin City Council	8196	0.00%	12294	50%
24	Kerry County Council	1167	0.00%	1751	50%
25	Leitrim County Council	201	0.00%	302	50%
26	Limerick City & County Council	2599	0.00%	3899	50%

	Local Authority	Adopted Development Plan - Annual Housing Requirement (Housing Supply Target)	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement to 2034	New Annual New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034 plus 50% increase	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement to 2034
27	Longford County Council	428	0.00%	642	50%
28	Roscommon County Council	392	0.00%	588	50%
29	Sligo County Council	672	0.00%	1008	50%
30	Tipperary County Council	1008	0.00%	1512	50%
31	Westmeath County Council	983	0.00%	1475	50%

Table 5.3 – Comparison of Ministerial Housing Growth Guidelines (Baseline + 50% additional provision - 2025 to 2034)

Table 5.3 above shows that once the 50% additional provision is applied for the 2025-2034 period, this would represent a 180% uplift in annual housing provision in Laois, which is almost threefold. Nationally Laois is ranked **third**, and **first** when compared to other East and Midland planning authorities. (see counties coloured green above).

Table 5.4 below provides an overview of the 2025 – 2040 period, which shows that overall, Laois ranks fourth nationally, and second within the East and Midland planning authorities.

	Local Authority	Total Adopted Development Plan 2025-2040	Total New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034 plus 50% increase	Total New Housing Growth Requirements 2035-2040 plus 50% increase	Total New Housing Growth Requirement 2025-2040 plus 50% increase	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement 2025-2040
1	Monaghan County Council	4950	11285	2865	14130	185%
2	Mayo County Council	8130	16665	4695	21360	163%
3	Kildare County Council	22860	41325	14385	55710	144%
4	Laois County Council	9990	18660	4388	23047.5	131%
5	Waterford City & County Council	12060	17160	6608	23767.5	97%
6	Wexford County Council	16080	24330	5415	29745	85%
7	Wicklow County Council	21165	31020	6983	38003	80%
8	Galway County Council	26850	30120	17160	47280	76%
9	Offaly County Council	9945	13365	4118	17482.5	76%
10	South Dublin County Council	38940	49050	18105	67155	72%
11	Kilkenny County Council	11625	14220	5790	20010	72%
12	Galway City Council	11085	11850	7065	18915	71%
13	Louth County Council	20700	25155	8963	34117.5	65%
14	Dún Laoghaire Rathdown	46275	53775	17880	71655	55%
15	Fingal County Council	41070	47295	16095	63390	54%
16	Limerick City & County Council	38985	38985	20550	59535	53%
17	Carlow County Council	7770	7770	3803	11572.5	49%
18	Longford County Council	6420	6420	3120	9540	49%
19	Donegal County Council	19200	19245	9045	28290	47%
20	Cork City Council	40590	40590	19043	59632.5	47%
21	Roscommon County Council	5880	5880	2670	8550	45%
22	Cavan County Council	9990	9990	4493	14482.5	45%
23	Sligo County Council	10080	10080	4388	14467.5	44%
24	Cork County Council	56535	57555	22838	80392.5	42%

	Local Authority	Total Adopted Development Plan 2025-2040	Total New Housing Growth Requirement to 2034 plus 50% increase	Total New Housing Growth Requirements 2035-2040 plus 50% increase	Total New Housing Growth Requirement 2025-2040 plus 50% increase	Adopted Development Plan Uplift from Housing Growth Requirement 2025-2040
25	Leitrim County Council	3015	3015	1163	4177.5	39%
26	Clare County Council	14400	14775	5153	19927.5	38%
27	Tipperary County Council	15120	15120	5670	20790	38%
28	Dublin City Council	122940	122940	45563	168502.5	37%
29	Kerry County Council	17505	17505	6465	23970	37%
30	Westmeath County Council	14745	14745	5138	19882.5	35%
31	Meath County Council	42390	44130	10215	54345	28%

Table 5.4 – Comparison of Ministerial Housing Growth Guidelines (Baseline + 50% additional provision - 2025 to 2040)

The Impact of Housing Growth

The 2025-2028 period is of particular relevance in the context of the variation, and for reasons outlined in the recommendations, the Council is assessing the overall housing growth requirement upto the end of 2030 as part of the variation to the LCDP (21-27).

Table 5.5 brings together information contained in the LCDP 21-27 (Column B) and also includes the S28 baseline figures (Column D) and an additional 50% additional provision (Column F).

The additional 50% provision has been applied in full to maximise the flexibility for the quantum of zoned lands in Laois, responding to the urgency referred to by the Minister in the recent Section 28 Guidelines to deliver more housing in the short and medium term.

Laois County Council is of the opinion that to meet the uplift in dwellings required the role of the Planning Authority is to:

- respond positively to the Section 28 Guidelines; and
- to ensure that there is a sufficient quantum of zoned lands, in the appropriate locations and to an acceptable scale.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Year	No of Anticipated dwellings per annum (LCDP 21-27)	Residential Delivery (source https://data.cso.ie/)	Total Anticipated dwellings (S28 baseline)	Revised Housing Requirement to plan for in the variation (net addition to LCDP 21-27)	50% Additional Provision of S28 baseline	Total additional zoning to be provided to accommodate HGR + 50%
				(D-B)	(D/2)	(E+F)
2021	549	381				
2022	555	512				
2023	561	747				
2024	567	654				
2025	574		1244	670	622	1292
	430 (Q3 Est)	601* (Q3)				
2026	580		1244	664	622	1286
2027	501		1244	743	622	1365
2028	0		1244	1244	622	1866
2029	0		1244	1244	622	1866
2030	0		1244	1244	622	1866
Total Requirements (2025-2030)				5139		8,249

Table 5.5 – Impact of Section 28 Guidelines

Table 5.5 shows that for 2026 to the end of 2030, the Chief Executive is of the opinion that the revised housing requirement is **5,139** dwellings. Allowing for the 50% additional provision as set out in the Ministerial Guidelines, this means there is a need to ensure that there are sufficient zoned lands for **8,249** dwellings. This allows for the maximum flexibility for zoned lands to be brought forward for development throughout County Laois.

The Council is therefore proposing a variation to the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 to facilitate this overall requirement, identifying lands in appropriate locations and to an appropriate scale to secure the objectives of the Guidelines.

Housing Distribution

Table 2.16 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the overall spatial distribution of zoned lands in the county. The overall distribution of zoned lands in the adopted LCDP (2021-2027) is broadly as follows:

- Key Towns (Portlaoise, Graiguecullen): 50%
- Self Sustaining (Portarlinton): 9%
- Self Sustaining Towns (Mountmellick, Abbeyleix, Stradbally, Mountrath): 17%
- Small Town (Durrow, Rathdowney, Ballylynan): 9%
- Villages (Clonaslee, Borris in Ossory, Ballyroan, Killenard): 5%
- Smaller Villages, Unserviced Villages and Open Countryside: 10%

As part of the variation, Laois County Council is progressing with the variation. As that is not available for public consultation, it is not considered appropriate to specify the proposed distribution. However, broadly it would follow the above distribution as set out in the adopted LCDP (21-27).

6.0 Summary

Laois Council is of the opinion that there is a significant and strategic opportunity presented by the Shannon to Dublin Water Supply Project that should be addressed at this stage and dealt with by condition of planning. The provision of a new mains linking the WSP pipeline to the Portarlinton public water supply is an obvious and necessary intervention. It will fulfil several functions, including;

- Provide a robust alternative source into the system in the event of an unexpected issue (drought, pollution of boreholes) affecting Laois Water Supplies
- Provide an opportunity for the provision of extra capacity and resilience into the system to cater for the increasing water supply needs arising from

In response to the Ministerial Guidelines, Laois County Council is planning to zone lands for 8,250 dwellings for the next 5 years, with the majority towards Portlaoise, given its position in the settlement hierarchy.

This equates to c.20,000pe or 4MI/d. This figure is not even allowing for commercial or industrial developments that could include high water demanding data centres, etc.

Whilst Dublin and the GDA is the supply priority and the downstream take-off watermain legs serving Tipperary, Offaly, Westmeath, Meath, Louth, Kildare, Wicklow and Carlow will be phase 2 of this significant project, it is vitally important that the strategic opportunity that it presents for County Laois is noted, considered and addressed at this stage.