Muirin Gowen

From: Shirley O'Neill <soneill@carlowcoco.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 13 October 2026 14:45
To: LAPS
Cc: PlanningDevMan; Emer Connors
Subject: RE: Request Reminder - Your Ref: ACP-32444726 - S37E (SID) - Uisce Éireann (Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant)
Attachments: Chief Executive's Report.pdf; Letter to ACP attaching CE Report.pdf; Resolution of Members.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hi Muirín,

I refer to previous correspondence relating to the above SID application.

In this regard, I can confirm that I have forwarded the attached CE Report and Resolution of the Council Members in registered post today in advance of the agreed return date of 14th October.

I am emailing a copy of the documents for your information as I am aware that your offices will not be open due to scheduled strike action.

I would be obliged if you could confirm receipt of the report and resolution at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

Shirley O'Neill
Oifigeach Riaracháin, An Roinn Pleanala
Administrative Officer, Planning Department

T: +353 59 9136229
E: planningdevman@carlowcoco.ie
W: carlow.ie

COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHEATHARLACH
CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Oifigí an Chontae, Bóthar Átha Í, Ceatharlach, R93E7R7
County Buildings, Athy Road, Carlow, R93E7R7

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AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA
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15 OCT 2026
Fee: € Type:
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13th October, 2026.

Muirin Gowen,
Executive Officer,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64, Marlborough Street,
Dublin, 1.

Re:	**ACP-324447-26**
Applicant:	**Uisce Éireann**
Description of Development:	**Proposed Upgrades to the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant and Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.**
Development Address:	**Carlow, County Carlow.**

A Chara,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 28th July, 2026 and email of 1st September 2026 in connection with the above application.

Please find attached, Chief Executive's Report which was presented to the members at the October Monthly meeting of Carlow County Council. I also attach Resolution of the members in this regard.

If you have any queries please contact the Planning Department at 059/9170346 or planningdevman@carlowcoco.ie.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley O'Neill,
Administrative Officer.

COMHAIRLE CONTAE
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Extract from Minutes of October Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County offices, Athy Road, Carlow on Monday 12th October 2026 at 2.00 pm

2.3 To seek the views of the Elected Members on the Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended - Ref: ACP-324447-26 – 10 Year Planning Permission for the Upgrades to the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant and Kilkenny Road Pumping Station, Carlow, Co. Carlow. Applicant – Uisce Eireann.

A. Sweeney briefed the meeting on the Chief Executive's Report for the 10-Year Planning Permission for the Upgrades to the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant and Kilkenny Road Pumping Station, Carlow, Co. Carlow. Applicant – Uisce Eireann.

Questions raised by the members were answered by A. Sweeney.

Proposed by Cllr. K. Murnane

Seconded by Cllr. F. Browne

Following a show of hands it was agreed:-

"That we the members of Carlow County Council submit one composite addendum on the Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended - Ref: ACP-324447-26 – 10 Year Planning Permission for the Upgrades to the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant and Kilkenny Road Pumping Station, Carlow, Co. Carlow. Applicant – Uisce Eireann:-

Councillors welcome this application to An Coimisiún Pleanála and wish to emphasise the critical nature of this upgrade to the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant for the future of Carlow.

Fiona Byrne

Fiona Byrne
Senior Executive Officer/
Meetings Administrator.
Dated this 13th day of October 2026

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006

Report to Elected Members as required by Section 37E(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference: ACP- 324447-26 Upgrades to the Mortarstown wastewater treatment plant and Kilkenny Road Pumping Station, Carlow – Uisce Éireann

Background: On the 22nd December 2025, An Coimisiún Pleanala determined that the proposed development falls within the scope of paragraphs Section 37A(2)(a) and Section 37A(2)(b) (ref: 310980-21) with reference to the following;

Having regard to the size of the proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant and associated development, with a capacity greater than a population equivalent of 10,000 and to the policy context, it is considered that the proposed development constitutes development that falls within the definition of environmental infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, thereby satisfying the requirements set out in section 37A (1) of the Act. The proposed development is also considered to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Sections 37A (2) (a) and (b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. An application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Accordingly, this application is made directly to ACP, who are the relevant consenting authority in this case.

The purpose of this Chief Executive's report is to set out the views of the Planning Authority 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) See Section 1 of the attached report.

Role of Elected Members:	In accordance with Section 37E(5) this Chief Executive's report is being submitted to the Elected Members of Carlow County Council. The views of the Elected Members are being sought on the proposed development. Pursuant to Section 37E(6) the members of the planning authority may, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations specified in the resolution to this report; where the members so decide those recommendations (together with the meetings administrator's record) shall be attached to the report submitted to the Board.
Application Type:	Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (As Amended)
Applicant:	Uisce Éireann
Agent:	AtkinsRéalis

ACP Ref. Number: ACP-324447-26

Proposed Development: The proposed development will consist of the following:

Upgrade to the existing Mortarstown WwTP, including the provision /refurbishment /demolition of various associated structures; decommissioning of existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station; construction of a new inlet pump station at Mortarstown WwTP; construction of a new microtunnel gravity sewer along Kilkenny Road (R448) between the existing Kilkenny Road WwPS and the proposed new inlet pump station; construction of a new outfall chamber and outfall pipe including a microtunnel under the Kilkenny Road (R448); and landscaping, boundary treatment works, an upgrade to an existing borehole, and all ancillary site works above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

The existing Mortarstown WwTP has a treatment capacity of 36,000 population equivalent (PE). It is proposed to upgrade the WwTP to increase its treatment capacity to 58,500 PE.

The proposed upgrade to the WwTP will consist of the following:

- Microtunnel Gravity Sewer (785m in length) connecting the decommissioned Kilkenny Road Pumping Station to a new inlet Pump Station.
- New inlet Pump Station.
- Decommissioning of Existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.
- New Outfall chamber, Outfall Pipe including a microtunnel for the section crossing under the R448.
- Provision of various new structures at existing Mortarstown WwTP which comprise the following structures:
  - New foul pumping station for local agglomeration adjacent to existing inlet works (supplemented by standby generator).
  - A new fuel storage tank and standby diesel generator to service the WwTP.
  - New inlet works which includes the provision of a new odour treatment unit.
  - 2 no. stormwater storage tanks and 2 no. stormwater return pumps.
  - New primary settlement tanks and new primary sludge pumps.
  - Provision of 4 no. air blowers and modifications to existing air delivery pipework.
  - Provision of new air blower building and new bubble diffused air system,
  - Provision of 2 no. final settlement tanks with half-bridge scrapers.
  - Provision of new Return Activated Sludge (PAS) / Waste Activated Sludge (WAS) pumping station and station fitted with 2 no. RAS pumps and 2 no. WAS pumps.
  - Provision of 2 no. additional picket fence tank thickener.
  - Provision of 1 no. belt press, polymer prep unit and polymer dosing pumps.
  - Provision of new pumped sludge transfer system.
  - Provision of sludge import facility.
  - Provision of minimum 6 no. odour control units.
  - Provision of Mechanical, Electrical, Instrumentation, Control and Automation (MEICA) and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) upgrades.
  - New storage shed and associated gantry.

Refurbishment of the following structures at Mortarstown WwTP:

- Structural refurbishment of picket fence tanks.
- Mechanical and electrical refurbishment of existing picket fence thickener and conversion of second existing tank to a sludge blending tank.
- Modifications to existing administration building.

Demolition of the following structures:

- Existing inlet works structure.
- Existing storm tank.
- Various small chambers within the site.
- Existing sludge cake transfer facility.

Decommissioning of the following plant/items:

- Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.
- Existing rising main.
- Existing settlement tanks.

- The installation of ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar panels.
- Diversion of existing ESB 38kV high voltage (HV) overhead lines and 10kV/20kV medium voltage (MV) overhead line on site (to be carried out by ESB).
- The proposed development will also consist of all site development, landscaping and boundary treatment works, an upgrade to an existing borehole; and all ancillary works above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

The proposed development will be constructed in the Carlow Town Agglomeration licenced under the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) (WWDA) Regulations 2007 (Discharge Licence No D0028-01). This application relates to a proposed development which requires a review of the existing WWDA Licence.

The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

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1. Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report 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 the Planning Authority 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) and
vi) Any other relevant provision or requirement of this act and any regulations made thereunder.

The Planning Authority can also submit a list of recommended conditions to be attached in the event of the Coimisiún granting planning permission. In addition, this report has been informed by the following guidance documents- *7th Schedule Strategic Infrastructure Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' and the OPR's *Strategic Infrastructure Development*.

Section 37E(4) of the 2000 Act requires that this report shall be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála by the 14th of October 2026. Section 37E(5) requires that before this report is submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála, the Chief Executive shall submit it to the elected members in order to seek their views on the proposed development. The members may, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations to the report (Section 37E (6) of the 2000 Act refers).

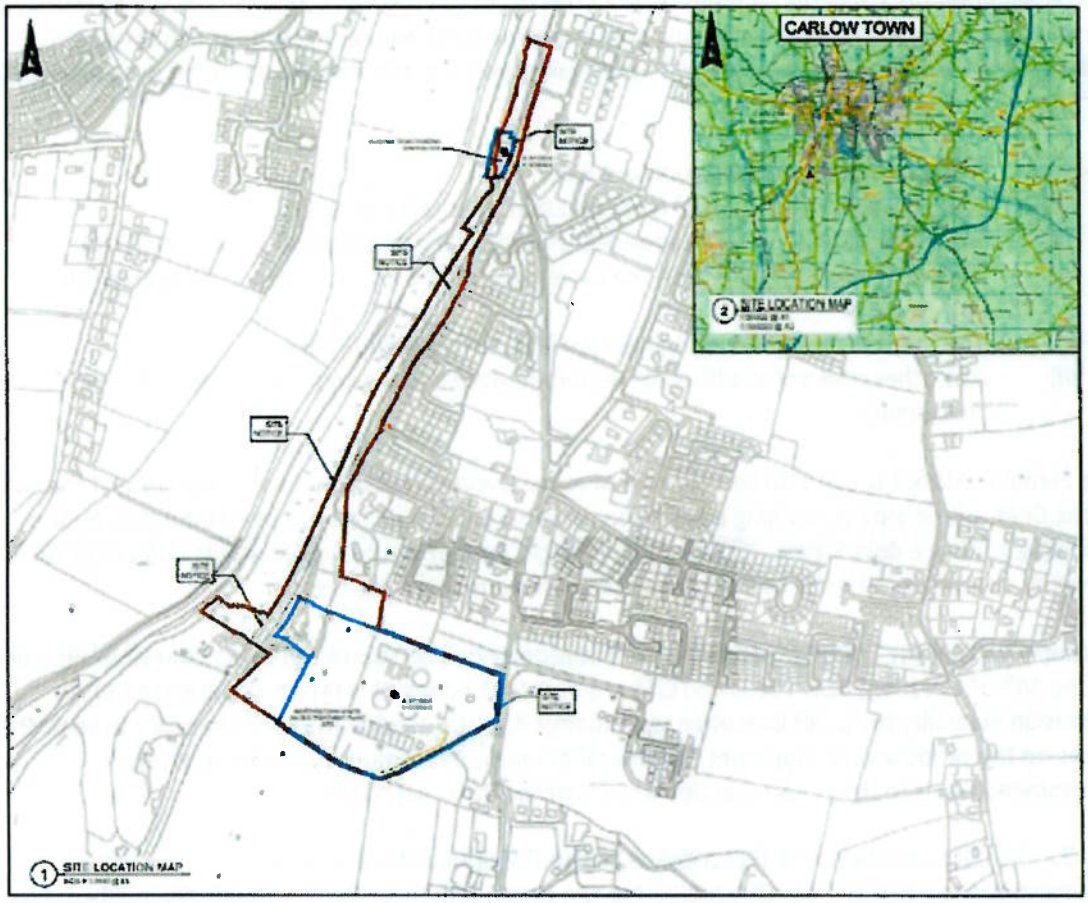
2. Site Location and Description of the Proposed Development

The existing Mortarstown WwTP is located to the east of the River Barrow within the built-up area of Carlow Town c2.2km to the south of Carlow Town Centre, in the townland of Mortarstown Upper, Carlow, Co. Carlow.

The site is bounded by agricultural land and Tyndall College Carlow to the south; agricultural land, and a dwelling house and sheds (c. 75m from the WwTP boundary) to the south-east; an existing, vacant residential dwelling), agricultural land and the Kilkenny Road (R448) to the west; agricultural land, the Glen residential estate (c. 52m from the WwTP boundary), and the South East Technological University (SETU) Carlow Campus to the north; and agricultural land, and the Cluain Bui residential estate (part under construction) (c. 70m from the WwTP boundary), to the east. The River Barrow, to which the existing outfall discharges, is approximately 250m further west.

The existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station is located on a generally level site, c. 1.3km to the south-west of Carlow Town Centre, between the Kilkenny Road, and the River Barrow. It is bounded to the east by the Kilkenny Road; vegetation and trees to the south; vegetation and trees and the River Barrow to the west; and a part-cleared area of vegetation and trees to the north. The SETU Carlow Campus and student accommodation is located to the east, on the opposite side of the Kilkenny Road. To the south-east is a mini roundabout that connects Kilkenny Road with the Green Road.

The WwTP serves the agglomeration of Carlow Town and its environs, including a section in Co. Laois. The WwTP also treats the wastewater from a micro-brewery and a housing development to the west of Carlow Town in the village of Killeshin, Co. Laois.



Site Location Map

The proposed development as described in the public notices to An Coimisiún Pleanála is as follows:

In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Uisce Éireann. have given notice of its intention to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála (the 'Commission') for permission for development comprising the upgrade of the existing Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) at Mortarstown, Co. Carlow. The application seeks a planning permission that has a duration of 10 years from the date of grant.

The proposed development will consist of the following:

Upgrade to the existing Mortarstown WwTP, including the provision /refurbishment /demolition of various associated structures; decommissioning of existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station; construction of a new inlet pump station at Mortarstown WwTP; construction of a new microtunnel gravity sewer along Kilkenny Road (R448) between the existing Kilkenny Road WwPS and the proposed new inlet pump station; construction of a new outfall chamber and outfall pipe including a microtunnel under the Kilkenny Road (R448); and landscaping, boundary treatment works, an upgrade to an existing borehole, and all ancillary site works above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

The existing Mortarstown WwTP has a treatment capacity of 36,000 population equivalent (PE). It is proposed to upgrade the WwTP to increase its treatment capacity to 58,500 PE.

The proposed upgrade to the WwTP will consist of the following:

- Microtunnel Gravity Sewer (785m in length) connecting the decommissioned Kilkenny Road Pumping Station to a new inlet Pump Station.
- New inlet Pump Station.
- Decommissioning of Existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.
- New Outfall chamber, Outfall Pipe including a microtunnel for the section crossing under the R448.
- Provision of various new structures at existing Mortarstown WwTP which comprise the following structures:
  - New foul pumping station for local agglomeration adjacent to existing inlet works (supplemented by standby generator).
  - A new fuel storage tank and standby diesel generator to service the WwTP.
  - New inlet works which includes the provision of a new odour treatment unit.
  - 2 no. stormwater storage tanks and 2 no. stormwater return pumps.
  - New primary settlement tanks and new primary sludge pumps.
  - Provision of 4 no. air blowers and modifications to existing air delivery pipework.
  - Provision of new air blower building and new bubble diffused air system,
  - Provision of 2 no. final settlement tanks with half-bridge scrapers.
  - Provision of new Return Activated Sludge (PAS) / Waste Activated Sludge (WAS) pumping station and station fitted with 2 no. RAS pumps and 2 no. WAS pumps.
  - Provision of 2 no. additional picket fence tank thickener.
  - Provision of 1 no. belt press, polymer prep unit and polymer dosing pumps.
  - Provision of new pumped sludge transfer system.
  - Provision of sludge import facility.
  - Provision of minimum 6 no. odour control units.
  - Provision of Mechanical, Electrical, Instrumentation, Control and Automation (MEICA) and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) upgrades.
  - New storage shed and associated gantry.

Refurbishment of the following structures at Mortarstown WwTP:

- Structural refurbishment of picket fence tanks.
- Mechanical and electrical refurbishment of existing picket fence thickener and conversion of second existing tank to a sludge blending tank.
- Modifications to existing administration building.

Demolition of the following structures:

- Existing inlet works structure.
- Existing storm tank.
- Various small chambers within the site.
- Existing sludge cake transfer facility.

Decommissioning of the following plant/items:

- Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.
- Existing rising main.
- Existing settlement tanks.

- The installation of ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar panels.

- Diversion of existing ESB 38kV high voltage (HV) overhead lines and 10kV/20kV medium voltage (MV) overhead line on site (to be carried out by ESB).
- The proposed development will also consist of all site development, landscaping and boundary treatment works, an upgrade to an existing borehole; and all ancillary works above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

The proposed development will be constructed in the Carlow Town Agglomeration licenced under the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) (WWDA) Regulations 2007 (Discharge Licence No D0028-01). This application relates to a proposed development which requires a review of the existing WWDA Licence.

The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Project

The nature and extent of the proposed development is described in Chapter 2 of the EIAR and will consist of the upgrade to the existing Mortarstown WwTP, construction of a new inlet pump station at the treatment plant site, construction of a new microtunnel gravity sewer along Kilkenny Road between the existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station and the new inlet pump station, landscaping, boundary treatments, lighting and all ancillary site works. The proposed WwTP upgrade works will be developed to the west of the existing plant footprint, taking in areas of undeveloped agricultural land and part of the adjoining UÉ property.

The proposal also includes the demolition of the inlet works, the stormwater holding tank, the sludge cake transfer facility, and 2 no. small chambers as well as decommissioning of the Kilkenny Road WwPS, final clarifiers (2 no.) and 2 no. rising mains.

The existing WwTP site is ca. 3.79 hectares (ha) and after completion of the upgrade works the site will expand to ca. 5.53ha. The total proposed development site area (Red line boundary) is ca. 10.766 ha in size.

The existing WwTP has a treatment capacity of 36,000PE and the proposed upgrade will result in a PE of 58,500.



Visualisation Existing Mortarstown WwTP Plan



Visualisation Proposed Mortarstown WwTP Plan

A summary of the proposed development works is outlined in Chapter 2 of the EIAR and include:

Microtunnel Gravity Sewer

A 785m long microtunnel gravity sewer (Ø1650mm internal diameter) will be constructed from the south side of Kilkenny Road Pumping Station to the new inlet pump station adjacent to the new inlet works of the existing WwTP which is proposed to be upgraded. The microtunnel will be routed under the R448 Kilkenny Road before it traverses under a treelined verge and local access road (to UÉ owned property) to connect to the WwTP.

New Inlet Pump Station (PS)

The construction of the new inlet pump station at the Mortarstown WwTP site, located west of the WwTP and north of a vacant cottage, will involve:

- The provision of 1 no. terminal pump station.
- The provision of 4 no. raw sewerage pumps inclusive of Mechanical, Electrical, Instrumentation, Control, and Automation (MEICA) works.
- The provision of 1 no. odour control unit.
- The provision of 1 no. flow meter chamber.

Existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station (PS)

The existing Kilkenny Road pumping station will be decommissioned. The existing building structure however will remain. The existing above ground steel gantry structure, access stairs and pumps will be removed from site and repurposed. Incoming flows will be diverted via the existing below-ground holding tank to a newly constructed manhole positioned south of the existing PS, conveying flows to the new gravity microtunnel.

Mortarstown WwTP

The upgrade of the Mortarstown Wastewater treatment plant will require:

- Provision of a new foul pumping station for local agglomeration adjacent to existing inlet works (supplemented by the WwTP standby generator).
- Provision of new fuel storage tank (5000l) and standby diesel generator to service the WwTP (roofed).
- Provision of new inlet works to include fine screening, mechanically raked by-pass screen, screening compaction and conveyance to skips, grit removal, grit classification and conveyance

to skips. The new inlet works will be provided with an odour treatment unit to cater for the maximum pass forward flow rate of the new inlet PS.

- Provision of 2 no. new stormwater storage tanks and 2 no. new stormwater return pumps.
- Existing final settlement tanks and associated Return Activated Sludge (RAS)/ Waste Activated Sludge (WAS) to be retained, cleaned and decommissioned.
- Provision of 4 no. new primary settlement tanks and scraper systems.
- Provision of 4 no. new primary sludge pumps.
- Provision of a new scum pump.
- Provision of 4 no. new air blowers and modifications to existing air delivery pipework
- Provision of a new air blower building (13.6m x 8.6m, roofed) and repurposing of existing blower building for storage purposes.
- Provision of new fine bubble diffused air system in existing aeration tanks.
- Provision of 2 no. new final settlement tanks with half-bridge scrapers.
- Provision of a new RAS/WAS pumping station and station fitted with 2 no. RAS pumps and 2 no. WAS pumps.
- Structural refurbishment of the existing picket fence tanks.
- Mechanical and electrical refurbishment of existing picket fence thickener and conversion of second existing tank to a sludge blending tank.
- Provision of 2 no. additional picket fence thickener tanks.
- Provision of 1 no. belt press, polymer prep unit and polymer dosing pumps in the existing sludge dewatering building.
- Provision of a new pumped sludge transfer system between the sledge blending tank and picket fence thickeners.
- Provision of upgrades to the existing sludge import facility.
- Provision of minimum 6 no. new odour control units
- Provision of upgrade to existing chemical storage tank and dosing facility
- Provision of 1 no. new outfall chamber and outfall pipe.
- Modifications to existing administration building.
- Provision of MEICA and SCADA upgrades.
- New storage shed and associated gantry (24.9m x 12.7m, roofed).
- Demolition of existing inlet works structure.
- Existing utility service relocations.
- General civil site works.
- Provision for PV solar panels,
- Diversion of existing ESB 38kv HV overhead lines and 10kV/20kV MV line on site (carried out by ESB).

Outfall Pipe

It is proposed to replace the existing 600mm diameter outfall pipe with a new 900mm diameter gravity outfall pipe 250m in length. The new outfall pipe will be constructed to the south side of the existing outfall; the pipe will cross under the R448 by micro tunnelling and enter the previously cleared woodland that is adjacent to the existing residential dwellings to the west of the Kilkenny Road. A temporary cofferdam/shoring will be required and is proposed to be carried out from a barge operating on the River Barrow, it is intended to avoid potential adverse effects of excavation from the riverbank. It is proposed that the outfall pipe will enter the river c. 1.5m below the low

water level. The existing outfall pipe will be retained, however it will not be used as part of the proposed development.

PV solar panels

The proposal includes the installation of an area of ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar panels. The proposed PV installation will have a capacity of approximately 382 kW and is indicated to generate sufficient renewable energy to meet approximately 15% of the operational energy demand of the proposed development.

Need for the Development

In order to sustainably support future residential, commercial and industrial development, and to ensure continued compliance with environmental legislation, an upgrade and expansion of the WwTP to a capacity of 58,500 PE is required. The proposed development is necessary to address current and future hydraulic and organic loading constraints at the plant, to alleviate overloading issues, and to bring the facility into full compliance with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the EPA Wastewater Discharge Licence (D0028-01), and other relevant European and national environmental legislation. Importantly, the upgrade will ensure enhanced protection of the River Barrow, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Regulations, 2011. By improving treatment performance and effluent quality, the proposed development will contribute to safeguarding the ecological integrity of this sensitive receiving environment.

The applicant indicates that the design lifespan of the upgraded plant is 25 years but it is anticipated that it will be maintained, with periodic upgrades over a longer lifetime to meet future demand and upgrades in technology.

3. Key Relevant Policy

National Policy

The National Planning Framework (NPF), First Revision, April 2025 is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040. The NPF emphasises the delivery of critical strategic infrastructure, including wastewater services, as essential to supporting sustainable growth in the context of climate transition, regional development, demographic change and investment priorities.

NSO's and NPO's that support the upgrade, expansion or provision of a publicly owned wastewater treatment facility are:

NPO 7 & NPO 9: The NPF's compact growth objectives require the provision of sufficient servicing infrastructure to facilitate development within existing settlements.

NPO 11b: Support the continued strengthening of Ireland's regions, cities, towns and villages through investment in enabling infrastructure, including water services infrastructure, to accommodate planned growth.

NPO 62: Prioritise the timely provision of enabling infrastructure, including water and wastewater services, to support the delivery of housing and sustainable settlement growth.

NPO 63: Support the strategic investment requirements of Uisce Éireann in delivering water and wastewater infrastructure in line with national and regional growth objectives.

NPO 64: Ensure that planning for future growth is aligned with the capacity and delivery of water services infrastructure and the investment programmes of Uisce Éireann.

NPO 65: Promote the efficient and sustainable use and development of water services infrastructure and support measures to improve environmental performance and compliance.

Regional Policy

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region provides the regional policy context for the proposed development and supports the implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF). The RSES vision seeks to promote the Southern Region as an attractive, competitive, and sustainable place to live, work, and visit, underpinned by strong cities and towns, high-quality infrastructure, a diverse economy, and protected natural environments. Carlow is designated as a Key Town within the RSES and is prioritised for sustainable compact growth and targeted infrastructural investment to support its role as a regional and inter-regional economic driver.

The RSES places strong emphasis on the delivery of water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate planned growth. Specific regional objectives relevant to the proposed development include;

RPO 14: To seek investment in water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate the sustainable development of the town as a regional growth centre.

RPO 211: To support the implementation of Irish Water Investment Plans (prepared in five year cycles) and subsequent investment plans, to align the supply of wastewater treatment facilities with the settlement strategy and objectives of the RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. Support the role of Irish Water Investment Plans in taking into account seasonal pressures on critical service infrastructure, climate change implications, and leakage reduction in the design of all relevant projects.

RPO 212: To support investment and the sustainable development of strategic wastewater treatment facilities by Irish Water in the Region arising from initiatives including Investment Plans, Strategic Drainage Area Plans subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process. For the management of wastewater, increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authorities to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

RPO 214: To support Irish Water and the relevant local authorities in the Region to eliminate untreated discharges from settlements in the short-term, while planning strategically for the long-term in tandem with Project Ireland 2040 and the RSES and in increasing compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

RPO 215: Development Plans shall support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment and facilitate the separation of foul and surface water networks to accommodate the future growth of the Region.

Local Policy

The Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028

The wastewater treatment site and Kilkenny Road pumping station are zoned Transport and Utilities in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, (Variation no 4) with a stated objective to provide for transport infrastructure and public utilities.

An area of the site to the west adjoining the R448 is zoned Existing / Infill Residential with a stated objective to protect and improve existing residential amenity; to provide for appropriate infill residential development; to provide for new and improved ancillary services

Part of the upgraded discharge pipe from the WwTP and the microtunnel crosses the area zoned as Existing / Infill Residential. Part of the upgraded discharge pipe is located in an area zoned open space and amenity.

Relevant chapters / sections of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 include Climate Action, Renewable Energy, Rural Development, Circular Bioeconomy and Waste Management sections.

Relevant policies / objectives comprise:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Context

S.011: Promote the provision and maintenance of high-quality infrastructure and infrastructural networks and environmental services which seek to complement the overall economic and settlement strategy and contribute to the sustainable development of the area.

Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy

CSP.1: Support the continued growth and sustainable development of Carlow Town to act as a regional and inter-regional growth driver in the region and to fulfil its role as a Key Town, focused on sustainable development, quality of life and economic investment.

CS.05: Promote an active land management approach through enhanced co-ordination with relevant
stakeholders and infrastructure providers in the delivery of enabling infrastructure in order to accelerate the development of higher order settlements and regeneration areas.

Chapter 6: Infrastructure and Environmental Management

PW.P1: Support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment by Irish Water and to support Irish Water in providing and maintaining adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment infrastructure to service zoned lands, towns and villages and developments over the period of the Plan in accordance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy.

PW.P2: Facilitate Irish Water in the delivery of public wastewater services which address the residential, commercial and industrial needs of the county subject to compliance with all relevant EU and national legislation and normal planning and environmental criteria.

PW.01: Facilitate the required upgrade of wastewater projects that may arise during the lifetime of this Plan subject to compliance with all relevant EU and national legislation and normal planning and environmental criteria including upgrade and improvement works on current and planned IW schemes for Tullow WWTP, Bagenalstown/Leighlinbridge WWTP, Mortarstown WWTP, and Borris WWTP.

Carlow-Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030

Chapter 3 Core Strategy and Housing

CS. O3: Support and facilitate the delivery of the necessary physical and social infrastructure to support all residential development.

Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Environmental Services

WW.P1: Facilitate and support Uisce Éireann in the delivery of public wastewater services in Carlow-Graiguecullen to serve the needs of the existing and future population of the Plan area, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance.

WW.O1: Support wastewater infrastructure treatment investment and provision by Uisce Éireann in Carlow Graiguecullen, including any maintenance works and planned upgrades for Mortarstown WWTP and the associated wastewater network serving the joint urban area, including the safeguarding of existing such infrastructure corridors, in order to ensure that zoned lands are adequately serviced over the period of the Plan and in accordance with the Core Strategies of Carlow and Laois County Councils.

WW.O2: Implement, in conjunction with Uisce Éireann, the relevant recommendations set out in the EPA (2022) publication 'Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2021' and any subsequent update to this document.

Chapter 10 Natural and Built Heritage

NH P1: Protect, manage and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, landscape and environment of County Carlow in recognition of its importance as a non-renewable resource, a unique identifier, and as a natural resource asset.

NH P2: Ensure, as far as is practicable, that development does not adversely impact on wildlife habitats and species, and that biodiversity is conserved for the benefit of future generations in the interests of sustainability. This will include moving towards no net loss of biodiversity from plans adopted by and projects granted permission/authorised by the Council.

NH P1: Support the conservation and enhancement of Natura 2000 Sites, and to protect the Natura 2000 network from any plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the coherence or integrity of a Natura 2000 Site, in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines.

NH O1: Strictly protect areas designated or proposed to be designated as Natura 2000 sites, including any areas that may be proposed for designation or designated during the period of this Plan.

WT P1: Protect and manage existing woodlands, trees and hedgerow which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their consideration, protection and management when undertaking, approving or authorising development.

4. Relevant Planning History

There is no recent planning history associated with the subject site.

5. Enforcement Information Relating to the Subject Site

There are no current enforcement files in relation to the development site.

6. Designations

European Designations

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared by the applicant and included with the application. Designated sites are discussed in detail in both the EIAR and the NIS submitted with the planning application.

The proposed development intersects the boundaries of one Natura 2000 site, namely the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162). Several other sites intersect or adjoin the River Barrow, namely the Lower River Suir SAC (site code: 002137), Blackstairs Mountains SAC (site code: 000770), Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC (site code: 000412), River Nore SPA (site code: 004233) and Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (site code: 004160). As such, these sites are within the potential zone of impact for indirect impacts. However, the NIS determines as set out in Table 7-1 that given the significant distances between these sites and the proposed development, and the sensitivities of their qualifying interests, any ecological connectivity to these sites is extremely weak and does not warrant their further consideration in the NIS.

The NIS also identifies Ballyprior Grassland SAC, Mountmellick SAC, The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC, Ballynafagh Lake SAC, Ballynafagh Bog SAC, Mouds Bog SAC, and Pollardstown Fen SAC as within the wider River Barrow catchment. However, these are all very small sites located at great distances from the proposed development and without any hydrological or other connectivity to their qualifying interests. As such, there are no pathways for effects to any of these sites.

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC is very important for the presence of a number of EU Habitats Directive Annex II animal species. For each qualifying interest, the Site-specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) document for the site (NPWS, 2025b) provides an overall objective to either maintain or restore its favourable conservation condition within the site. Table 7-2 of the NIS shows which qualifying interests have an SSCO to maintain their favourable conservation condition and which have an SSCO to restore it. These SSCOs are defined by detailed attributes and corresponding targets.

The NIS on the basis of objective information found that adverse effects on the following qualifying interests of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, could not be ruled out so further assessment is required: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation, Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels, Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*), White-clawed Crayfish, Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey, Twaite Shad, Salmon and Otter.

The proposed development has the potential to adversely affect several qualifying interests of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, the NIS prescribes mitigation measures to control impacts from the proposed development and, thereby, prevent such effects.

The development of the mitigation measures prescribed in the NIS has followed the "mitigation hierarchy", which prioritises avoidance over reduction, and actions at source over pathway over receptor, as follows: -

1. Eliminate the source of the impact,
2. Minimise or reduce the impact at its source,
3. Block or weaken the pathway for effects, and
4. Abate effects at the receptor.

The NIS contends that this approach assists with more complete removal of the effects, minimises the risk of effects occurring by less obvious pathways, also protects non-target receptors, and minimises the risks of unintended harm associated with measures focussed at or near the receptors.

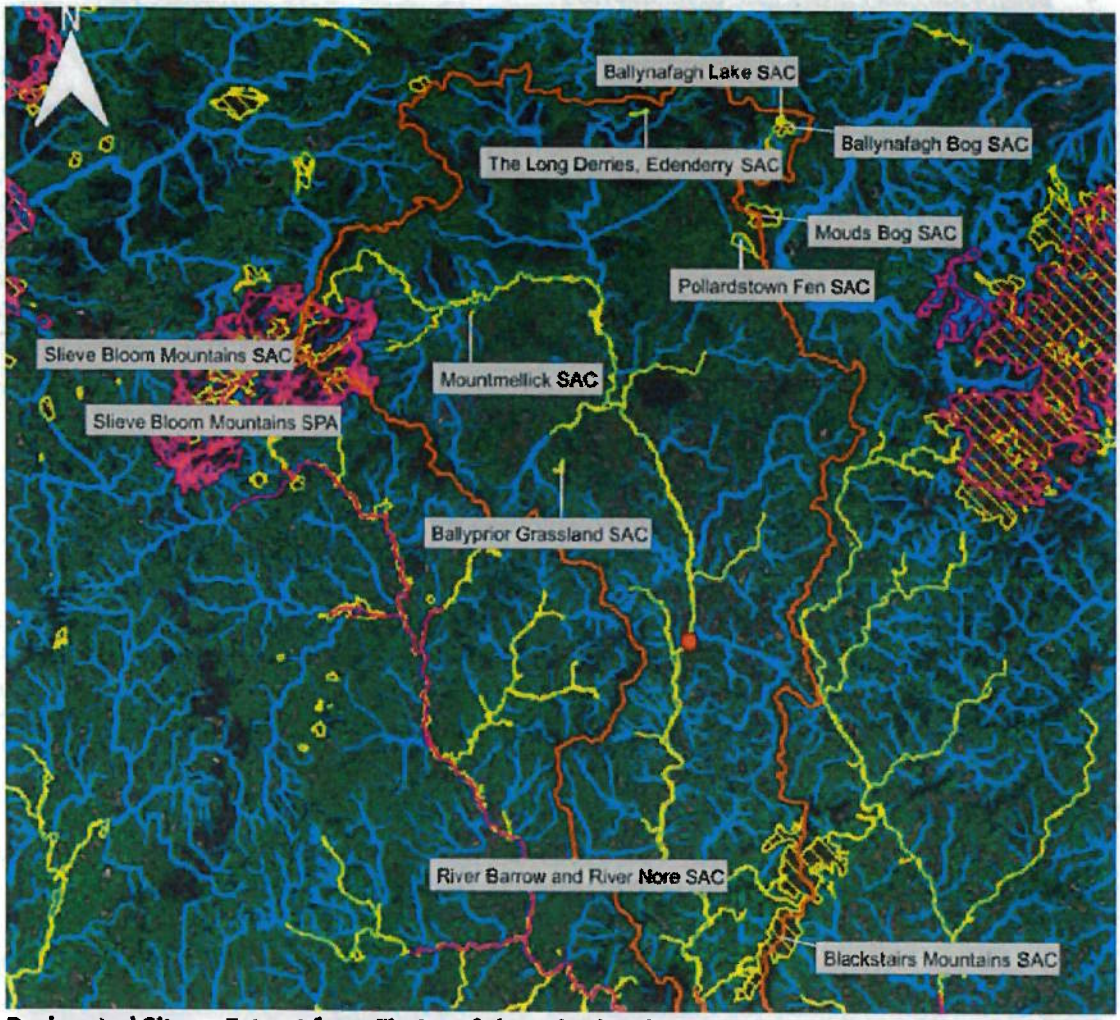
It is indicated that an Ecologist will be appointed by the Developer with responsibility for monitoring and supervising works during the construction phase of the Project in addition to undertaking pre-construction surveys for breeding or resting places of species listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive. The mitigation measures also include inter alia general precautions regarding construction works, measures to prevent water quality impacts, measures to minimise the quantity of surface water run-off from the works area, management of groundwater seepages and subsequent treatment prior to discharge into the drainage network, measures to control the risk of pollution from hydrocarbons, the use of concrete based products and artificial lighting.

The NIS concludes that the NIS has examined the details of the proposed upgrades to the Mortarstown WwTP and Kilkenny Road WwPS in Carlow Town and the Natura 2000 sites in their Zone of Influence. It has analysed the potential impacts of the proposed development on the receiving natural environment and evaluated its effects, in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites. This report has been prepared in line with the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act, Habitats Regulations, relevant case law and guidance from the European Commission, the relevant Government Departments, and the Office of the Planning Regulator, on the basis of objective information and adhering to the precautionary principle.

Given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation detailed in this NIS, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts that would constitute adverse effects on the River Barrow and River Nore SAC or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is recommended that the competent authority may determine that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, provided that the mitigation prescribed in this NIS is fully and properly implemented.

The referral response received from the Senior Executive Engineer- Environment indicates that he is satisfied that with full implementation of mitigation measures, the probability, likely magnitude and likely maximum extent of any water quality do not present any risk of significant negative impacts on water quality in the River Barrow and will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. Similarly, the effects associated with noise and visual disturbance to aquatic and woodland habitats and fauna, including from piling for the temporary cofferdam, and spread of invasive alien species and disease, are under effective control and will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

It is noted that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in their report to An Coimisiún Pleanála consider that the NIS does not currently provide sufficient information to enable An Coimisiún Pleanála to complete Appropriate Assessment indicating that it has not been demonstrated beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development alone or in combination with other plans or projects. would not adversely affect the integrity of River Barrow and River Nore SAC. As such they recommend that Further Information is requested seeking a detailed CEMP to include a programme of works and phasing details, a Biosecurity Management Plan, SAC Qualifying Interest Protection Measure and Water Quality Protection and Monitoring.



Designated Sites - Extract from Fig 1.1 of the submitted NIS

National Designations - Natural Heritage Areas

There are 3 no. NHAs designated within the Zone of influence of the proposed development, as follows:

- Hodgestown Bog (site code: 001393) is >50km north of the proposed development and is designated for the protection of its raised bog habitats.
- Daingean Bog (site code: 002033) is >55km north-west of the proposed development and is designated for the protection of its raised bag habitats and its population of Irish Hare (*Lepus timidus hibernicus*).
- Clonreher Bog (site code: 002357) is >35 km north-west of the proposed development and is designated for the protection of its raised bog habitats.

These sites were examined for potential Source-Pathway-Receptor connectivity with the Project. All three of these sites are in the upper reaches of the Barrow catchment and are of conservation interest for their terrestrial habitats and species. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development and its location at large distances downstream from these areas, there are no pathways for impacts to these habitats and species.

There are 7 no. pNHAs are within 15km of the proposed development:

- Ardristan Fen pNHA (site code: 000788)
- Ballymoon Esker pNHA (site code: 000797)
- Cloghristick Wood pNHA (site code: 000806)
- Oakpark pNHA (site code: 000810)
- Whitehall Quarries pNHA (site code: 000855)
- Ballylynan pNHA (site code: 000857)
- Barrow Valley at Tankardstown Bridge pNHA (site code: 000858)

Oakpark pNHA and Whitehall Quarries pNHA are situated 4.5km north-east and 14.2km south-west, respectively, of the proposed development and have no surface water connectivity to the proposed development. All the remaining sites have some surface water connectivity to the proposed development. However, with the exception of Cloghristick Wood pNHA, which is c. 4.8km downstream of the proposed development (on the River Barrow), all are upstream of the proposed development.

Cloghristick Wood pNHA is of interest for its woodland complex, which includes Annex I priority habitat 'alluvial forests' (which is a qualifying interest of the overlapping River Barrow and River Nore SAC) and a larger area of mixed broadleaved woodland.

Protected Structures / Recorded Archaeological Sites

There are no recorded archaeological sites located within the 500m study area. Implementation of the mitigation measures including a programme of archaeological monitoring of ground excavation works during the construction phase will be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist licensed by the National Monument Service. Section 13.6 of the EIAR, notes that the operational phase of the proposed development will have no predicted impacts on known or potential elements of the archaeological resource.

There are no designated architectural heritage structures located within or directly adjacent to the proposed development and it is not located within an Architectural Conservation Area.

The proposed outfall pipe extending to the west of the wastewater treatment plant will extend to an overgrown section of the riverside through a wooded area that formerly formed part of the landholding of Erindale House which is a Protected Structure (CW066).

Protected Structure CW396, a 19th century thatched house is located c.100m to the southeast of the existing wastewater treatment plant with Protected Structure CW395, a roadside stable building located c.300m to the south of the proposed outfall pipe.

The EIAR contends that no likely significant effects on known cultural heritage will arise due to the proposed development.

7. Public Services

Water supply. Potable water supply for human consumption and use such as uses in canteen and other welfare facilities is provided from Carlow Town's existing water network mains. The existing potable water supply to the WwTP will be retained to continue the supply of potable water supply to the administration building, emergency shower and eye wash and hydrants at the WwTP site.

The wash water supply to the process units is provided via an existing borehole located in the WwTP site, east of the administration building. The borehole system will be upgraded and the wash water network will be expanded to cover the new process units and the inlet pump station during the operational phase.

Sanitary facilities. Foul water will connect to the public sewer system.

Surface water. The Mortarstown WwTP has an existing surface water drainage system which drains to the existing roadways. The extension of the site to the west including the proposed WwTP will require a new surface water drainage system. This system includes infrastructure such as filter drainage along the access road, a kerb and gulley drainage system within the WwTP site and surface drainage outlet pipe to connect to the proposed storm water overflow pipeline which includes an oil / petrol interceptor prior to discharge via the existing outfall pipe to the River Barrow.

8. Flood Risk Assessment

A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) has been undertaken in accordance with the principles of the guidelines (DEHLG & OPW, 2009). The primary risk of flooding at the Proposed Development Site is associated with fluvial flooding due to the sites close proximity to the River Barrow. While the majority of the Proposed Development Site is located in Fluvial Flood Zone C with a low risk of flooding, some sections in the east, adjacent to the River Barrow, are located in Fluvial Flood Zone A.

The SSFRA assessed the flood risk associated with the proposed outfall pipe and associated headwall. The primary flood risk is associated with fluvial flooding on the River Barrow, with the headwall and outfall pipe located within the modelled Fluvial Flood Zone A and B. However, these elements are considered to be 'Water Compatible' and are not subject to the requirements of a Justification Test. Hydraulic modelling confirmed that the proposed headwall and outfall pipe will not result in an adverse impact to the existing hydrological regime or increase the flood risk in adjacent lands. There is no predictive increase in flood extents when comparing the undeveloped baseline scenario with the proposed development scenario. The SSFRA concludes that the potential flood risk to and from the proposed outfall pipe and headwall is considered to be low, and is considered to be appropriate from a flood risk perspective.

9. Water Framework Directive

A Water Framework Directive Assessment is included with the particulars and assesses the implications of the proposed development for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) quality status and objectives for the receiving waterbodies and is included in Appendix 12-6 to the EIAR. This assessment concluded that the proposed development:

- will not cause a deterioration in the status of all surface and groundwater bodies assessed;
- will not jeopardise the objectives to achieve 'Good' surface water/groundwater status;
- does not jeopardise the attainment of 'Good' surface water/groundwater chemical status;
- does not jeopardise the attainment of 'Good' surface water/groundwater quantity status;
- does not permanently exclude or compromise the achievement of the objectives of the WFD
- in other waterbodies within the same river basin district;
- is compliant with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC); and,
- is consistent with other Community Environmental Legislation including the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU), the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)."

The EIAR states that on the basis of the assessments carried out and from the perspective of biodiversity, the overall effect of the operation of the proposed development on water quality in the River Barrow is likely to be positive and slight in the short term to imperceptible in the long term.

10. Environment Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

The following section gives an overview of the EIAR submitted as part of this planning application. For the most part, the EIAR is considered to be set out in a clear format. The section below provides a brief summary of the environmental impacts of the proposal as outlined in the chapters contained in the EIAR.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

This chapter is clearly set out and indexed. The introduction sets out details of the applicant, the site, detail of the existing infrastructure on site and an overview of the nature of the proposed development. The design lifespan of the upgraded plant is 25 years but it is anticipated that it will be maintained, with periodic upgrading undertaken over a longer lifetime to meet future demand and upgrades in technology. An overview of the planning and policy framework supporting the proposed development is also set out. In addition, the need for the project is clearly detailed.

Chapter 2 - Description of the Proposed Development

A description of the proposed development is provided in Chapter 2. The Chapter provides the details/specifications with respect to; project duration, location and specific development works including the demolition phase and decommissioning phase. Proposals including the microtunnel gravity sewer, inlet pump station, outfall and solar energy generation are detailed. Onsite storage and chemical and fuel storage arrangements are set out in addition to advanced works, traffic management, construction compounds, landscaping and environmental management during construction.

Chapter 3 – Alternatives Considered

This section of the EIAR presents a description of the reasonable alternatives considered for the proposed development including the 'do nothing scenario' and types of alternatives, including four technical scenarios. A Conceptual Design Workshop was held with UÉ and Carlow County Council on 12th July 2018 where these scenarios were presented and reviewed. All four scenarios are set out in Section 3.4.1.1.1 of the EIAR. Scenario A was identified as the preferred treatment solution as it provides primary settlement tanks (PSTs) for load-shedding, which reduces the load on downstream biological treatment processes while meeting compliance requirements. This treatment option was approved by UÉ in May 2019 and subsequently progressed to the specimen design stage. The requirement for the upgrade of the existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station (PS) to deliver and manage flows for future design horizons was identified during the Feasibility Study. This upgrade requires increased pipeline capacity to convey increased flows from the existing Kilkenny Road PS to the WwTP, with the result that the provision of 2 No. new 900mm diameter rising mains are also proposed as part of the project.

This chapter also sets out that the microtunnel alignment was presented to the public during a public consultation period and displayed at a public information event on 9th October 2025. Landowners provided feedback during the consultation process, which led to refinements in the alignment design.

Following design revisions arising from the public consultation process, the updated design was subsequently reviewed by Carlow County Council. It was requested that the relocated shaft be repositioned to avoid overlap with the Southern Relief Road layout.

The existing outfall pipeline which discharges flows from Mortarstown WwTP to the River Barrow does not have sufficient capacity to convey treated effluent from the upgraded WwTP. The project therefore proposes to replace the existing 600mm diameter outfall pipe with a 900mm diameter gravity outfall pipe approximately 205m in length. The alternatives considered for this aspect of the development is also set out in this chapter as are the construction methodologies to construct same.

Overall, it is submitted that the preferred option was determined to be the best overall from an environmental, constructability and cost perspective.

Chapter 4 -Population and Human Health
Chapter 4 summaries the likely population and human health impacts associated with the proposed development. The assessment of impacts has been undertaken in the context of current relevant standards and guidance and identifies any requirements for mitigation and monitoring measures. With the implementation of standard mitigation measures, industry standards and best practice, no adverse residual effects on the population or human beings are anticipated.

Chapter 5 -Biodiversity
Chapter 5 describes the existing biodiversity environment of the project. It examines the potential effects that the project may have on biodiversity during each phase of the development. Where required appropriate mitigation measures are described to avoid, control or reduce activities that may have potential significant effect(s) on biodiversity. It also outlines ecological enhancement measures to achieve a No Net Loss/Net Gain of Biodiversity in accordance with UÉ's Biodiversity Action Plan (UÉ, 2021).

Key measures prioritise protection of water quality through adherence to detailed controls including management of sediment, hydrocarbons, wastewater and specialist works (e.g. outfalls and micro-tunnelling). Construction effects are further reduced through strict timing constraints (e.g. daylight-only in-stream works), minimisation and control of artificial lighting, and implementation of wildlife-sensitive lighting design principles such as dark buffers and low-intensity luminaires. Habitat loss and fragmentation are minimised via adherence to tree protection plans, constrained vegetation clearance, and retention of key ecological features, including mature trees supporting bat roosts. Species-specific mitigation includes pre-construction surveys, seasonal restrictions, exclusion measures, and ecological supervision to protect birds, bats, otter and aquatic fauna. Biosecurity protocols are comprehensive, addressing invasive species and disease risks through cleaning, containment and controlled disposal procedures. Additional measures include fish rescue during cofferdam works, noise control, and maintaining habitat connectivity. Operational mitigation is largely embedded in design, with wastewater treatment improvements expected to safeguard overall water quality.

The enhancement strategy seeks to deliver biodiversity gains in line with national, county and UÉ policies, including green infrastructure objectives and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Central to this is a landscape-led approach incorporating native planting, habitat creation and improved ecological connectivity.

The chapter concludes that mitigation and enhancement measures secured through both the EIAR Biodiversity chapter and the NIS will ensure that the proposed development, alone or in combination with other plans and project, will not give rise to any significant negative effects on Biodiversity or any adverse effects on the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC or any other Natura 2000 site.

Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual

This chapter describes the effects of the proposed development on landscape and visual receptors, and the significance of the effects identified. The study area includes areas of land within a 0.5km radius of the site. The part of the study area east of the River Barrow is designated in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as within the Central Lowlands Character Area. The study area west of the River Barrow is located in County Laois includes land within, Urban Fringe and Lowland Agricultural Areas as designated in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

The field survey noted that the rural landscape in the Central Lowlands Character Area, in County Carlow is generally in good condition, with intact characteristics such as grassland, hedgerows, woodland, and views along the river Barrow contributing to character. This area is judged to be of local importance and low value due to the influence of suburban development. The EIAR contends that the proposed development in combination of the overall minor adverse magnitude and low sensitivity, that the overall significance of the effect on Central Lowlands landscape character in the study area during operation would be slight adverse.

A number of mitigation measures will be implemented during the design and construction phase, to minimise or eliminate significant effects. This mitigation measures are set out in detail in the landscape plan contained in Appendix 6-4 of the EIAR and include;

- Hedge planting and natural recolonisation of woodland to replace the woodland removed south of Kilkenny Road Pumping Station.
- Any damage to existing stone walls at the Kilkenny Road Pumping Station will be made good.
- A comprehensive landscape scheme will be implemented at the WwTP site to include biodiversity enhancements.
- Tree and hedge planting will be provided to replace tree and hedges lost on Kilkenny Road due to the provision of shafts for the micro tunnelling works.

Following the implementation of the mitigation measures the EIAR concludes that there would be no significant adverse residual landscape and visual effects, during the Construction and Operational Phases.

Chapter 7 – Air Quality and Odour

Chapter 7 assesses the likely air quality and odour impacts associated with the proposed development. The assessment of impacts has been undertaken in the context of current relevant standards and guidance and identifies any requirements or possibilities for mitigation. Particular attention was given to the potential exposure of receptors to airborne pollutants resulting from the development and operation of the subject site. Sensitive receptors within 1km of the subject, including local business units and residential dwellings in the vicinity of the subject site have been included within the assessment.

It is indicated that the application of an Environmental Management System will incorporate best practice measures in order to minimise dust and odour air pollutants at the subject site. During the construction and operational phase, emissions to air from the construction, landscaping and operation of the process will be mitigated in accordance with specific measures set out within this Chapter and within Chapter 18 – Schedule of Commitments of the EIAR.

When dust mitigation measures detailed in the mitigation section are implemented, fugitive emissions of dust and particulate matter from the site will be minor and not significant in nature posing no nuisance at nearby receptors.

Best practice mitigation measures are proposed for the operational phase of the proposed development which will focus on the pro-active control of dust and odour air pollutants to minimise generation and release of emissions at source. The mitigation measures that will be put in place during the operation of the proposed development will ensure that the impact of the development complies with all EU ambient and guideline odour air quality limit values which are based on the protection of human health. Therefore, the impact of construction and operation of the proposed development is stated as likely to be temporary and imperceptible with result to human health.

Chapter 8 –Climate

Chapter 8 assesses the likely climate impacts and the impact of climate change risks on the proposed Development. The climate assessment is divided into two distinct sections – a greenhouse gas assessment (GHGA) and a climate change risk assessment (CCRA).

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (GHGA) – Quantifies the GHG emissions from a project over its lifetime. The assessment compares these emissions to relevant carbon budgets, targets and policy to contextualise magnitude.
- Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) – Identifies the impact of a changing climate on a project and receiving environment. The assessment considers a projects vulnerability to climate change and identifies adaptation measures to increase project resilience.

The majority of the operational GHG emissions associated with the proposed development are from vehicle use to carry out routine maintenance, deliver chemicals and collect sludge cake. Emissions from these visits will be reduced by using local businesses to carry out required works and ensuring visits are multi-functional where possible to negate the need for additional trips. Electricity consumption also contributes to operational emissions. The installation of solar panels will reduce GHG emissions associated with electricity consumption from the grid which is often generated using fossil fuels. Solar panels will provide 15% of the energy demand of Mortarstown WwTP.

A Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) was conducted to consider the vulnerability of the proposed development to climate change, as per the TII 2022 PE-ENV-01104 guidance. This involves an analysis of the sensitivity and exposure of the development to future climate hazards which together provide a measure of vulnerability. The hazards assessed included flooding (pluvial, fluvial); extreme heat; extreme cold; drought and extreme wind. The proposed development is predicted to have at most low vulnerabilities to the various climate hazards and therefore the effect of climate change on the proposed development is considered direct, long-term, negative and not significant.

Chapter 9- Noise and Vibration

Chapter 9 contains a description of the receiving ambient noise climate in the vicinity of the subject site and an assessment of the potential noise and vibration impact associated with the proposed development, during both the short-term construction phase and the long-term operational phase, on its surrounding environment. The assessment of direct, indirect and cumulative noise and vibration impacts on the surrounding environment have been considered. Mitigation measures are included, where relevant, to ensure the proposed development is constructed and operated in an environmentally sustainable manner in order to ensure minimal impact on the receiving environment.

The mitigation measures relate to construction activities, including demolition and decommissioning which will cause some impact on nearby noise sensitive properties due to noise emissions from site traffic and other activities, including;

- selection of quiet plant;
- control of noise sources;
- screening (boundary, and or localised plant screening);

- hours of work;
- liaison with the public, and;
- monitoring.

The EIAR contends that any construction noise effects will be slight to significant (dependant on location), negative and short-term in nature.

Predicted operational noise levels are below the levels at which significant effects would be expected as such no mitigation measures are required.

Chapter 10 - Traffic and Transportation
Chapter 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) reviews the existing receiving environment in relation to current road traffic characteristics and assesses the proposed development to identify its likely effects on the traffic environment.

The chapter states that the current WwTP access from Green Road will be retained. A new internal vehicle access point will be provided to facilitate entry to the rear of the UÉ–owned property situated to the west of the WwTP boundary. The existing Kilkenny Road Pumping Station access will also be retained.

The majority of traffic associated with the proposed development is expected during the construction phase, particularly during excavation works, with a maximum of 347 PCU two-way trips anticipated throughout the day. Analysis indicates that cumulative construction traffic volumes will remain significantly below the capacity of key road links, including Kilkenny Road and Green Road, suggesting that the traffic-related effect during construction can be considered not significant.

During the operational phase, the proposed development is expected to generate approximately 10 staff trips and 2 material-related trips per day (equivalent to 16 PCU trips per day). These trips are primarily associated with screening, grit removal, dewatered sludge handling, and the administration building

The proposed development is also not expected to have any significant impact on the future Carlow Southern Relief Road, and the cumulative traffic effect remains imperceptible.

Chapter 11 – Land, Soil and Geology
Chapter 11 describes the type of soils and geology likely to be encountered beneath and in the general area of the Mortarstown wastewater treatment plant (WwTP) micro tunnels and associated Kilkenny Road pumping station site (PS). The chapter also addresses the potential impact of the development on land, soils and geology together with the mitigation measures that will be employed to eliminate or reduce any potential impacts.

A public water supply (PWS) well is located approximately 1.1km to the southeast of Mortarstown WwTP. This well is reported to have a moderate yield-class and the source is within the granular subsoils. There is no potential for this PWS to be impacted by the proposed development due to the local hydrogeological regime, whereby groundwater at the site will flow towards the River Barrow.

The proposed works at the WwTP, including the new pumping station will have potential impacts on soils and geology during construction. The maximum excavation depth is anticipated to be ca. 15m. Works will involve disturbance of topsoil and subsoil within the existing WwTP site and the agricultural land to be incorporated into the development. Bedrock may be encountered during the excavations for the deeper tanks and sumps. Below ground construction works will be required to

facilitate the construction of the tanks, clarifier and thickener. The total volume of material requiring excavation is expected to be ca. 89,000m^3 for the development including topsoil, subsoil and weathered rock. It is anticipated that the 2,500m^3 subsoil will be used as fill on the site while the topsoil will be removed to an appropriate facility. An application may be made to the EPA under Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 for the use of excess soil as a by-product if a definite use and need for this material can be determined. Works will also involve deliveries of imported fill, crushed stone, concrete, reinforcement and other construction materials. Other construction activities will include site storage of cement and concrete materials, oils and fuels.

The Chapter concludes that with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures and monitoring as set out in the chapter, the effect of the proposed development on land and soils is considered to be negative minor in magnitude and permanent during construction and operation and decommissioning phase.

Chapter 12 -Water

Chapter 12 identifies likely impacts of the proposed development on surface water and groundwater during construction and operational phases of the development and sets out mitigation measures to avoid, remediate or reduce significant negative impacts.

The proposed development site is located in the River Barrow surface water catchment and lies immediately to the west of the site and forms part of River Barrow and River Nore SAC. There are no drinking water abstractions from the River Barrow in the vicinity of the proposed development site, whilst the River Barrow is listed as a Nutrient Sensitive Area. The primary risk to groundwater during construction is from cementitious materials, hydrocarbon/chemical spillage and leakages, all of which are common potential impacts which occur on construction sites. All potential contamination sources are to be carefully managed during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development and mitigation measures are proposed to deal with these potential minor impacts. There is likely to be requirements to manage groundwater during the construction phase in terms of excavation dewatering. However, any dewatering will only be localised and temporary and the effects will not be significant.

The proposed upgraded WwTP plant will discharge treated effluent to the River Barrow. The upgraded plant has been designed to meet both the discharge quality standards set out in Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations (UWWTR), and to a standard which will allow the River Barrow to meet at least "Good" status as required by the WFD and the Surface Water Regulations. Given the high level of treatment to be provided by the proposed upgraded WwTP, there will be no significant negative effects associated with the proposed discharge.

A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment Report has been completed for the proposed development (IE Consulting, 2026). The proposed outfall pipe and associated headwall are located within the mapped fluvial flood zones along the River Barrow. All other infrastructure is located in Flood Zone C and is considered to be at low risk of flooding. The elements of the proposed development mapped within the flood zones are considered to be "Water Compatible". Modelling has revealed that the construction of these elements will not result in any negative effects to the existing hydrological regime or any increase in the downstream/upstream flood risk. The potential flood risk is considered to be low and the proposed development is considered to be appropriate from a flood risk perspective.

A Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment has been completed for all waterbodies (surface water and groundwater bodies) with the potential to be impacted by the

proposed development. This chapter states that with the implementation of the mitigation measures prescribed there will be no change in the WFD status of the underlying groundwater body or downstream surface waterbodies as a result of the proposed development. The proposed development has been found to be fully compliant with the WFD and will not prevent any waterbody from achieving its WFD objectives. The chapter concludes by stating that no significant effects on the water environment will occur during the construction, or operational phase of the proposed development.

Chapter 13- Cultural Heritage

Chapter 13 assesses the effects of the proposed development on the known and potential cultural heritage resource which includes archaeological sites and architectural heritage structures as well as intangible cultural heritage assets such as folklore and historical associations.

There are no recorded archaeological sites located within the study area and, therefore, no effects on the known archaeological resource are predicted during the construction phase. The areas within the existing WwTP and pumping station properties have been previously subject to ground disturbance works during the construction of the existing infrastructure and the potential for adverse effects on unrecorded, sub-surface archaeological sites and features within these disturbed areas is deemed to be negligible. The proposed demolition of modern infrastructure within the boundary of the proposed development will have a neutral effect on the cultural heritage resource.

A programme of archaeological monitoring of ground excavation works during the construction phase will be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist. In the event that any archaeological remains are identified during the course of archaeological supervision of works they will be recorded and securely cordoned off while the National Monuments Service are consulted to determine further appropriate mitigation measures.

There are no designated architectural heritage structures located within or directly adjacent to the proposed development and it is not located within an Architectural Conservation Area. A proposed outfall pipe extending to the west of the WwTP will extend through a wooded area that formerly formed part of the landholding of Erindale House which is a Protected Structure (CW066). There are no associated curtilage structures located within the environs of the proposed outfall route which extends through an area that is now separated from the existing Erindale property by a modern residential house. While the proposed outfall pipe will result in no predicted effects on Erindale House, it will result in a temporary, direct, slight effect on an area formerly within its grounds during the construction phase. The construction phase will result in no predicted effects on Protected Structure CW396, a 19th century thatched house located c.100m to the southeast of the existing WWTP, or on Protected Structure CW395, a roadside stable building located c.300m to the south of the proposed outfall pipe.

A single-storey cottage is located within an area of the proposed development site to the west of the Kilkenny Road (R448). While not a designated architectural heritage structure, the cottage does comprise a structure of local (low) vernacular significance which has been compromised by modern interventions. The cottage will be retained in situ as part of the proposed development and, therefore, no direct adverse effects on this structure will occur during the construction phase.

Chapter 14 -Material Assets

Chapter 14 (in accordance with relevant EPA guidance (EPA, 2022)) assesses Built Services, Roads and Traffic, and Waste Management. Given the nature and scale of proposed development and the fact that a detailed CEMP will be prepared and implemented by the contractor during construction and demolition, these potential effects are unlikely and should they occur, would be temporary and

moderate adverse in nature. Similarly, there will be no likely significant effects regarding built services during the operational phase. Overall, no significant effects on built services are likely.

Further the chapter contends based on the scale and nature of the proposed development and taking account of the preparation and implementation of a Resource and Waste Management Plan (RWMP) for the construction phase, no cumulative effects are predicted in relation to waste generation. Any effects arising from waste management activities during the construction and operational phases will be imperceptible and not significant. Hence there are no likely significant effects identified in respect of waste management and/or waste generation.

Chapter 15 – Major Accidents and Disasters

Chapter 15 assesses the expected effects deriving from the vulnerability of the proposed development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters associated with the proposed upgrade. This chapter identifies and evaluates events with the potential to cause significant adverse effects on human health, the environment, or property, during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. The assessment considers both internal risks (such as fires, explosions, or structure failures) and external hazards (such as extreme weather events, flooding, or nearby industrial accidents).

The chapter clarifies that the COMAH Regulations do not apply to the proposed development as the proposed development will not store significant quantities of hazardous materials which are in excess of the defined COMAH thresholds set out in Schedule 1 of the COMAH Regulations. It is further clarified that there are no Seveso sites within 5km of the proposed development site and the site is not located within the consultation zones of any Seveso establishment; therefore, there are no constraints to the proposed development from nearby Seveso establishments.

The Chapter sets out potential effects during the construction phase relating to construction materials and materials associated with various construction vehicles and construction processes, such as fuel and compressed gas.

It is indicated that the proposed development has been designed in line with good industry practice, and mitigation against the risk of major accidents and/or disasters is embedded through the design, in accordance with planning and legislative requirements. Further a layered suite of mitigation measures has been embedded across design, construction, operation and decommissioning to prevent, detect and respond to major accidents and disasters. This includes regulatory compliance with licensing and adherence to national and international codes and standards.

As no likely significant effects were identified for the construction, operational and decommissioning phases, no additional mitigation measures are proposed, as such there is no potential for residual effects.

Chapter 16 – Cumulative Effects

Chapter 16 defines Cumulative effects as changes to the environment that arise because of an action in combination with other actions. The Chapter assesses the potential for the proposed development to act in combination with permitted developments / projects within the vicinity to result in cumulative impacts on the environment. It will examine whether the addition of effects from the proposed development itself or in combination with the effects of other permitted projects will have more significant effects when combined. The EIAR has considered and assessed the interactive effects due to construction and operation of the proposed development. This Chapter carries out a cumulative effects assessment of the specific environmental factors as set out in all Chapters of the EIAR in accordance with the EPA Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022).

The Carlow Southern Relief Road is planned along the northern boundary of the wastewater treatment plant (WwTP) site and this project has therefore been included in the cumulative effects

assessment presented in this Chapter. This project forms one of a number of projects all of which are listed in Table 16-1 which have been considered with respect to potential cumulative effects.

Chapter 17- Interactions
Chapter 17 describes how effects on different environmental factors may interact with each other during both the construction and the operational phases of the proposed development. Different contributors worked together to understand how impacts in one area could affect others ensuring that all combined, cumulative and interactive effects that could arise during construction and operational lifetime were properly identified and assessed.

A summary table showing key interaction and interdependencies between environmental attributes is presented in Table 17-1 with each environmental topic discussed.

Chapter 18 Schedule of Commitments
This chapter sets out a schedule of environmental commitments prepared, for ease of reference and clarity, and to facilitate enforcement of all environmental mitigation and monitoring measures specified within Chapter 4 to Chapter 15, of the EIAR.

All mitigation and monitoring commitments detailed within the EIAR have been included in a separate compendium and are presented in this Chapter. These commitments have been incorporated into the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) received with this planning application and set out in Appendix 2.2, Volume 3 of the EIAR.

The CEMP is a live document which will be added to in the detailed CEMP, prepared by the Contractor, which will include any future additional requirements.

11. Reports of Relevant Local Authority Departments

Municipal District Engineer's Report:
A report received from the Municipal District Engineer raises no objection to the proposed development subject to;

- the protection of the local road network and associated infrastructure during the construction phase. Any disturbance to public roads, footpaths, drainage infrastructure, road signage, verges or other Council assets should be fully reinstated to the satisfaction of the Roads Authority.
- appropriate traffic management measures should be implemented throughout the construction period to minimise disruption to road users, residents, businesses and emergency services. The applicant should maintain regular liaison with the Local Authority in relation to construction activities and proposed road works.

Transportation Engineer's Report
Carlow County Councils Transport Department's Senior Executive Engineer has provided the following observations/comments in relation to the proposal. The report notes engagement occurred between Uisce Éireann (or technical consultants working on their behalf) in the development of the above proposal to SID level and in particular the examination of the proposal in line with the Carlow Southern Relief Road. The transportation department is satisfied with proposals as agreed with UE as per letter issued to UE. The report also notes that the connection required to the pump station on Kilkenny road will include significant detail and agreement with the Council through the road opening licence procedure.

Senior Executive Engineer - Environmental Report
The Environment Department has reviewed the planning documentation associated with this proposal.

The NIS has been considered (see attached report) and found to be satisfactory and that the aggregated mitigation measures are sufficient. The report quotes the conclusion of the *Natura Impact Statement which states;*

"The report concludes that given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation detailed in this NIS, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts that would constitute adverse effects on the River Barrow and River Nore SAC or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives. Therefore, it is recommended that the competent authority may determine that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, provided that the mitigation prescribed in this NIS is fully and properly implemented.

The EIAR has also been reviewed (see attached), and its content assessed against the requirements set out in (EU, 2017) EIA Guidance on preparation of the EIA report. This was found to be satisfactory".

No objection or further comments are made in the report and no conditions are suggested.

Executive Engineer - Environmental Report
The Environment Department's Executive Engineer has reviewed surface water matters relating to the proposed development and recommends the following conditions;

1. The proposed storm water overflow pipeline must have a suitably designed and maintained oil/petrol interceptor prior to discharge via the existing outfall pipe to the River Barrow.

2. There shall be a magnetic flow meter on the proposed storm water overflow pipeline to determine how much surface water is generated by the sites roads and internal collection systems.

3. All surface water collection and disposal systems should be designed to comply with the Carlow County Council SuDs Policy.

4. The collection and storage of surface water where possible should use nature-based surface water solutions – tree pits, swales, permeable paving etc to minimise the surface water dispersion the River Barrow.

5. No surface water generated by any proposed development shall be dispersed to any public road or public footpath or private property.

12. Third Party Observation's / Submissions to An Coimisiún Pleanála

Submissions on the proposed development are made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanala.

13. Planning Authority's Assessment and Views

Acknowledged Need for the Proposed Development

The proposed upgrade is acknowledged as necessary to address current and future hydraulic and organic loading constraints at the plant, to alleviate overloading issues, and to bring the facility into full compliance with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the EPA Wastewater Discharge Licence (D0028-01), and other relevant European and national environmental legislation.

The upgrade will ensure enhanced protection of the River Barrow, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Regulations, 2011. By improving treatment performance and effluent quality, the proposed development will contribute to safeguarding the ecological integrity of this sensitive receiving environment.

The upgrade will also facilitate anticipated growth of residential, economic, social and community infrastructure required to support the future sustainable development of the Carlow -Graiguecullen greater urban area.

Landuse Zonings

The wastewater treatment site and the Kilkenny Road Pumping Station are zoned Transport and Utilities in The Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, (Variation no 4) and the Carlow-Graiguecullen Joint Urban LAP 2024-2030 with a stated objective to provide for transport infrastructure and public utilities. This zoning identifies lands associated with the provision of transport infrastructure and public utilities such as road, rail, electricity, gas, telecommunications, broadband, and water, wastewater infrastructure etc. The nature of these facilities is such that the use of the lands is dedicated to the provision and maintenance of such uses. The proposed development is therefore fully compliant with this zoning.

The pumping station site is zoned as Existing / Infill Residential with an objective; To protect and improve existing residential amenity; to provide for appropriate infill residential development; to provide for new and improved ancillary services. Part of the upgraded discharge pipe from the WwTP and the microtunnel crosses the area zoned as Existing / Infill Residential. The upgraded discharge pipe will follow the route and footprint of the existing discharge pipe and the microtunnel will be within the footprint of the road. Utility structures are open for consideration within the existing residential/infill zoning.

Part of the upgraded discharge pipe from the WwTP crosses an area zoned as Open Space and Amenity with the objective: To protect, provide for and enhance open space, amenity facilities, and recreational uses. Utility structures are open for consideration within the open space and amenity zoning.

Having regard to the foregoing and given the strategic nature of the proposed development which is required to meet other policies and objectives of Carlow County Council, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle.

Visual Impact

The proposed development site is located on the site within an urban area. Having regard to the existing and historic use of the subject site, the scale and height of the existing and proposed development on site, and the adjoining land uses the Planning Authority considers that the development would not have an adverse visual impact given the nature and topography of the subject site and the wider area within which it is situated and would not therefore be contrary to

policies as contained in Chapter 9 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. The planning authority notes and welcomes the detailed landscape plan provided in Appendix 6-4.

Impact on Sensitive Receptors
The settlement pattern in the area of the subject site consists of a mix of residential, educational, commercial, and industrial uses.

Details in the EIAR state that in air quality impacts due to the construction and operation of the proposed development is likely to be temporary and imperceptible with respect to human health. In terms of odour the applicant indicates that a number of design features have been integrated to control odour. The proposal includes active odour management during the operation of the WwTP by means of odour control units (OCUs) to be installed to the following process units:

- New Pumping Station
- New Inlet Works
- New Primary Settlement Tank
- Anoxic / Anaerobic Tank
- Sludge Blending Tank and Picket Fence Thickeners (New and Existing)
- Sludge Dewatering Building
- Local Foul Pump Station
- Centrate Pumps.

Table 7.15 in the EIAR sets out 'predicted ground level concentrations (GLC's) of odours at each identified sensitive receptor for the existing and proposed facility design'. For the existing WwTP plant design, the maximum predicted Ground Level Concentration (GLC) of Odour is above the guideline odour air quality limit value presented in Table 7.1. With regard to the proposed WwTP design, the maximum predicted GLC of Odour is well below the guideline odour air quality limit value presented in Table 7.1. As such there will be a net overall improvement in odour air quality in the vicinity of the facility as a result of the development and the impact associated with the proposed development is considered positive and imperceptible.

With regard to Noise and Vibration, Volume 2 of the EIAR provides details on potential noise and vibration impacts arising from the construction and maintenance of the proposed development. The EIAR contends that any construction noise effects will be slight to significant (dependant on location), negative and short-term in nature. Predicted operational noise levels are below the levels at which significant effects would cause nuisance.

Subject to compliance with the details proposed and measures to mitigate impacts on residential amenities including odour abatement measures, implementation of odour management plan (appendix 7.1), compliance with relevant standards the Planning Authority is satisfied that potential impacts can be adequately addressed/mitigated.

Seveso III Directive
The Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accidents Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015 (COMAH), which implements the Seveso III Directive, are not relevant to the proposed development and it is indicated that the development will not be a Seveso site.

Conclusion
The Planning Authority acknowledges and supports the strategic importance of the proposed development as a critical element of physical infrastructure required to facilitate future economic and social development of the greater Carlow-Graiguecullen Urban Area.

The development as proposed is considered to be broadly consistent with the provisions of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Carlow-Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030. Having regard to the foregoing, it is concluded that the proposal accords with the objectives of statutory local plans and subject to appropriate mitigation measures / environmental controls and compliance with licensing requirements of the EPA it is considered generally acceptable and in compliance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

14. Development Contributions

Currently, the relevant Scheme is the Carlow Development Contribution Scheme 2025-2029 (amended Jan 2026). The relevant charge applicable is *Class 27: Development not coming within the foregoing* with a charge rate of €26 per m^2.

15. Special Development Contribution

No special development contribution is considered warranted.

16. Planning Authority's View on Conditions in the Event of the Coimisiún Deciding to Grant Permission

The Planning Authority note that the quality and impact of the final discharge (effluent) entering the receiving aquatic environment will be regulated by the EPA through the Waste Water Discharge Licence process. Given the upgrade proposed, the applicant will be required to review the current Waste Water Discharge Licence.

Relevant conditions for consideration include:

- Timescale for completion, operation and decommissioning
- Detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan
- Appointment of Environmental / Ecological Clerk of Works / Ecologist during the construction phase.
- Noise / dust levels during construction including monitoring and timely procedures to address any issues of complaint.
- Protection of the local road network and associated infrastructure during the construction phase. Any disturbance to public roads, footpaths, drainage infrastructure, road signage, verges or other Council assets should be fully reinstated to the satisfaction of the Roads Authority.
- Adherence to Construction Traffic Management Plan including continuous monitoring to ensure compliance and response to any matters arising is required. Agreement of HGV delivery schedules to ensure compliance and agreed timing restrictions. Construction Manager/Transport Coordinator should liaise with the Municipal District Engineer to agree timing restrictions, routing, signage and manage any complaints received.
- No dirt or debris from the site to be permitted on the public road either during construction or operation of the development. Road sweeper to be available on site to keep affected roads debris free during construction phase.
- No parking or queuing of vehicles including HGV's on the public road will be permitted.
- Requirement to obtain a road opening licence for all excavation or works on public roads, footpaths, grass margins, public car parks or public areas.

- Appointment of a traffic management coordinator.
- Incorporation of SuDs measures in the drainage design.
- The proposed storm water overflow pipeline shall have a suitably designed and maintained oil/petrol interceptor prior to discharge via the existing outfall pipe to the River Barrow.
- A magnetic flow meter shall be fitted to the proposed storm water overflow pipeline to determine how much surface water is generated by the sites roads and internal collection systems.
- No surface water generated by the proposed development shall be dispersed to any public road or public footpath or private property.
- Measures to mitigate impact on sensitive receptors during construction and operation including operational hours, odour, noise, dust and vibration control measures etc.
- A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
- Archaeological requirements of the DAU.
- Implementation of landscaping measures / plan (Appendix 6-4), hedgerow retention /bolstering proposals to include semi mature planting around the perimeter of the subject development in order to soften and absorb the overall visual impact of the proposed development on this area.
- All mitigation measures / commitments outlined in the submitted EIAR and Natura Impact Statement be carried out in full and implemented by the developer.
- Compliance with EPA Discharge Authorisation.
- Development contributions

P. O'Gorman

Date: 5/10/2026

Padraig O'Gorman
A / Chief Executive