Limerick WWTP Upgrade and Regional Bioresource Centre

EIAR Chapter 1 - Introduction

June 2026

Formerly JB Barry Partners who became part of Egis in 2023

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 Purpose of this Report 1
1.2 The Applicant 1
1.3 Project Need 2
1.3.1 WWTP Treatment Capacity 2
1.3.2 Stormwater Storage Capacity 3
1.3.3 Regional Bioresource Centre 4
1.4 Overview of the Proposed Development 4
1.5 Site Description 5
1.5.1 Site Location 5
1.5.2 Existing WWTP Processes 6
1.5.3 Summary of Emissions 8
1.6 Overview of the Planning Process 9
1.7 Approach to the EIA 10
1.7.1 Definition of EIA 10
1.7.2 Screening 11
1.7.3 Scoping 11
1.7.4 Environmental Impact Assessment Report 12
1.7.5 Public Consultation, Scrutiny and Consent 12
1.7.6 Enforcement and Monitoring 12
1.7.7 Legislative Context 13
1.7.8 Other Relevant Legislation 16
1.7.9 EIAR Guidance 19
1.7.10 Structure of the EIAR 20
1.7.11 EIAR Disciplines Chapter Structure 21
1.7.12 EIAR Team 28
1.8 Consultation 34
1.8.1 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála 34
1.8.2 Stakeholder Engagement 34
1.8.3 Public Engagement in Context 36
1.8.4 Non-Statutory Public Consultation 37
1.8.5 Communications Tools 37
1.8.6 Consultation Feedback 37
1.9 Reference List 39

List of Figures

Figure 1-1: Limerick City Agglomeration Area 2
Figure 1-2: Site Location Diagram 6
Figure 1-3: Existing Layout Plan of Limerick WWTP 7
Figure 1-4: Existing Layout of Corcanree Pumping Station 8
Figure 1-5: Position of EIAR within the EIA Process (Source: EPA, 2022) 11
Figure 1-6: Significance of Impact Matrix (Source: EPA, 2022) 25

List of Tables

Table 1-1:Information required under EIA Directive 14

Table 1-2: EIAR Structure....20
Table 1-3: Description of Effects (Table 3.4 from the EPA Guidelines (EPA, 2022)) 22
Table 1-4: Details of Competent experts 29
Table 1-5: Stakeholder Register Summary 35

Appendices

Appendix 1 – EIA Screening Statement

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Report

This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Upgrade and Regional Bioresource Centre (RBC) Project, hereafter referred to as the "Proposed Development", has been prepared by Egis on behalf of the applicant, Uisce Éireann (UÉ).

The EIAR accompanies a planning application made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). This EIAR has been completed in order to comply with the requirements of all relevant legislation and guidance. Specifically, this EIAR has been prepared to address all the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (hereafter referred to as the "EIA Directive").

The Proposed Development will upgrade the existing WWTP capacity, stormwater storage capacity and the existing sludge treatment facility will be developed into a regional bioresource centre. The work requirements are spread over 2 No. sites, Limerick WWTP and Corcanree PS. Both sites are located in an industrial location near the Dock Road, Limerick and in the townlands Ballykeeffe and Corcanree. The existing land use at both locations comprises wastewater treatment activities.

This EIAR presents an evaluation of the likely significant environmental impacts and applicable mitigation and monitoring measures associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Decommissioning of the Proposed Development is not envisaged at this time, therefore environmental effects associated with the decommissioning phase are not considered in this EIAR. This Chapter introduces the Proposed Development, summarises the EIA process, describes the methodology used to prepare this EIAR and outlines the consultation activities that have been carried out to date. The structure of the EIAR is described in Section 1.7.10. This EIAR was preceded by an EIA Scoping Report, which was made available to all stakeholders during the Public Consultation Stage. Details of the public consultation are further described in Section 1.8.

1.2 The Applicant

The Applicant for the Proposed Development is Uisce Éireann. Uisce Éireann is the national water utility responsible for providing water and wastewater services throughout Ireland. Uisce Éireann is a public utility formed as a company under the Water Services Act 2013 and incorporated under the Companies Acts. Uisce Éireann took responsibility of almost all functions for the delivery of water and wastewater assets and services that were previously managed by the 31 No. Local Authorities in January 2014. Uisce Éireann is now responsible for the operation of all public water and wastewater services in Ireland including:

- Management of national water and wastewater assets;
- Maintenance of the water and wastewater system;
- Investment and planning;
- Managing capital projects; and
- Customer care and billing.

Uisce Éireann is also responsible for the capital investment decisions and implementation of the capital programme delivery across the country. As outlined in its business plan, Uisce Éireann's mission states:

"All of our customers should receive a safe and reliable supply of drinking water and have their wastewater collected and safely returned to the environment. We will protect the environment in all our activities and support Ireland's social and economic growth through appropriate investment in Water Services."

The Limerick WWTP Upgrade Project forms part of Uisce Éireann's 2020-2024 Capital Investment Plan as Uisce Éireann has identified that increased treatment capacity is needed in order to facilitate future development in

Limerick. The existing Sludge Hub Centre (SHC) on site was also identified as the preferred location for the development of a Regional Bioresource Centre (RBC) to serve the south-western region in line with the National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan (NWSMP, 2016).

As the individual WWTP and RBC upgrade projects have interdependencies, they were merged by Uisce Éireann to be progressed as a single project, under a single planning application. Egis was appointed to further develop the RBC feasibility study and design optioneering, in combination with the WWTP upgrade design. This became the current Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade & Regional Bioresource Centre Project.

1.3 Project Need

1.3.1 WWTP Treatment Capacity

Limerick City is a major urban centre with a population of approximately 105,000 people (2022 Census), with a target growth of 50% by 2040 in accordance with the National Development Plan. The existing WWTP has been serving the Limerick agglomeration since the early 2000's and it was issued an EPA Wastewater Discharge License (WWDL) No. D0013-01 in 2009. The WWTP uses a conventional activated sludge (CAS) treatment process to treat the wastewater, which is finally discharged into the Lower Shannon Estuary. The license permits the WWTP to accept wastewater loading for a Population Equivalent (PE) up to 130,000.

The agglomeration is served by the Limerick Main Drainage Network which conveys wastewater to Corcanree PS where it is pumped forward to the wastewater treatment plant. The geographical configuration of the Limerick agglomeration catchment area is shown in Figure 1-1 below.

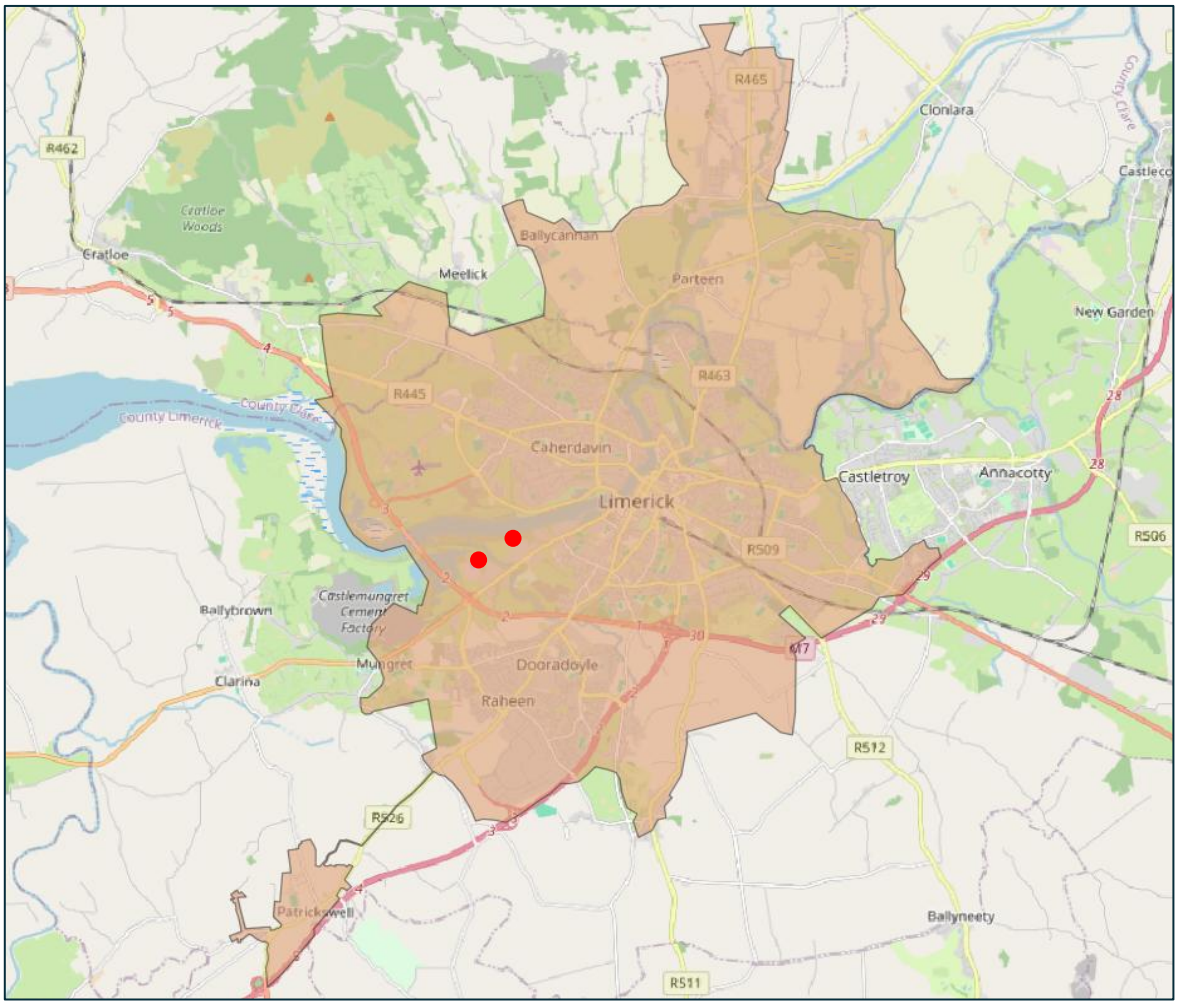

FIGURE 1-1: LIMERICK CITY AGGLOMERATION AREA. RED DOT REPRESENTING LIMERICK WWTP AND PS

Limerick WWTP is currently operating at the limitations of its design capacity and growth projections indicate that, without intervention, it will become overloaded in the coming years. This would cause severe deterioration in the quality of the final effluent discharge, with consequent negative effects on receiving water quality in the Shannon Estuary and SAC habitats.

The Proposed Development addresses this eventuality by increasing the capacity of the WWTP to cater for +10-year population growth projections, extending the existing WWTP from 130,000 PE to 285,000 PE, which includes a future industrial committed load of 27,500 PE. There will be provision made within the civil infrastructural development of the plant for the +25-year growth projections of 325,000 PE, which includes tank sizing (AGS and stormwater storage) and pipework. Further details relating to PE projections are provided in Chapter 3 (The Proposed Development).

The population estimates for Limerick WWTP have considered the information from the Central Statistics Office census data (2022), Limerick Local Area Development Plan (2009 to 2015), information from the Geo-directory (2017) and UÉ Technical Guidance Notes (TGN). Population growth projections have been based on recommendations from Uisce Éireann Wastewater Asset Planning detailed in the Growth and Headroom Technical Guidance Note (TGN) - December 2017. To reaffirm the validity of the Feasibility Study Report (FSR) and the initial 2016 baseline figures, a review was carried out of the domestic population data from 2022, the updated National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030, the National Planning Framework and the updated Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Limerick City's domestic population is reported to have grown by 9% over the 6-year period (2016 - 2022). In order to reach the objective of 50% growth between 2016 and 2040, each census period should achieve c. 12.5% growth increase. The 2016 – 2022 period did not fulfil this requirement, but it is expected that the development of critical new housing infrastructure and associated services (transport and water/wastewater treatment), will accelerate growth rates in line with the National Planning Framework. Refer detail on predicted population growth presented in EIAR Chapter 3 (The Proposed Development).

Additional key drivers identified for the expansion of the Limerick WWTP are as follows;

- Limerick WWTP is an aging plant – Several items of equipment, key to the process, need refurbishment or replacement;
- There is an existing commitment to industrial licensees to provide capacity of 50,063 PE which is not being fully utilised. Full use of this allowance will cause the WWTP to exceed current treatment capacity;
- There is an additional future industrial commitment of 27,500 PE, if required;
- There is a requirement to meet a forecasted growth for domestic, commercial and institutional uses over +10 years; and
- There is a requirement to provide 20% headroom on domestic, non-domestic and institutional loading in accordance with Uisce Éireann policy.

The Limerick (Bunlicky) Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Bioresource Centre has been designated by the Government as a Critical Infrastructure Project under the Critical Infrastructure Act 2026. This designation recognises the strategic national importance of the project and provides for the prioritisation of statutory decision-making processes to support its timely delivery.

1.3.2 Stormwater Storage Capacity

The existing stormwater storage at the WWTP does not have sufficient capacity to manage excess flows from the drainage network. The current baseline scenario, derived from Drainage Area Plan (DAP) modelling and verified through TSR simulations undertaken by EGIS, indicates an annual average of 213 spills from the stormwater overflows (SWOs) serving the wastewater treatment plant. These uncontrolled spills are discharged with minimal treatment to the Shannon Estuary, which forms part of a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (Commission of the European Communities, 2007). The frequency of spills exceeds the limits set by the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD) and the current Uisce Éireann Technical Standards.

The Proposed Development includes the installation of a new 12,500 m^3 stormwater storage tank at Corcanree Pumping Station, together with upgraded pumping and flow management arrangements. These improvements

will substantially reduce the annual number and volume of uncontrolled spills to the Shannon Estuary, bringing the WWTP into compliance with environmental legislation and UWWTD objectives.

1.3.3 Regional Bioresource Centre

The existing Sludge Hub Centre at the Limerick WWTP was upgraded in 2017 to include an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility, which enables treatment of sludge produced onsite as well as imported sludge from Castletroy WWTP and smaller plants serving towns and villages in the surrounding area. The facility has been identified as the preferred location for the development of a Regional Bioresource Centre to serve the south-west region. This designation reflects the site's strategic location, existing infrastructure, and capacity to accommodate additional sludge treatment and processing.

The development of a Regional Bioresource Centre at Limerick forms part of the National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan (NWSMP), which seeks to deliver a sustainable, standardised, and long-term approach to the management of wastewater sludge across Ireland. The NWSMP promotes a hub-and-satellite approach, optimising treatment efficiency, supporting energy recovery through anaerobic digestion, and producing biosolids suitable for reuse in line with environmental and circular economy objectives. The proposed upgrades will ensure that the Limerick WWTP continues to provide a sustainable solution for sludge arising from the agglomeration while also meeting national sludge management standards.

1.4 Overview of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will cater for future population growth and industrial development in the area, in line with population projections for Limerick as set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) Implementation Roadmap and the Southern Region Regional Economic Spatial Strategy (RSES). It will provide 20% Headroom allowance, in line with Uisce Éireann guidelines for large urban settlements. It will also ensure the WWTP continues to comply with requirements of the EPA Wastewater Discharge License (WWDL), Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations (UWWTR) and other relevant Uisce Éireann Guidelines.

The initial upgrade works will cater for the +10-year growth projections, increasing to 285,000 PE including a future industrial committed load of 27,500 PE. There will be provision made in the civil infrastructural development of the plant (tank sizing and pipework) for the +25-year growth projections of 325,000 PE. However, a planning review will be required before any uplift above 285,000 PE can be instated.

The main elements of the Proposed Development are listed below:

- Wastewater Treatment Capacity Upgrade
    - Construct a new 157,000 PE inlet works and AGS process stream to operate in parallel with the existing WWTP arrangement.
    - Divert 1 no. rising main from Corcanree PS to the new process stream, allowing a 50:50 flow split between the new and existing works.
    - New Rising Main at Mungret pumping station.
- Stormwater Storage (Corcanree PS)
    - Complete acquisition of Shannon Foynes Port Company (SFPC) lands (greenfield) to the east of Corcanree PS site.
    - Construct new 12,500m^3 stormwater storage tank with gravity overflow to existing Corcanree outfall chamber.
    - Retain existing rising mains to the WWTP site.
    - Upgrade existing foul pumps to increase pumping capacity to the WWTP.
- Regional Bioresource Centre (RBC)
    - Retain existing imported cake sludge reception facility.
    - Construct a new dewatered sludge cake reception facility.

- Retain & refurbish existing 2. No digester feed tanks as pre -THP dewatering feed tanks.
- New odour control system to cater for overall sludge hub installation.
- New dewatered sludge cake silo for blending and storage of cake imports.
- New Thermal Hydrolysis plant (THP).
- New 3rd Anaerobic Digestion tank to allow operational flexibility.
- Provide additional gas storage to facilitate increased biogas production.
- CHP and Biomethane production options.
- New digested sludge dewatering installation to cater for full digested sludge.
- Treated biosolid export storage silo.
- Upgraded wash water system with added UV treatment.

The WWTP will remain operational during the construction phase. All new structures will be constructed offline and connected during temporary shutdowns. The shutdowns will be planned in a manner that will not affect WWTP performance.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) includes an assessment of the potential environmental effects associated with the use of a temporary construction compound located on southern lands adjacent to the existing WWTP site. However, the temporary compound does not form part of the Proposed Development for which consent is currently being sought and is not required to facilitate the delivery of the Proposed Development, as alternative construction arrangements located to the north of the site remain available and are also assessed in the EIAR. Accordingly, the Proposed Development can proceed without the use of this specific compound.

Landowner agreement for the use of the adjacent temporary construction compound has not yet been secured and Uisce Éireann will continue to engage with the relevant landowner in this regard. Should agreement be reached, any necessary statutory approvals or consents relating to the possible use of the temporary compound to the south of the WWTP site will be pursued separately, as appropriate. The assessment of the temporary compound has been included within the EIAR solely to ensure a comprehensive and transparent understanding of its potential environmental effects, including any potential cumulative effects that could arise should the compound be brought forward in the future.

Further information on the construction strategy and proposed works is included in Chapter 3 (The Proposed Development) and Chapter 4 (Construction Strategy).

1.5 Site Description

1.5.1 Site Location

The proposed development comprises works at Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Corcanree Pumping Station (PS), both located within an established industrial area along Dock Road, approximately 3 km south-west of Limerick City Centre. The sites are situated on the southern banks of Limerick Dock, at the transitional zone where the River Shannon flows into the Shannon Estuary. The location of both sites in relation to the receiving waters is illustrated on Figure 1-2.

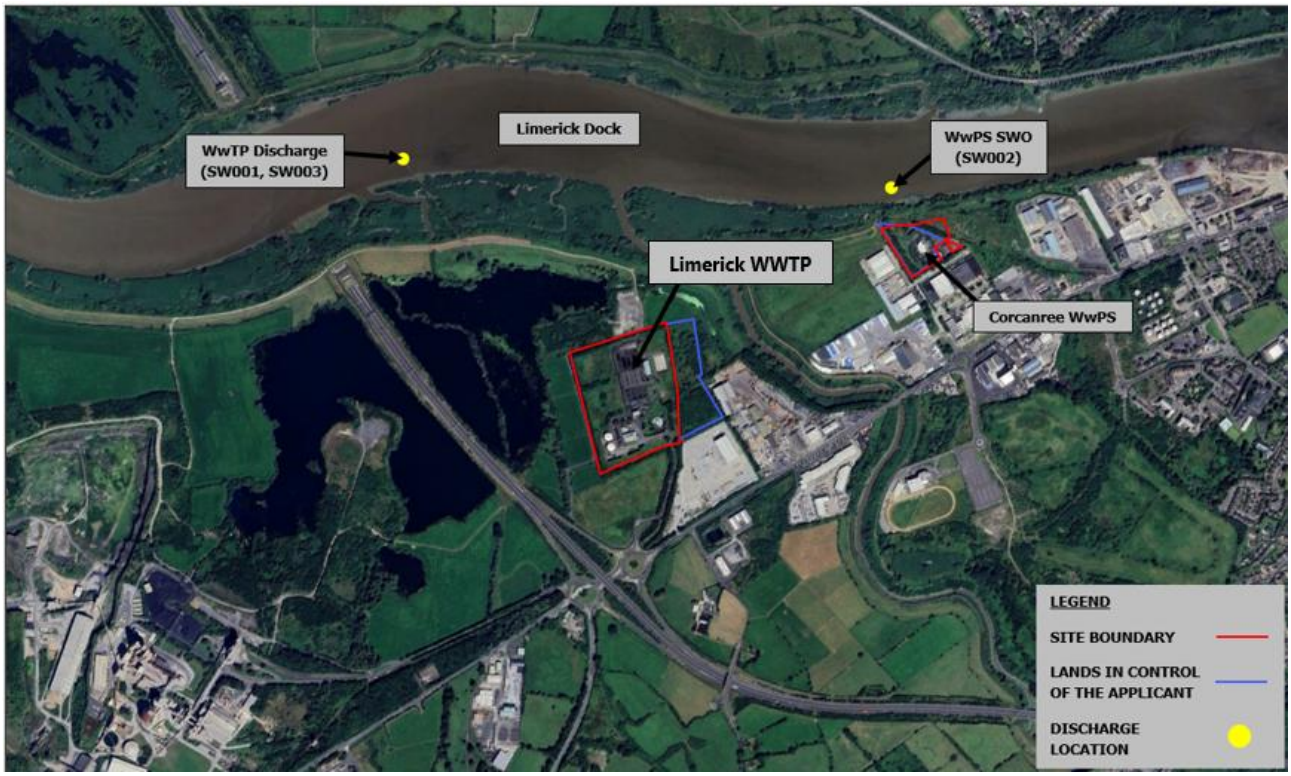

FIGURE 1-2: SITE LOCATION

The immediate surrounding land use is predominantly industrial and port-related, consistent with the long-established character of the Dock Road corridor. Adjacent and nearby land uses include port infrastructure, warehousing and storage facilities, light and heavy industrial units, and other utility installations. A concrete batching plant is located in close proximity, alongside other industrial and commercial operations.

Beyond the Dock Road industrial area, the surrounding landscape comprises predominantly agricultural lands. These lands are physically separated from the sites by established industrial plots and transport infrastructure, thereby limiting direct connectivity and interaction with the proposed development.

Both sites (PS and WWTP) are accessible via Dock Road (R510), which connects to Limerick City Centre and provides onward access to the N18 and N69 national and regional routes. This road network accommodates the operational traffic associated with industrial and port-related activities in the area.

Approximately 90% of the Limerick Main Drainage network flows to Corcanree Pumping Station, where it is conveyed to the Limerick WWTP via two 900 mm diameter rising mains. The remaining influent enters the WWTP via Mungret Pumping Station (located on the WWTP site). Following treatment, the final effluent is discharged to the Shannon Estuary through a 1.2 km long outfall pipeline.

The sites are adjacent to the River Shannon / Shannon Estuary, which forms part of the Lower Shannon Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC, Site Code: 002165). This SAC extends from Killaloe to Loop Head / Kerry Head (approximately 120 km) and is designated for estuarine, intertidal, and riverine habitats, supporting Annex II species including Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar), lamprey species (Lampetra spp.), otter (Lutra lutra), and waterbirds.

1.5.2 Existing WWTP Processes

1.5.2.1 Limerick WWTP & Sludge Hub Centre

The existing Limerick WWTP operates as a Plug Flow Conventional Activated Sludge (CAS) Plant, and the Sludge Hub Centre (SHC) treats indigenous and imported sludges with Anaerobic Digestion. It has an organic design loading of 186,233 PE and operational processes include preliminary treatment, primary treatment and sludge treatment facilities. The plant is restricted to treating a hydraulic capacity of 130,000 PE (865 l/s) due to the

capacity of the final settlement tanks (FSTs) which limits throughput. See the main processes elements of the WWTP labelled in Figure 1-3, and description as follows:

- Preliminary treatment – Fine inlet screening complete with screenings removal, washing and compaction; Grit trap complete with classifier; Inlet flow measurement.
- Primary treatment – tanks complete with chemically enhanced primary treatment.
- Secondary treatment – removal of suspended and dissolved pollutants. 3 No. plug flow rectangular aeration tanks with Fine Bubble Diffused Aeration (FBDA); 5 No. rectangular secondary clarifiers.
- Nutrient removal – 3 No. Anoxic zones are provided within the 3 No. Aeration basins to provide nitrite removal.
- Sludge treatment – 2 No. Anaerobic digestors; 1 No. 400kW$_e$ CHP; 1 No. Sludge drying facility (currently mothballed); Sludge dewatering building complete with 3 No. centrifuges.
- Stormwater Storage – 7,500m^3 tank with return pumping and overflow system via Stormwater Outfall No. 3 (SW003).

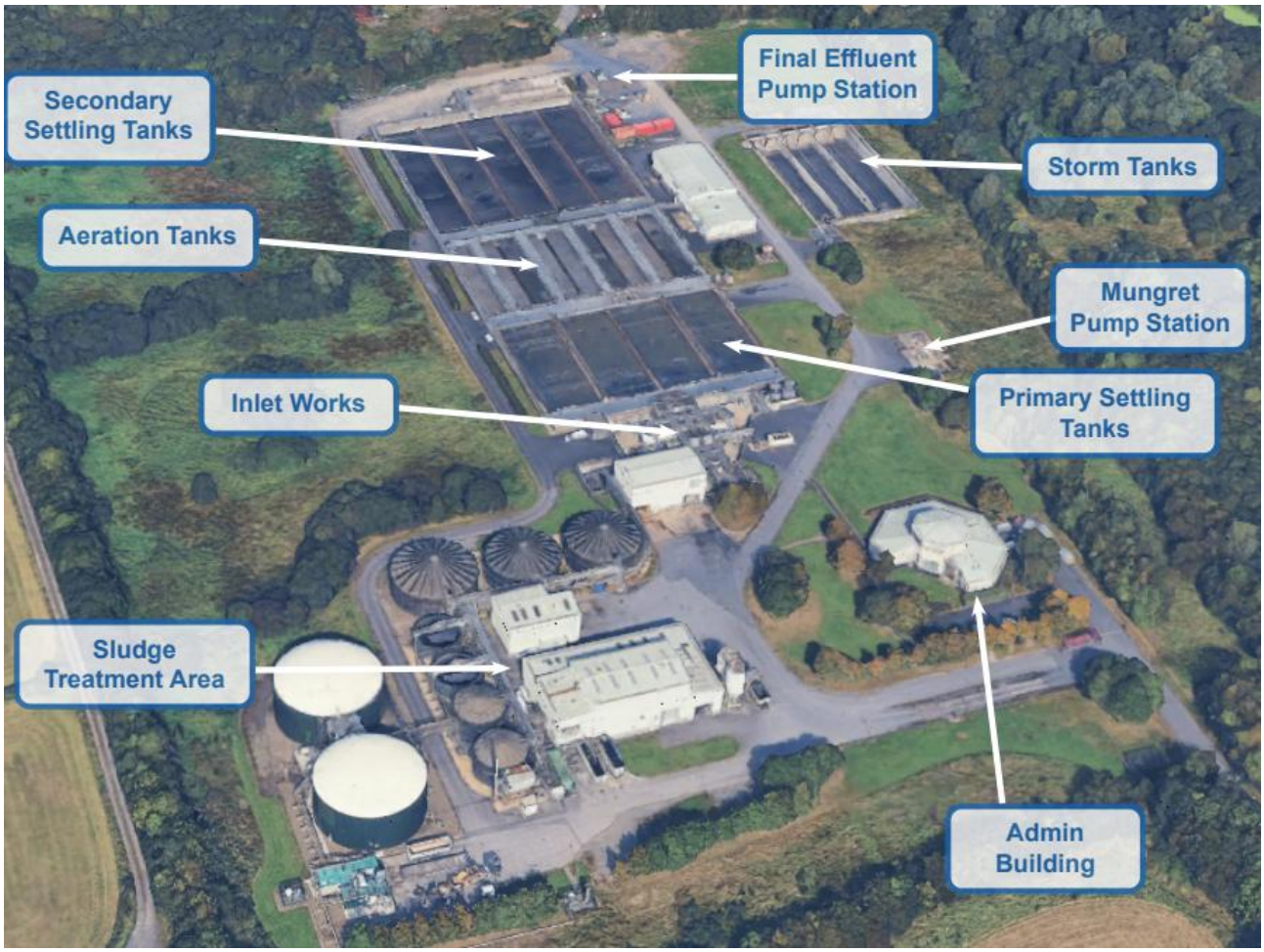

FIGURE 1-3: EXISTING LAYOUT PLAN OF LIMERICK WWTP

1.5.2.2 Corcanree PS

Corcanree is the main lift pumping station (MLPS) for Limerick City's sewer network to the WWTP. The network encompasses approx. 45km of large diameter interceptor sewers and accounts for 90% of flows to the WWTP. Mungret pumping station is located on the WWTP site (Figure 1-3) and accounts for the remaining 10% of incoming flows.

Flows from Corcanree MLPS (Figure 1-4) are pumped 1km to the WWTP via 900mm diameter twin rising mains. The pumps can forward flows up to 1,250 l/s to the WWTP and remaining stormwater is screened and discharged via Storm Water Outfall No. 2 (SW002) to the Shannon Estuary.

The existing Corcanree pumping station consists of the following elements;

- Pumping station with inlet chamber and two separate streams (including foul wet wells, storm screens and storm wet wells);
- 8 No. storm pumps;
- 4 No. dry well centrifugal pumps;
- Storm syphon chamber;
- Storm and emergency overflow chambers;
- Overflow culvert to Limerick Dock;
- Southern interceptor sewer shaft;
- Emergency generator building; and
- Air valve & surge chamber on 900mm twin rising main.

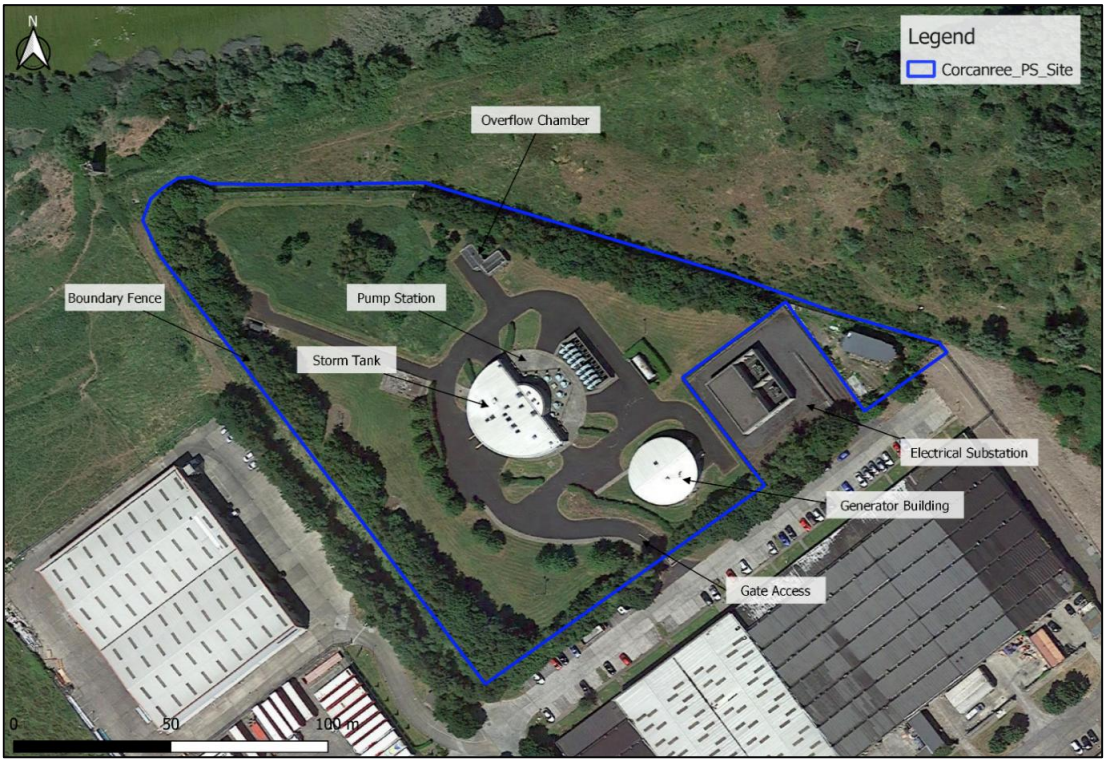

FIGURE 1-4: EXISTING LAYOUT OF CORCANREE PUMPING STATION

1.5.3 Summary of Emissions

Final treated effluent and stormwater overflows are discharged at the same location point in the Shannon Estuary as shown in Figure 1-2. The discharge point has been referred to as DP1 in the Wastewater Discharge License (WWDL) for D0013-01.

Outgoing treated effluent is monitored and released in accordance with WWDL licence D0013-01 issued by the EPA. Plant emissions must meet effluent Emission Limit Values (ELVs). Licence compliance is recorded and made publicly available in the annual environmental reports (AERs), which can be accessed via the following link: *https://www.water.ie/help/wastewater/compliance/annual-environmental-repo/*

Stormwater overflows occur during heavy rainfall events. At Corcanree Pumping Station, flows in excess of 1,250 l/s are discharged to the Shannon Estuary via SW002, and excess storm spills from the WWTP storm tank are discharged via SW003. The current total annual number of spills is approximately 213, indicating that the existing arrangement does not meet the requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD).

Sludge treatment – Existing sludge treatment comprises, sludge digestion, thickening, dewatering and with sludge cake (22.95%DS) pumped to trailers for offloading to an authorised contractor such as ENVA Ireland Limited for post-treatment. Lime stabilisation and land spreading is the current post-treatment operation.

1.6 Overview of the Planning Process

The planning system in Ireland is governed primarily by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), hereinafter referred to as the 'Planning Act', and regulations made thereunder. The Planning Act has been amended several times since its introduction. The Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 made significant amendments to the Planning Act by changing the way applications for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) are managed and determined within the planning system.

SID development is defined in the 7th Schedule of the Act. It is defined as any development that is of strategic economic or social importance to the state or a region. It includes development that contributes significantly to the fulfilment of the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) or Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for an area, or which would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority. 'Environmental Infrastructure' development falls under the 7th schedule of the Act. This type of development automatically requires an EIA to be carried out where it includes works relating to wastewater treatment plants with a capacity greater than 10,000 PE or a sludge deposition site with the capacity for the annual deposition of 50,000 tonnes of sludge (wet). The proposed development constitutes an extension to an existing WWTP that will increase capacity to 285,000 PE. Records from the plant indicate that approximately 70,000 tonnes of sludge (wet) was processed in 2023.

The Planning Act provides for applications for SID being made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP). Before the introduction of the SID provisions such applications were made to the local planning authority for a decision with a subsequent right of appeal to the Commission. When lodged, an SID application (and its EIAR and NIS if applicable) is made available for purchase and inspection for a period of at least seven weeks. Any person or body may make submissions to the Commission within this period in relation to the implications of the Proposed Development for proper planning and sustainable development and for the likely effects on the environment of the Proposed Development. The Commission may hold an oral hearing in relation to the development at its discretion. Before making its decision on the SID application the Commission must consider all submissions and observations made to it.

Uisce Éireann has undertaken pre-application discussions with An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP), under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), to determine whether the proposed Limerick WWTP Upgrade & Regional Bioresource Centre Project is a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID). According to the Planning Act, SID Projects are those which:

- Contribute significantly to meeting any of the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF);
- Contribute significantly to meeting any regional spatial and economic strategy for an area; or
- Have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

The NPF identifies the need for Limerick to further strengthen its position as the principal focus for the region. Key future growth enablers for Limerick include the need to ensure that wastewater needs are met and improving sustainability in terms of energy, waste management, resource efficiency and water. The project will meet the objectives of the first revision of NPF by increasing the wastewater treatment capacity, and by implementing sustainable development of water services infrastructure.

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region aims to support the delivery of the programme for change set out in Project Ireland 2040, the NPF and the National Development Plan 2018-2027. RSES outlines a number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) relevant to the Proposed Development and the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan specifically addresses the need for enhanced wastewater infrastructure to accommodate future growth and development.

The implementation of the proposed RBC, in conjunction with the NWSMP, will improve environmental outcomes, reduce sludge quantities for disposal, improve energy recovery, reduce operating costs and reduce overall energy consumption on a regional basis. Therefore, the project will have a significant positive effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

As the Proposed Development complies with all criteria, ACP has determined it to be SID (please refer to letter in Statutory Documents: ACP-323900-25-Notification of Board Decision). Subsequently, as per Section 37E of the Act, the planning application for the Proposed Development will be made directly to ACP, accompanied by this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The planning application and supporting documents are available to the public and statutory consultees, for a period of at least seven weeks, on www.limerickwwtp.ie. ACP will invite submissions within this period in relation to the implications of the Proposed Development for proper planning and sustainable development, and the likely effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.

1.7 Approach to the EIA

1.7.1 Definition of EIA

EIA supports the decision-making process as it is integrated into consenting processes for new development projects. This helps to ensure that consent decisions are made in the knowledge of the environmental consequences of the project. Article 1(2)(g) of the 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) states that:

"Environmental impact assessment" means a process consisting of:

(i) the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report by the developer, as referred to in Article 5(1) and (2);

(ii) the carrying out of consultations as referred to in Article 6 and, where relevant, Article 7;

(iii) the examination by the competent authority of the information presented in the environmental impact assessment report and any supplementary information provided, where necessary, by the developer in accordance with Article 5(3), and any relevant information received through the consultations under Articles 6 and 7;

(iv) the reasoned conclusion by the competent authority on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account the results of the examination referred to in point (iii) and, where appropriate, its own supplementary examination; and

(v) the integration of the competent authority's reasoned conclusion into any of the decisions referred to in Article 8a."

For the purpose of this EIAR, Uisce Éireann is the 'developer' of the Proposed Development and An Coimisiún Pleanála is the 'competent authority' responsible for undertaking the EIA and integrating its reasoned conclusion in this regard into the consent decision for the Proposed Development.

An overview of the EIA process is presented in Figure 1-5 and can generally be summarised as follows:

- Screening – Is an EIAR required?;
- Scoping – What issues should be considered within the EIAR?;
- Consideration of reasonable alternatives;
- Baseline Data Collection – Establishing a robust baseline of the receiving environment on and around the site. This stage includes a review of existing available information and undertaking any surveys identified during the scoping phase;
- Impact Assessment – Assessment of the environmental impacts and establishing their significance;
- Mitigation – Formulation of mitigation measures to ameliorate the potential impacts of the Proposed Development which cannot be avoided practically through site design;
- Consultation – With Statutory Authorities, stakeholders, the public and other bodies;
- Decision – The competent authority, in this case the Coimisiún, will decide if the Proposed Development can be authorised and if so, will specify conditions that must be adhered to;
- Announcement – The public is informed of the decision; and
- Monitoring – Monitoring of the effectiveness of implemented mitigation measures.

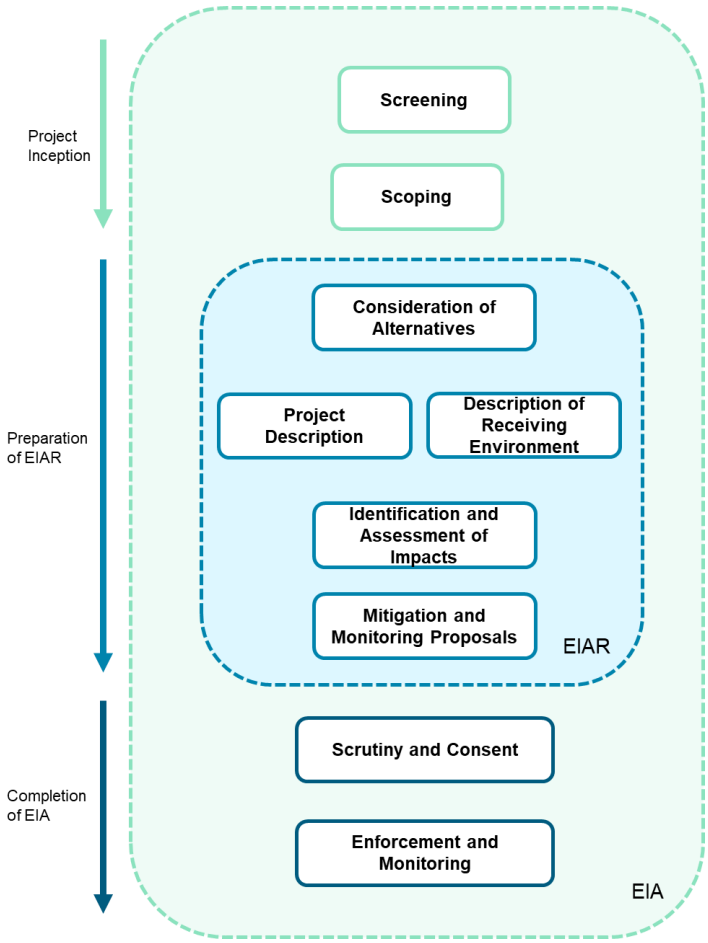

FIGURE 1-5: POSITION OF EIAR WITHIN THE EIA PROCESS (SOURCE: EPA, 2022)

1.7.2 Screening

EIA 'Screening' is the first stage of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, undertaken to determine whether a proposed development's characteristics, location, and potential impacts are likely to result in significant effects on the environment and therefore require a full Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).This screening stage is typically carried out for projects listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive, as transposed into Schedule 5 (Part 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

As noted above, this EIAR accompanies a planning application submitted directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). In accordance with the EIA Directive and its transposition into Irish law, this is equivalent to a mandatory EIA for developments of the type listed in Annex I of the Directive and Schedule 5 (Part 1) of the Regulations. Consequently, the Proposed Development is treated as automatically screened in for EIA purposes.

The EIA Screening Statement is available in Appendix 1 of this report.

1.7.3 Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining the content and extent of matters that should be covered by the EIAR for submission to the Coimisiún. Scoping requires consideration of the nature and probable scale of potential environmental impacts which are likely to arise as a result of the Proposed Development.

A non-statutory consultation process in relation to this scoping exercise was undertaken over a four-week period between November and December 2025.

The Limerick WWTP Upgrade Project EIA Scoping Report (Egis, January 2025), hereafter referred to as the EIA Scoping Report, was made publicly available during November 2025 via the UÉ project website. Submissions were welcomed from all stakeholders in relation to potential environmental issues that they considered may

result from the Proposed Development, and which would require consideration within the EIAR. Full details in regard to non-statutory consultation to date are provided in Section 1.8. This section also sets out how issues raised during the non-statutory scoping consultation have been addressed in the EIA process.

The EIA Scoping Report sets out the proposed scope of work and methodologies to be applied in the development of the EIAR for the Proposed Development. The key objectives of the EIA Scoping Report were to:

- Provide a description of the Proposed Development;
- Provide details of the environmental aspects being assessed and the general structure of the EIAR;
- Provide details on the assessment methodologies, proposed site visits and surveys, and the sources of desktop data that would inform the assessments;
- Identify likely significant effects which may arise during construction and operation of the Proposed Development and which will be addressed in detail in the EIAR;
- Identify potential environmental effects which may be partially or wholly omitted from the EIAR (scoped out) and the reasons/rationale as to why that is; and
- Form a basis of common reference for consultation about the scope and methodology for the EIAR.

Although an EIA Scoping Report was issued early in the assessment process and informed the initial development, content, methods and level of detail to be provided within the EIAR, it should be noted that scoping is considered to be a dynamic and iterative process that would be ongoing throughout the development of the EIAR for the Proposed Development.

1.7.4 Environmental Impact Assessment Report

The methodology adopted for the preparation of this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), which supports the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, is set out in Section 1.7.9. This EIAR accompanies the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

1.7.5 Public Consultation, Scrutiny and Consent

Section 1.8 addresses the outcome of consultations undertaken to date, including the consultation on the EIA Scoping, which informed the identification of the main impacts of the Proposed Development and the methodology of assessment reported in this EIAR. As a part of the SID application process, a statutory consultation process will be undertaken.

Scrutiny (as it is described in the EPA Guidelines) will include the examination by the Commission of the information presented in the EIAR. The Commission will undertake an examination of the EIAR and carry out its EIA. The assessment by the Commission involves the identification, description and assessment of the direct and indirect significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment. The EIA process requires the Commission to come to a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.

Article 8(a) of the EIA Directive specifies the information which must be included in the competent authority's decision which includes the reasoned conclusions on the significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.

1.7.6 Enforcement and Monitoring

Article 8a of the EIA Directive requires that:

'1. The decision to grant development consent shall incorporate at least the following information: (b) any environmental conditions attached to the decision, a description of any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset significant adverse effects on the environment as well as, where appropriate, monitoring measures.'

and

'4. In accordance with the requirements referred to in paragraph 1(b), Member States shall ensure that the features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset significant adverse effects on the environment are implemented by the developer, and shall determine the procedures regarding the monitoring of significant adverse effects on the environment. The type of parameters to be monitored and the duration of the monitoring shall be proportionate to the nature, location and size of the project and the significance of its effects on the environment. Existing monitoring arrangements resulting from Union legislation other than this Directive and from national legislation may be used if appropriate, with a view to avoiding duplication of monitoring.'

It is anticipated that the environmental conditions of the planning consent will incorporate those mitigation and monitoring measures described throughout this EIAR and summarised in Chapter 20 (Summary of Mitigation Measures, Monitoring & Residual Impacts).

1.7.7 Legislative Context

1.7.7.1 Statutory Requirement for EIA

A European Directive for EIA has been in force since 1985 since the adoption of Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The EIA Directive of 1985 has been amended three times by Council Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC. It was ultimately codified and repealed by Council Directive 2011/92/EU on 13 December 2011. This Directive was further amended in 2014 by Council Directive 2014/52/EU which sets out the current requirements for member states on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

The EIA Directive Requires the competent authority to consider and take account of the EIAR for certain public and private projects that are likely to have significant effects on the environment as part of the consent decision making process. In Ireland, the requirements for EIA in relation to planning consents are specified in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, in Part 10 (Part X) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

As outlined previously, the Proposed Development requires an EIA, under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. This EIAR adheres to the requirements of the EIA Directive and the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (SI No. 296 of 2018) which came into force on 1 September 2018, and all associated guidance documents outlined in Section 1.7.9.

The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 transpose the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU, amending previous Directive 2011/52/EU, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive) into planning law with effect from 1st September 2018. Where reference is made to the EIA Directive throughout this EIAR, it should be understood that the transposing European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 also apply.

Notwithstanding, regard has also been had to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) as they apply now. This EIAR therefore fully complies with all European law and EIA Directive requirements in respect of EIARs and also all Irish law and requirements under the Planning Act and Planning Regulations in respect of Environmental Impact Assessments.

1.1.1.1.1 Key Changes in the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU)

EIA Directive 2014/52/EU introduced new requirements for an EIA. The various amendments introduced in the 2014 Directive aim to strengthen the quality of the EIA process and are in line with the drive for smarter regulation and reduced administrative burden. The amendments to the EIA Directive also sought to improve the level of environmental protection, with a view to making business decisions on public and private investments more sound, more predictable and sustainable in the longer term.

One of the amendments to the EIA Directive brought in by Directive 2014/52/EU was to refer to an environmental impact assessment report, hence the term EIAR now replaces EIS (Environmental Impact

Statement) as was used prior to transposition of the amendment Directive 2014/52/EU. Further key changes to the EIA Directive introduced by Directive 2014/52/EU are as follows:

- The reduction in the administrative burden by way of co-ordinated procedures in the event that Appropriate Assessment is required;
- Additional information to be provided in the project description to describe the location of the project, the technologies and substances used, the construction of the project and required demolition;
- The requirement for consideration of alternatives has changed from a requirement to provide *'An outline of the main alternatives studied by the developer and an indication of the main reasons for this choice, taking into account the environmental effects'* to *'a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the project on the environment'*;
- A refinement of the environmental factors to be considered in the assessment with an increased focus on resource efficiency, climate change, biodiversity and disaster prevention;
- Changes to Prescribed Environmental Factors with 'Land' being added, 'Human Beings' replaced by 'Population & Human Health' and 'Flora & Fauna' replaced by 'Biodiversity';
- Information to be contained in the EIAR to be expanded;
- The developer is required to have competent experts to prepare the EIAR and the Commission is required to have access to sufficient expertise to assess the EIAR;
- Requirement for the incorporation of mitigation and monitoring measures in consents and ensuring that developers deliver these measures;
- The requirements for the assessment of cumulative effects with existing and/or approved projects, taking into account existing environmental issues to be considered; and
- Reasoned decisions made with regard to the EIA outcomes must be provided.

The EIAR prepared for the Proposed Development has regard to the Article 5(1) and Annex IV of the EIA Directive, and the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in an EIAR, (EPA, 2022). Table 1-3 sets out a list of information required and a guide as to where it can be found within the EIAR.

TABLE 1-1:INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER EIA DIRECTIVE

EIA DIRECTIVE INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS	WHERE THIS INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN THE EIAR
EIA DIRECTIVE ARTICLE 5(1)	
(a) a description of the project comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the project.	Volume 2: Introduction and Project Description Chapter 3: The Proposed Development
(b) a description of the likely significant effects of the project on the environment.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21 Volume 4: Appendices
(c) a description of the features of the project and/or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21 (See section 1.7.11 for how discipline chapters are structured to include this information)
(d) a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the project on the environment	Volume 2: Introduction and Project Description Chapter 2: Alternatives Considered
(e) a non-technical summary of the information referred to in points (a) to (d).	Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary
(f) any additional information specified in Annex IV relevant to the specific characteristics of a particular project or type of project and to the environmental features likely to be affected.	Volume 2: Introduction and Project Description Chapter 3: The Proposed Development

	Chapter 4: Construction Strategy Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21 Volume 4: Appendices
EIA DIRECTIVE ANNEX IV (INFORMATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT	
1. Description of the project, including in particular: (a) a description of the location of the project;	Volume 2: Introduction and Project Description Chapter 3: The Proposed Development Chapter 4: Construction Strategy Volume 4: Appendices
(b) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole project, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases;	
(c) a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the project (in particular any production process), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used.	
(d) an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation) and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operational phases.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21
2. A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of project design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.	Volume 2: Introduction and Project Description Chapter 2: Alternatives Considered
3. A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the project as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21
4. A description of the factors specified in Article 3(1) likely to be significantly affected by the project: population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21
5. A description of the likely significant effects of the project on the environment resulting from, inter alia: (a) the construction and existence of the project, including, where relevant, demolition works; (b) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources; (c) the emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste; (d) the risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment (for example due to accidents or disasters); (e) the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources; (f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change; (g) the technologies and the substances used.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21
6. A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties (for example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge)	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21

encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.	
7. A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post project analysis). That description should explain the extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases.	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 21
8. A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the project on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned. Relevant information available and obtained through risk assessments pursuant to Union legislation such as Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (*) or Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom (**) or relevant assessments carried out pursuant to national legislation may be used for this purpose provided that the requirements of this Directive are met. Where appropriate, this description should include measures envisaged to prevent or mitigate the significant adverse effects of such events on the environment and details of the preparedness for and proposed response to such emergencies. (*) Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 4th July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC (OJ L 197, 24.7.2012, p. 1). (**) Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25th June 2009 establishing a community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations (OJ L 172, 2.7.2009, p. 18).	Volume 2: Environmental Baseline and Assessment Chapters 6 - 20 Chapter 20: Risk of Major Accidents and Natural Disasters
9. A non-technical summary of the information provided under points 1 to 8.	Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary
10. A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the report	Each chapter in this EIAR includes a reference list.

1.7.8 Other Relevant Legislation

1.7.8.1 Water Framework Directive

In response to the increasing threat of pollution and the increasing demand from the public for cleaner rivers, lakes and beaches, the EU adopted the Water Framework Directive (WFD), 2000/60/EC. This Directive is unique in that it establishes a framework for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater, and their dependent wildlife/habitats under one piece of environmental legislation. The WFD aims to:

- Protect/enhance all waters (surface, ground and coastal waters);
- Achieve "good status" for all waters by December 2015 or, at the latest, by 2027;
- Manage water bodies based on river basins or catchments; and
- Involve the public in this process.

The WFD is linked to, and cross-references, a number of other EU directives. These include Directives relating to the protection of biodiversity (Birds and Habitats Directives), directives related to specific uses of waters (Drinking Water, Bathing Waters and Urban Wastewater Directives) and to directives concerned with the regulation of activities undertaken in the environment (Industrial Emissions and Environmental Impact Assessment directives).

More recent directives on topics such as Floods and the Marine Strategy Framework have significant linkages with the WFD which is also supplemented by the Priority Substances Directive and the Groundwater Directive.

The Nitrates Directive forms an integral part of the Water Framework Directive and is one of the key instruments in the protection of waters against agricultural pressures. The Sustainable Use of Pesticides and the Sewage Sludge Directives also provide for the control of materials applied to land. The European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009, (S.I. No. 272 of 2009) are of particular interest as they implement further aspects of the WFD, in particular Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy and Directive 2006/11/EC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment. The Regulations apply to all surface waters and provide, inter alia, for:

- The establishment of legally binding quality objectives for all surface waters and environmental quality standards for pollutants;
- The examination and, where appropriate, review of existing discharge authorisations by Public Authorities to ensure that the emission limits laid down in authorisations support compliance with the new water quality objectives/standards;
- The classification of surface water bodies by the EPA for the purposes of the Water Framework Directive;
- The establishment of inventories of priority substances by the EPA; and
- The drawing up of pollution reduction plans to reduce pollution by priority substances and to cease and/or phase out discharges, emissions or losses of priority hazardous substances.

The WFD aims at improving the water environment in the EU and requires all Member States to protect and improve water quality in all waters so that they achieve good ecological status by 2015 or, at the latest, by 2027. It has been transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). The WFD applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, and transitional coastal waters and requires that management plans are prepared on a river basin basis through the specified structured method.

River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) have been prepared to protect and improve Ireland's water environment. They are reviewed and updated every six years. The first RBMPs covered the period 2009 to 2014 and identified the waterbodies that may not meet the environmental objectives of the WFD by 2015. The latest RBMPs (for 2022 to 2027) were published in September 2024 and these set out the actions to improve water quality and achieve 'good' ecological status in water bodies (rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) by 2027.

A WFD Compliance Assessment has been undertaken with respect to the Proposed Development and is presented as Appendix 16.1 of this EIAR. This assessment determined that the Proposed Development is not anticipated to cause deterioration in the status of any affected water bodies or impede their ability to achieve Good Ecological Status (GES) or Good Ecological Potential (GEP). The Proposed Development will be in compliance with all the requirements of the WFD.

1.7.8.2 Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

The European Union Urban Wastewater Directive (EUUWD) sets standards to be met in the collection and treatment of wastewater, as well as the monitoring requirements for wastewater discharges from urban areas. Since its adoption in 1991, it aims "to protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban wastewater discharges and discharges from certain industrial sectors" by mandating wastewater collection and treatment in urban agglomerations with a PE >2,000 and more advanced treatment in places with a PE >10,000 in sensitive areas.

The Directive pertains to protecting the environment from the adverse effects of urban wastewater. The proposed upgrades to the wastewater and sludge treatment process will accommodate the increase in Limerick City's population, as well as commercial and industrial economic activity which is forecast to increase in the area.

Meeting the standards in the Directive is a key compliance issue for Ireland in protecting our environment from the adverse effects of wastewater discharges. Therefore, Uisce Éireann must provide the infrastructure to adequately collect and treat wastewater and prevent serious risks to human health and the environment in compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. The proposed upgrades will bring Limerick WWTP in line with the requirements of the Directive now and into the future.

Furthermore, there is a commitment to achieve 100% renewable energy usage in treatment plants by 2045. Establishing a Regional Bioresource Centre will contribute to this target as the regional management of sludges will improve treatment efficiency, cut transport emissions, and increase energy recovery.

1.7.8.3 Recast Urban Wastewater Directive

On the 5th of November 2024, the European Council accepted the recast Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (rUWWTD). The rUWWTD signifies a significant step in adapting wastewater management to address current and future challenges. Uisce Éireann must factor these changes into the future planning and delivery of wastewater services.

The key changes include the progressive reinforcement of treatments, with the application of secondary treatment to all urban wastewater discharged into the environment for agglomerations of 1,000 people or more by 2035. Additionally, tertiary treatment will be mandatory for larger plants by 2039, and quaternary treatment for all plants over 10,000 people by 2045. The Directive also aims to promote water reuse in water-stressed areas, improve monitoring of contaminants like microplastics, and implement the polluter pays principle with extended producer responsibility.

Impacts of the Recast Directive on the project will be dealt with during the workshop process to confirm planning requirements prior to application. Updates will be included in the Design when legislative requirements are in force.

1.7.8.4 Habitats and Birds Directives

EU member states are required to establish a network of Natura 2000 sites under the obligations of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive), as amended and codified in Council Directive 2009/147/EC. The Natura 2000 network comprises designated sites selected to protect important biodiversity including rare and threatened habitats and species including:

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs, including candidate SACs) protected under the provisions of the Habitats Directive; and

Special Protection Areas (SPAs, including proposed SPAs) protected under the provisions of the Birds Directive.

The Habitat and Birds Directives require that the likely significant effects of any plan or project, alone, or in combination with, other plans or projects, on the Natura 2000 site network (i.e. European designated sites), should be assessed before any decision is made to allow that plan or project to proceed. This process is known as Appropriate Assessment (AA), which starts with Stage 1 AA Screening and if likely significant effects cannot be ruled out, must progress to Stage 2 AA (i.e. preparation of a Natura Impact Statement).

There are a number of steps and tests in place that should be undertaken sequentially and documented by competent authorities in order to make decisions on the approval or refusal of a plan or project that may impact on European designated sites). Part XAB of the Planning Acts, which transposes the Birds and Habitats Directive requires the following to be undertaken:

Stage 1 – Screening for Appropriate Assessment: To assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if a development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on any European designated site.

Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment: This is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European designated site. The appropriate assessment must include a final determination by the competent authority as to whether or not a Proposed Development would adversely affect the integrity of a European designated site. In order to reach a final determination, the consenting authority must undertake examination, analysis and evaluation, followed by findings, conclusions and a final determination. The appropriate assessment must contain complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions, and may not have lacunae or gaps.

Stage 3 – Assessment of alternative solutions: The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European designated sites.

Stage 4 – Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: An assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain – an assessment of compensatory measures where, in light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

1.7.8.5 Surface Water Regulations 2009 (As Amended)

The European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Water) Regulations 2009, as amended, provide a more complete and stringent set of surface water quality regulations which address the requirements of the WFD and Council Directive 2006/11/EC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community. These regulations specify the conditions and physio-chemical concentrations that should be considered in the assessment of surface water quality. These regulations also give effect to Council Directive 2008/105/EC, as amended by Directive 2013/39/EU, on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

1.7.8.6 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities

In November 2009, the (then) Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works jointly published their guidance. The aim of the Guidelines is to ensure that flood risk is neither created nor increased by inappropriate development.

The Guidelines are issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and planning authorities and An Coimisiún Pleanála are therefore required to implement these guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts. The Guidelines require the planning system to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, unless the development can be justified on wider sustainability grounds and the risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level.

The Guidelines specifically require the adoption of a Sequential Approach (to Flood Risk Management) of Avoidance, Reduction, Justification and Mitigation and they require the incorporation of Flood Risk Assessment into the process of making decisions on Planning Applications and Planning Appeals. Fundamental to the Guidelines is the introduction of flood risk zoning and the classifications of different types of development having regard to their vulnerability.

The management of flood risk is therefore a key element of any development proposal in an area of potential flood risk and should therefore be addressed as early as possible in the site master planning stage.

1.7.9 EIAR Guidance

This EIAR has been prepared with due regard to the following overarching guidance on EIA:

- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EPA, 2022);
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018);
- Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022);
- Environmental Impact Assessments of Projects – Rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union (European Commission, 2022);
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Scoping (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) (European Union, 2017); and
- Guidance of Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Environmental Impact Assessment (European Union, 2013).

In addition to the applicable EIA legislation and guidance, all EU Directives and national legislation relating to the specialist areas have also been considered as part of the process and are addressed in the relevant

assessment chapters. Subject-specific best practice guidance used for each appraisal presented in the EIAR is detailed in the relevant assessment chapter of this EIAR.

Similarly, an extensive policy framework of International, National, Regional and Local policies, planning strategies and plans support the development of the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 3 (The Proposed Development) and Chapter 5 (Planning and Policy Context) for further information.

1.7.10 Structure of the EIAR

This EIAR has followed the 'Grouped Format Structure' as laid out in the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements (EPA, 2022). This means that the EIAR has been prepared in a format which examines each environmental topic in a separate chapter of the EIAR, with each chapter covering the baseline environment, predicted potential impacts, mitigation and monitoring measures and residual impacts for each particular environmental topic. This format facilitates ease of cross-referencing the various environmental topics.

The EIAR also follows advice set out in the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022) by presenting information in a rational and systematic manner, such that it is clear how the EIAR meets the mandatory requirements. A description of the main components of the EIAR are detailed here. This EIAR has been sub-divided into four volumes as follows:

This EIAR has been prepared in four volumes as follows:

Volume 1 - Non-Technical Summary: This summarises the findings of the EIAR in a clear, accessible format that uses non-technical language and supporting graphics. The non-technical summary describes the Proposed Development, existing environment, effects and mitigation measures and relevant aspects of the EIAR in a manner that can be easily understood by the general public;

Volume 2 – Introduction and Project Description: This volume provides a description of the Proposed Development, comprising information on the location, design and scale of the Proposed Development and the physical characteristics having regard to the Construction and Operational Phases. It also includes a description of the EIA process, the legislative and planning context, the reasonable alternatives considered and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of environmental effects and a description of the consultation process undertaken;

Volume 2 – Environmental Baseline and Assessment: This volume provides an accurate and comprehensive description of the environmental baseline and assessment of the impacts of the Proposed Development divided into separate chapters, one for each environmental factor. The assessment identifies and assesses the likely significant effects during the Construction and Operational Phases, provides a description of the mitigation and monitoring required to ensure that significant adverse environmental effects are minimised, and describes the residual post-mitigation effects;

Volume 3 – Figures: This volume contains clear and consistent graphics and plans supporting the EIAR chapters, illustrating the Proposed Development and environmental information; and

Volume 4 – Appendices: The appendices contain a collection of technical reference information supporting the EIAR chapters, such as calculations and detailed background data.

TABLE 1-2: EIAR STRUCTURE

EIAR CHAPTER	DESCRIPTION
VOLUME 1: NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	
NTS	Summary of the EIAR in non-technical language
VOLUME 2: EIAR MAIN REPORTS	
Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Alternatives

EIAR CHAPTER	DESCRIPTION
Chapter 3	The Proposed Development
Chapter 4	Construction Strategy
Chapter 5	Planning and Policy
Chapter 6	Traffic and Transportation
Chapter 7	Odour
Chapter 8	Air Quality
Chapter 9	Climate
Chapter 10	Noise and Vibration
Chapter 11	Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage
Chapter 12	Biodiversity (Marine)
Chapter 13	Biodiversity (Terrestrial)
Chapter 14	Land and Soils
Chapter 15	Landscape and Visual
Chapter 16	Water
Chapter 17	Resource and Waste Management
Chapter 18	Material Assets
Chapter 19	Population and Human Health
Chapter 20	Risk of Major Accidents and Natural Disasters
Chapter 21	Cumulative Effects and Interactions
Chapter 22	Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring
VOLUME 3: FIGURES	
Figures	Graphics and plans supporting the EIAR chapters, illustrating the Proposed Development and environmental information.
VOLUME 4: APPENDICES	
Appendices	Technical reference information supporting the EIAR chapters, such as technical reports compiling calculation and detailed breakdown data.

1.7.11 EIAR Disciplines Chapter Structure

Each of the specialist chapters (Chapters 6-20) in Volume 2 of this EIAR will broadly follow the same structure which includes the following headings:

1.7.11.1 Introduction

This section of each chapter provides an overview of the aims and objectives of the chapter in assessing the Proposed Development and outlines the scope of the assessment.

1.7.11.2 Methodology

Annex IV point 6 of the EIA Directive requires an EIAR to provide:

'A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effect on the environment, including details of difficulties (for example technical description or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.'

This section of each chapter outlines the methods used to describe the baseline environmental conditions and to predict the likely impacts on the environment of the Proposed Development during both the Construction Phase and the Operational Phase. The data and survey requirements for each chapter vary depending on the environmental topic and have been chosen by the particular specialist based on relevant legislation, best practice guidance, policy requirements, consultation with relevant stakeholders via EIA scoping and professional judgement. Similarly, the study area is also defined for each environmental topic based on best practice guidelines, professional judgement and experience.

All environmental topics require desk-based reviews of all relevant data at a minimum. These desk-based studies were then supplemented by field studies and consultation with relevant stakeholders, for example interested parties, statutory bodies and local authorities, as required for each environmental topic.

This section of each chapter describes the assessment criteria for each environmental topic. Each environmental topic has its own bespoke method for assessment, in accordance with published professional guidelines, details of which are provided within each topic chapter. General methods for EIA also apply and the assessments have been conducted in accordance with the following EPA Guidance:

- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022); and
- Draft Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements (EPA, 2015).

In addition to the applicable EIA legislation and guidance, all EU Directives and national legislation relating to the specialist areas have been considered as part of the process.

The EPA Guidelines (EPA, 2022) provide guidance on determining significance. This is reproduced in Table 1-3 and has formed the basis of all topic assessments in the EIAR.

TABLE 1-3: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS (TABLE 3.4 FROM THE EPA GUIDELINES (EPA, 2022))

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS
Quality of Effects It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral	**Positive Effects** A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity, or improving the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
	Neutral Effects No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	Negative/ Adverse Effects A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).
Describing the Significance of Effects ''Significance' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.	**Imperceptible** An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
	Not significant An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
	Slight Effects An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
	Moderate Effects

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS
	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
	Significant Effects An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Profound Effects An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Describing the Extent and Context of Effects Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.	**Extent** Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.
	Context Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)
Describing the Probability of Effects Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the predicted effects will occur – so that the competent authority can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision.	**Likely Effects** The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
	Unlikely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects 'Duration' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.	**Momentary Effects** Effects lasting from seconds to minutes
	Brief Effects Effects lasting less than a day
	Temporary Effects Effects lasting less than a year
	Short-term Effects Effects lasting one to seven years.
	Medium-term Effects Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
	Long-term Effects Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
	Permanent Effects Effects lasting over sixty years.
	Reversible Effects Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration
	Frequency of Effects Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)
Describing the Types of Effects	**Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary or Off-site Effects)** Effects on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.
	Cumulative Effects The addition of many minor or insignificant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS
	'Do-nothing Effects' The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.
	Worst-case' Effects The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.
	Indeterminable Effects When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.
	Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	Residual Effects The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.
	Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents (e.g. combination of Sox and Nox to produce smog).

In addition to the use of these criteria, the most common method employed to determine significance of effects is to compare the magnitude of the predicted effect with the sensitivity of the receiving environment. This approach is outlined in Figure 1-6, which shows how comparing the character of the predicted effect to the sensitivity of the receiving environment can determine the significance of the effect. In this approach 'magnitude' and 'sensitivity' are used as descriptors of a wide range of different factors. 'Magnitude' includes the spatial extent of the effect; the time period over which the effect will occur; and whether the effect is permanent or reversible. Sensitivity describes the value or importance placed upon a 'receptor'. The use of these approaches improves the transparency and robustness of the professional judgement employed.

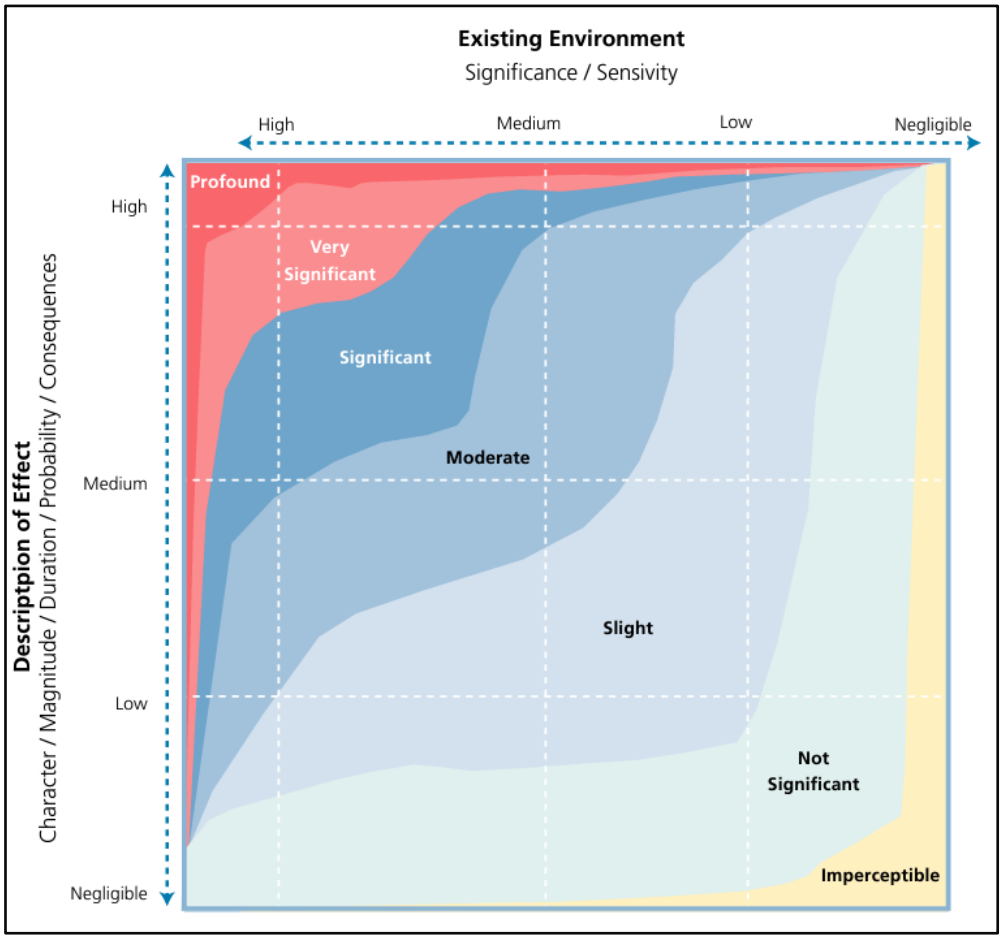

FIGURE 1-6: SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACT MATRIX (SOURCE: EPA, 2022)

1.7.11.3 Baseline Environment

Chapters 6 – 21 in Volume 2 of this EIAR provide a description of the existing environmental conditions within each defined study area. Annex IV paragraph 3 of the EIA Directive has a requirement to include the following in the EIAR:

'a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.'

This section in each chapter describes the findings of the desktop studies, field surveys and information gained through any consultations carried out and uses the information to provide a description of the current state of the environment and an outline of its likely evolution based on all information gathered.

1.7.11.4 Predicted Impacts

The main purpose of the EIAR is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant impacts of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development has the potential to impact on the environment during both the Construction and Operational Phases. Each specialist reviewed the details of the Proposed Development and, based on the baseline information collected, predicted the impacts that the Proposed Development will potentially have on their specific environmental topic.

Under Annex IV, paragraph 5 of the EIA Directive, the EIAR should include a description of likely significant effects of the project resulting from, inter alia:

'the construction and existence of the project, including, where relevant, demolition works';

'the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources';

'the emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste';

'the risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment (for example due to accidents or disasters)';

'the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, or both, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources';

'the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change'; and

'the technologies and the substances used'.

And that:

'The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in Article 3(1) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project. This description should take into account the environmental protection objectives established at Union or Member State level which are relevant to the project.'

Each predicted impact has been fully described and assigned a significance and duration based on the assessment criteria as outlined within each chapter. A conservative approach has been taken to assessing likely impacts, with the 'worst-case scenario' used in order to ensure all foreseeable impacts have been identified. It should be noted that cumulative impacts are addressed specifically in Chapter 19 (Cumulative Effects and Interactions).

1.7.11.5 Mitigation Measures

This section of each topic chapter describes the mitigation measures which are required. An EIAR is required to contain *'a description of any features of the proposed works and of any measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and if possible offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment.'*

The requirement to describe mitigation measures is laid out in the EIA Directive. Article 5(1)(c) of the 2011 Directive (as amended by the 2014 EIA Directive) states that:

'the developer shall include at least:

a description of the features of the project and/or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment'.

Annex IV paragraph 7 requires that the description of the project must include:

'A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce, or if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post-project analysis). That description should explain the extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases.'

As per Section 3.8.1 of the EPA Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022), there are four types of mitigation measure:

- Mitigation by Avoidance – generally part of the consideration of alternatives, where adverse effects are avoided entirely through changes in design;
- Mitigation by Prevention – generally technical measures taken to prevent a potential unacceptable significant effect. Measures are put in place to limit the source of the effect, e.g. through specification of

process standards or building design. Prevention measures also include safeguards against the effects of accidental events;

- Mitigation by Reduction – commonly used to deal with effects which cannot be avoided. Does not tend to affect the source of the problems but instead aims to limit their effect. These measures can be split into two types, namely: reducing the effect through interception of the emission (e.g. wastewater treatment and noise attenuation); and reducing exposure to the effect by identifying the receptors to be impacted and installing protection or a barrier between the receptor and the source of the effect; and
- Mitigation by Remedy/Offsetting – a strategy for dealing with negative effects which can be neither avoided nor reduced. Remedy involves compensation for, or counteraction of, an adverse effect (e.g. planting new vegetation to compensate for removal elsewhere as a result of the project). Offsetting involves carrying out further works to improve adverse conditions (e.g. installing tunnels to allow wildlife to retain access to comparable habitats).

A significant proportion of mitigation is already incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development through mitigation by avoidance. Where an impact to the environment has been deemed as unacceptable, the unacceptable option has been ruled out by designing the scheme to avoid the receptor. If the impacted receptor can't be designed out, mitigation by prevention and reduction has been embedded in the design. Refer to Chapter 2 (Alternatives) for further details on how the consideration of environmental impacts has influenced the development of the Proposed Development.

1.7.11.6 Residual Effects

Any effects that remain after all assessment and mitigation are referred to as 'Residual Effects'. Each specialist topic chapter in Volume 2 of this EIAR includes a section describing significant residual impacts that will continue to exist after mitigation has been implemented. These are the Proposed Development's remaining environmental effects that could not be reasonably avoided.

1.7.11.7 Cumulative Impacts and Impacts Interrelations

Annex IV of the EIA Directive includes the following at paragraph 5(e):

'A description of the likely significant effects of the project on the environment resulting from, inter alia:

(e) the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources'.

The potential for significant impact interrelations between each environmental topic and cumulative impacts is described in Chapter 19 (Cumulative Effects and Interactions). This Chapter outlines all anticipated interactions between the environmental topics on a project level and explores all planned projects in the vicinity of the Proposed Development and examines all likely cumulative impacts.

1.7.11.8 Difficulties Encountered in Compiling Information and Main Uncertainties Involved

This section draws attention to limitations about factors that may affect the reliability of baseline data. These include the availability, completeness, accuracy, age and accessibility of data.

Annex IV, paragraph 6 of the EIA Directive requires *'A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties (for example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information, and the main uncertainties involved'*. Each topic chapter in Volume 2 includes a section outlining any difficulties encountered in compiling that chapter.

1.7.11.9 List of References

Each chapter provides a list of references used to inform the methodology, baseline and assessment.

1.7.12 EIAR Team

This EIAR has been prepared on behalf of Uisce Éireann by a multi-disciplinary consultancy team of competent experts led by Egis with input from specialist sub-consultants.

All technical leads are deemed to be qualified and competent experts in their fields in accordance with Article 5(3) of the EIA Directive, given their academic qualifications, professional affiliations and professional experience on other EIAs for major infrastructure projects. Refer to Table 1-4 for further details on the competent experts that have prepared this EIAR.

TABLE 1-4: DETAILS OF COMPETENT EXPERTS

TOPIC	AUTHOR (S) & COMPANY	EXPERTISE
Chapter 1 - Introduction	Mirela Sava BEng (Hons) MSc MIEI MIEnvSc Egis	Mirela is an Environmental Lead Manager with Egis. She holds an honours degree in Environmental Engineering and a MSc in Water from Polytechnic University of Tirana, Albania, and Post Graduate Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from Kings Inns. She is a full Member with the Institute of Engineers of Ireland. She is also a full member of the Institution of Environmental Sciences. Mirela has over 18 years' relevant experience in planning, design, construction and environmental co-ordination and management of large-scale transport infrastructure projects and water projects. She is responsible for the co-ordination and preparation of EIARs for a number of major infrastructure schemes. Mirela was the lead EIAR co-ordinator for the Proposed Development and supervised the preparation of this EIAR.
Chapter 2 - Alternatives	Orla O'Brien BEng ME DipPM MIEI Egis	Orla O'Brien is a Senior Civil Engineer with over six years' experience specialising in wastewater infrastructure, with a strong technical focus on wastewater design compliance, water quality assessment, and WWDL (Wastewater Discharge Licence) applications. She has led marine surveys and coordinated the development of the Stage 4 Hydrodynamic/Water Quality Model for the current project. Orla has coordinated EIA for other wastewater treatment plant projects like Castletroy WWTP planning application. She has conducted waste assimilative capacity assessments to define appropriate Emission Limit Values for multiple WWTP upgrade projects, and she has managed the Annual Environmental Reporting in the Northwest Region on behalf of UÉ since 2021. Orla has authored this chapter along with water chapter and has supervised other chapters as well.
Chapter 3 - The Proposed Development	Michael Leonard BEng (Hons) CEng MIEI Egis	Michael Leonard is a Chartered Civil Engineer who is an Associate with EGIS Engineering Ireland. Michael has 16 years' Irish and International experience in all aspects of civil engineering, design, project management and project delivery on major infrastructure projects. Michael experience includes the design and wastewater treatment plants, pumping stations and pipelines, review of design submissions, designing for safety in construction, contract procurement and management and construction supervision of various drainage infrastructure projects.
Chapter 4 - Construction Strategy	Paul Hennessy Beng (Hons) MSc CEng MIEI Egis	The Construction Strategy chapter was prepared by Paul Hennessy, an Associate with Egis. Paul has 11 years' experience and holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering from the University of Limerick. Paul has experience in the design and delivery of water and wastewater infrastructure projects and has previously contributed to the EIAR for the Castletroy Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Chapter 5 - Planning and Policy	Conor Frehill BA(Hons) MSc CMRTPI Harry Walsh Planning	BA (HONS) Liberal Arts, University of Limerick, MA Regional and Urban Planning, University College Dublin. Conor is a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (CMRTPI). He has over 15 years of experience on policy development and strategic infrastructure planning and delivery. Conor also has extensive expertise in undertaking socioeconomic analysis to inform housing and employment strategies.

TOPIC	AUTHOR (S) & COMPANY	EXPERTISE
Chapter 6 - Traffic and Transportation	Kwok Chuen Lam BEng CEng MICE MHKIE Egis	This assessment was prepared by Kwok Chuen Lam, Chartered Engineer who is a Senior Traffic Engineer with EGIS. Kwok Chuen Lam has 19 years' experience specialising in the field of Traffic and Transport Engineering. He has been engaged as team member on a variety of Transportation and Traffic projects. His experience includes the design and management of road improvement projects, preparation of mobility management plans and traffic impact assessments.
Chapter 7 - Odour	Imelda Shanahan B.Sc (Hons) PhD MSCI Chartered Chemist, FICI FRSocC TMS	Imelda has over 30 years professional experience in completing assessments of this type for various different types of development. Imelda has a BSc (Hons) in Chemistry from University College Dublin and a PhD in Physical Chemistry, she is a Chartered Chemist and a Fellow of the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry.
Chapter 8 - Air Quality	Carl Ramskill BSc MSc MIEnvSc MIAQM	Carl Ramskill is a Principal Environmental Consultant in the Air Quality section of AWN Consulting with 9 years' experience in air quality consulting. He holds a BSc. in Chemistry and MSc. in Air Pollution Management and Control from the University of Birmingham. He is a Member of the Institution of Environmental Science (MIEnvSc), Member of the Institute of Air Quality Management (MIAQM) and specialises in the fields of air quality, EIA and air dispersion modelling and monitoring. Carl has prepared air quality impact assessments for EIARs, planning application support and permitting/licencing support. He has worked on a diverse range of projects including large scale infrastructure road and rail schemes, residential developments, commercial developments, data centres and energy centres.
Chapter 9 - Climate	Sarah Berry BSc in Physical Geography AWN Consulting	This chapter was written by Sarah Berry. Sarah is a Principal Environmental Consultant in the Air Quality & Climate section of AWN Consulting, a Trinity Consultants Company. Sarah holds a BSc in Physical Geography from the University of Leeds. She has 9 years' experience in climate change and sustainability, with expertise in greenhouse gas permitting, accounting and verification. Her experience includes conducting strategic sector-specific GHG audits across a range of industries (data centres, industrial facilities, hospitals, manufacturing, power stations and airports). She has prepared climate chapters for EIARs for proposed developments across Ireland including large residential developments, windfarms, industrial developments and wastewater treatment works.
Chapter 10 - Noise and Vibration	Mervyn Keegan BSc (Hons) MSc AONA Environmental Consulting	Mervyn is a Full Member of the Institute of Acoustics since 2002. Mervyn's academic qualifications include a M.Sc. Environmental Science (1998), a B.Sc. (Hons) Applied Biology (1996), a Diploma in Pollution Assessment & Control (1995) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Acoustics & Noise Control (2002). Mervyn has over 25 years' experience in environmental and health & safety consultancy. Mervyn has undertaken noise surveys and impact assessment reporting for numerous road projects in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland over the previous 25 years. Mervyn's main areas of expertise are in Air Quality & Noise impact assessment and mitigation design and EIA, Planning & IPPC Licensing, and has appeared on numerous occasions as an Expert Witness at Planning Hearings / Public Inquiries and legal cases.

TOPIC	AUTHOR (S) & COMPANY	EXPERTISE
Chapter 11 - Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Donald Murphy BA MA MIAI Magda Lyne MA, MIAI ACSU	Donald Murphy (BA(Hons), MA, MIAI) is the founder and Managing Director of Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit Ltd and he has over 30 years of experience as an archaeological consultant. Donald has completed EIARs for a variety of projects across Ireland and has managed the archaeological work in advance of several large infrastructural schemes, such as the M3 and M4 motorways. Magda Lyne (MA, MIAI) is an Archaeologist with over 15 years of experience. Her primary focus includes preparing Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Chapters for EIARs, Archaeological Impact Assessments (AIA), and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (CHIA). She has completed EIARs for numerous projects across Ireland, including housing, pharmaceutical plants, wastewater facilities, and public revival projects.
Chapter 12 – Biodiversity (Marine)	Eddie McCormack PhD Aquafact Aisling Hearty BSc MSc Aquafact	Eddie McCormack is responsible for reviewing the Marine Ecology chapter. Eddie is Associate Director and marine ecologist with AQUAFACT. Eddie is a recognised national and international expert in the identification of benthic invertebrate organisms. Eddie has authored and co-authored many scientific reports for a variety of marine and coastal developments in his 18 years at AQUAFACT which have included EIS, EIAR, AA screening and Natura Impact Statements. This has given him a detailed understanding and appreciation of legislation and anthropogenic impacts on the marine and coastal environment and measures to reduce/avoid such impacts. All of these projects involved initial surveying and assessments of the baseline environments, followed by an assessment of the impacts from the proposed development, mitigation measures and residual impacts. Aisling Hearty is responsible for authoring the Marine Biodiversity chapter. Aisling is a Principal ecologist with AQUAFACT with over 8 years of experience in marine ecology. She holds a BSc (Hons) Science degree from NUIG and a First-Class Honours MSc in Marine Biology from UCC, where she completed her thesis on habitat distribution modelling of odontocetes using bioacoustic analysis. She subsequently co-authored a peer-reviewed publication based on this work, which supported the designation of the Southeastern Rockall Slope and Canyons as an Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA). Aisling has been with AQUAFACT since 2019. Aisling has expertise in the identification of marine invertebrates and undertaking marine ecological surveys and habitat assessment. She has undertaken Natura Impact Statements for activities in the marine environment and Appropriate Assessment Screening for both marine and terrestrial activities. Aisling has been responsible for delivering a number of EIAR marine biodiversity chapters for various sectors including renewable energy, flood relief schemes, wastewater treatment plants and port and harbour developments. Aisling has a JNCC certification as a Marine Mammal Observer and has a Certificate of Training in Irish Mitigation Guidelines for Industry using NPWS guidelines. She also holds an Associate Membership with CIEEM

TOPIC	AUTHOR (S) & COMPANY	EXPERTISE
Chapter 13 – Biodiversity (Terrestrial)	Rachel Walsh BSc. Env, MCIEEM Sarah Mullen (BSc., MSC., PhD., ACIEEM) MKO	Rachel is a Senior Ecologist with over 5 years' of experience of ecological impact assessment and appropriate assessment and has worked on a wide range of projects including water services infrastructure and renewable energy projects. This report has been reviewed by Sarah Mullen (BSc., MSC., PhD., ACIEEM). Sarah is a Project Director with MKO and has 10 years' experience in ecological consultancy.
Chapter 14 - Land and Soil	Deirdre O'Hara BSc MSc HDip, PM CEng MIEI PGeo EurGeol Egis	Deirdre is an Associate Director and Geotechnical Team Lead at Egis with over 27 years' experience in geotechnics from project inception to post construction stage. She has a Bachelor of Science honours degree from University College Galway and a master's degree in environmental and Geo-Resource Engineering. Deirdre is a Professional Geologist (PGeo) and a Member of the European Federation of Geologists (EurGeol). She has prepared numerous Land, Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology Impact Assessments for large civil projects including roads, railways, bridges, water and wastewater treatment plants.
Chapter 15 - Landscape and Visual	Christos Papachristou MSc MA CMLI MILI JBA Consulting	Christos is a dedicated Landscape Architect with a background in Agricultural Engineering. He specialises in enhancing the elements of a project that will increase their long-term sustainable character. He has worked in landscape research, design and consultancy for 9 years in the UK and continental Europe. Christos has assisted in the delivery of projects from Feasibility and Detailed Design through to, Construction and Maintenance from small residential projects to large infrastructure projects, with clients including TII, Highways England (HE), Transport for Scotland and High Speed Railway 2 (HS2). Other projects he has worked on include the Visual Assessments for the dualling of A96 as well as the M1 and M25 as part of the Smart Motorways Project and Kent County Council where he has been commenting on planning applications. Christos has prepared Landscape and Visual Amenity Impact Assessment for many large projects.
Chapter 16 - Water	Orla O'Brien BEng ME DipPM MIEI Egis Dr. Filip Schuurman Haskoning DHV	As above. Orla has authored this chapter. Project manager and lead modeller Dr. Filip Schuurman has 13 years of experience in hydrodynamic, sediment transport and water quality (modelling) studies, including MIKE software. Filip is supported by senior water quality (modelling) experts Inge Folmer and Keming Hu. Inge has 16 years' experience, and her input includes the modelling of bacterial and pollutant processes, survey specifications and water quality analysis. Keming has more than 30 years' experience in hydrodynamic and water quality modelling, including water quality modelling with MIKE software. He is responsible for the quality checks of the modelling and deliverables.
Chapter 17 - Resource and Waste Management	Orla O'Brien BEng ME DipPM MIEI Egis	As above

TOPIC	AUTHOR (S) & COMPANY	EXPERTISE
	Mirela Sava BEng (Hons) MSc MIEI MIEnvSc Egis	
Chapter 18 - Material Assets	Paul Hennessy BEng(Hons) MSc CEng MIEI Egis	As above
Chapter 19 - Population and Human Health	Conor Frehill BA MSc CMRTPI Harry Walsh Planning	As above
Chapter 20 - Major Accidents and Natural Disasters	Mirela Sava BEng (Hons) MSc MIEI MIEnvSc Egis	As above
Chapter 21 - Cumulative Effects and Interactions	Mirela Sava BEng (Hons) MSc MIEI MIEnvSc Egis	As above
Chapter 22 - Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring	Mirela Sava BEng (Hons) MSc MIEI MIEnvSc Egis	As above

1.8 Consultation

1.8.1 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála

In October 2021, Uisce Éireann submitted a formal request to An Coimisiún Pleanála to enter into pre-application consultation in order to determine whether the Proposed Development would constitute Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) under the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. As part of the pre-application consultation process, the Commission is required to provide advice on the procedural requirements of the application and on matters relating to proper planning and sustainable development, including environmental considerations, which may have a bearing on its determination.

Subsequent changes to the project scope, including the inclusion of the RBC element and the associated Project Business Case (PBC), extended the timeline for the planning submission. As a result, the original pre-application consultation process was formally closed.

A new SID pre-application consultation process has since been initiated under Ref. No. 323900. To support the re-commencement of consultations, the appointed Planning Advisor (HWP) prepared and submitted an updated Project Summary and SID Scoping Opinion to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

An Coimisiún Pleanála subsequently issued a determination letter dated 19th June 2026 confirming that the Proposed Development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID).

1.8.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Early stakeholder engagement (including dialogue, consultation and the disclosure of information) is a key element of project planning, development and implementation. Effective stakeholder engagement assists good design, builds relationships with local community, and reduces the potential for delays through the early identification of risks and issues.

From the outset, stakeholder consultation has been an integral part of the iterative development of the design and EIAR for the proposed Scheme. This approach has been informed by National and European requirements and enhanced by Uisce Éireann's organisational commitment to best practice in this area.

The overall consultation objectives were:

- To create an understanding of the project's aim, objectives and benefits;
- To provide an opportunity for the members of the public and other interested parties to become involved with the process and to share with the Project Team any relevant supporting information that should be considered in the design process. This allows for early identification and focused consideration of significant impacts;
- To demonstrate changes that have been made to the Proposed Development on the basis of feedback received;
- To encourage members of the public to contact the Project Team directly, via the project website, project email and project personnel to ensure that the Project Team was viewed as a trusted and accurate source of information;
- To develop relationships with communities and stakeholders and to facilitate consistent, timely, relevant and up to date information sharing for this and future phases of the Proposed Development; and
- To ensure consultation and engagement is carried out in a transparent and meaningful way while complying with the regulatory requirements for consultation under the EIA Regulations. This allows opportunities to be identified to factor mitigation measures into the design of the proposal.

1.8.2.1 Stakeholder Identification

A Stakeholder Audit has been carried out to identify prescribed bodies and key stakeholders. Primary and Secondary Stakeholders have been identified and categorised through brainstorming and RACI Matrix mapping. Stakeholder category groups include the following;

- Internal and Immediate;

- Environmental Authorities;
- Other State & Semi-State Bodies; and
- Interested Parties.

The team has engaged with a broad spectrum of stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive consultation process. This involved 10 No. internal and immediate stakeholders from various departments and operations involved in the project, ensuring that internal perspectives were well-represented. Additionally, 7 No. environmental authorities were consulted, which include state bodies responsible for environmental regulation and management, to incorporate environmental considerations into our project planning.

Furthermore, the team reached out to 14 No. other state and semi-state bodies, encompassing a variety of public sector organisations and agencies, to gather input from a wide range of public sector perspectives. To ensure community and local business perspectives were also considered, a letter drop to 229 No. local businesses and residents with notification of the consultation period was carried out.

Stakeholders are listed in a Stakeholder Register document which shall be maintained and updated throughout the project. A summary of the Stakeholder Register is outlined in Table 1-5 below.

TABLE 1-5: STAKEHOLDER REGISTER SUMMARY

PRESCRIBED BODIES & KEY STAKEHOLDERS	
INTERNAL & IMMEDIATE	
UÉ Asset Delivery	Local Authority PM
UÉ Regional Lead	LCCC WW Operations
UÉ Capital Projects	Ward & Burke Construction Ltd
UÉ WW Operations	UÉ Shared Services
UÉ Asset Planning	
ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES	
EPA	Shannon River Basin District Authorities
Inland Fisheries Ireland	NPWS
WFD Competent Authority (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government – DAU)	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment – Co-ordination Unit
Minister and Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	LAWPRO
National Environmental Health Service (NEHS)	
OTHER STATE & SEMI-STATE BODIES	
Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)	Birdwatch Ireland
Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)	County Developments Boards
An Taisce	Fáilte Ireland
The Heritage Council	Irish Environmental Network
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	An Coimisiún Pleanála
OPW	Utility Providers (ESB, Gas Networks Ireland and Telecoms)
Shannon Foynes Port Company	Chamber of Commerce
INTERESTED PARTIES	
Local Residents & Businesses & Community Groups	Elected Representatives

1.8.3 Public Engagement in Context

In preparing an application to the ACP for the Proposed Development and as part of the EIA process, the Design Team has consulted with the public and stakeholders in accordance with the following legislative, best practice and planning practice requirements:

- Aarhus Convention;
- Consolidated EIA Directive requirements; and
- Requirements of National Law.

1.8.3.1 The Aarhus Convention

The Aarhus Convention is an international treaty which both the EU and Ireland signed up to in 1998. More specifically, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted on 25th June 1998 at the Fourth Ministerial Conference as part of the "Environment for Europe" process.

The EU ratified the Aarhus Convention in February 2005. Ireland ratified the Convention in June 2012 and the Convention entered into force in September 2012. Prior to ratification, Ireland had fully implemented the provisions of the Aarhus Convention and the related EU Directives, Directive 2003/4/EC on Public Access to Environmental Information and Directive 2003/35/EC on Public Participation.

The Aarhus Convention lays down a set of basic rules to promote citizens involvement in environmental matters and improve enforcement of environmental law. The Aarhus Convention comprises three pillars:

- Access to environmental information;
- Participation in the environmental decision-making process; and
- Access to justice in environmental matters.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) document, 'The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide' (Second Edition, 2014) represents best practice in respect of how to consult with members of the public on major projects. This document informed the consultation process developed by the Project Team at the outset of the Proposed Development.

1.8.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Directive

A number of amendments have been introduced to the text of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU to reflect the Aarhus Convention public participation requirements. The substantive provisions ensure that the public concerned shall be given early and effective opportunities to participate in environmental decision-making procedures for consent to projects and, for that purpose, the public concerned is entitled to express comments and opinions when all options are open to the competent authority before the decision on the request for development consent is taken.

1.8.3.3 Best Practice Communications

Article 6, paragraph 5 of the Aarhus Convention states that:

'Each Party should, where appropriate, encourage prospective applicants to identify the public concerned, to enter into discussions, and to provide information regarding the objectives of their application before applying for a permit'.

The Aarhus Implementation Guide notes that the advisory nature of paragraph 5 is confirmed by the use of the wording *'should, where appropriate, encourage'*. The Convention does not require the Member State or the Planning Authority to oblige prospective applicants to take these steps. However, in line with the spirit of the Convention and the principles of best practice consultation, the Project Team committed at the outset of the project to provide information on the Proposed Development, to provide early opportunities for the public concerned to participate in the decision-making process, and to ensure that all communication and consultation was accessible, meaningful and accountable.

1.8.4 Non-Statutory Public Consultation

Uisce Éireann undertook a period of non-statutory public consultation to engage with the local community and relevant stakeholders regarding the Proposed Development. The consultation took place over a four-week period from 3 November to 1 December 2025. Stakeholders included members of the public, elected representatives, and other interested parties such as local industry.

During the consultation period, the Project Team hosted in-person public information events at local venues in Limerick to present the proposed design and associated environmental considerations. The events included open forums for questions and discussion. Key project information and consultation materials, including presentations, were also made available on the project webpage.

All feedback received during the consultation period was recorded and considered by the project team. A summary of the responses will be included in the Consultation Report submitted with the planning application to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

1.8.5 Communications Tools

1.8.5.1 Email and Letter Drop

Dual language emails were issued to statutory and non-statutory stakeholders in advance of the Project launch and again at Public Consultation stage.

1.8.5.2 UÉ Newsletter

A newsletter bulletin for each project stage accompanied emails and letters with an overview of the project, latest developments and contact details for the project team. Throughout the process, stakeholders were able to request further information on detailed project information sheet or to visit the project webpage.

1.8.5.3 Project Information Sheet

The project information sheet was shared by request with interested stakeholders and Elected Representatives. The information sheet is a live document that will be updated throughout the various project stages.

The Project Information Sheet includes a general introduction to the project, a brief outline of the project need, a summary of the benefits for the community, information pertaining to what will be involved in completing the upgrade works at the Limerick WWTP and an indication of next steps.

1.8.5.4 Uisce Éireann Website

The Uisce Éireann website has been developed to reflect the project information sheet. The online platform enables a wide public audience to access details of the project and development stages. The web page is maintained by UÉ and updated when new relevant information becomes available.

1.8.5.5 Consultation Feedback Form

A feedback form was made available during the public consultation to provide stakeholders and the public with a clear and accessible way to share their views on the Proposed Development. This ensures consistent, structured input, helping Uisce Éireann identify key themes, address concerns, and support a transparent, inclusive decision-making process.

1.8.6 Consultation Feedback

A Consultation Report is prepared to accompany the planning application, summarising the engagement activities carried out during the public consultation period (refer to Consultation Report in Planning Reports). The report outlines the methods used to inform and engage stakeholders, present the feedback received from the public, elected representatives, and other interested parties, and detail how this feedback will inform the design and development of the proposal. By including this report, Uisce Éireann will demonstrate its

commitment to transparency and proactive engagement, ensuring that stakeholder input is considered as part of the planning and decision-making process.

1.9 Reference List

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018. *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Coimisiún Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment,* s.l.: Government of Ireland.

Egis, 2025. *Limerick WWTP Upgrade and Regional Bioresource Centre - Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report,* Ireland: Egis.

EPA, 2022. *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports,* European Union: Environmental Protection Agency.

European Commission, 2022. *Environmental Impact Assessments of Projects - Rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union,* s.l.: EU.

European Union, 2011. *Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.,* s.l.: EU.

European Union, 2013. *Guidance of Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Environmental Impact Assessment,* s.l.: EU.

European Union, 2014. *Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014 on the assessment of the effect of certain public and private projects on the environment.* s.l.:EU.

European Union, 2017. *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Scoping (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) (European Union 2017a);,* s.l.: EU.

Government of Ireland, 2006. *Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006.* Ireland: s.n.

Government of Ireland 2000. Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended

Uisce Éireann, 2019. *Site Selection Methodology Report for Bioresource Centres in the Southern Region.* Ireland: Uisce Éireann.

APPENDIX 1 – EIA SCREENING STATEMENT

Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Regional Bioresource Centre

EIA Screening

Introduction

This assessment examines whether the proposed development at Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Corcanree Pumping Station should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required.

Upgrade works are proposed at the existing Limerick WWTP to increase the capacity from 130,000PE to 285,000PE, constituting a 119.2% capacity increase, including a future committed industrial load of 27,500 PE. Provision will also be made within the civil infrastructure design to accommodate the projected +25-year growth of 325,000 PE, which includes allowances for AGS tank sizing, stormwater storage, and associated pipework. The scope of works includes major upgrade of Limerick WWTP and the development of a new Regional Bioresource Centre (RBC), as well as the installation of an additional stormwater storage tank.

Screening assessment

The first step in the EIA process is to determine whether a proposed development requires an EIA. Projects requiring EIA are transposed from Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, into Irish law through Section 172 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended).

The proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) and is required to be considered by An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended).

A determination is to be undertaken to examine whether the proposal constitutes a project for the purposes of EIA, as defined under the above legislative framework. Where a proposed development falls within a class of development listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001–2018 (as amended), EIA is mandatory. Schedule 5 sets out the classes of development requiring EIA. Part 1 of Schedule 5 identifies classes of development for which EIA is mandatory in all cases, while Part 2 identifies classes of development subject to specified thresholds or criteria.

The proposed development is considered under Part 1, Class 13, of the Regulations, "*Wastewater treatment plants with a capacity exceeding 150,000 population equivalent as defined in Article 2(6), of Directive 91/271/EEC*". The proposed development will increase the capacity from 130,000 PE to 285,000 PE, including a future committed industrial load of 27,500 PE, which is above the limit of 150,000, therefore, it falls under Part 1 Class 13.

The proposed development is considered under Part 2, Class 13, (a), "*Any change or extension of development which would (i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and (ii) result in size greater than 25%, or an amount equal to 50% of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater*". The Proposed Development constitutes an extension to an existing WWTP capacity

(130,000 PE) and will result in a 119.2% increase in capacity (i.e. providing capacity for 285,000 PE). The resulting increase in development is greater than 25% of the existing capacity.

Part 2 Class 11 (c) is described as "*Wastewater treatment plants with a capacity greater than 10,000 population equivalents as defined in Article 2(6), of Directive 91/271/EEC not included in Part 1 of Schedule V*". The Proposed Development has an existing capacity of 130,000 PE and will increase the capacity to 285,000 PE which is above the threshold of Part 2, Class 11 (c).

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the proposed development is required to be subject to EIA, as it falls within Schedule 5, Part 1, Class 13, Part 2, Class 11(c) and Part 2, Class 13(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001–2018 (as amended). Accordingly, preparation of an EIAR is required.

The proposed development also constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) and is therefore required to be considered by An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). An EIAR shall accompany the planning application for the proposed development.

Author:

Paul Judge

Ireland

www.egis-group.com

egis