COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

Planning Report

Strategic Infrastructure Development –

Proposed Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade,

County Mayo and County Sligo

Prepared in October, 2026 on behalf of

Uisce Éireann

Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 We, Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd have been retained by Uisce Éireann, c/o AtkinsRéalis, Atkins House, 150 Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 K5W4, to prepare this planning report to accompany a planning application for a Strategic Infrastructure Development in respect of the proposed Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade, hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development.

1.2 The purpose of the Proposed Development is to upgrade the water infrastructure in the Ballina and Lough Talt supply areas and to deliver a sustainable resilient water supply to Ballina and Lough Talt.

1.3 This planning report sets out the nature and extent of the Proposed Development and how it accords with national, regional and local policy, is generally consistent with the pattern of development in the vicinity, that will not result in any significant environmental effects, that is not likely, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on a European site in light of the site's conservation objectives, and is in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 The Proposed Development site comprises the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake and Raw Water Pump Station (RWPS) at Lough Conn, Cloghans, Ballina, Co. Mayo; the existing Lisglennon RWPS and the Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Killala, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site at Carralavin, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site adjacent to the existing Uisce Éireann reservoir at Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site Drumsheen, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; the existing Lough Talt WTP at Gortersluin, Lough Talt, Co. Sligo; parts of the R314, R294, and local roads including the L11109, L1547, L5140, L1120, L1101, L5132, L51333, L5135, L51172 and the L51357; an existing track in the curtilage of Belleek Castle Hotel (Protected Structure, RPS 2) and Belleek Woods; and agricultural fields.

2.2 The Proposed Development site is located in the following townlands: Wherrew, Lisglennon, Ballinteean, Rathglass East, Derreens, Broadlands, Coonealmore, Rosserk, Coonealcauraun, Rathroeen, Culleens, Laghtadawannagh, Farrannoo, Garrankeel, Quignamanger, Quignalegan, Rathmeel, Quignashee, Ballyholan, Behy More, Corrimbla South, Carrownlabaun, Bonniconlon West, Bonniconlon East, and Drumsheen, Co. Mayo: and Knockasliggaun, Glennawoo, Largan, and Gortersluin, Co. Sligo; and Lough Conn, Co. Mayo and Lough Talt, Co. Sligo. There is an existing treated water main under the R314 between Lisglennon WTP and Ballina Town. This does not form part of the Proposed Development site.

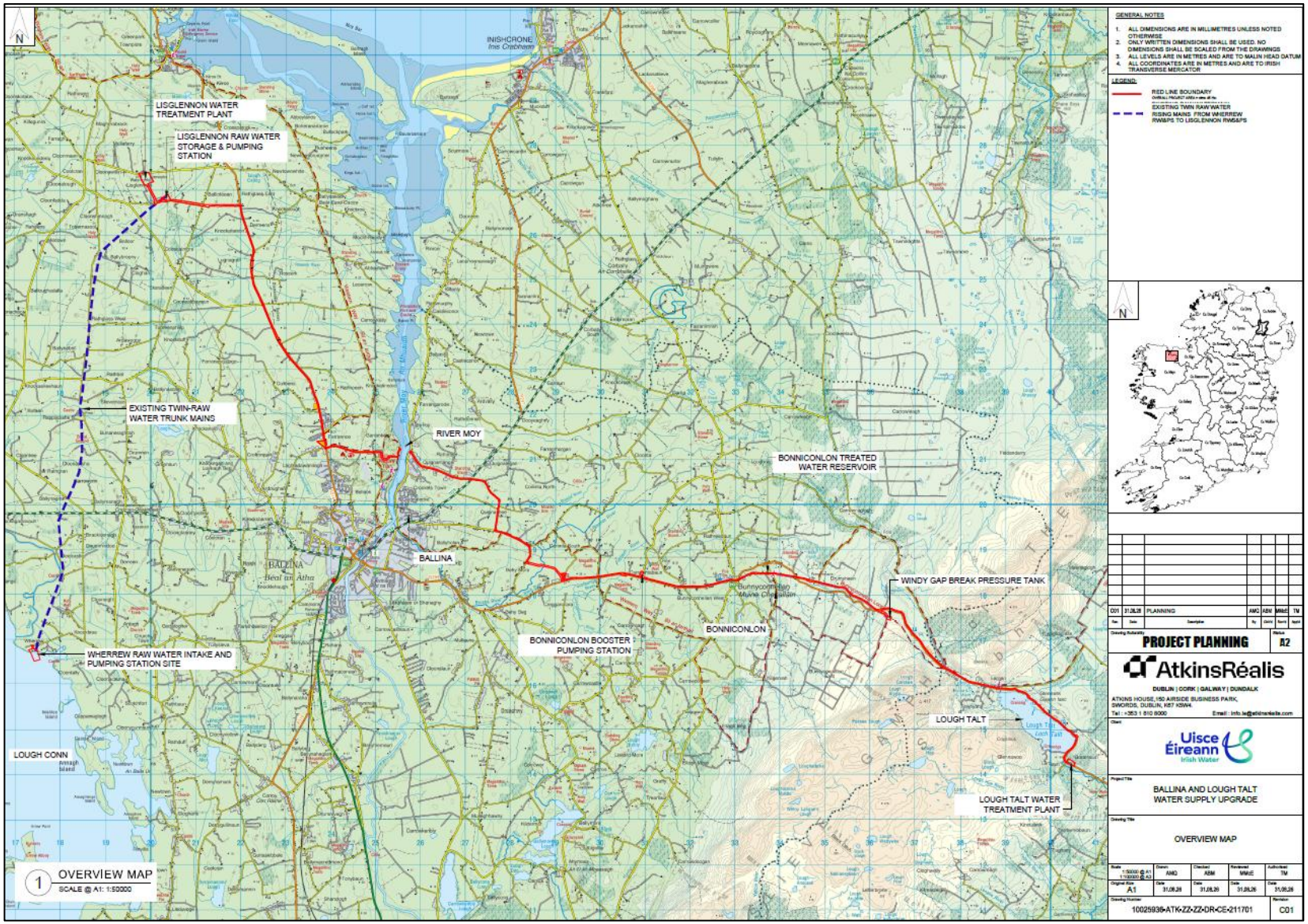


Figure 1. Overview of the Site Location of the Proposed Development

Wherrew Raw Water Intake (RWI) and Pumping Station (PS)

2.3 The existing site at Wherrew is located at the top of small bay known as Kent's Pool, on the north-eastern shoreline of Lough Conn. The shoreline is comprised of rock/gravel coverage and grass brush land. The existing development consists of a raw water intake channel, a raw water intake structure, raw water pumping station and transfer pipelines. The existing Wherrew RWI&PS abstracts raw water and transfers to two Water Treatment Plants (WTPs), Wherrew WTP and Lisglennon WTP, in accordance with the existing abstraction licence.

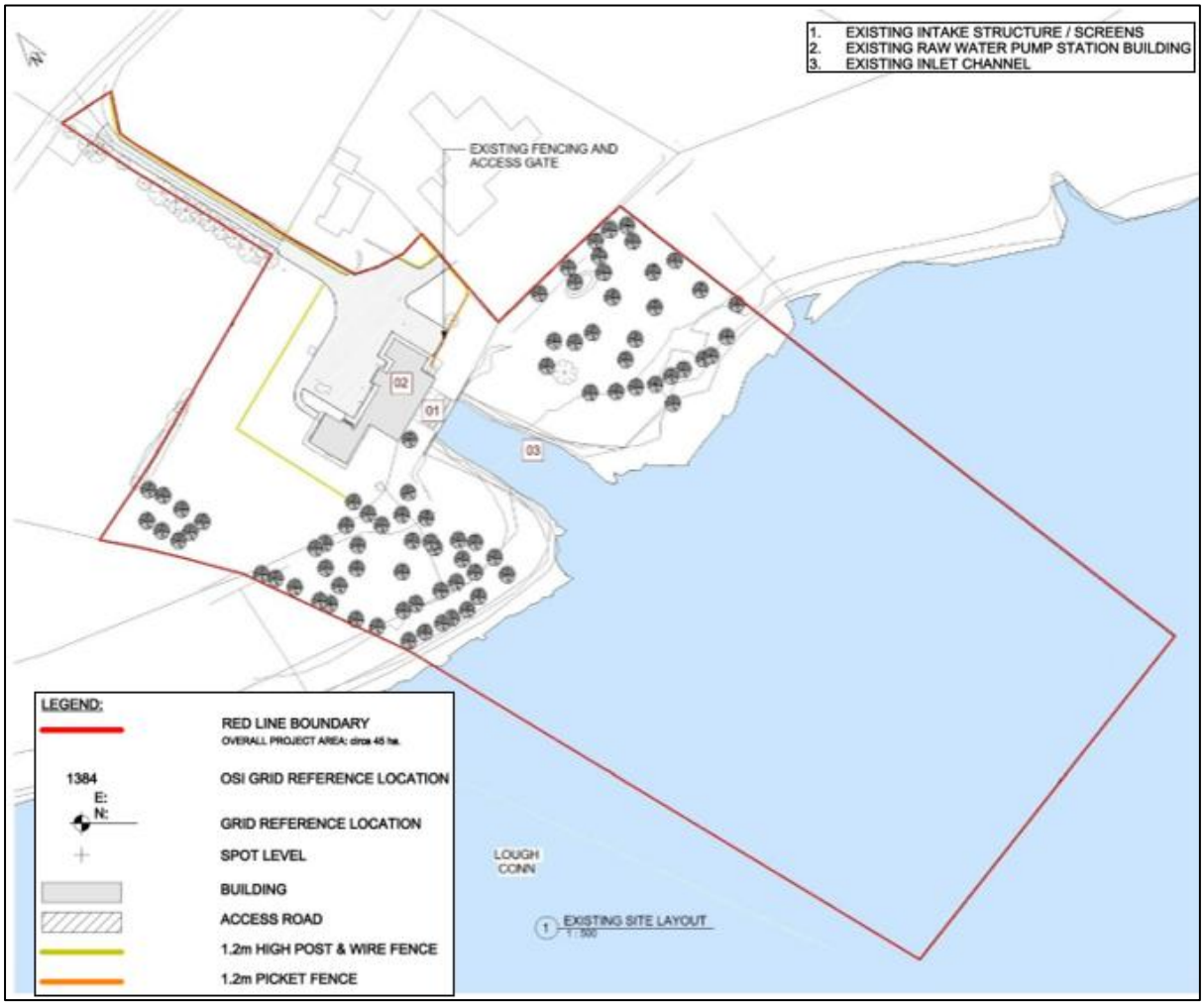


Plate 1: Existing Wherrew RWI&PS Layout



Plate 2: Existing Wherrew RWI

Lisglennon Raw Water Storage & Pumping Station (RWS&PS)

2.4 At the existing Lisglennon RWS&PS at Lisglennon, Ballina, Co. Mayo, raw water enters via the inlet chamber, which functions as a break pressure tank. From there, raw water is transferred to the raw water storage tank, then to the raw water pumping station. The raw water storage tank provides approximately 48 hours of storage.

2.5 Raw water leaves the pumping station via an existing 300 mm internal diameter raw water pipeline serving the Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP), which is located to the north-west of the RWS&PS.

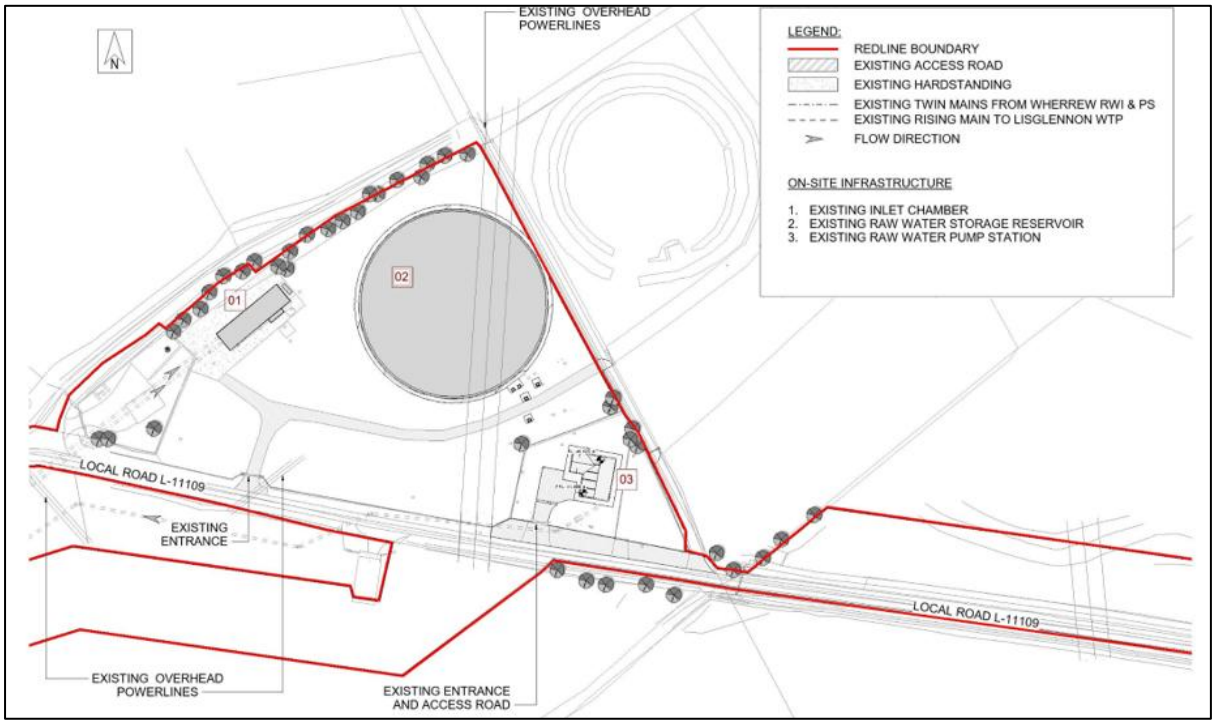


Plate 3: Existing Lisglennon RWPS site layout



Plate 4: Existing Lisglennon Storage Tank



Plate 5: Existing Lisglennon RWPS



Plate 6: Existing Lisglennon Inlet Chamber

Pipeline A – Lisglennon RWS&PS to Lisglennon WTP

2.6 An existing 300 mm internal diameter raw water pipeline leaves Lisglennon RWS&PS, crosses the L11109, then continues off-road through private agricultural lands in the Lisglennon area before crossing beneath the L11109 and extending northwards to the Lisglennon WTP inlet chamber. The total length of the existing pipeline corridor is approximately 1 km.

Lisglennon WTP

2.7 The existing Lisglennon WTP at Lisglennon, Killala, Co. Mayo comprises a part single-storey and part two-storey treatment building, associated treatment infrastructure, treated water storage, access roads, hardstanding and ancillary operational areas. The WTP is set back from the roadway, with a c. 1.5 m high stone boundary wall. The rear of the site is separated by approx. 2m high boundary fencing and gates.

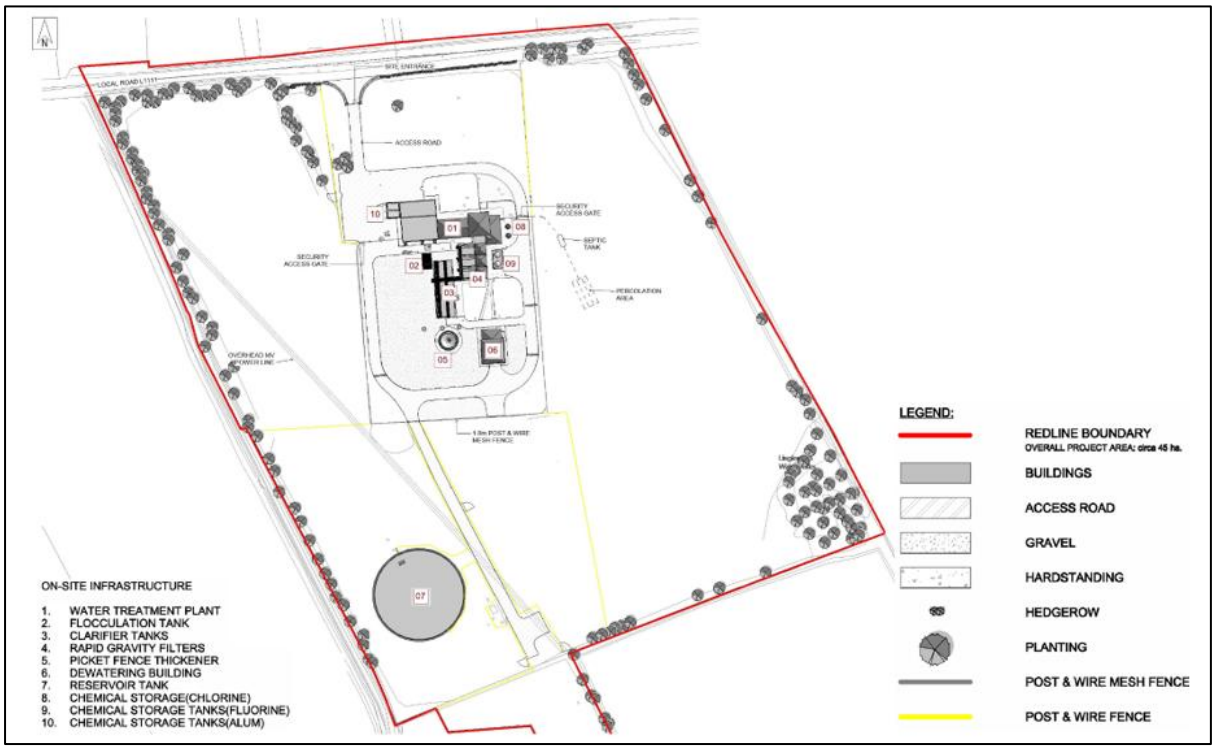


Plate 7: Existing Lisglennon WTP site layout



Plate 8: Existing Lisglennon WTP

Existing Treated Water Pipelines: Lisglennon WTP to Ballina, Bonniconlon and surrounds.

2.8 The existing pipeline conveys treated water from Lisglennon WTP to Ballina, Bonniconlon and surrounds. Between Lisglennon WTP and Lisglennon RWS&PS, the existing treated water pipeline runs parallel to the raw water mains. From the Lisglennon RWS&PS, the existing pipeline continues east along the L11109 before joining the L5147. From the L5147, the route crosses a section of agricultural land until the R314. The route then follows the R314 southwards to Belleek Crossroads (where there is an existing offtake to Ballina), before turning east onto the L5140. From there, the route crosses through the grounds of Belleek Castle and woodland to the L1120, Quay Road, and crosses the River Moy at an existing crossing. On the eastern side of the River Moy, the existing pipeline supplies treated water to Creggs Road and Bonniconlon via an offtake. There is no existing pipeline from Creggs Road to Lough Talt.

Site of the proposed Treated Water Boosting Pumping Station (BPS)

2.9 The site of the proposed BPS at Carralavin, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo is greenfield, and fronts onto the L3135 Carrownlabaun, c. 1.8 kilometres west of Bonniconlon. The site is bounded to the east and south by a sod ditch with areas of hedgerows further along the eastern boundary, and on the northern and western boundaries. There is an existing agricultural gate on the eastern boundary of the site.



Plate 9: Existing site at Bonniconlon

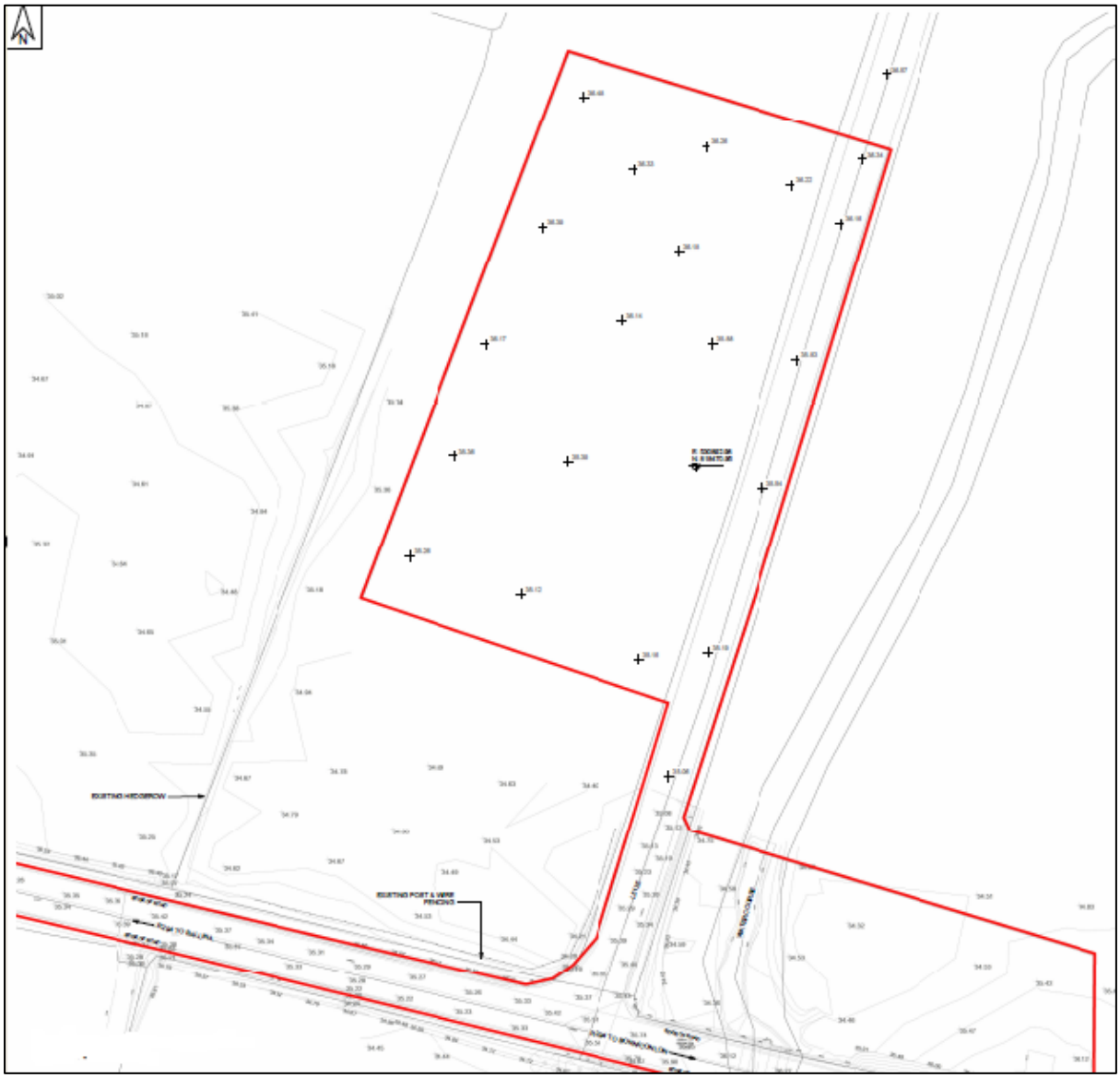


Plate 10: Existing site layout plan at Bonniconlon

Site adjacent to the existing Bonniconlon Reservoir

2.10 The site adjacent to an existing Uisce Éireann reservoir at Bonniconlon is greenfield, and is protected by a fence and screened with mature trees, and fronts onto the L51172.

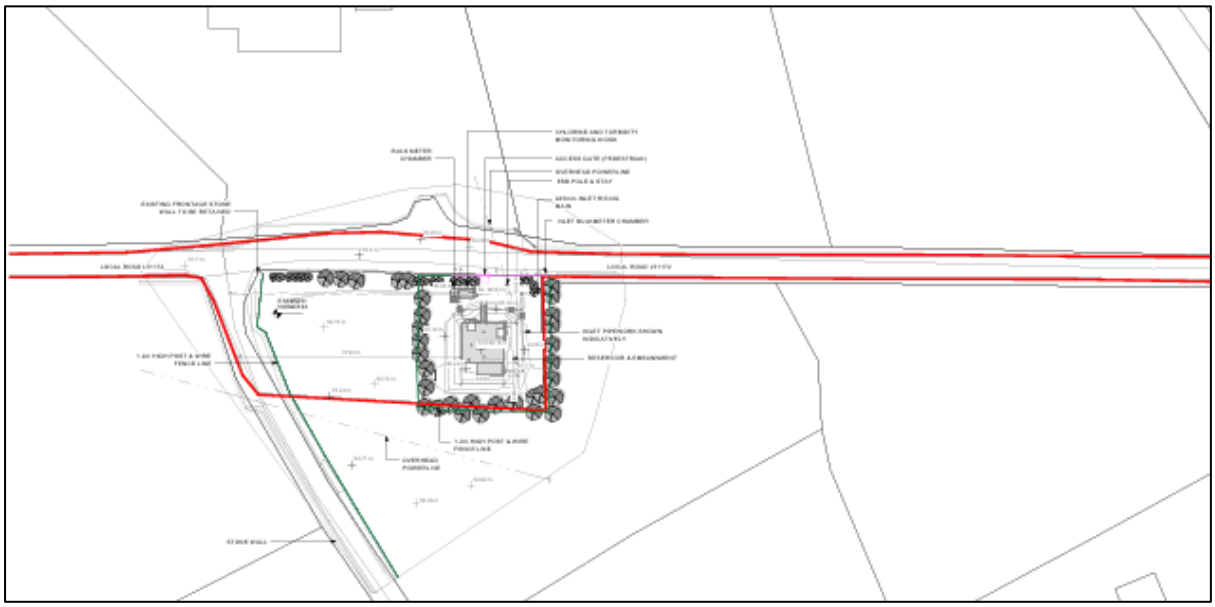


Plate 11: Existing site layout plan at Bonniconlon Treated Water Reservoir



Plate 12: Site adjacent to the existing Bonniconlon Reservoir

Site of the proposed Break Pressure Tank (BPT) at Windy Gap

2.11 The site of the proposed BPT at Drumsheen, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo is located in the vicinity of the Bunnyconnellan Wind Farm granted planning permission in 2013 under ACP Ref. No. PL 16.241506 (Mayo County Council Reg. Ref. P10/514), and which comprises 12no. 2.3 MW wind turbines. The proposed site utilises the existing access road of the wind farm. The site is located above the level of the road, but it is generally flat, and is not visible from the public road. It is accessed via a private road which also provides vehicular access to the windfarm. The access road to the site is gated.

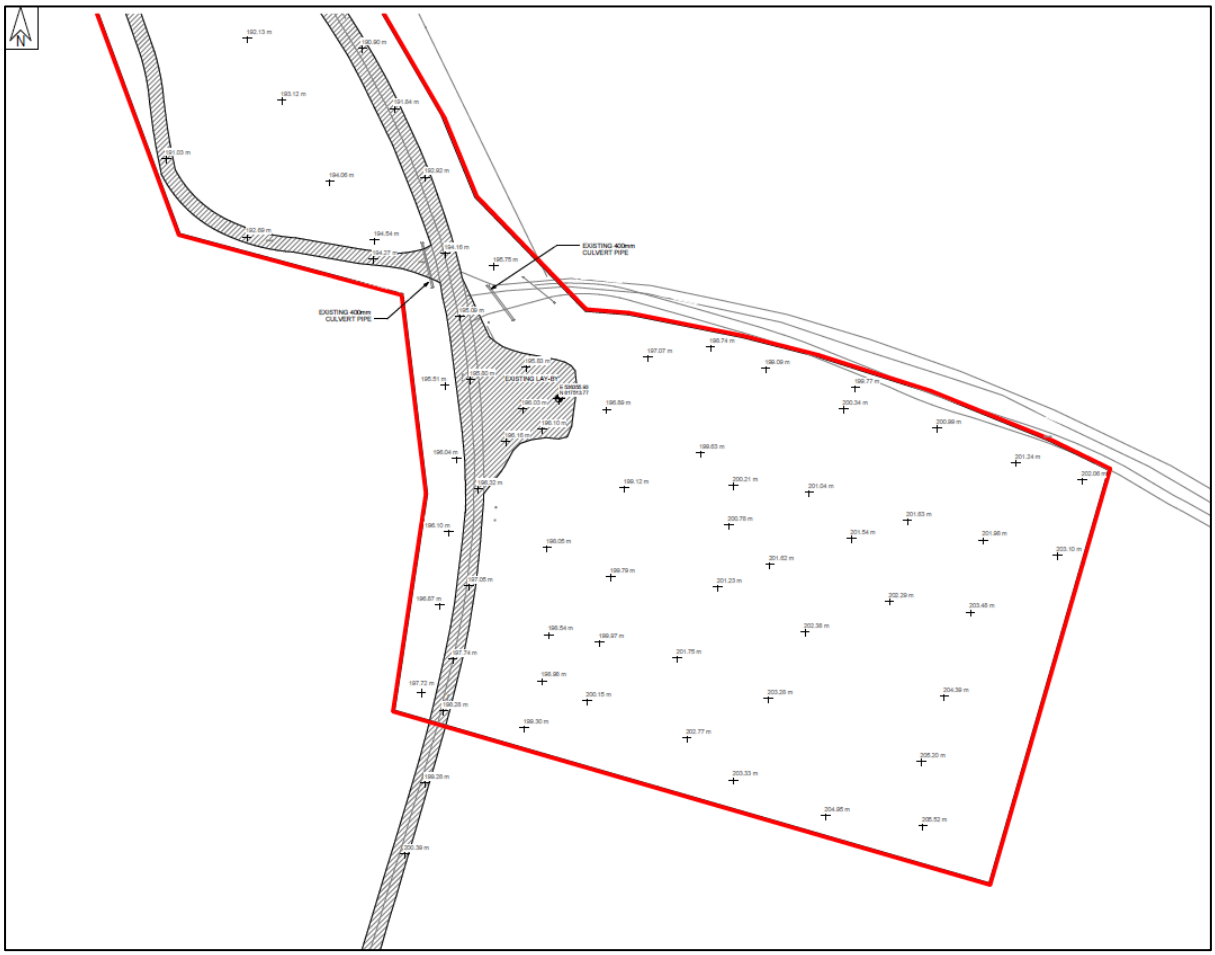


Plate 13: Existing site layout plan at Windy Gap



Plate 14: Site of the proposed BPT at Windy Gap

Lough Talt Water Treatment Plant (WTP) site

2.12 The existing Lough Talt WTP site consists of a control building, chemical storage, chlorine contact tank and other associated plant and infrastructure. The site is accessed via a shared vehicular entrance on the east of the site, which also provides access to the Coillte lands to north. The site runs parallel to the R294 which bounds the site to the south. The site is separated from the roadway by a c. 2m high wire fence which runs along the perimeter of the entire WTP site. The overall site is topographically flat in nature.



Plate 15: Existing Lough Talt WTP site



Plate 16: Existing Lough Talt WTP site

3.0 CONTEXT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 There are significant water supply deficits and water infrastructure needs in north County Mayo and south County Sligo.

3.2 The Ballina Regional Water Resource Zone (WRZ), which includes Ballina and surrounding areas currently serves a population of c. 22,631 persons (June, 2026) from two WTPs, and is forecast to have shortfall in potable water supply capacity in the near future due to population growth, growth in non-domestic/industrial users and further tourism.

3.3 Potable water storage (reservoir) capacity in the Ballina Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS) network is also currently below optimal levels to ensure security and resilience of supply to the area.

3.4 In addition, the existing trunk main network between Lisglennon WTP and Ballina Town will also not have sufficient capacity to transfer the necessary flows to meet increased demand. Large parts of Ballina Town are also currently served by a critical ageing trunk main.

3.5 In relation to the Lough Talt RWSS, an "interim" Water Treatment Plant at Lough Talt was commissioned in 2020 to meet short/medium-term needs, and that an alternative long-term water supply for the area would be required by 2029.

4.0 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 This section sets out the key provisions of the policy context within which the Proposed Development is framed.

European Level

The European Green Deal

4.2 The European Green Deal was approved in 2020 and is a package of policy initiatives, which aim to set the European Union on the path to green transition, with the ultimate goal of reaching climate neutrality 2050. It aims to curb greenhouse gas emissions and encourage greater production and use of green energy. Of relevance to the Proposed Development is the emphasis on the protection and sustainable management of water resources.

Recast Drinking Water Directive

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

The Water Framework Directive (WFD)

4.4 The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), established on 23rd October 2000, seeks to establish a framework to prevent further deterioration of water bodies, promote sustainable water use, reduce pollution, mitigate against floods and droughts and to enhance the protection of the aquatic environment. The WFD was given legal effect in Ireland by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). It requires all Member States to protect and improve water quality in all waters to achieve good ecological status by 2015 or, at least, by 2027.

The European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023

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

The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003

4.6 The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003) transpose the WFD into Irish Law.

4.7 The Proposed Development is aligned with the applicable policies and legislation at a European level that seek to protect water resources and facilitate the provision of a quality drinking water supply.

National Level

The Water Services Acts 2007-2022

4.8 The Water Services Acts lay out the legislation, governing functions, standards, obligations and practice in relation to the planning, management, and delivery of water supply and wastewater collection and treatment services. The Acts focuses on management of water "in the pipe", as distinct from broader water resources issues such as river quality. The specific duties and functions of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) are also set out, including those requiring the preparation of Uisce Éireann's Water Service Strategic Plan (WSSP), and the time period for which Uisce Éireann's Investment Plans apply.

Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022

4.9 The provisions of the Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022 expand the classes of development within Part 3 (Environmental Infrastructure) of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure Development), Act 2006, as amended, to include surface water abstractions equivalent to or exceeds 2 million cubic metres.

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended

4.10 The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, committed the State to 2030 and 2050 legally binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing the governance framework by which this is to be realised. Section 15 of the Act states that:

(1) A relevant body shall, in the performance of is functions, have regard to –

a) The most recent approved national mitigation plan,
b) The most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plan,
c) The furtherance of the national transition objective,
d) The objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.

4.11 The Supreme Court delivered judgment in Coolglass ([2026] IESC 5), which held that section 15(1) of the Climate Acts does not expand or confer any additional functions on public authorities, and that in the planning context, the functions of the planning authority are set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The Supreme Court held that it is the existing functions which must be carried out in a manner consistent with section 15(1). The Supreme Court also clarified that the Commission is *"entitled to approach its task on a presumption that any strategy or development plan adopted is consistent with climate objectives, and that any decision consistent with such a plan and strategy will itself be consistent with those objectives, and therefore in compliance with s. 15(1)."*

National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision (2025)

4.12 The NPF First Revision, approved by the Government in April 2025, highlights the delivery of critical strategic infrastructure, which includes water services as essential for sustainable growth in the future. The NPF notes that it is essential to have a resilient water supply to serve the existing population and for the increases to 1 million people projected for the Region by 2040.

4.13 National Strategic Outcome (NSO) 9 (Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources), highlights the need to bring and maintain water services to acceptable international levels, verified by independent monitoring and reporting.

4.14 NSO 9 further seeks to *devise detailed network and capacity assessments to support the provision of water services infrastructure that facilitates housing and economic development in the priority towns and urban areas identified in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies in order to ensure plan-led development decisions are underpinned by coordinated investment plans.*

4.15 In addition, NPO 92 seeks to ensure the alignment of planned growth with the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure, in order to manage and conserve water resources in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development requirements and a cleaner environment.

National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030

4.16 The NDP addresses water infrastructure and services as follows:

> *Significant continued investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and services will also involve the increases delivery of new connections, co-ordinated with the planning process to support economic growth and meet the needs of priority housing developments and urban renewal areas, while at the same time supporting implementation of national strategies in relation to public health, safety and environmental compliance.*
> *In the period from 2021-2025 almost €6bn investment will be undertaken by Irish Water of which over €4.5 billion will be Voted Exchequer funded.*

NDP Review 2025

4.17 A review of the NDP took place to ensure the delivery of transformative, critical and growth enhancing infrastructure over the remaining five years. This included an additional injection of €4.5 billion on top of the original NDP provision for specifically water services.

4.18 Therefore, in total, €12 billion has been released and earmarked specifically for critical water infrastructure investment.

National Water Resources Framework Plan 2021

4.19 The National Water Resources Plan, comprised of a Framework Plan and four Regional Water Resources Plans (RWRPs), is Uisce Éireann's 25-year strategic plan for Ireland's public water supplies, to move towards a safe, secure, reliable, and sustainable drinking water supply for all Uisce Éireann customers, whilst safeguarding the natural environment.

4.20 Section 1.3 of the Plan states that effective water services, including the delivery of a sustainable and reliable clean water supply, are essential for a modern country.

Water Services Strategic Plan 2050

4.21 The Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP), approved in July 2025, sets out Uisce Éireann's objectives for the next 25 years and the strategy to achieve them.

4.22 Strategic Objective 2 of the WSSP seeks to meet customer needs *through the provision of high quality, reliable water services.*

4.23 The WSSP acknowledges that *our existing water infrastructure is ageing and our assets need significant maintenance or replacement so that we can continue to deliver services at an appropriate level.*

Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland

4.24 The Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Ireland sets out the measures that are necessary to protect and restore water quality in Ireland. The aim of the Plan is to ensure that Ireland's natural waters are sustainably managed and that freshwater resources are protected to maintain and improve Ireland's water environment.

4.25 The Plan supports Uisce Éireann *to implement the National Water Resource Plan and associated regional plans and to maintain national water and wastewater capacity registers to ensure security of supply and sufficient capacity in drinking and wastewater networks to inform decisions on balanced regional development in line with the National Planning Framework.*

4.26 The Plan further sets out several actions for each of the most significant pressures and issues of which urban wastewater, domestic wastewater and water abstraction are outlined.

Water Services Policy Statement 2024-2030

4.27 The Water Services Policy Statement (WPS) sets the high-level policy framework in relation to the provision of water services, generally, including meeting the obligations to protect and enhance the environment.

4.28 The Statement acknowledges that *Ireland's future economic and social progress is critically dependent on upscaling our capacity to deliver reliable, sustainable high-quality water and wastewater services.*

4.29 Further stated is the priority of the statement to ensure that *current water and wastewater services are maintained, requiring infrastructure investment in maintenance and renewal.* `

National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030

4.30 The National Biodiversity Action Plan sets the agenda for the 2023-2030 period to scale up biodiversity action.

4.31 Identified as Action Number 2D2, Uisce Éireann is named as the partner to achieve this action by implementing the Water Services Strategic Plan, in conjunction with Uisce Éireann's Biodiversity Action Plan, to protect and enhance the environment.

Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan – Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation July 2025

4.32 The Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan identifies water services and infrastructure as fundamental and critical to support compact growth, economic growth and environmental goals. It is noted that Ireland's water infrastructure must expand to meet the rising demand while maintaining service quality.

4.33 Action 17, Sub-Action (i), of the Plan further acknowledges the importance in ensuring a resilient water supply infrastructure throughout the country to secure the accelerated delivery of infrastructure critical to housing and economic development. This sub-action states the following:

> *Allocate increased capital investment under the National Development Plan (NDP) to electricity, water, and transport infrastructure.*

Uisce Éireann's Strategic Funding Plan 2025-2029

4.34 Uisce Éireann's Strategic Funding Plan 2025-2029 sets out the measures that are proposed between 2025 and 2029 to implement the objectives of the WSSP.

Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure – Sectoral Adaptation Plan

4.35 The Plan highlights Uisce Éireann's role as Ireland's national public water services provider, supplying water to customers.

4.36 Goal 3 (Secure, Resilient, and Adaptable Water Services) seeks to *ensure the delivery of Water Services Infrastructure (WSI) that meets the requirements of the European Drinking Water and Urban Wastewater Directives, providing safe, reliable and resilient WSI. This involves upgrading existing infrastructure while delivering new infrastructure to cope with increased supply and demand pressures.*

4.37 From a national perspective, the Proposed Development is supported by key policy objectives that underpin the provision of a sustainable, resilient, reliable, and clean water supply in a manner that protects and enhances the environment. Specifically, it is aligned with:

- The NPF and the NDP, which highlight the delivery of critical strategic infrastructure such as water services to serve the existing population and for the additional 1 million people projected by 2040.
- The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, in supporting a resilient water supply for the area.
- National water service policy as embodied in, for example, the National Water Resources Framework Plan, and the Water Services Strategic Plan, in delivering safe and reliable drinking water to the Ballina and Lough Talt water supply areas.

Regional

Regional Water Resources Plan – North West 2023

4.38 The focus of the Regional Water Resources Plan is:

- Merging supply systems within the region to form 15 larger interconnected Water Resource Zones (WRZs), reducing the number of WRZs in the North West Region from 119 to 81.
- Upgrading 104 existing water treatment plants to reduce water quality risks across all WRZs.
- Increasing the capacity of 45 (of the remaining 104) WTPs to address the current supply deficit and to meet forecast growth.
- Interconnecting supplies via 692 kilometres of trunk mains.
- Development of 10 new water treatment plants.
- Eventual decommissioning of 38 water treatment plants.
- Reducing leakage to 23% of regional demand through pressure management, active leakage control, and targeted asset replacement

4.39 Table 7.2 of the Regional Water Resources Plan – North Lough Non-Technical Summary indicates that the preferred approach for Study Area C (SAC), which includes Ballina and Sligo, is *Lough Easky and Lough Talt rationalised to Lisglennon WTP, increasing SW abstraction at Lough Conn and upgrading Lisglennon WTP for capacity (SAC-543*).

Northern & Western Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) 2030

4.40 The primary purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the NPF and provide a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the region.

4.41 The key Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) include:

- RPO 8.12
    - To ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place to meet demands from continuing growth and development of the economy and to cater to existing and increased population.
- RPO 8.15
    - Support investment for water and wastewater services in the first instance where existing facilities are insufficient to meet current demands and as outlined above (See: Expanding Service Provision). This includes the Lough Talt Water Supply Scheme, which is identified as being necessary to deliver the growth model outlined in the RSES (Section 8.5, page 274 of the RSES).
- RPO 8.17
    - Provide quality water and wastewater services necessary for urban and rural economic development purposes.
- RPO 8.18
    - Ensure the protection and improvement of all waters – rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries (transitional waters), coastal waters and their associated habitats and species

throughout the region and implement measures to achieve at least Good Status in all water surface bodies.

4.42 From a regional perspective, the Proposed Development is aligned with the requirement to provide adequate infrastructure to support future growth, particularly where existing provision is inadequate. The Lough Talt Water Supply Scheme is specifically identified as being necessary to deliver growth in the region.

Local

4.43 The following local planning policies and objectives endorse the need for, and propriety of, the Proposed Development:

- **Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028**
  - The vision of the Plan is *to create a sustainable and competitive county that supports the health and wellbeing of the people of Mayo, providing an attractive destination, as a place in which to live, work, invest, do business and visit offering high quality employment and educational opportunities within strong and vibrant sustainable communities, whilst ensuring a transition to a low caron and climate resilient county that supports high environmental quality.*
  - Infrastructural Development is listed as a Strategic Aim to achieve this vision, it sets out *to protect, improve and provide water, wastewater, surface water and flood alleviation services throughout the county, and to facilitate the provision of high-quality information communication, technology, broadband, telecommunication information and electricity network required to support and enhance the key aims of the best place to live, work, visit and invest.*
  - The sustainable socio-economic growth of Mayo is dependent on the provision of essential infrastructure to ensure it achieves its targets and strategic objectives.
  - Table 7.1 of the Plan identifies a number of key Water Services Projects for County Mayo of which the Ballina Regional Water Supply is one. Policy objective INO 6 seeks to support and facilitate upgrades to the water schemes listed in Table 7.1.
  - Furthermore, policy objective INP 1 obliges the Planning Authority to liaise and work in conjunction with Uisce Éireann in the delivery of an adequate level of water services infrastructure, to ensure that a sufficient water supply is available for the settlements set out in the County Settlement Hierarchy.
  - The Proposed Development (above ground elements) is principally located on unzoned lands outside any settlement boundary. The Plan identifies that in areas of rural countryside, *the Council will ensure that development of the unserved rural areas takes place in a manner that is compatible with the protection of key economic, environmental, biodiversity and cultural/heritage assets such as the road network, water quality and important landscapes.* The Proposed Development site principally comprises existing, established water services infrastructure, including the Wherrew Raw Water Intake & Pumping Station (RWI&PS); Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Bonniconlon Reservoir, and the Lough Talt Water

Treatment Plant (WTP). The Proposed Development is compatible with the nature, extent and character of this existing water services infrastructure.

- As illustrated in the Landscape Appraisal of the County in Volume 4 of the Plan, the Proposed Development traverses the following Landscape Character Units:
  - Area G (primarily): North Mayo Drumlins:
    - This Character Unit is described as a mildly undulating topography represented by glacial drumlins, which have, of the note, the ability to both shelter and absorb the visual impact of development.
    - It is noted that the main concern for natural linear features such as lake-shores, coast lines, and ridge lines is to avoid penetration by development that will interrupt and reduce the integrity of such elements. Given the low viewing points around the Loughs, visual intrusion by development is likely to be enhanced. As set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on the landscape character of the area.
  - Area D (small northern section): North Coast Plateaux:
    - This Character Unit is described as comprising low vegetation represented in by moorland and bog type grasses, which have similar characteristics to smooth terrain in landscape terms. Grassland vegetation is generally uniform in appearance, failing to break up vistas, and allowing long distance visibility. This inability to absorb development identifies low vegetation as a critical landscape factor. As set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any residual significant effects on the landscape character of the area.
  - Area H: (small north-eastern section): East Mayo Uplands
    - This Character Unit envelopes parts of Lough, around the shores of which, several major roads pass. Due to the low-lying nature of lakeland environments such as this, low prospect vistas are available from the roads of the Lough and its shores. Having regard to policy objective NEP 14, which seeks to protect, enhance and contribute to the physical, visual and scenic character of County Mayo and to preserve its unique landscape character, and as set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on the landscape character of the area.
- The shoreline of Lough Conn, the banks of the River Moy, and the skyline of part of the West Hills of the Ox Mountains are designated as an 'Area Designated as Vulnerable; in section 3 of the Landscape Appraisal of the County. Policy 3.1(b) states that *these areas or features designated as vulnerable represent the principal features which create and sustain the character and distinctiveness of the surrounding landscape. To be considered for permission, development in the environs of these vulnerable areas must be shown not to impinge in any*

significant way upon its character, integrity or uniformity when viewed from the surroundings. Particular attention should be given to the preservation of the character and distinctiveness of these areas as viewed from scenic routes and the environs of archaeological and historic sites. The skyline of part of the West Hills of the Ox Mountains Proposed Development is also identified as a slope >10%. Having regard to policy objective NEP 14, which seeks to protect, enhance and contribute to the physical, visual and scenic character of County Mayo and to preserve its unique landscape character, and as set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on these 'Areas Designated as Vulnerable'.

- The Proposed Development does not interfere with any Scenic Views as illustrated in the Landscape Appraisal of the County in Volume 4 of the Plan, but at certain locations the Proposed Development will interact with the *'R294 from west of Bunnyconellan to the boundary with Co. Sligo'*, which is, having regard to Section 3.6(a) of Volume 4 of the Plan, a designated Scenic Route. Section 3.6 (b) of Volume 4 of the Plan outlines that *the onus should be on the applicant when applying for permission to develop in the environs of a scenic route, to demonstrate that there will be no obstruction or degradation of the views towards visually vulnerable features nor significant alterations to the appearance of the character of sensitive areas.* Having regard to policy objective NEP 14, which seeks to protect, enhance and contribute to the physical, visual and scenic character of County Mayo and to preserve its unique landscape character, and as set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on this scenic route.
- In the general area of the Proposed Development, there are also a number of sensitive areas, including peat bogs and mixed forest areas. Section 3.2(b) of Volume 4 of the Plan notes that development in these areas must demonstrate an awareness of the inherent limitations by having a very high standard of site selection, siting layout, selection of materials and finishes. Having regard to policy objective NEP 14, which seeks to protect, enhance and contribute to the physical, visual and scenic character of County Mayo and to preserve its unique landscape character, and as set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant effects on these sensitive areas.
- The Proposed Development also straddles Policy Area 3: Uplands, Moors, Heaths or Bogs, and Policy Area 4/4A: Drumlins and Inland Lowlands. Having regard to the Landscape Area Sensitivity Index in Volume 4 of the Plan, Policy Areas 3 and 4 are generally of medium landscape sensitivity.
    - Having regard to Policy 13, which seeks to encourage development that will not have a disproportionate visual impact (due to excessive bulk, scale or inappropriate siting) and will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic upland vistas when viewed from areas of the public realm, and Policy 22, which will continue to permit development that can utilise existing infrastructure, whilst taking account of absorption opportunities provided by the landscape and prevailing vegetation, and as set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter in the EIAR that

accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on these Policy Areas.

- The Proposed Development is also aligned with the following policies of the Plan:
  - ***NEO 37:*** *To ensure that the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and any subsequent Water Management Plans are fully considered throughout the planning process.*
  - ***NEO 41:*** *To protect both ground and surface water resources to work with Uisce* Éireann *to develop and implement Drinking Water Safety Plans, to protect sources* of public water supply and their contributing catchment, and to work with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes, in respect of Source Protection Plans for Group Water Schemes to protect these sources.
  - ***EDO 17:*** *To work with Uisce Éireann and other infrastructure providers, to support the provision of services and facilities to accommodate the future economic growth of the County and to seek to reserve infrastructure capacity for employment generating uses.*
  - ***INP 1:*** *To liaise and work in conjunction with Uisce Éireann in the delivery of an adequate level of water services infrastructure through the Capital Investment Plan 2017-2021 and Rural Water Programme 2019-2021 and any subsequent plans or programmes, to ensure that a sufficient water supply is available for the settlements set out in the County Settlement Hierarchy.*
  - ***INP 2:*** *To liaise and work in conjunction with Uisce* Éireann to promote the sustainable development of water supplies and drainage infrastructure in the county and region, in accordance with the objectives and recommendations set out in *Uisce* Éireann's *Water Services Strategic Plan.*
  - ***INP 3:*** *To liaise with Uisce* Éireann to develop and implement Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment.
  - ***INO 6:*** *To support and facilitate upgrades to the water schemes listed in Table 7.1.* This includes the Ballina Regional Waster Supply Scheme (Storage/Mains).

- **Ballina Local Area Plan 2024-2030**
  - The Ballina Local Area Plan (LAP) has been informed by the NPF, RSES and the Mayo County Development Plan 2022, to create a strategy that will influence the sustainable future growth of Ballina over the lifetime of the plan and beyond.
  - Ballina is designated as a Key Town in the RSES, which means it is considered a regionally strategic employment centre of significant scale that can act as a regional driver, complimenting and supporting higher order urban areas.
  - The vision of the LAP is *to support and grow the role of the Key Town of Ballina, to create a sustainable and competitive town that supports the health and well-being of the people Ballina, providing an attractive destination, as a place in which to live, work, invest, do business and visit, offering high quality employment and educational opportunities within string and vibrant sustainable communities, whilst ensuring a transition to a carbon neutral and climate resilient town that supports high environmental quality.*

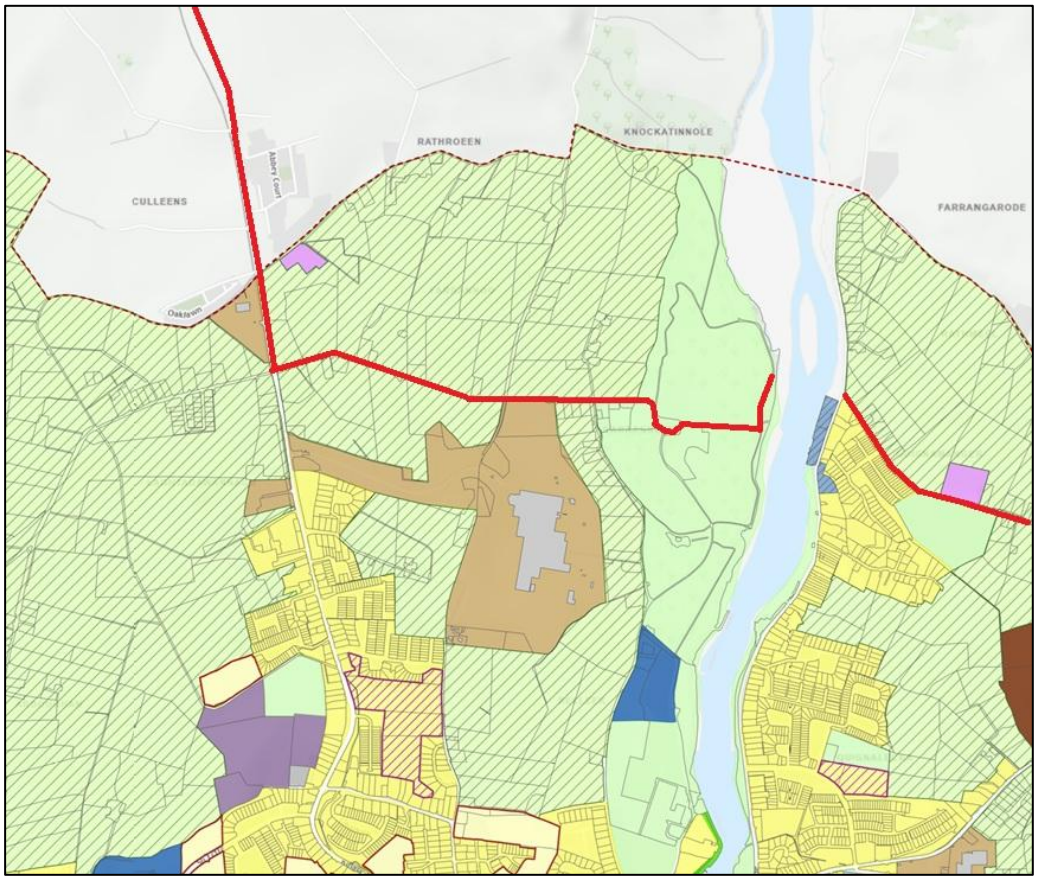


Plate 17: Excerpt from the Ballina LAP illustrating part of the route of the proposed new c. 30km pipeline

- Part of the proposed pipeline between Lisglennon WTP and the Lough Talt WTP traverses north of the town centre, but within the development boundary, of Ballina. The Proposed Development principally traverses public roads, but a small section traverses lands in the vicinity of Belleek Castle which are zoned LUZ 10-Recreation and Amenity, the purpose of which is *to protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.* Having regard to the Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2 in the LAP, Utility Structures are 'Open for Consideration' on lands zoned LUZ-10. The LAP advises that *the subject use may be permitted where the Local Authority is satisfied it complies with the zoning objective and other relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan, and will not conflict with the permitted, existing or adjoining land uses, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
- In this regard the following is of note:
  - Section 10.2 notes that *the ability of Ballina to accommodate future development and remain a competitive location is dependent on the capacity and delivery of infrastructural support.*
  - Section 10.5.1 states that *in co-operation with Uisce Éireann, the Council will contribute towards compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended) and seek to undertake any remedial action as required. Ballina's drinking water is supplied by the Ballina*

Water Resource Zone. It is envisaged that there is adequate capacity to cater for the projected population increase over the Plan period [An increase to 12,348 persons to 2028]. *However, an upgrade to provide additional capacity is likely to be required beyond the lifetime of the Plan.*

- Policy Objective DSP 6 seeks to ensure that all new developments within the Ballina LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028, in respect of water and wastewater infrastructure.
- Policy Objective IESP 6 seeks to a) support the implementation of the Uisce Éireann investment plans, b) liaise with Uisce Éireann, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.
- Policy Objective IESP 7 seeks to support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2022-2028, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede the same during the lifetime of this Plan.
- It is also noted that the proposed pipeline route corridor follows an existing private track through the grounds to minimise interaction with mature trees, woodland habitat, built heritage features and estate infrastructure.

- Part of the proposed pipeline is located in the curtilage of Belleek Castle Hotel (Protected Structure, RPS 2). Chapter 17 of the EIAR states that there will be no direct impact on the Protected Structure.
- The Proposed Development, as it relates to the LUZ 10-Recreation and Amenity zoned lands in the vicinity of Belleek Castle, is aligned with the above policies. It will also not conflict with the adjoining land uses, and is therefore in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- **Mayo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029**
  - Strategic Priority 1, Action no. 34 of the Mayo County Council's Climate Action Plan outlines the plan's objective to *protect and maintain our freshwater and transitional water systems, in order to achieve the highest possible water quality and achieving Water Framework Directive objectives.*

- **Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030**
  - The eastern section of the Proposed Development, between Windy Gap and Lough Talt is located in the jurisdiction of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 (hereafter the Plan).
  - The Plan outlines the vision for Sligo as *a smart, sustainable, and socially inclusive Sligo; one that cherishes its vibrant communities, protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, and is a champion of innovative growth and development.*
  - The Proposed Development is underpinned by Section 30.1.2 (and Table 30.1) of the Plan, which states that *Water supply for other settlements Ballymote and Tobercurry are supplied from Lough Talt RWSS, where an "interim" Water Treatment Plant was commissioned in 2020*

to meet short/medium-term needs. An alternative long-term supply for the area is required by 2029.

- That part of the Proposed Development located in County Sligo will take place on unzoned lands in the vicinity Lough Talt, an existing, established water services infrastructure facility.
- The landscape in which these works will take place have been identified as Visually Vulnerable and located on two scenic routes listed in Appendix C of the Plan (R-294 from junction with L-7516 (Belladrehid) to junction with L-7523 and L-8701 & L-7802 from junction with L-4701 at Masshill to junction with R-294 at Largan).
- Section 23.2.2 of the Plan describes Visually Vulnerable Areas as *distinctive and conspicuous natural features of significant beauty or interest, which have extremely low capacity to absorb new development.*
- Section 23.2.2 of the Plan describes Scenic Routes as *public roads passing through or close to Sensitive Rural Landscapes, or in the vicinity of visual Visually Vulnerable Areas, and affording unique scenic views of distinctive natural features or vast open landscapes. Scenic routes often have a distinctive visual character conferred by old road boundaries, such as stone walls, established hedgerows, lines of mature trees, adjoining cottages or farmyards together with their traditional, planted of enclosures.*
- As set out in the Landscape and Visual Assessment Chapter (Chapter 18) of the EIAR that accompanies the application, the Proposed Development will not result in any significant residual effects on landscape character, designated vulnerable landscapes, scenic routes or visually sensitive areas.
- The following planning policy and objectives are relevant to the Proposed Development:

  P-WS-1: *Co-operate with Uisce Éireann to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to identify and facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure required to realise the development objectives and support population and economic growth as set out in the Core Strategy of this Plan.*

  P-WS-2: *Liaise with Uisce Éireann in seeking to establish source management and protection zones around the drinking water supply source (ground and surface water) and develop appropriate management and maintenance measures for these sources.*

  P-WS-3: *Support the implementation of Uisce Éireann's Capital Investment Programmes and Minor Works Programmes.*

  P-LCP-1: *Protect the physical landscape, visual and scenic character of County Sligo and seek to preserve the County's landscape character. Planning applications for developments that have the potential to impact significantly and adversely upon landscape character, especially in Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas and along Scenic Routes, may be required to be accompanied by a visual impact assessment using agreed and appropriate viewing points and methods for the assessment.*

  P-LCP-2: *Discourage any developments that would be detrimental to the unique visual character of designed Visually Vulnerable Areas.*

  P-LCP-3: *Preserve the scenic views listed in Appendix C and the distinctive visual character of designated Scenic Routes by controlling development along such Routes and other roads, while facilitating developments that may be tied to a specific location or, in*

the case of individual houses, to the demonstrated needs of applicants to reside in a particular area.

- **Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2030**
    - Sligo County Council's Climate Action Plan states that the Council will work *in partnership with relevant stakeholders to develop and progress future-proofing projects/initiatives with particular focus and support for those that will also provide co-benefits to other environmental resources such as water, air quality, human health, biodiversity and landscape.*

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Uisce Éireann gives notice of its intention to make an application for a 10-year permission to An Coimisiún Pleanála in relation to the following proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) on a site that includes: the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake and Raw Water Pump Station (RWPS) at Lough Conn, Cloghans, Ballina, Co. Mayo; the existing Lisglennon RWPS and the Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Killala, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site at Carralavin, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site adjacent to the existing Uisce Éireann reservoir at Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; a greenfield site Drumsheen, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo; and the existing Lough Talt WTP at Gortersluin, Lough Talt, Co. Sligo. The proposed development site also includes parts of the R314, R294, and local roads including the L11109, L1547, L5140, L1120, L1101, L5132, L51333, L5135, L51172 and the L51357; an existing track in the curtilage of Belleek Castle Hotel (Protected Structure RPS 2) and Belleek Woods; and agricultural fields.

5.2 The proposed development site is located in the following townlands: Co. Mayo: Wherrew, Lisglennon, Ballinteean, Rathglass East, Derreens, Broadlands Or Knockafarson, Coonealmore, Rosserk, Coonealcauraun, Rathroeen, Culleens, Laghtadawannagh, Farrannoo, Garrankeel, Quignamanger, Quignalegan, Rathmeel, Quignashee, Ballyholan, Behy More, Corimla South, Carrownlabaun, Bunnyconnellan West, and Bunnyconnellan East; and Co. Sligo: Drumsheen, Knockasliggaun, Glennawoo, Largan, and Gortersluin. There is an existing treated water main under the R314 between Lisglennon WTP and Ballina Town. This does not form part of the proposed development site.

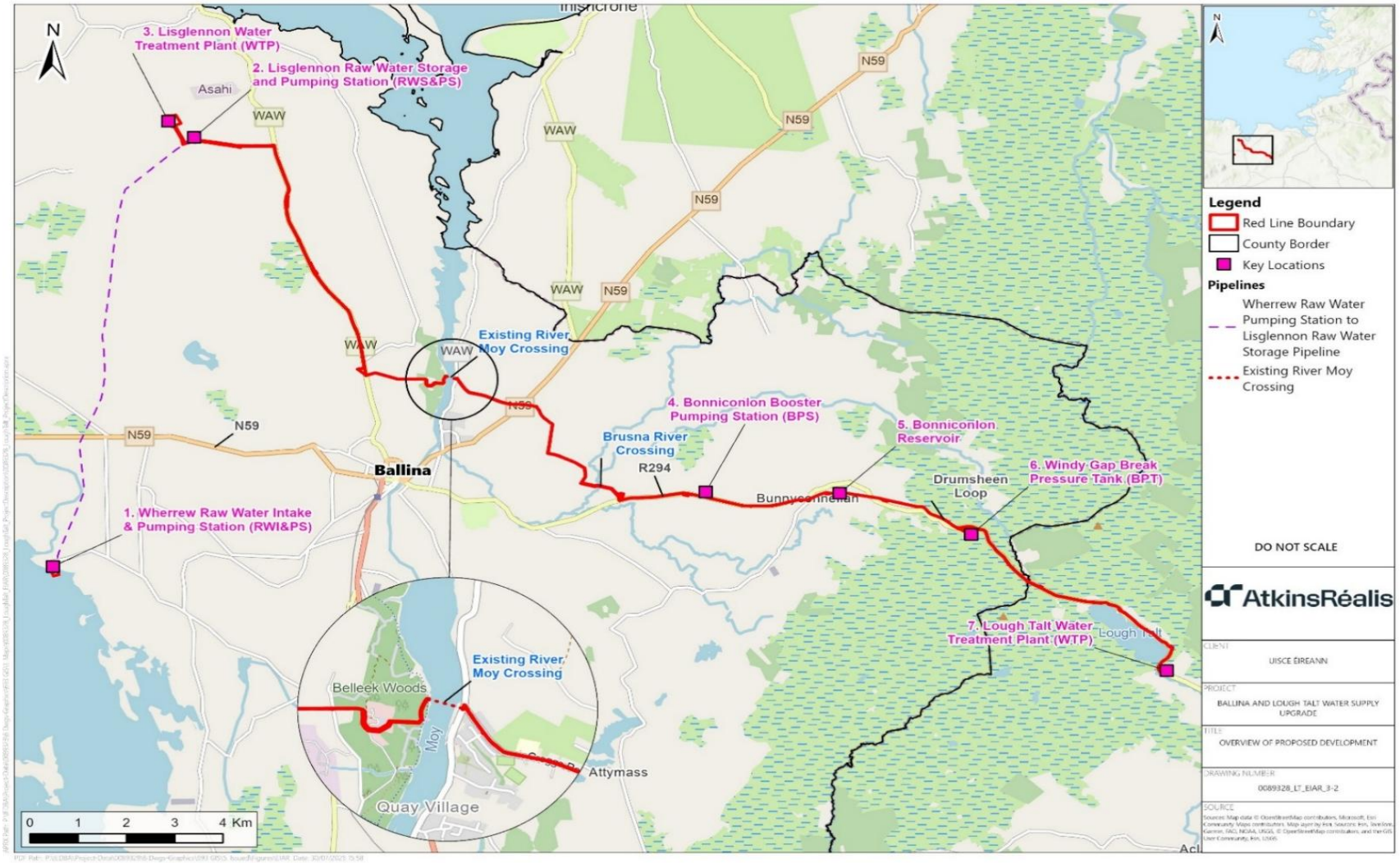
5.3 In summary, the Proposed Development, subject to detailed design, will consist of seven "key locations" and five discrete sections of pipeline, as follows:

- Upgrade to the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake & Pumping Station (RWI&PS), Wherrew, Ballina, Co. Mayo;
- Upgrade to the existing Lisglennon Raw Water Storage and Pumping Station (RWS&PS), Lisglennon, Ballina, Co. Mayo;
- Proposed Pipeline A – Lisglennon RWPS to Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP);
- Upgrade to the existing Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Lisglennon, Ballina, Co. Mayo;
- Proposed Pipeline B – Lisglennon WTP to Existing River Moy Crossing;
- Proposed Pipeline C – Existing River Moy Crossing to Bonniconlon Booster Pumping Station (BPS);
- Proposed Pipeline D – Bonniconlon BPS to Windy Gap Break Pressure Tank (BPT);

- Proposed Pipeline E – Windy Gap BPT to Lough WTP;
- Proposed Bonniconlon Booster Pumping Station (BPS) located at Carralavin, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo;
- Proposed Windy Gap BPT located at Drumsheen, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo;
- Repurposing the existing Lough Talt Water WTP, Co. Sligo;
- Proposed Treated Water Reservoir at the existing Bonniconlon Reservoir site, Ballina, Co. Mayo; and,
- All permanent and temporary works, including construction compounds, access routes, pipeline corridors, and trenchless crossings.

5.4 The Proposed Development would see increased raw water abstraction from Lough Conn in Co. Mayo at the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake. In accordance with the Water Environment Act (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022, the regulation of abstractions falls under the remit of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Plate 18: Overview of the Proposed Development



5.5 The proposed upgrade to the Wherrew RWI&PS will consist of the following:

- A new intake pipe (c. 165m long, 1,200mm internal diameter); intake screen on a precast concrete base; and cardinal markers;
- An extension to the existing intake structure, to include a fish return system with acoustic hood;
- Installation of proposed pressure and flow monitoring instrumentation and associated works;
- Upgrade to the existing pumping station;
- The provision of a concrete slab for a temporary mobile generator;
- The installation of temporary raw water abstraction pipework and a temporary water-retaining structure during the construction period;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works, including access arrangements, hardstanding, infilling of the existing intake channel, fencing, and site lighting.

5.6 The existing 700 mm twin rising mains have sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated increases in abstracted water and do not require upsizing, therefore no works are proposed to these existing rising mains and they do not form part of the Proposed Development. There are no works proposed to Wherrew WTP or the pumps which supply it, therefore Wherrew WTP does not form part of the Proposed Development. The proposed increases in rate of abstraction will supply Lisglennon WTP only.

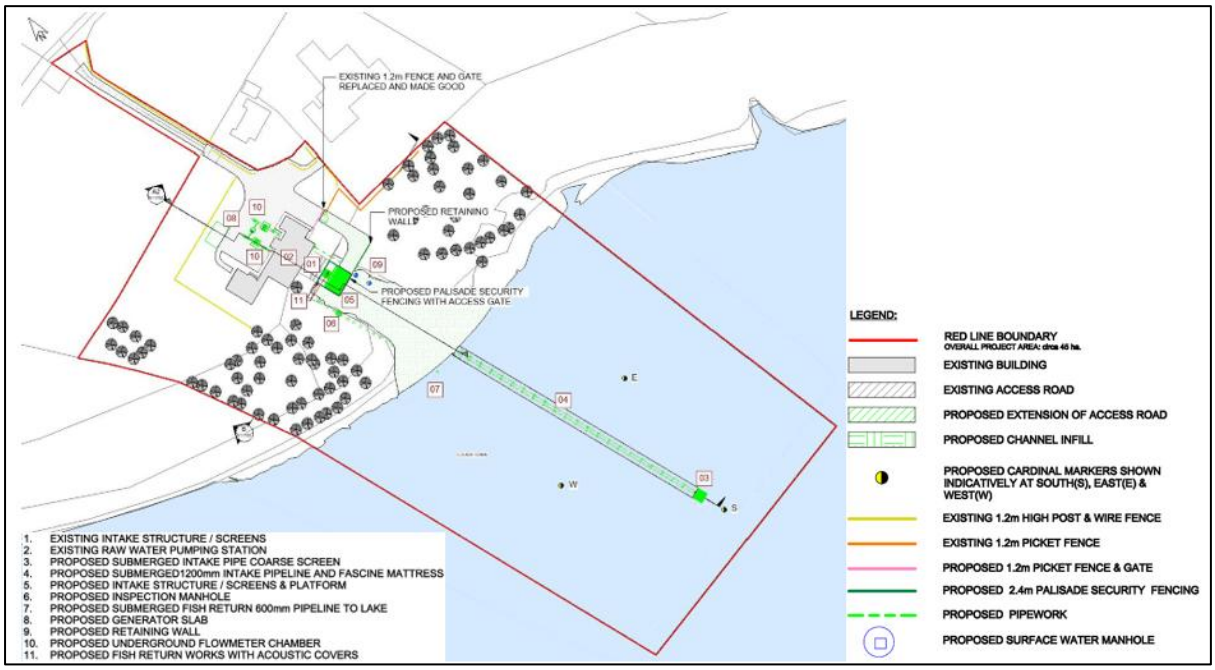


Plate 19: Proposed Works at Wherrew

5.7 The proposed upgrade to the existing Lisglennon RWS&PS will consist of:

- Upgrades to pumps, pipework and ancillary infrastructure;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works.

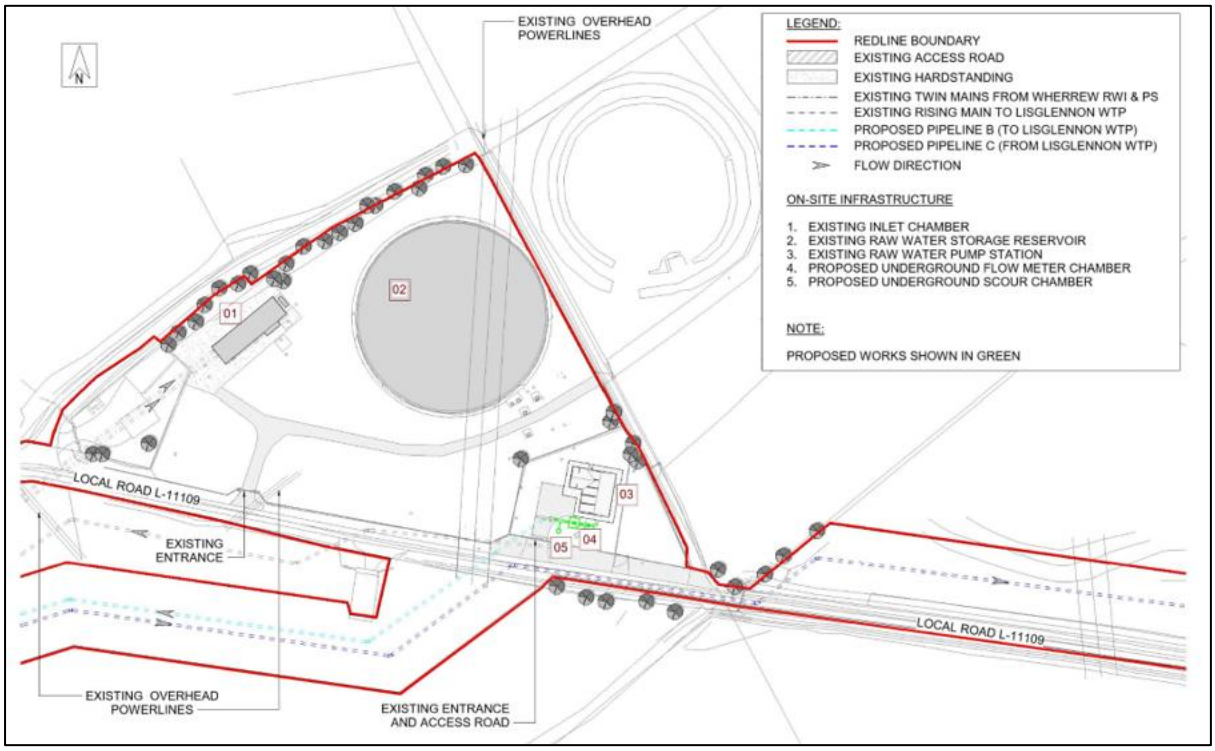


Plate 20: Proposed Works at Lisglennon RWPS Site

5.8 Proposed Pipeline A will consist of a new raw water pipeline (c. 1km in length, 630mm internal diameter) parallel to the existing raw water pipeline, and all ancillary infrastructure.

5.9 The proposed upgrade to the existing Lisglennon WTP will consist of:

- The construction of 1no. treated water storage reservoir;
- The construction of new and upgraded coagulation, flocculation, clarification, rapid gravity filter and residuals management infrastructure;
- The construction of new process buildings, including filter gallery buildings, soda ash dosing building, pump station and UV building, and sludge dewatering building;
- The construction of 1no. ESB medium voltage substation and associated ducting;
- The installation of solar PV panels and associated infrastructure;
- The decommissioning of the existing septic tank and its replacement with a new wastewater treatment system and percolation area;
- Upgrades to existing internal access roads, hardstanding, drainage, fencing, lighting and site security;
- All ancillary site development and landscaping works, including a weighbridge and temporary generator plinth.



Plate 21: Proposed Works at Lisglennon RWPS Site

5.10 The Proposed Treated Water Pipelines B, C, D and E (Lisglennon WTP to Lough Talt WTP), which extends to c. 30.2km, will consist of:

- Pipeline B – Lisglennon WTP to the Existing River Moy Crossing
  - New treated water pipeline from Lisglennon WTP to Junction R314 and Belleek Rd (c. 8.4km in length, 710mm diameter);
  - New treated water pipeline from Junction R314 and Belleek Rd to the Existing River Moy Crossing (c. 2km in length, 560mm diameter);
  - All ancillary site development, infrastructural and landscaping works.
- Pipeline C – Existing River Moy Crossing to Bonniconlon BPS (c. 7.2km in length, 500-560mm internal diameter), and all ancillary site development, infrastructural and landscaping works.
- Pipeline D – Bonniconlon BPS to Windy Gap BPT (c. 6km in length, 500-560mm diameter), and all ancillary site development and landscaping works.
- Pipeline E – Windy Gap BPT to Lough Talt WTP (c. 6.6km in length, 450mm diameter), and all ancillary site development and landscaping works.

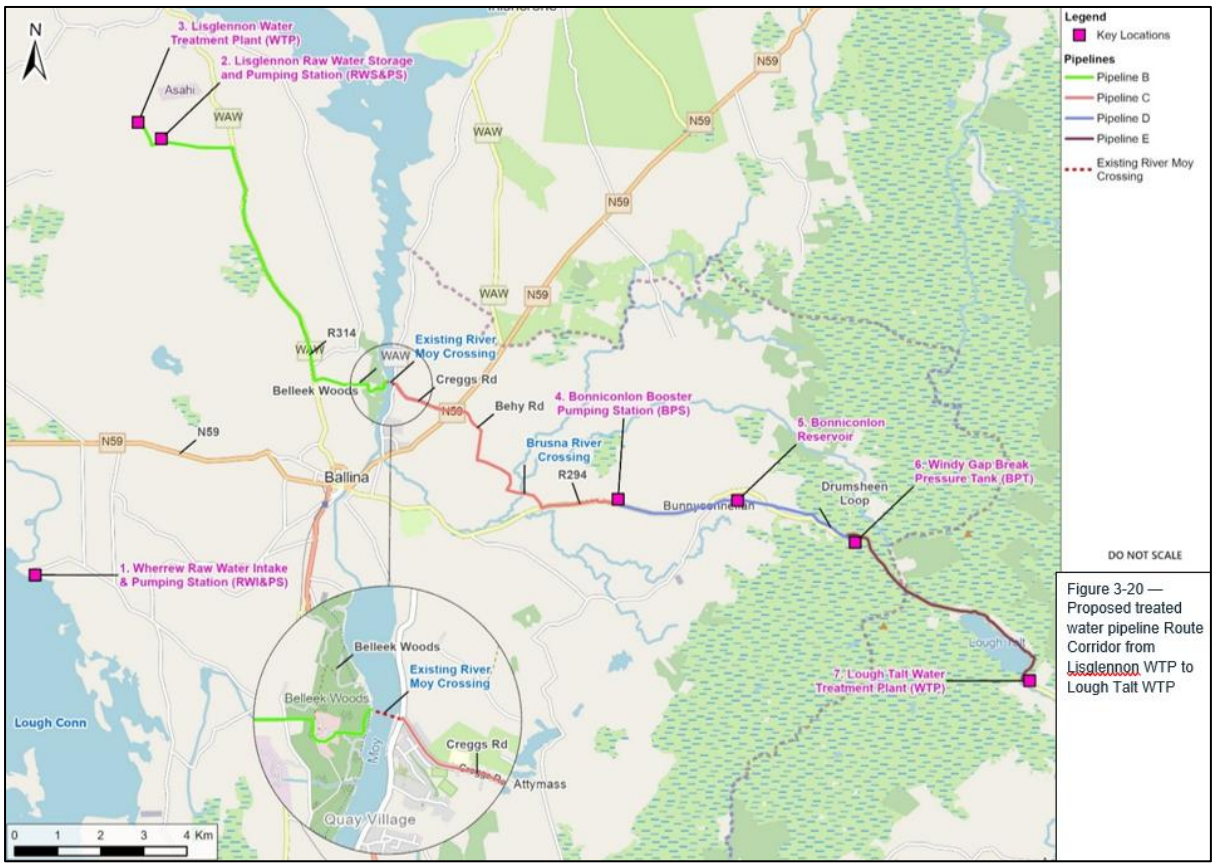


Figure 3-20 — Proposed treated water pipeline Route Corridor from Lisglennon WTP to Lough Talt WTP

Plate 22: Proposed Treated Water Pipeline Route

5.11 The proposed Bonniconlon Booster Pumping Station (BPS) to be located at Carralavin, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co. Mayo will consist of:

- The construction of a new 320 kW booster pumping station, with pumping area, control room, welfare facilities, with roof mounted solar panels;
- The construction of an ESB substation, with security fencing and gate;
- The installation of a new permanent standby generator;
- 2no. surge vessels;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works, including a new access off the L5135, hardstanding, wastewater holding tank, and security fencing and gate.

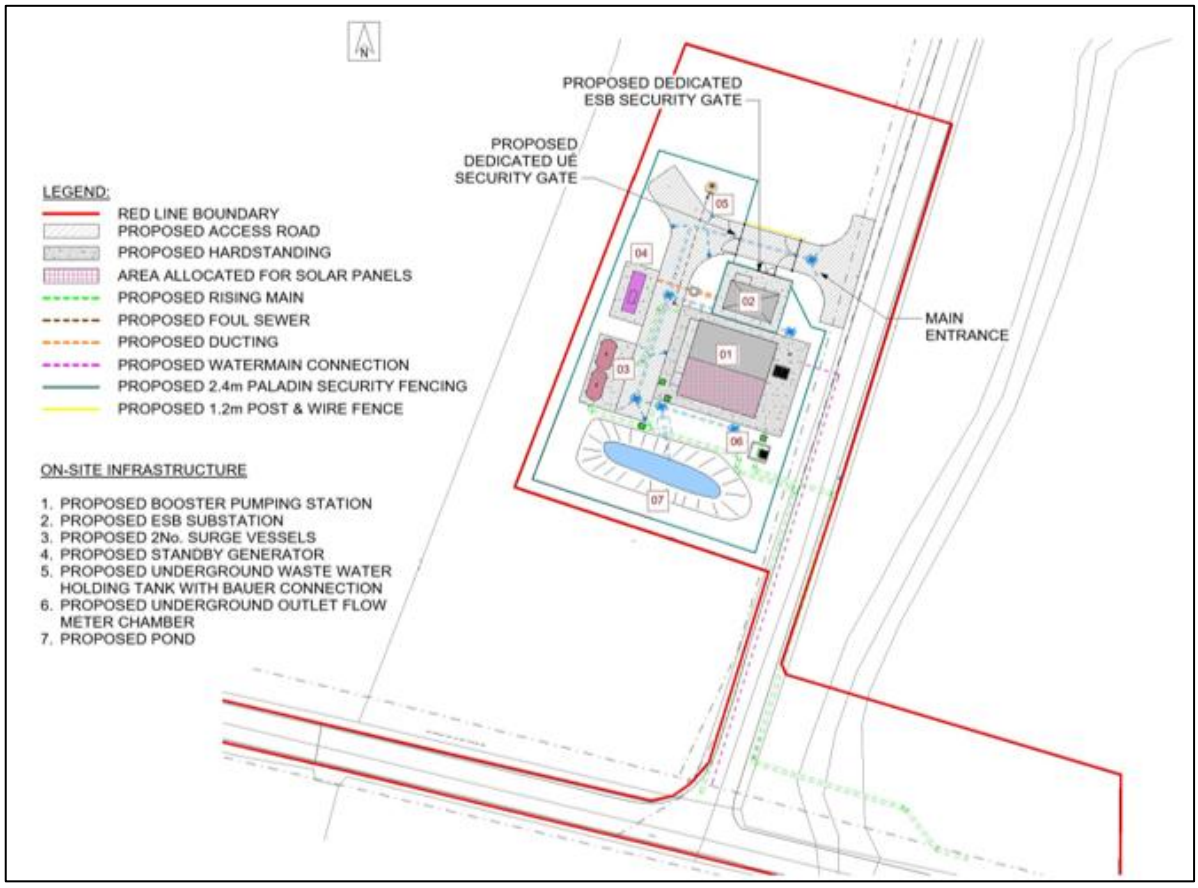


Plate 23: Proposed BPS at Bonniconlon



Plate 24: Proposed Treated Water Reservoir at Bonniconlon

5.12 The proposed Treated Water Reservoir at the existing Bonniconlon Reservoir site, Ballina, Co. Mayo will consist of:

- The construction of 1no. treated water reservoir;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works, including the relocation of an existing ESB pole, lighting, security and fencing.

5.13 The proposed Windy Gap Break Pressure Tank (BPT) to be located at Drumsheen, Bonniconlon, Ballina, Co Mayo will consist of:

- 1no. single-storey BPT;
- The construction of 1no. scour line extraction kiosk and 1no. control kiosk, and all ancillary infrastructure;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works, including access arrangements, hardstanding, lighting, security, and fencing.

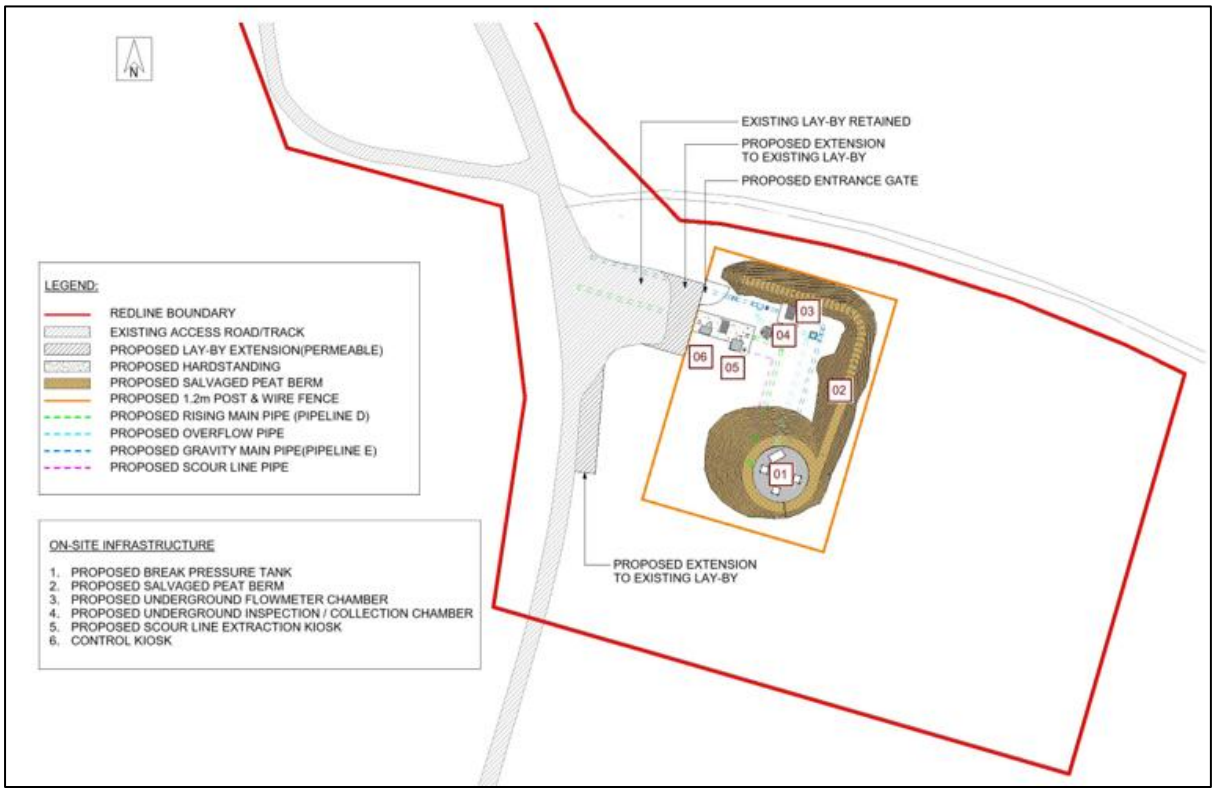


Plate 25: Proposed Break Pressure Tank at Windy Gap

5.14 The proposed repurposing of the existing Lough Talt Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Co. Sligo will consist of:

- The removal and decommissioning of existing redundant tanks and associated infrastructure;
- The construction of 1no. treated water reservoir, with roof mounted solar panels;
- The repurposing of an existing tank as a reservoir;
- Ancillary site development, drainage and landscaping works, including an extension to an existing attenuation pond, hardstanding, wastewater holding tank, lighting and security fencing.

5.15 Upon commissioning of the Proposed Development, abstraction from Lough Talt will cease and Lough Talt WTP will receive treated water from proposed Pipeline E.

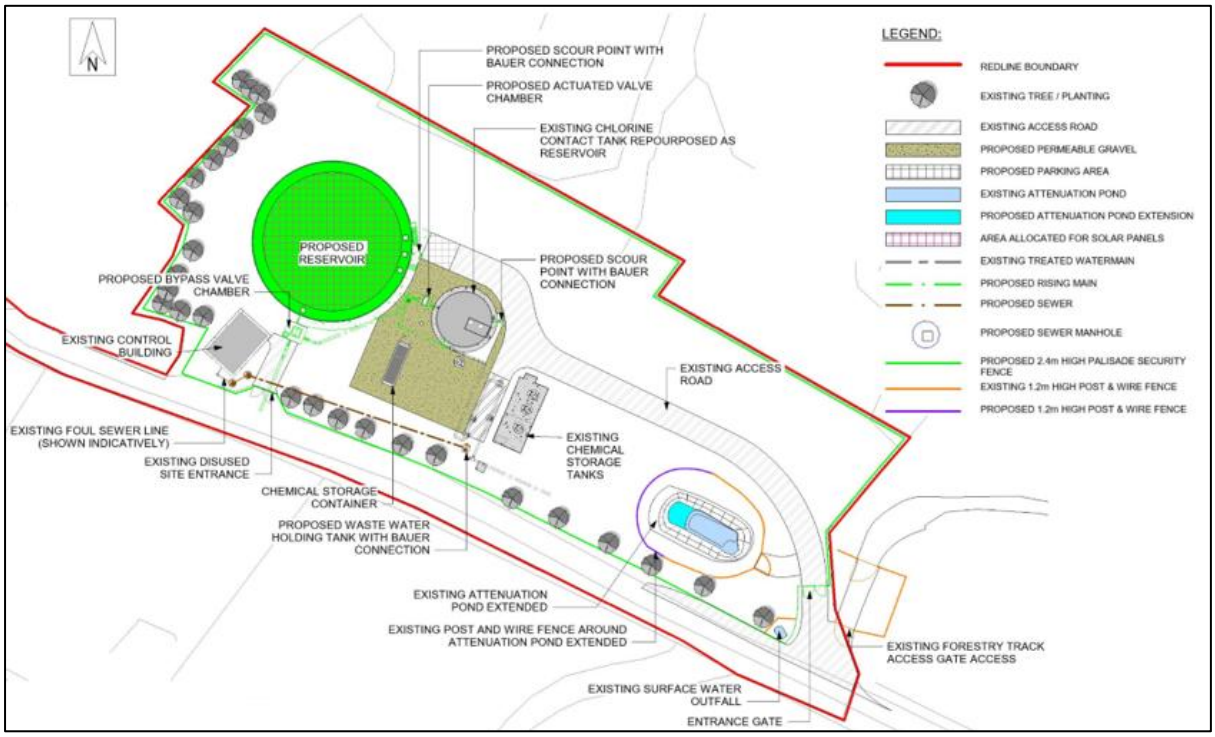


Plate 26: Proposed Lough Talt WTP repurposing

5.16 The Proposed Development will include indicative site compounds at Wherrew RWI&PS, Lisglennon RWS&PS and Lisglennon WTP, Bonniconlon BPS, Windy Gap BPT, Lough Talt Reservoir and Bonniconlon Reservoir. One further site compound has been identified on the R314, adjacent to Laughtadawannagh. Temporary Working Areas within sites such as Lisglennon WTP will also be utilised as compound areas.

5.17 The Proposed Development will also include all ancillary development above and below ground to facilitate the proposed development.

5.18 The Proposed Development relates to a project which has an existing EPA water abstraction licence (Lough Conn, Reference No. R00651-02). In accordance with the Water Environment Act (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022, the regulation of abstractions falls under the remit of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

5.19 The application will also be accompanied by a Compulsory Purchase Order under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1966 as amended.

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

5.21 It is noted in section 3.11 of Chapter 3 of the EIAR that a preliminary construction phase of c. 35 months is envisaged, as well as a 3-month commissioning phase. Notwithstanding, a 10-year permission is requested, having regard to:

- The strategic nature and extent and complexity of the Proposed Development.
- To provide adequate time for the planning consent process
- To allow adequate time for the provision of funding and the procurement process.

It is considered reasonable and appropriate to seek a period of the permission in excess of the standard five-year period in this context.

6.0 STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

6.1 The provisions of the Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022 expands the classes of development within Part 3 (Environmental Infrastructure) of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure Development), Act 2006, as amended, to include:

> *development comprising or for the purposes of … a surface water abstraction where the annual volume of water abstracted or recharged is equivalent to or exceeds 2 million cubic metres*.

The Proposed Development will facilitate an increase in the current raw water abstraction from Lough Conn from 13,400m^3 /day (4,891,000 m^3/annum) to 38,100m^3 /day (13,906,500 m^3/annum) to serve Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS) along with forecast future demand in the Ballina RWSS area. The Proposed Development qualifies to be considered as a Strategic Infrastructure Development.

6.2 The applicant entered into pre-application consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála on 17th April, 2025, ACP Ref. No. ABP-322333-25, with pre-application consultation meetings taking place on 28th July, 2025 and 3rd March, 2026, the pre-application consultations carried out under S37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, were closed on 26th May, 2026.

6.3 An Coimisiún Pleanála concluded by letter dated 19th June, 2026 that the Proposed Development exceeds the relevant threshold set out in the 7th schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and therefore satisfies Section 37A (1) of the Act. Furthermore, An Coimisiún Pleanála concluded that the Proposed Development meets the requirements of Section 37A (2)(a), (b) and (c) of the Act. An application for Strategic Infrastructure Development is to be made to An Coimisiún Pleanála direct. The Inspector's Report noted the following:

- *a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate –*
  - *The National Planning Framework (NPF First Revision) and its National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) and Priorities of the National Development Plan, including no.9 'Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources' identifies that water sources are critical to environmental and economic well-being into the future. NSO 9 states that the policy objectives and priorities of the Government regarding the provision of water services are as set out in the Water Services Policy Statement 2018-2025 and provided for under section 32A of the Water Services (No.2) Act 2013 (as amended). These objectives focus*

on quality, conservation and future proofing, with investment in public water services to improve public and environmental health standards and reach international benchmarks.

- *The Water Services Policy Statement 2018-2025 identifies the importance of water services to support anticipated population and economic growth in the State. The National Development Plan 2021-2030 identifies Strategic Investment Priorities water, including the delivering of significant infrastructure development projects to meet future economic, housing and population demands and delivery of nationwide water and wastewater capital projects listed in Irish Water's Capital Investment Plans. Uisce Éireann's Funding Plan 2025-2029 includes water treatment plants 'new and upgraded'.*
- *Having regard to the strategic context and the details of the subject proposal outlined above, I am satisfied that the development would be of strategic economic and social importance to the state and the Region and would, therefore, comply with the condition set out in section 37A(2)(a) of the Act.*

- *(b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Planning Framework (NPF) or any regional spatial and economic strategy (RSES) in force in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situate –*
  - *Of relevance to this is National Policy Objective (NPO) 92 which concerns the development of water resource and services infrastructure to support a healthy society, economic development requirements and a cleaner environment. NPO 5 recognises the regional role of Sligo to be supported in the RSES. The RSES 2020 2030 for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly, includes the following Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) of relevance, RPO 8.12 concerning ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place to meet the demand of growth and development, with increased populations levels; RPO 8.15 supports investment for water services; RPO 8.17 concerns the provision of quality water services necessary for urban and rural economic development; and RPO 8.18 relates to protection and improvement of all waters. 8.10.1. Having regard to the objectives in the NPF and RSES, and the details of the subject proposal outlined above, I am satisfied that the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of the aforementioned objectives of the NPF and RSES, and would therefore comply with the condition set out in section 37A(2)(b).*
- *(c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority -*
  - *The proposed development will be situated in two Counties, being County Mayo and County Sligo, having a significant effect upon both of these areas, and therefore on more than one planning authority.*

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Chapter 5 of the EIAR sets out in detail the extensive consultation Uisce Éireann has undertaken in preparing the planning application for the Proposed Development.

7.2 In particular, the issues raised in consultation with ACP, Mayo County Council and Sligo County Council have been addressed as follows:

- The Proposed Development has prioritised utilising made ground (i.e. existing Uisce Éireann sites and road network) where possible to minimise potential effects on land-use.
- Quantity of sludge and proposed re-use options, as well as disposal routes have been considered and are presented in Chapter 14 – Resource and Waste Management of the EIAR. Traffic Quantity of sludge and proposed re-use options have been considered, including traffic implications in Chapter 15 – Roads, Traffic and Transport.
- Biodiversity Net Gain is included as part of Chapter 7 – Biodiversity of the EIAR.
- NPWS guidance, including derogation, was used to inform Chapter 7 – Biodiversity and the NIS.
- A standalone WFD Assessment is included with the application.
- Options considered for the pipeline route are presented in Chapter 4 – Alternatives of the EIAR. The Proposed Development as presented in Chapter 3 – Project Description of the EIAR is considered to be technically and environmentally the best option.
- The need for the Proposed Development, as set out in Chapter 2 – Project Need of the EIAR, applies inherent constrains in design options. As a result, design flexibility is not being sought.
- The proposed ESB substation at the proposed Bonniconlon Booster Pumping Station was local power generation and not SID.
- The Proposed Development crosses a junction with the N59. There are no other interactions with the national road network. The Proposed Development has been designed having regard to all relevant TII standards.
- An Article 27 Declaration would be made once a contractor is appointed.
- All potential impacts and resulting effects are clearly stated in each technical chapter of the EIAR, including residual, cumulative and interactive effects.
- Access and set back requirements in compliance with County Mayo and County Sligo's Policies and Objectives have been incorporated into the Design.
- The proposed Windy Gap Break Pressure Tank (BPT) site incorporates mitigation measures for potential for visual impacts, including fencing and landscaping design.
- Potential impacts relating to the cessation of abstraction at Lough Talt have been taken into account in the NIS.
- Potential effects on the *Vertigo geyeri* snail and other biodiversity receptors have been assessed in Chapter 7 – Biodiversity of the EIAR, and protected habitats and species in the NIS.
- Mayo County Council Roads Department noted that pipes should preferably be placed in verge, footpath or off the road where possible and should avoid being laid within road lanes where possible, which has been incorporated into the design.
- Consultation will be carried out with local quarries in the Lisglennon area by the appointed contractor.
- Traffic management will be controlled via a CWTMP. A preliminary CWTMP is included with the EIAR.
- Following completion of the works, all roads will be reinstated in consultation with the County Council.
- Cumulative impact assessments have been completed and are presented within each technical chapter. A summary of the assessments is presented in Chapter 20 – Cumulative Impact Assessment of the EIAR.

- The proposed repurposing works at the Lough Talt WTP site incorporates mitigation measures for potential for visual impacts, including screening.
- Project level traffic management measures are set out in the preliminary CWTMP. The Appointed Contractor will set out local measures as part of the detailed design phase, including assessment of risk for bridges and crossings.
- Construction methodology is set out in Chapter 3 – Project Description of the EIAR. Bridges and culverts have been incorporated into the pipeline route and are shown on drawings. It is proposed that bridges and culverts will be crossed using trenchless methods. The Appointed Contractor will produce a detailed design for each bridge and culvert prior to commencement of works, including proposed traffic management measures, temporary and permanent reinstatement.
- Solar panels are included as part of the Proposed Development. No power is proposed for export off site.

7.3 A summary of consultation undertaken, including with Mayo and Sligo County Councils, National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS), Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI), and National Monument Service (NMS); non-statutory consultation; and engagement with landowners, is provided in the Chapter, and issues raised through the consultation process have been taken into account and addressed in the preparation of the EIAR and the accompanying Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

8.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle

8.1 The provision and operation of, and investment in, water services such as the Proposed Development is critical to the implementation of national, regional and local planning policy.

8.2 The Proposed Development is supported by policy objectives at European, National, Regional and Local level to ensure the provision of a resilient water supply by way of high-quality water infrastructure, including an upgrade of existing facilities, to support planned growth and development, while also ensuring the proper protection of relevant water bodies:

- National Strategic Outcome (NSO) 9 (Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources) of the National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision, 2025, highlights the need to bring and maintain water services to acceptable international levels. NSO 9 further seeks to *devise detailed network and capacity assessments to support the provision of water services infrastructure that facilitates housing and economic development in the priority towns and urban areas identified in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies in order to ensure plan-led development decisions are underpinned by coordinated investment plans.*
- The National Development Plan 2021, as updated in 2025 confirms a commitment to continued investment in water infrastructure and services as follows:
    - *Significant continued investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and services will also involve the increases delivery of new connections, co-ordinated with the planning process to support economic growth and meet the needs of priority housing developments and urban*

renewal areas, while at the same time supporting implementation of national strategies in relation to public health, safety and environmental compliance.

- The Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan 2025 also commits to increased investment in water services.
- This is reflected further in Strategic Objective 2 of Uisce Éireann's Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP), 2025, which states that the provision of water services infrastructure capacity in the right place, at the right time, is critical to enable delivery of housing and economic growth.
- The WSSP also acknowledges in Chapter 2 (page 18) that *our existing water infrastructure is ageing and our assets need significant maintenance or replacement so that we can continue to deliver services at an appropriate level.*
- Goal 3 (Secure, Resilient, and Adaptable Water Services) of the Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure – Sectoral Adaptation Plan 2025 seeks to *ensure the delivery of Water Services Infrastructure (WSI) that meets the requirements of the European Drinking Water and Urban Wastewater Directives, providing safe, reliable and resilient WSI. This involves upgrading existing infrastructure while delivering new infrastructure to cope with increased supply and demand pressures.*
- At a regional level, the Regional Water Resources Plan – North West Non-Technical Summary refers to *Lough Easky and Lough Talt rationalised to Lisglennon WTP, increasing SW abstraction at Lough Conn and upgrading Lisglennon WTP for capacity (SAC-543*) as a preferred option for the Ballina/Sligo study area (Study Area C (SAC)).
- In addition, RPO 8.15 of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern Region (RSES) 2020 seeks to support investment for water and wastewater services in the first instance where existing facilities are insufficient to meet current demands. This includes the Lough Talt Water Supply Scheme, which is identified as being necessary to deliver the growth model outlined in the RSES (Section 8.5, page 274 of the RSES).
- Locally, Table 7.1 of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022 identifies a number of key Water Services Projects for County Mayo of which the Ballina Regional Water Supply is one. Policy objective INO 6 seeks to support and facilitate upgrades to the water schemes listed in Table 7.1. Furthermore, policy objective INP 1 obliges the Planning Authority *to liaise and work in conjunction with Uisce Éireann in the delivery of an adequate level of water services infrastructure, to ensure that a sufficient water supply is available for the settlements set out in the County Settlement Hierarchy*.
- The Ballina Local Area Plan 2024-2030 also states as follows under Section 10.5.1 Drinking Water:
  "*In co-operation with Uisce Éireann, the Council will contribute towards compliance with the EU Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended) and seek to undertake any remedial action as required. Ballina's drinking water is supplied by the Ballina Water Resource Zone. It is envisaged that there is adequate capacity to cater for the projected population increase over the Plan period. However, an upgrade to provide additional capacity is likely to be required beyond the lifetime of the Plan*."
- The Ballina Water Resource Zone currently serves a population of circa 22,631 persons (2026) from two WTPs and is forecast to have shortfall in potable water supply capacity in future due to factors including growth in population growth, non-domestic/industrial users and tourism. Potable water storage (reservoir) capacity in the Ballina WRSS network is currently below optimal volumes to ensure security and resilience of supply to the area. The existing trunk main network between Lisglennon WTP and Ballina town will not have sufficient capacity to transfer the necessary flows to meet the

increased demand. Upgrades to the existing network are therefore required between the Lisglennon WTP and Ballina town, with extension of the network to connect the existing Lough Talt RWSS.

- In addition, there is currently no potable water storage serving a large area downstream of the current Lough Talt WTP. Approximately 3,000 customers in this area have poor security of water supply and are at elevated risk of experiencing an outage.
- Furthermore, the NWRP forecast for the Easkey RWSS shows a potential deficit by 2044. Rationalisation of the Easkey RWSS network will be required in future, to allow for partial or full supply to be provided from the Ballina Water Resource Zone.
- In addition, Section 30.1.2 (and Table 30.1) of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024 states that *Water supply for other settlements Ballymote and Tobercurry are supplied from Lough Talt RWSS, where an "interim" Water Treatment Plant was commissioned in 2020 to meet short/medium-term needs.*
- In addition, policy objective P-WS-1of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024 seeks to *Co-operate with Uisce Éireann to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to identify and facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure required to realise the development objectives and support population and economic growth as set out in the Core Strategy of this Plan.*

8.3 In this respect, the Proposed Development is clearly supported by the applicable policy context, and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Need and Justification

8.4 As noted in section 3 above, Sligo County Council granted permission on 4th June, 2019 (reg. ref. 18/210) for an upgrade to the existing Lough Talt Water Treatment Plant. In the application for the planning permission, Uisce Éireann stated its intention to operate this upgraded WTP for a period of 10 years, providing an interim solution while a new public drinking water supply source is developed, constructed, and commissioned.

8.5 The Proposed Development responds to the requirement to develop a new public drinking water source.

8.6 The Regional Water Resources Plan – North West identifies the preferred solution as being to rationalise Lough Talt WRZ to Lisglennon WTP and upgrade the Lisglennon WTP to meet the deficit. An expansion/upgrade of supply from Lough Conn emerged as the preferred strategic level solution as a replacement supply to Lough Talt WRZ, when considered as part of overall future supply requirements for the area.

8.7 The Proposed Development is therefore needed:

- to provide a safe and reliable water supply to Ballina and surrounding areas, while also supporting future growth and development in the area. The Proposed Development will benefit c. 36,400 people, ensuring a reliable and sustainable water supply for Ballina, Bonniconlon, and surrounding areas as well as allowing for future social economic growth in the region.
- to upgrade Ballina town's existing critical aging trunk main, which will be replaced to improve the reliability of water supply.

- to provide for treatment capacity, storage and pumping between Lisglennon and Lough Talt and provision of supply network that will enable the existing Lough Talt RWSS to be supplied from the Ballina WRZ.
- to provide a long-term safe supply of drinking water for the existing Lough Talt RWSS.
- to cease abstraction at Lough Talt currently supplying Lough Talt RWSS in order to protect Lough Talt and associated dependent habitat and species from further environmental impact.
- to provide for treatment capacity, provision of storage and upgraded treated water conveyance to the existing water network in Ballina, Co. Mayo in accordance with future demand to 2044 projections.
- to upgrade water storage facilities with the construction of new water storage tanks to prepare for future increases in water supply demand that exceed the capacity of the Easkey RWSS from Lough Easkey, and
- to invest in water services infrastructure to support sustainable management of water resources.

8.8 The Proposed Development will ensure a continual safe water supply that is compliant with EU Drinking Water Standards, and that will facilitate the sustainable development of the population that it supports.

8.9 Failure to implement the Proposed Development could have detrimental effects on the security of potable water in the Ballina Lough Talt Water Supply network.

Benefits

8.10 The Proposed Development will enhance the security and resilience of the water supply in Ballina and surrounding areas in Co. Mayo, as well as Lough Talt and surrounding areas in Co. Sligo.

8.11 It will directly benefit 36,400 people, ensuring a reliable and sustainable water supply for Ballina, Bonniconlon, Tobercurry, and surrounding areas as well as allowing for future social economic growth and development in the region.

8.12 Specifically, the Proposed Development will result in:

- Upgrades to the ageing water network infrastructure. Large parts of Ballina Town are currently served by a critical asbestos cement trunk main, which will be replaced to improve the reliability of the water supply.
- Increased capacity to provide for future growth and development.
- Increased resilience in the network by increasing the treated water storage for Ballina.
- Increased resilience in the network with the addition of treated water storage in Lough Talt, Co Sligo.
- Upgrade to the Lisglennon water treatment facilities which will improve the robustness of the treatment processes.

8.13 The Proposed Development will increase capacity in the supply network, allowing Uisce Éireann to extend the Ballina network to areas currently served by the Lough Talt RWSS. Additional storage at Lisglennon will enhance the security of supply for Ballina and new storage facilities will also be provided at Lough Talt to ensure a stable water supply for south Co. Sligo.

8.14 In addition, the cessation of water abstraction from Lough Talt will restore natural lake levels and provide significant ecological benefits to local habitats and wildlife.

Findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment

8.15 The proposed development does not fall within any of the classes of development for which Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is mandatory under Schedule 5, Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), nor does it constitute a class of development listed under Schedule 5, Part 2 that exceeds the relevant thresholds requiring EIA . However, under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, applications for which a notice under Section 37B has been served by ACP requires an EIAR to accompany the planning application. An EIAR has, therefore, been prepared for the Proposed Development.

8.16 It is considered that the EIAR adequately considers alternatives to the Proposed Development and identifies and describes adequately the direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative effects of the Proposed Development on the environment.

8.17 An Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), together with mitigation measures to be employed, as summarised in Chapter 21 of the EIAR, provide a description of the overarching general mitigation measures embedded in the project design and delivery for construction and operational stages.

8.18 The main likely impacts, both positive and negative are as follows:

- Benefits/positive impacts to population and human health arising as a result of the Proposed Development due to providing increased treatment infrastructural capacity and improved level of treatment which would be pivotal in supporting future growth in Mayo and Sligo.
- The Proposed Development will also provide for measures to reduce noise and odour levels at nearest sensitive receptors.
- Negative temporary impact on population and human health during the construction phase arising from increased traffic and construction activity and resultant noise, dust and disturbance are addressed through the Construction and Environmental Management Plan, Traffic Construction Works Management Plan, which will incorporate best practice measures.
- Potential impacts on biodiversity would be mitigated by landscaping and biodiversity enhancement measures, including a Tree Protection Plan. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment for the Proposed Development found that across the project site as a whole the Proposed Development can achieve a net beneficial effect on biodiversity.
- Potential landscape and visual impacts are mitigated through measures to include the use of existing infrastructure sites where practicable, routing of the pipeline along existing road corridors and utility / pipeline corridors where practicable, retention of existing vegetation where feasible, reinstatement of disturbed areas, and proposed landscape planting. Proposed mitigation includes hedgerow, scrub, woodland and species-rich grassland planting, as well as bog reinstatement where appropriate. Built structures will use neutral finishes and colours appropriate to their rural or upland contexts, and site lighting will be designed to minimise unnecessary light spill.

- Potential impacts on land and soils from risk of spread of invasive species at the site which would be mitigated by the implementation of the Non-Native Invasive Species Management Plan and a method statement for the control of disturbance of soils containing the invasive species.
- Risk of pollution of receiving water environment as a result of accidental spillages of chemicals, hydrocarbons or other contaminants entering the site drains and discharging to water bodies including Lough Conn, The River Moy, and Lough Talt during the construction phase would be mitigated by measures within the Construction and Environmental Management Plan and adherence to best practice construction measures and incorporation of appropriate drainage facilities.

8.19 Subject to the implementation of specific mitigation measures, the benefits associated with the Proposed Development over the long-term would far outweigh any negative impact on the amenities of the area, noting that, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures, no significant adverse environmental effects have been identified.

Findings of the Appropriate Assessment

8.20 As the Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 sites, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was prepared to determine whether or not it was likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

8.21 The report concluded that the Proposed Development without mitigation measures in place has the potential to significantly affect the Natura 2000 Network in the area and recommended that a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) be prepared to assess the implications of the Proposed Development on the Network.

8.22 The NIS examines the details of the Proposed Development and the Natura 2000 sites; it then assesses the implications of the proposed project for the integrity of this site by analysing the impacts and evaluating their effects in view of the site's conservation objectives.

8.23 The NIS concludes that *the proposed development will not either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts which would constitute adverse effects on Natura 2000 Network, in view of their conservation objectives.*

8.24 A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared as part of this proposal and is included in support of this application. The CEMP outlines a number of standard mitigation measures to be implemented.

Findings of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment

8.25 The WFD Compliance Assessment notes the following:

- In relation to the proposed increased abstraction at Lough Conn, it is concluded that lake levels and river flows will remain compliant with WFD standards for achieving Good to High status.
- While the spatial scale of the Proposed Development is large, interactions between the Proposed Development and WFD water bodies are largely minor in nature, with potential impacts likely to be negligible when considering mitigation measures, durations, and scale of interactions.
- In relation to WFD Compliance, it is noted that:

    - There will be no deterioration of water body or quality element status.
    - The Proposed Development will not compromise the achievement of Good or High ecological status.

8.26 Accordingly, the Proposed Development will not cause deterioration of water body or quality element status, including those determined to be High status water bodies, and will not prevent water bodies from the achieving Good or High ecological status in the future.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 In conclusion, the Proposed Development, which is unequivocally supported by national, regional and local policy, seeks to address current significant water supply deficits and water infrastructure needs in north County Mayo and south County Sligo.

9.2 The Proposed Development is principally located at existing, established water extraction and treatment facilities, and adjacent to existing underground water pipelines in the Mayo and Sligo areas. New and upgraded water treatment and pipeline infrastructure will bolster the overall water treatment services in the area, ensuring that it is fit-for-purpose to respond to demand.

9.3 The Proposed Development will deliver a number of key benefits to the existing water infrastructure and network, including:

- Addressing both current and future water supply challenges in the region.
- Enabling future growth and development in the community and to cater for an expected increase in population in the area.
- The cessation of abstraction from Lough Talt will help restore natural lake levels and deliver significant ecological benefits for local habitats and wildlife.
- Improve the resilience of the network and enhance long-term security of supply across North Mayo and South Sligo.

9.4 Subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, the effects on the environment of the Proposed Development, by itself and cumulatively with other development in the vicinity, would be acceptable.

9.5 The NIS concludes that the Proposed Development, by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Sites, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

9.6 In the context of Section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015, as amended by Section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, in accordance with the provisions of the Climate Action Plan 2025, the Proposed Development will facilitate increased water supply in new or upgraded infrastructure.

9.7 The Proposed Development would assist Ireland in meeting obligations to provide a quality water supply. The Proposed Development would enable sustainable and properly planned growth within Mayo and Sligo through the delivery of increased water treatment capacity.

9.8 On this basis, and having regard to the relevant provisions of European, national, regional and local planning policy; the location, nature, scale and layout of the Proposed Development; the pattern of development in the area; the likely consequences for the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which it is proposed to carry out the Proposed Development and the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on European Sites; and the range of mitigation

measures set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement, the Proposed Development would accord with national, regional and local planning policy and is acceptable in respect of its likely effects on the environment and its likely consequences for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.