AtkinsRéalis

Appendix 5-1
Consultation responses

Uisce Éireann

October 2026

BALLINA AND LOUGH TALT WATER SUPPLY UPGRADE

Contents

Appendix 5- – Consultation Responses

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Our Case Number: ABP-322333-25

Your Reference: Uisce Éireann

An Coimisiún Pleanála

AtkinsRealis
150-155 Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin
K67 K5W4

Date: 19 June 2026

Re: Pre-application consultation - Proposed Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Zones Upgrade County Mayo and County Sligo

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please be advised that following consultations under section 37B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, the Commission hereby serves notice under section 37B(4)(a) that it is of the opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of paragraphs 37A(2)(a), (b), and (c) of the Act. Accordingly, the Commission has decided that the proposed development would be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of section 37A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Any application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under section 37E of the Act.

Please also be informed that the Commission considers that the pre-application consultation process in respect of this proposed development is now closed.

Below is a list of prescribed bodies to be notified of the application for the proposed development:

1. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
2. Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment
3. Sligo County Council
4. Mayo County Council
5. The Northern and Western Regional Assembly
6. The National Transport Authority
7. Transport Infrastructure Ireland
8. An Chomhairle Ealaíon (Arts Council)
9. The Heritage Council
10. Fáilte Ireland
11. An Taisce
12. Inland Fisheries Ireland
13. Ireland West Airport

Teil	**Tel**	(01) 858 8100
Glao Áitiúil	**LoCall**	1800 275 175
Láithreán Gréasáin	**Website**	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	**Email**	communications@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

14. Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
15. Department of Culture, Communications and Sport
16. EPA
17. HSE
18. The Commission for Regulation of Utilities
19. Office of Public Works

Further notifications should also be made where deemed appropriate.

In accordance with section 146(5) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, the Commission will make available for inspection and purchase at its offices the documents relating to the decision within 3 working days following its decision. This information is normally made available on the list of decided cases on the website on the Wednesday following the week in which the decision is made.

The following information relates to challenges to the validity of a decision of An Coimisiún Pleanála under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Judicial review of An Coimisiún Pleanála decisions under the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts (as amended).

A person wishing to challenge the validity of a Commission decision may do so by way of judicial review only. Sections 50, 50A and 50B of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as substituted by section 13 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, as amended/substituted by sections 32 and 33 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and as amended by sections 20 and 21 of the Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011) contain provisions in relation to challenges to the validity of a decision of the Commission.

The validity of a decision taken by the Commission may only be questioned by making an application for judicial review under Order 84 of The Rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. No. 15 of 1986). Sub-section 50(7) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that subject to any extension to the time period which may be allowed by the High Court in accordance with subsection 50(8), any application for judicial review must be made within 8 weeks of the decision of the Commission. It should be noted that any challenge taken under section 50 may question only the validity of the decision and the Courts do not adjudicate on the merits of the development from the perspectives of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and/or effects on the environment. Section 50A states that leave for judicial review shall not be granted unless the Court is satisfied that there are substantial grounds for contending that the decision is invalid or ought to be quashed and that the applicant has a sufficient interest in the matter which is the subject of the application or in cases involving environmental impact assessment is a body complying with specified criteria.

Section 50B contains provisions in relation to the cost of judicial review proceedings in the High Court relating to specified types of development (including proceedings relating to decisions or actions pursuant to a law of the state that gives effect to the public participation and access to justice provisions of Council Directive 85/337/EEC i.e. the EIA Directive and to the provisions of Directive 2001/12/EC i.e. Directive on the assessment of the effects on the environment of certain plans and programmes). The general provision contained in section 50B is that in such cases each party shall bear its own costs. The Court however may award costs against any party in specified circumstances. There is also provision for the Court to award the costs of proceedings or a portion of such costs to an applicant against a respondent or notice party where relief is obtained to the extent that the action or omission of the respondent or notice party contributed to the relief being obtained.

General information on judicial review procedures is contained on the following website, www.citizensinformation.ie.

Teil	**Tel**	(01) 858 8100
Glao Áitiúil	**LoCall**	1800 275 175
Facs	**Fax**	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	**Website**	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	**Email**	communications@pleanala.ie

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Disclaimer: The above is intended for information purposes. It does not purport to be a legally binding interpretation of the relevant provisions, and it would be advisable for persons contemplating legal action to seek legal advice.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission or email laps@pleanala.ie quoting the above mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Executive Officer

PC09

Teil	**Tel**	(01) 858 8100
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An Coimisiún Pleanála

Record of Meeting
ABP-322333-25

Case Reference / Description	Ballina and Lough Talt WSZ Upgrade		
Case Type	Pre-Application Consultation		
Date	28/07/25	**Start Time**	11:00am
Location	Virtually	**End Time**	12:00pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála		
[redacted] Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
[redacted] Senior Planning Inspector		
[redacted] Ecologist		
[redacted] Executive Officer	[redacted]	[redacted]
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
[redacted] Éireann		
[redacted] Éireann		
[redacted] Uisce Éireann		
[redacted] tkins Réalis		
[redacted] Réalis		
[redacted] Réalis		
[redacted] ns Réalis		

Introduction:

The Commission's representative welcomed the prospective applicant to the meeting and introduced those attending from the Commission.

The Commission's representative mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre application consultation process:

- The Commission will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Commission once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- It is not permitted to record the meeting in any way. The only record of the meeting will be the record issued by the Commission following the meeting.
- The Commission will serve notice at the conclusion of the process as to the strategic infrastructure status of the proposed development. It may form preliminary view at an early stage in the process on this matter.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Commission and public consultations may also be directed by the Commission.
- The Commission may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Commission in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.

Presentation:

The prospective applicant introduced the attendees from Uisce Éireann and Atkins Réalis and continued with the beginning of its presentation.

It was noted by the prospective applicant that a previous application, the Lough Talt IROPI project was granted in 2018.

The prospective applicant began with a scheme overview noting the upgrades and new additions, these included: An upgrade of the raw water pumping station (RWPS) at Wherrew, a Lisglennon RWPS upgrade, a Lisglennon water treatment plant (WTP) upgrade, a new Lisglennon to Lough Talt treated water pipeline, new treated water booster pumping station, new Bonniconlon storage reservoir, a new break pressure tank and the repurposing of the Lough Talt water treatment plant for treated water storage.

The prospective applicant stated that the total supply demand to be served by the scheme would have an abstraction of 38.1 megalitres per day, including future growth demands, the water treatment plant would be extended from 9.6 megalitres per day to 22.6 megalitres per day and the trunk main would be sized to cater to 26.5 megalitres per day.

The prospective applicant continued by stating that the current configuration of the channel leading to the water intake was a 50m long by 20m wide channel and that the intake structure itself consists of four reinforced concrete channels with screens and penstocks. It noted that the key issues with the current channel was silt build up over time and fish entering the Lisglennon raw water storage site.

The prospective applicant presented insight into each element of the scheme, outlining the proposed modifications, the proposed design and network layout of each point of the pipeline.

The prospective applicant gave an update on the environmental reports and surveys undertaken. It was concluded that there would be environmental impacts arising from the project and that the preparation of an EIAR was ongoing. It was also stated that work on the preparation of an NIS was ongoing. A Hydrological Assessment and a Water Framework Directive Report regarding Lough Conn had been undertaken and it was noted; Lough Conn would not be affected by the proposed development.

The prospective applicant stated that it would enter consultation with Mayo and Sligo County Councils, members of the public and effected landowners. It was also stated that it is planned to enter consultation with the NPWS, IFI and the NMS.

The prospective applicant continued by stating it had undertaken soil samples from the SI works to determine the quality of the soil that would be excavated. The prospective applicant proposed to maximise the amount of material it would keep on site. It was also proposed that surface materials could be used by local landowners who could acquire the soil through Article 27 of the EC (Waste Directive) Regulations, 2011.

It was noted the Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022 was enacted in August 2024, and that this expands the classes of development within the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act to include "A groundwater abstraction, artificial groundwater recharge scheme or a surface water abstraction where the annual volume of water abstracted or recharged is equivalent to or exceeds 2 million cubic metres."

The prospective applicant stated that the proposed surface water abstraction at Lough Conn is in excess 2 million cubic metres per annum, therefore qualifying the project to be considered as a Strategic Infrastructure Development. It was the view of the prospective applicant that the proposed development met all 3 criteria set out under section 37A of the Act to meet SID requirements.

The prospective applicant highlighted its programme going forward, indicating it intends to lodge an application with the Commission in Q3 of 2025.

Discussion/Advice:

The following matters were discussed:

- The Commission's representative shared that its preliminary view was that the proposed development would constitute Strategic Infrastructure Development, however the final decision sits with the Commission.

- The Commission's representative requested further clarification on the consultations the prospective applicant had undertaken with prescribed bodies. The prospective applicant confirmed it intends to meet with the NPWS and with IFI once SI works were completed.

- The Commission's representative queried was there further review of the route of the proposed development and specifically the Lisglennon to Lough Talt treated water pipeline is proposed and whether this alignment could change. The prospective applicant confirmed that the route presented was technically and environmentally the best and was not likely to change.

- In response to a question from representatives of the Commission regarding the need for a design flexibility opinion, the prospective applicants stated that this was still under consideration and that any approach regarding flexibility should be consistent with that followed in the Greater Dublin Water Supply project which is also currently the subject of pre application consultations with the Commission.

- The Commission's representative advised when presenting the quantum of abstraction, to give an estimate of the annual figure and an uplift of what the total figure would be.

- The Commission's representative advised the prospective applicant that it would look for the effects of the proposed development in terms of the characteristics of the project and the sensitivity of the locations on the route. The prospective applicant confirmed they would be utilizing un-zoned white land for the project. The Commission representatives stated that this should be highlighted in any application.

- The Commission's representative noted that the proposed ESB substation as part of the booster pumping station could be deemed to constitute SID and advised the prospective applicant to investigate decided related applications.

- The Commission's representatives noted that the timelines set out in the 2024 Act would be adhered to when making decisions, and that it was therefore in the best interest of the prospective applicant to utilise the pre-app consultation process to prepare a comprehensive application. The greater the level of design certainty, consultations and survey work undertaken the best chance there is for the avoidance of further information and a timely decision from the Commission.

- A general discussion took place regarding sludge; the Commission's representative asked for further details on where and how the sludge might be reused. The prospective applicant stated one of the options was to reuse the sludge in the production of concrete. When asked by representatives of the Commission where this would take place, no location was confirmed, however there are potential locations within 25km of the site. The Commission's representative advised that detail on this issue, including traffic implications arising, would need to be provided with the application.

- The Commission's representative advised that robust consultation should take place with prescribed bodies in advance of the submission of an application.

- The Commission's representative advised that all surveys and reports should be as comprehensive as possible prior to submitting an application.

- With regard to biodiversity net gain, the Commission's representatives stated that this is an issue which should be presented in any application. The fact that there is no Irish methodology or guidance on the issue was noted and in such circumstances it is appropriate that direction on the methodology would be taken from UK guidance.

- Representatives from the Commission highlighted the recent publication by the NPWS of guidance on derogations and that the requirements in terms of the identification of need for derogations and the making of the required applications should be considered when preparing any application.

- The Commission's representative advised that the Water Framework Directive assessment should be a stand-alone report submitted with the application.

- The Commission's representative queried would there be a design flexibility request for this project. The prospective applicant stated it would compare this project to the Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region application (PC0124) as they are similar projects and are proposed to be submitted at the same time. It was noted that a design flexibility request was submitted for PC0124.

- The prospective applicant stated it proposes to submit the application in Q3 of this year. The prospective applicant indicated that it may require a further pre-application consultation meeting prior to the submission of an application and will revert to the Commission on this issue following receipt of the record of this meeting and further consultations with prescribed bodies.

Conclusion:

The Commission's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued shortly, and that the prospective applicant can submit, in writing, any comments that it may have on the record, or request a further meeting.

[redacted]

Assistant Director of Planning

An Coimisiún Pleanála

Record of Meeting

ABP-322333-25

Case Reference / Description	Ballina and Lough Talt WSZ Upgrade		
Case Type	Pre-Application Consultation		
Meeting	2nd Meeting		
Date	03/03/26	**Start Time**	14:00pm
Location	Virtually	**End Time**	14:50pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála
[redacted]ssistant Director of Planning (Chair)
[redacted] Senior Planning Inspector
[redacted]st
[redacted]ental Scientist
[redacted]Officer [redacted]
Representing the Prospective Applicant
[redacted]e Éireann
[redacted]Éireann
[redacted]– Uisce Éireann
[redacted]s Réalis
[redacted]ns Réalis
[redacted]ns Réalis
[redacted]kley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd.

Introduction:

The Commission's representative welcomed the prospective applicant to the meeting and introduced those attending from the Commission.

The Commission's representative mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre application consultation process:

- The Commission will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Commission once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Commission mentioned that there will be no decision made on the SID status of the proposed development.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Commission and public consultations may also be directed by the Commission.
- The Commission may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Commission in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.
- The use of AI is strictly prohibited.

Presentation:

The prospective applicant set out their presentation, which is attached to the file. The following topics were presented:

- Recap on scheme overview
- Consultation and Engagement

- Survey Works and Assessments
- Programme – Key Milestones

Discussion/Advice:

The following matters were discussed:

- The prospective applicant confirmed that design flexibility would not be sought for this proposed scheme.

- While discussing the traffic implications of sludge management, the Commission's representative queried had consultation with TII taken place regarding potential impacts to National roads. The prospective applicant confirmed it had not entered consultation.

- The Commission's representative advised the prospective applicant to enter into consultation with TII in advance.

- The Commission's representative queried had traffic management been taken into consideration during the construction phase. The prospective applicant confirmed preliminary discussions had taken place with Mayo County Council and Sligo County Council regarding traffic management.

- The prospective applicant confirmed cumulative assessment was underway.

- The prospective applicant confirmed it contacted the DAU to schedule a meeting with the NPWS. The DAU responded stating it had no comment at the time of correspondence.

- When discussing the Wherrew Intake Works, the Commission's representative sought clarification on the proposed infilling of the inlet channel post works and the new fish screens and returns system. The prospective applicant confirmed it proposed to infill the inlet channel to eliminate the risk of sediment and to reinstate the inlet to its natural landscape. The prospective applicant continued stating, the proposed new fish screens and returns system would be used to

minimise the impact and interference with fish and allow the fish to be transferred from the intake chamber to the lake.

- The prospective applicant confirmed there would be no derogation licence for bat roosts.
- The Commission's representative advised when drafting the NIS to refer to previous works at Lough Talt.
- A general discussion took place regarding the excavated waste; the Commission's representative asked for further details on an Article 27 Declaration. The prospective applicant stated once a contractor is appointed, the Article 27 Declaration would be made at that point. The Commission's representative advised that detail would need to be provided with the application regarding this.
- The Commission's representative queried would the wastewater be recycled, the prospective confirmed the water would be recycled.
- The Commission's representative queried would there be welfare facilities provided at the site, the prospective applicant stated it had no plans to make amendments to existing infrastructure at the site, which already included welfare facilities.
- The Commission's representative referenced the drawings provided in the presentation. It was noted it that drawings at 1:1000 scale would be acceptable with the application, but it was advised additional detail would be required at sensitive areas of the pipeline.
- The Commission's representative queried did the water catchment extend beyond Mayo and Sligo. The prospective applicant confirmed the catchment level was taken into consideration in the Water Framework Directive.
- The Commission's representative advised that the EIAR submitted should be clear on all potential impacts related to the proposed development.

- The Commission's representative confirmed that it requires eight soft copies and two hard copies.
- The prospective applicant stated it proposed to submit the application in Q2 of this year. The prospective applicant indicated it would require no more pre-application consultation meetings.

Conclusion:

The Commission's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued shortly, and that the prospective applicant can submit, in writing, any comments that it may have on the record, or request a further meeting.

[redacted]

Assistant Director of Planning

MEETING NOTES

Ballina and Lough Talt WSZ Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Meeting with Mayo and Sligo Planners	County Hall, Sligo	08th May 2025 at 11:30	[redacted]

MEETING NO	PRESENT	REPRESENTING
01	[redacted]	Uisce Éireann Uisce Éireann Uisce Éireann Sligo CC Sligo CC Mayo CC AtkinsRéalis AtkinsRéalis

Item		Action	Target Date
1	**Introductions**		
1.1	All attendees introduced themselves and their role on the project.		
2	**Meeting Objectives**		
2.1	AR advised that the reasons for UÉ requesting the meeting were to address the following objectives: 1. Present Project 2. Advise on Progress and Timelines 3. Guidance required by Project Team 4. Mayo and Sligo CC specific requirements 5. Pre-submission consultation 6. General discussion to ensure minimum comments after submission		
3	**Scheme Overview**		
3.1	AR went through a presentation on the draft designs. This will not be repeated here however a slide deck will be shared if required.		

NEXT MEETING	TBA		
DISTRIBUTION	Attendees		
DATE ISSUED	29th May 2025	**FILE REF**	100089328

NOTE TO RECIPIENTS:
These meeting notes record AtkinsRéalis understanding of the meeting and intended actions arising therefrom. Your agreement that the notes form a true record of the discussion will be assumed unless adverse comments are received in writing within five days of receipt.

MEETING NOTES

4	**Environmental and Planning**		
4.1	[redacted] explained that this is a SID Planning Application, and the reasons for it, and accordingly it will be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála.		
5	**Programme**		
5.1	[redacted] presented a high level programme as follows:		

Key Milestones	Target Dates
An Bord Pleanála Pre-Application Consultation	Q2 2025
An Bord Pleanála EIAR Scoping Meeting (if required)	Q2 2025
An Bord Pleanála Application	Q3 2025
An Bord Pleanála Decision	Q4 2025/Q1 2026
Procurement Commencement	Q4 2025
Departmental approval	Q1 2027
Procurement Completion/Contractor Appointment	Q1 2027/Q2 2027
Completion of works	2029

6	**Way Forward**		
6.1	[redacted] described progress to date and next steps as follows: • Preliminary Design Complete • Planning Statement issued to ABP to secure pre-application meeting • Detailed design commenced • SI in progress • EIA and NIS to advance • ABP submission expected Q3 2025		
7	**Discussion**		
7.1	[redacted] advised that he would be looking to arrange a meeting with Mayo CC prior to planning submission to discuss the architectural requirements on new buildings proposed for the project at the various site. [redacted] advised that it would be a different team looking at it however we may contact him when ready with drawings for discussion.		
7.2	[redacted] sought clarity regarding site access restrictions on the protected stretch of road on the R294 between Ballina and Bonniconlon where the proposed booster pump station is to be located. A discussion was held and it was confirmed that access would not be granted directly off the R294. It was also advised that access from the secondary road from the R294 will need to have a setback distance of 70-90 metres from the junction with the R294. The exact distance to be confirmed. [redacted] to arrange a meeting with MCC Roads Department to confirm site access.		
7.3	[redacted] asked if there were any issues regarding the Break Pressure Tank being located at the Windy Gap due to visual impacts. [redacted] raised his concerns regarding the boundary treatment which may be considered high. [redacted] explained that the ground level in that area is around 10 metres from the road level however the proposed berm is less than 1.5 metres high. It will not be clearly visible from the road and in-situ material will be used in its construction. There were no further queries around this point.		

7.4	[redacted] queried the impact of decommissioning the Lough Talt intake on the Vertigo Geyeri Fen given that the current mitigation measure includes for irrigation in certain areas of Lough Talt which may ultimately be flooded after the proposed works due to the increase in lake levels. A response to this will need to be addressed in the NIS supporting the Planning Application		
7.5	[redacted]queried the water supply demand figures shown on the presentation. [redacted] acknowledged that 3 figures were given for abstraction (38.1 MLD), treatment (22.6 MLD) and conveyance (26.5 MLD) which may be deemed confusing. [redacted] explained the background to the 3 figures which were considered in the design of the aforementioned infrastructure. [redacted]equested future demands for Ballina and adjacent WSZ that will be fed from the upgraded scheme.		
7.6	[redacted]ommented that Site 20, as shown on the C&D Slide, is quite close to the pilot study site for the Vertigo Geyeri. [redacted]advised that the site was identified as a potential construction site compound however it may be removed if it poses a risk to the pilot study site.		
7.7	When asked by [redacted]f there were any other concerns that the attendees could see with the proposed development, [redacted]esponded by saying that he is in support of the project and the only risk that he could see is if the cessation of the abstraction at Lough Talt poses a negative impact to the Vertigo Geyeri Fen. This is addressed above.		

MEETING NOTES

Lough Talt RWSS

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Meeting with Mayo County Council Roads Section	Mayo County Council Ballina Office	09 May 2024 at 14:30	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
		[redacted]	Uisce Éireann AtkinsRéalis MCC (District Engineer) MCC (Roads) MCC (Water Services) MCC (Water Services)

Item		Responsible
1	**Presentation**	
	Presentation given by AtkinsRéalis & UÉ on scheme background, current status, upcoming stages of work including design development and Site Investigation Works, Project Timeline (Presentation Ref 10025936-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-PP-CE-203003)	
2	**Pipe Placement**	
	MCC Roads 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.	
3	**SI Proposals & Traffic Management**	
	Overview of SI proposals and associated traffic management plans was provided (TM, closures, diversions etc)	

a. It was noted that works on Mullafarry Road (to front of Lisglennon) would impact on HGV movements to/from the two quarry sites in this area. This would potentially have a significant impact on these businesses. It is advised that if works will affect this road, that consultation with the quarries be undertaken in advance. Route selection should take these impacts into consideration.

b. Traffic Management at Belleek Road – Caravan park is open all year round. Alternative access route would need to be considered during closures.

c. Passing bays need to be provided on local roads where diversions or closure are proposed. Particularly near Behy NS.

DISTRIBUTION	Internal		
DATE ISSUED	15 July 2024	**FILE REF**	

NOTE TO RECIPIENTS:
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MEETING NOTES

4 Working Hours

a. Night-time works – would mainly only apply for works through towns and on national roads. Not applicable for this scheme.
b. School interfaces will need to be managed (suitable working hours or seasonal work).
c. Salmon festival – works are outside the town so should not impact.
d. Tobercurry festival to be considered for R294 works.
e. Bonniconlon show noted in discussions for R294 works.
f. Condition during festivals, etc. may be to take TM off roads and make works passable.

5 Road Opening Licence Process

a. ROLs will be reviewed by MCC Roads / [redacted]

6 Reinstatement Requirements

b. Slit trenches to be reinstated as per purple book requirements.
c. Full road width reinstatement (both lanes) will be required for works in roads within their protected period (Section on the Bonniconlon R294 road were recently upgraded). 10-year protection period on this road.
d. Reinstatement for slit trenches on R294 would be lane-width with 5m either side of trench (as per purple book).
e. Reinstatement at Quignashee would likely require geogrid or similar type solution to reinforce the road embankment after creating the pipe trench. Detail would need to be looked at as part of the design development.
f. Upgrade to sewer at Behy NS may be required – TBC.

7 Works by Others in the Area

a. MCC noted that planning permission has recently been granted following resubmittal for an Anaerobic Digester plant near Lisglennon WTP (Mayo Power/Renewables). This includes a gas network connection which involves installing a new gas main between Ballina Town to near Lisglennon, via the R314. The works will need to be considered and potentially coordinated with the proposed trunk main upgrades between Lisglennon and Ballina.
b. MCC noted that planning permission has also recently been granted for a Biomass Energy plant at the old Asahi site (Killala Business Park). This development proposed to use a substantial volume of water. To be checked by UÉ project team.
c. There are plans for other developments at the old Asahi site (Killala Business Park) including a Hydrogen Plant and Data Centre.
d. Eirgrid have an upgrade scheme for the Moy Substation near Ballina. There is a crossing of the Moy proposed near Hollister. Unlikely to have impact on this scheme.
e. Road upgrades are proposed at Creggs Road this year. The first 300m of the road is being upgraded as part of an active travel scheme. Details will be shared with the UÉ/AR project team. Scheme will be completed in advance of proposed UÉ works including SI.
f. There are resurfacing works proposed on the R314 between Killala and the Mullafarry Road. These works will be completed in advance of UÉ works. Works will include full width overlay with AC20/Asphalt surfacing in Summer 2024.
Possible additional overlay and active travel works could arise before the main construction project.

MEETING NOTES

Ballina Lough Talt WSZ Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Meeting with Sligo County Council Roads Section	Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo	21st August 2024 at 11:00	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
		[redacted]	Uisce Éireann AtkinsRéalis Sligo County Council

Item		Responsible
1	**Presentation**	
	Presentation given by AtkinsRéalis & UÉ on scheme background, current status, upcoming stages of work including design development and Site Investigation Works, Project Timeline (Presentation Ref 10025936-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-PP-CE-203008)	
2	**SI Proposals & Traffic Management**	
	Overview of SI proposals and associated traffic management plans was provided in County Sligo and areas of route close to Sligo boundary for information (TM proposals).	

a. It was noted that there are 100kV ESB overhead lines in the Windy Gap area to the north west of Lough Talt which can present a safety hazard in wet weather (risk of arcing with machinery).
b. There is a Eurovelo route which passes along the route in the area around Lough Talt which will need to be considered in TM proposals.
c. There is a church near Lough Talt which can be busy during events including weddings.
d. A walking festival takes place in the area – organised by Lough Talt / Ox Mountain development association. Consultation required prior to main works.
e. Grand Velo event has taken place in the area previously.
f. There is a wind farm development in the Windy Gap area. Further development of the site is possible. Consultation with the operator of the site required before main works.
g. Noted that a broadband cable runs between Ballina and Tubbercurry along the R294. The duct is in the Tubbercurry bound lane in the area around Lough Talt. Duct is surrounded by leanmix. Protection of this asset will need to be taken into account when selecting final position for the new watermain. The watermain will need to be in the same lane, to provide separation from slopes towards the lake along parts of the route.
h. There is a roadside memorial which will need to be protected / avoided during works.

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DATE ISSUED	6th Sept 2024	FILE REF	

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i. Noted that there are water connections / abstraction pipes for a number of properties crossing the road to the lake. These are generally small (1/2") plastic pipes.
j. There are several culverts crossing the R294. These were discussed, where positions have been noted to date during site walkovers. Other known locations of crossings near the existing WTP site and along the R294 towards the Mayo boundary were highlighted by SCC, for checking by UE/AR design team.
k. Discussed existing culvert near former public house near Lough Talt. There is an area near the lake at this location which is used by anglers accessing the lake.
l. Discussed that it is possible that the main pipe installation works will require a closure of the R294 due to limited working width, depending on final pipe position in the lane and separation from existing broadband ducting.

3 Working Hours

a. Standard working hours discussed. Site specific working hours requirements not expected to be required for this area.

4 Road Opening Licence Process

a. T1 submission to be completed to SCC. This meeting has provided an overview of the proposed works. Details of SI proposals, duration and associated TM to be provided in submission.
b. Advance warning message boards may be required.
c. Noted that consultation with TII would be required for N59 crossing (near Ballina) – note for info only.

5 Reinstatement Requirements

a. Slit trenches to be reinstated as per purple book requirements for regional roads.
b. There are not currently any surfaces within protected period in the works area in Sligo.

6 Works by Others in the Area

a. Overlay of the R294 in the works area is proposed in coming years. The proposed watermain works will be taken into account and surfacing scheduled to follow completion.
b. Tobercurry by-pass road is due to be resurfaced. Works schedule may overlap. Discussions with UE to be continued to ensure any closures are coordinated to minimise impact on road users.

MEETING NOTES

Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Meeting minutes Sligo County Council	Teach Laighne	21 January 2026	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
	NA	[redacted]	AtkinsRéalis AtkinsRéalis Uisce Éireann Sligo County Council Sligo County Council

Item	Description and Action
1.	Proposed mitigation measures were discussed. Preliminary traffic management measure to be used will be stop/go. A max. length needs to encompass blind bends. Stop/go would be preferable to maintain flow of traffic, as long as there is confidence the road can be kept open. It is preferable that works are completed in light traffic. Noted there are sections coming out of Bonniconlon with lots of bends, a number of stone bridges and HGV route. There are pinch points where stop/go would be difficult. There is also a section in bog. Contractor could work under closures, can be done as long as upstream / downstream makes sense.
2.	Where closures are envisioned, preferred for predictable time periods until complete.

NEXT MEETING

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DATE ISSUED	24 July 2026	FILE REF	

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MEETING NOTES

Item	Description and Action
3.	4 The following sensitivities were identified: ▪ Bridges, approx. 20 culverts; ▪ HGV route for Coillte, Wind farm; ▪ Schools, bus routes; ▪ Knock airport; ▪ Eurocycle route; ▪ Church at Sligo wedding destination; ▪ Boggy ground (wet in winter); ▪ Existing utilities; and ▪ Tourism. The following were also noted: ▪ Runoff high risk and key SCC consideration for Lough Talt; ▪ Excavation near Lough Talt in rock - risk of damage to existing abstraction; and ▪ Sensitivities need to be considered in traffic management and phasing of the works.
4.	SSC require proper notice in advance of road closures, as much as possible. Proposed traffic management measures require appropriate public clarity, including social media and a point of contact. SCC require roads to be reinstated in accordance with the Purple Book. SCC highlighted that works would need to be mindful of road resurfacing schedule and known repair spots. Cleg test to be called out in employer requirements.
5.	Project timeline: Contractor appointment 2027.
6.	Energy recovery was discussed. Solar panels to be included.
7.	*Vertigo Geyeri* was discussed regarding effects on the Trinity College Dublin (TCD) study and changes to the abstraction from Lough Talt, however this is not part of this Project. Abstraction to continue to 2029.

Outlook

FW: Fisheries input

From [redacted]
Date Tue 10/29/2024 3:55 PM
To Lough Talt Project <LoughTaltProject@atkinsglobal.com>

ertigo Geyeri was discussed regarding effects on the Trinity College Dublin (TCD) study and changes to the abstraction from Lough Talt.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2024 3:51 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Fisheries input

[redacted]

Apologies that you didn't get a callback on this.
Aisling Donegan, Senior Fisheries Environmental Officer, is on leave at present but will contact you on her return to work next week.
Regards

[redacted]
Administrative Assistant

[redacted]



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From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday 29 October 2024 12:04
To: Ballina Office <Ballina@fisheriesireland.ie>
Subject: Fisheries input
Good Morning,
I am involved, on behalf of Uisce Éireann, with the development of upgraded intake works at Wherrew on Lough Conn. I had contact the Ballina office ten days ago by telephone, and was advised of a callback, which has not happened. I would be grateful if I could speak to someone in the Ballina office about the following two issues:
We'd like to run through our proposals in order to ensure that we have IFI buy in to the process prior to planning application stage (expected Q1).
We'd also like to ascertain if any raw bathymetry data from the IFI 2016 survey is available adjacent to the intake works at Wherrew.
I can be contacted by return mail or by any of the numbers below.

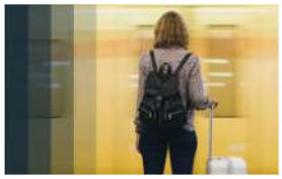
Best Regards

[redacted]

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Wherrew Intake, Lough Conn

IFI initial conversation notes

Revision Record

Revision	Date	Author	Checked by
1	28/07/2025	Iain Stewart-Russon	Paul Gratton

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Fishtek Ltd. has used due skill, care and diligence in the preparation of this report.

1. BACKGROUND

AtkinsRéalis is in the process of designing a new raw water intake system in Lough Conn (Ireland). Fishtek has been commissioned to review the proposed design and provide fisheries advice to ensure it meets regulatory requirements.

As part of this investigation, Fishtek has discussed the site with the regulator (Inland Fisheries Ireland – IFI) to establish the intake screening requirements for fish protection. The below summarises the IFI requirements / main drivers, following a meeting between [redacted] (Fishtek) and [redacted] (IFI) on 25/07/2025.

2. DRIVERS

The main fish species that require protection are:

- Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) – Via The Habitats Directive and linked to the River Moy SAC for salmon and lamprey (sea and brook). The River Deel entering Lough Conn adjacent to the offtake was noted as the main spawning habitat for spring run salmon.
- Brown trout (*S. trutta*) – Via the Freshwater Fish Directive.
- European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) – Via Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 (the Eel Regulation).
- Lamprey species – Via The Habitats Directive and linked to the River Moy SAC for salmon and lamprey (sea and brook).

Note that all of these species, apart from lamprey, were identified as present in the latest fish survey of Lough Conn, undertaken in 2022[1].

3. SCREENING PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS

The main factors impacting the screening requirements to protect fish relate to approach velocity and mesh size. The following guidance was provided by IFI during the meeting:

- Maximum approach velocity (which we understand to apply at 10 cm away from the screen face, open mesh area is not taken into account (only major structural infrastructure), and is based on an allowance for 10% blinding with an automatically cleaned screen):
  - Salmon smolts = ≤ 0.15 m/s
  - European eel = ≤ 0.10 m/s
- Maximum mesh size:
  - Salmon smolts = ≤ 10 mm
  - European eel (elver stage that are likely present in Lough Conn) = ≤ 2 mm

The main species limiting the design characteristic of the screen is the European eel, specifically the juvenile elver stage, requiring a **maximum approach velocity of ≤ 0.1 m/s and mesh size ≤ 2 mm**.

The maximum approach velocity for eel may be able to be increased based on location of the offtake and site-specific factors, providing proof of effectiveness and no harm to fish can be given. Depending

[1] McLoone, P., Corcoran, W., Bateman, A., Cierpial, D., Gavin, A., Gordon, P., McCarthy, E., Heagney, B., Hyland, J., Robson, S., Kelly, K., and Kelly, F.L. (2023). Fish Stock Survey of Lough Conn, August & September 2022. National Research Survey Programme, Inland Fisheries Ireland, 3044 Lake Drive, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24.

on the screen location and site specific factors, it may be feasible to increase the approach velocity to ≤ 0.25 m/s if following Environment Agency (England) guidance, and acceptance by IFI of any evidence given. Given Lough Conn is likely to have very little / no significant flow within it, it is important to note that the likelihood of increasing the approach velocity is low.

In addition to the above, discussions with IFI confirmed that best practice is for **fish to be screened at the point of abstraction** (i.e. at the entrance to the pipe within the Lough), with no fish handling. Only after all options that do not require fish handling are explored and discounted (including acceptance of reasons by IFI) would a solution requiring fish handling (e.g. the fish recovery and return (FRR) system currently conceptualised by AtkinsRéalis following Irish Water requests) be acceptable as the correct solution for the site.

4. ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM IFI

If the main concern for having a mechanical screen in the Lough at the pipe entrance is maintenance, IFI suggest that before it can be ruled out, additional 'backups' should be explored. (Fishtek note: subject to feasibility, the backups could take the form of e.g. a second pipe and intake setup, for duty standby, or potentially maintaining some of the existing intake to enable use in an emergency).

[redacted] would be keen to know where any proposed screens have been installed previously, ideally in Ireland, to enable IFI to discuss effectiveness of the screens. (Fishtek note: we understand from discussions with AtkinsRéalis that the currently proposed FRR system and screens have been installed elsewhere in Ireland, if so, it may be useful to provide the information to [redacted] - particularly if they were shown to be effective with no fish mortality).

5. CONCLUSIONS

- The European eel is the main species that drives the factors dictating the screen protection requirements, as this will protect all target species.
- Maximum approach velocity allowed ≤ 0.1 m/s (with potential to increase dependent upon site specific factors and acceptance of evidence by IFI if it is possible).
- Maximum mesh size ≤ 2mm
- Screen to be located at the point of abstraction (i.e. at the entrance to the pipe within Lough Conn) to prevent the need for fish handling.
    - Fishtek notes that the current proposal is for a screen at the land side end of the pipe, incorporating FRR. Currently this would not be acceptable to IFI unless all other options for screening at the offtake are explored and evidence for not providing screening at the point of abstract is provided and accepted by IFI.

MEETING NOTES

Ballina Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
IFI Meeting Minutes	Teams	09 December 2025 at 10:00	[redacted]

MEETING NO	PRESENT	REPRESENTING
2	[redacted]	AtkinsRéalis (AR) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) Fishtek (FT) Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)

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DATE ISSUED	09 December 2025	FILE REF

NOTE TO RECIPIENTS:
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IFI Meeting Minutes

- **Project Overview and Objectives:** [redacted] provided an overview of the water supply upgrade project, outlining its scope, objectives, and the tight programme constraints, with input from [redacted], [redacted] and other team members.
  - **Project Scope and Benefits**: [redacted] explained that the project aims to upgrade the water supply system to benefit approximately 35,000 people, ensuring a reliable and stable supply for Ballina, Ballina, Bonniconlon, Tubbercurry, and surrounding areas. The project includes upgrades to the Wherrew intake, Lisglennon pump station, Lisglennon water treatment plant, and a 30-kilometre network with booster pump stations and break pressure tanks to Lough Talt.
  - **Programme Timeline and Constraints**: [redacted] highlighted that the project is at the detailed design phase, with a hard stop due to the planned cessation of the Lough Talt supply in mid-2029. The team aims to complete planning next year, appoint a contractor by early 2027, and deliver the project within a 24-month programme.
- **Wherrew Intake Upgrade and Fish Protection Measures**: [redacted] and [redacted] discussed the design options for the Wherrew intake upgrade, focusing on fish screening, sedimentation issues, and the selection of the preferred technical solution, with detailed technical explanations and consideration of fisheries requirements.
  - **Design Options and Preferred Solution**: [redacted] described three main options for the intake upgrade: do nothing, install a pipeline with fish screens at the lake end, or install a pipeline with screens adjacent to the intake on land. The preferred option is to locate the screens on land, adjacent to the existing structure, to address sedimentation and operational maintenance challenges.
  - **Fish Return System Technical Details**: [redacted] explained the fish return system, which uses rotating band screens with buckets to lift fish and deposit them into a return chute. The system includes low-pressure washers for fish and high-pressure washers for debris, with design criteria based on UK guidance and specific requirements for eels, which drive the mesh size and approach velocities.
  - **Operational Experience and Monitoring**: [redacted] referenced similar installations at Terryland (Galway) and Troyswood (Kilkenny), noting the use of cameras and counters for monitoring fish passage. AD requested more information on operational performance, fish counts, and the effectiveness of deterrence measures.
  - **Fisheries Concerns and Alternative Options**: [redacted] raised concerns about minimising fish handling and potential impacts, expressing a preference for screening at the lakeshore end. [redacted] and [redacted] responded by outlining the operational and maintenance risks of submerged screens and the rationale for the preferred on-land solution, including redundancy and accessibility, increasing the risk to water security.
  - **Actions and Next Steps**: The team agreed to prepare a technical note addressing fisheries concerns, arrange a site visit to Terryland for [redacted], and follow up with additional data on fish passage and system effectiveness. TM committed to circulating a draft note and scheduling a follow-up call before the site visit.
- **Water Source Transition and Decommissioning**: [redacted] and [redacted] discussed the planned cessation of the Lough Talt water abstraction, its positive environmental impact, and the transition to the Wherrew intake as the main water source.
  - **Cessation of Lough Talt Abstraction**: [redacted] confirmed that the Lough Talt abstraction licence will cease in 2029, with the source being shut off and the adjacent treatment plant repurposed for storage. [redacted] noted that this change would benefit the river and lake ecosystems by reducing pressure on the system.
- **Watercourse Crossings and Environmental Mitigation**: [redacted] and [redacted] described the methodologies for crossing rivers and streams, including the use of directional drilling and open trenching, and outlined the environmental mitigation measures to protect fisheries and water quality.
  - **Crossing Techniques and Surveys**: [redacted] explained that most watercourse crossings are over field drains and small streams, with larger watercourses such as the River Moy estuary and Brosna River being crossed using

directional drilling. All sites were surveyed, and aquatic specialists conducted species assessments and Q-value sampling.
    - **Mitigation Measures**: [redacted] detailed that launch and reception pits are set back 20 metres from watercourses, surface water mitigation measures such as silt fences will be used, and non-toxic drilling fluids will be contractually specified to prevent harm to fish. These measures will be documented in the environmental impact assessment.
- **Water Treatment Plant Operations and Separation**: [redacted] and [redacted] clarified the operational separation between the Wherrew and Lisglennon water treatment plants, confirming that the project will not affect the existing Wherrew plant and that both plants will continue to operate independently.
    - **Operational Independence**: [redacted] confirmed that the Wherrew water treatment plant, located adjacent to the intake, is not part of the current project and will continue to operate separately from the upgraded Lisglennon plant. While Wherrew water treatment plant will be supplied by the same intake, no process interconnection is planned.
- **Next Steps and Action Items**: [redacted] summarised the agreed actions, including preparing a technical note, arranging a site visit, gathering additional data, and scheduling a follow-up meeting to address outstanding concerns before planning submission.
    - **Action Plan**: [redacted] committed to drafting a technical note addressing fisheries and environmental concerns, circulating it for feedback, and organising a follow-up call before Christmas to discuss the proposed contents. The team will also arrange a site visit to Terryland in early January and gather operational data on fish passage for review.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Technical Note on Wherrew Intake Options**: Prepare and circulate a technical note detailing the preferred solution, including justification for the chosen option, assessment of alternatives, and demonstration of measures to minimise impact on fish species. ([redacted], the team)
- **Site Visit to Terryland Intake**: Arrange and confirm a site visit to the Terryland intake facility for [redacted] to observe the fish screen and return system in operation, providing potential dates in January or February. [redacted]
- **Provision of Fish Count and Monitoring Data**: Obtain and share fish count and monitoring data from the Terryland intake facility, including camera footage and effectiveness information, with [redacted] [redacted]
- **Evidence on Fish Return System Effectiveness**: Compile and provide evidence on the effectiveness of fish return systems, including size ranges and protection of fish, for inclusion in the technical note. [redacted]
- **Assessment of Watercourse Crossings**: Confirm and document the assessment of all watercourse crossings, demonstrating that trench cuts are not in fish-bearing channels or adjacent to important habitats, and outline pollution mitigation measures. [redacted]
- **Follow-Up Teams Call to Address Outstanding Issues**: Schedule a follow-up Teams call before Christmas to discuss the technical note and address any outstanding concerns prior to the Terryland site visit. [redacted]

MEETING NOTES

Ballina Lough Talt Water Supply Zone (WSZ) Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Wherrew alignment	Teams	13 January 2026 at 15:00	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
	3 (Catch-up)	[redacted]	Fishtek (FT) AtkinsRéalis (AR) Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)

Item	Description	Action	Responsible
1.	[redacted] intro, we're looking at Species comparison between the sites for potential estimate of counts, best practice guidance for the design, how that applies to Terryland and what we would do similar / different at Wherrew.	Summary note	FT / AR
2.	[redacted] Relevant guidance: 2022 guidance section 8 is what we'll be complying with [redacted] what's the name of the guide? [redacted] I'll send a copy. 2011 version is withdrawn. Things have changed over the years so we work to best practice that we have now. Guidance is still useful. Screen sizes set by smallest species	Provide guidance	[redacted]

NEXT MEETING

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DATE ISSUED	13 January 2026	FILE REF	

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MEETING NOTES

Item	Description	Action	Responsible
3.	[redacted] Biocides included – zebra mussels. Don't use these in Terryland, use strobe lighting? [redacted] That's a deterrent for fish I think, to confirm how zebra mussels are dealt with in Terryland [redacted] there are options, e.g. materials which can be considered in the design [redacted] zebra mussels aren't really a risk within the pipeline, can be dealt with by routine maintenance. The screen is the sensitive point	Clarify how zebra mussels are dealt with, Terryland and Wherrew Clarify standard procedure for zebra mussels at UÉ	[redacted] [redacted]
4.	[redacted] Large pipe – what is the abstraction speed? [redacted] Velocity within the pipe would be very low, most fish should be able to swim in and out, but closer to the screen increase speed. [redacted] Does the guidance give guidance for approach velocity to attract them into the lift [redacted] Yes - Summary box 4.0. Positive Barrier Screen Design Requirements. Roughly 2-3 times the provided value for most sensitive species. [redacted] Is this enough to draw in the larger fish as well? [redacted] Doc is more of a literature review, 20 years old. Risk of them entering the pipe is low as it's the wrong way. Smolts is an issue, but velocities so low they can get out, should avoid dark spaces. Behaviourally the risk should be low.	Set out speeds Comparison / appraisal of Terryland compared to guidance Describe anticipated behaviour within the pipe	[redacted]

MEETING NOTES

Item	Description	Action	Responsible
5.	[redacted] Counter? [redacted] can be done [redacted] spoke to colleague about counter. Any time they check to confirm the counter with the video it's usually debris [redacted] there are new systems use AI to distinguish debris from fish. [redacted] something to flag when something changes, e.g. suddenly there's a lot of fish [redacted] there are methods that can be applied. Can be noted in the design to include it. [redacted] not sure it would be worth putting a camera in the pipe as some species might like to live in there.	Consider adding as design commitment for installation of counter, Investigate updated technology to identify fish vs debris more efficiently and consider adding as design commitment Benefit analysis whether a camera in pipe is suitable (part of behaviour synopsis above)	[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
6.	[redacted] is eel and lamprey similar? [redacted] yes, generally they're looked at together and captures both. Different camera systems could be useful. Maybe a camera trained on an earlier bit, see what the behaviour is.	Include lamprey	[redacted]
7.	[redacted] is the screen operating all the time? [redacted] yes, even when not abstracting is the recommendation, or to continue with one full rotation after cessation of abstraction. If it's only working on debris, it would be head differential, but fish is 24/7	Set out screen operation parameters Consider adding as design commitment for operation	[redacted] [redacted]

MEETING NOTES

Item	Description	Action	Responsible
8.	[redacted] Telemetry? [redacted] that's standard. Also important to know it's working for the debris as well as fish.	Summarise standard technology and up-to-date options	[redacted]
		Consider adding as design commitment for inclusion of telemetry	[redacted]

SITE MEETING NOTES

Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
IFI Site Visit – Fish Return System	Galway City Water Intake Works, Terryland Water Works	Site Visit: 20 January 2026, 10:45 am. Notes issued: 20 March 2026	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
	N/A	[redacted]	Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) AtkinsRéalis (AR) AtkinsRéalis (AR) AtkinsRéalis (AR)

Purpose

The purpose of the site visit undertaken by UÉ, AR and IFI to the Raw Water Intake Works at the Terryland Water Works in Galway City was to review a fish return system that is being proposed as a reference example for the redevelopment of the Wherrew Raw Water Intake Works at Lough Conn in County Mayo. The meeting and induction began at 10:45 am, followed by a tour of the intake infrastructure and fish return system at 11:00 am. The design of the fish return system at the intake was discussed, the key points of which are outlined below:

- A demonstration of the system in operation showed the fish return buckets rotating within a sealed chamber, which included a side viewing window and an internal camera. Two water washers were used: a low-pressure washer to remove fish from the screens, followed by a high-pressure washer to clear debris. The rotating screen is activated before pumping begins and completes several additional cycles afterward to ensure any fish remaining in the intake structure are captured in the buckets and returned to the river.
- The camera used for counting fish in the return system was positioned after the rotating buckets, above the exit pipe. Downstream of the camera, the pipe splits to allow discharge either upstream or downstream of the intake. One branch can be blocked seasonally to reduce the likelihood of recapturing fish.
- The coarse screen (a set of vertical bars at the intake) was set at a 90-degree angle to the river flow, preventing most larger debris and fish from entering. A rope suspended at the water surface between two buoys also functioned as a fish deterrent and helped prevent kayakers entering the intake area. The coarse screen was manually brushed twice per week.

The purpose of these notes is to provide responses to specific questions raised by IFI.

Item	Description
1.	While site characteristics at Terryland are different from Wherrew, the fish return system would function the same way. [redacted] Query: 1. How effective the low-pressure washer was for removing fish safely from the screen? Response: The design being used at Terryland has been developed in accordance with rule 316(b)[1] of the U.S. Clean Water Act, for which specific test evidence is done for 1 bar, and complies with the UK Environment Agency (2022) guidance[2], as well as Turnpenny and O'Keefe (2005)[3]. In general, design focuses around reducing the opportunity for injury, e.g. collision or abrasion. Studies undertaken on a variety of fish species did not find the spray washer to cause injury[4], rather a low-pressure washer resulted in lower velocities and therefore less opportunity for injury from shear stress or collisions. [redacted] Query: 2. It was hard to see or visualise from the site how fish got from the tank into the buckets. What attracts the fish out of the tank and into the buckets? Do fish get caught on the lip? Response: At Terryland, fish are directed into the buckets by the water flow. In Terryland no fish have been caught in the lip. There are several methods available in compliance with guidance to ensure fish enter the fish return system. This depends on the screen type installed, and design information for the specific systems. [redacted] Query: 3. How often does the screen need to be cleaned (fine versus coarse)? What is the process, and how would this work at Wherrew? Response: At Wherrew, fine screens will be washed during operation by low- and high-pressure washers, screens can be cleaned several times a day. As the screens are not static, there is little opportunity for growth of material (such as biofilms or zebra mussels on the screens). At Wherrew, the coarse screen will be submerged, significantly reducing potential debris build-up.

[1] Section 316(b) of the U.S. Clean Water Act requires that the location, design, construction, and capacity of water intake structures reflect the best technology available (to minimize adverse environmental impacts, primarily the impingement and entrainment of fish and other aquatic organisms.

[2] Screening at intakes and outfalls: measures to protect eel. Science Report GEHO0411BTQD-E-E. The Environment Agency, Bristol, UK.

[3] Turnpenny, A.W.H. and O'Keefe, N. (2005). Best Practice Guide for Intake and Outfall Screening. Science Report SC030231. The Environment Agency, Bristol, UK.

[4] See Fish Protection Technology Manual and Fish and cooling water intakes: Debunking the myths for review

Item	Description
	[redacted] Query: 4. What are the largest fish that the buckets can handle? Response: This is specific to each manufacturer and screen. Access by larger fish would be restricted via the screen at the pipe entrance. Various measurements for buckets are available, below are two examples: ▪ Fish buckets are 100 mm X 100 mm and up to 900 mm long depending the width and number buckets across the width of the belt. ▪ Fish bucket size of 70 mm in width by 600 mm in length
2.	Behavioural deterrents were discussed as a means of maximising fish avoidance through behavioural responses where possible, and their use should be considered. Response: Recent guidance literature indicates that behavioural deterrents are only partially effective, as resident fish often become accustomed to stimuli such as light or noise over time. There is also a risk that certain deterrents may inadvertently attract some species, at various life stages, toward the intake, or prevent others from exiting once inside, thereby increasing the likelihood of entrainment. At present, based on the most recent guidance literature, behavioural deterrents are not considered an effective method for reducing the likelihood of fish entering the system, and none are proposed.
3.	General comment: additional inspection hatches and modifications to the camera setup, making data processing simpler and less labour intensive are also proposed over and above design at Terryland.
4.	Data collection and verification of the fish return system's effectiveness were discussed, including both permanent and temporary monitoring options. Any monitoring approach would need to consider the time required for data analysis to ensure that the level of effort remains proportionate to the value of the information gathered. Response: The Terryland system has two permanent cameras, one within the fish return buckets and one over the exit pipe to count fish. These provide live and recorded telemetry and trigger an alert, which can be checked via a phone app. Cameras will be provided at Wherrew Intake.
5.	More detail on methods to prevent zebra mussel settlement and accumulation was requested. Response: Zebra mussels are already present in Lough Conn and, like many invasive species, establish dominance by rapidly colonising new habitat, out competing local species, exhibiting high fecundity, and proving difficult to eradicate once established. Their tendency to attach in dense clusters leads to blockage of water infrastructure and displacement of native species. Adhesion success depends heavily on substrate properties such as hydrophobicity, surface energy, roughness, and chemical composition. Zebra mussels typically adhere more strongly to hydrophilic materials such as metals and glass than to hydrophobic surfaces like PVC or silicone-based polymers. This pattern is consistent with observations at Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant, where mussels rarely colonise plastic surfaces but are occasionally found on metal ladders within low flow settling tanks.

Item	Description
	The proposed Wherrew intake system incorporates several inherent protections against mussel colonisation, for example the intake pipe will be constructed from High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), a smooth, relatively hydrophobic material known to provide poor attachment conditions. Although low flow velocities may still allow some settlement, the pipe's internal space and material characteristics mean that any colonisation is unlikely to compromise abstraction and can be managed through routine maintenance. At the intake screens themselves, both material choice and operational behaviour strongly influence mussel settlement risk. Regular screen movement, rotation and cleaning reduce opportunities for long term attachment. Use of polymer-based screen components can further limit settlement because these plastics generally resist mussel adhesion. Where metal components are necessary, periodic maintenance remains the typical management approach.
6.	Post Meeting Note: The following drawings of the intake design have been provided: ▪ 10025936-ATK-W1-ZZ-DR-CE- 211736 – proposed site layout showing proposed upgrades in green. Key points to note: ▪ The intake pipe will extend into the lake to ensure sufficient depth and minimise silt entering the intake. The fish return pass will be laid alongside and buried. Any fish returned will be released below the water line. ▪ Infill of the old intake is proposed to restore the old lake shoreline. ▪ Markers are proposed to alert boats to the presence of the intake pipe (shown in red).

MEETING NOTES

Ballina and Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Pre Construction Surveys	Teams Meeting	9th of September 2025	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	PRESENT	REPRESENTING
		[redacted]	National Monuments Services, E.T.

[redacted]:

- We need clearance from archaeologist.
- [redacted] gave presentation (same as presentation to [redacted] in July 2023).
- Explaining how slopes form.
- Upgrade storm water with culvert to existing pipe.
- Green in drawing is not designated.
- High level design works, some minor hard surface.
- Boundary wall along stream.

Working area: archaeological test. Example E.T. staff.

E.T. staff to be accommodated.

DATE ISSUED	31 August 2026	FILE REF

NOTE TO RECIPIENTS:
These meeting notes record AtkinsRéalis understanding of the meeting and intended actions arising therefrom. Your agreement that the notes form a true record of the discussion will be assumed unless adverse comments are received in writing within five days of receipt.

MEETING NOTES

[redacted] 4 trials, all should be near the pipeline. There are also the areas we would need geophys surveys and some prep to access. Care to see we mentioned c. 80% area used.

- [redacted] Needs to know location and addresses and exact spots. If we have a matrix available, address. NMS want the testing done by E.T. staff. NMS might stay later on archaeology so if they have plant on site.
- Method statement and licences. How will these areas be accessed?
- Ground reduction described in drawing will be clarified.
- Geophys survey to be carried out – how do we mitigate by design?
- What happens if we uncover potential features?
- Pre-works – possibly need to re-consult NMS, need to contact owner to state test features probably 3m trenches before to consent owner to site.
- Between now and future surveys:
- Get an undertaking of capacity.
- Get drawing submitted to understand the impacts, and show how issues will be sufficiently mitigated.

MEETING NOTES

Ballina Lough Talt Water Supply Upgrade

SUBJECT	MEETING PLACE	DATE AND TIME	MINUTES BY
Meeting with National Monuments Service	Ice House Hotel, Ballina	18 February 2026 at 11:00	[redacted]
	MEETING NO	**PRESENT**	**REPRESENTING**
	2	[redacted]	Through Time Ltd (TTL) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) Uisce Éireann (UÉ) AtkinsRéalis (AR) National Monuments Service (NMS)

Item	Description and Action	Deadline	Responsible
1.	[redacted] provided an overview of the project, presenting all known finds on 1st, 2nd and 3rd edition maps as required, including site notes and photographs. ▪ Majority of the works will be within roads, on existing sites and previously disturbed ground. ▪ Green field sites: Mains between Lisglennon RWPS and WTP (1 km); two sections of mains along Lisglennon to Lough Talt (1.5 km); Bonniconlon BPS site; Windy Gap BPT site. Other off-road sites are small (e.g. river crossings). ▪ No works will be undertaken within the Moy, instead the pipe will tie into an existing crossing. ▪ Desktop study and walkover of entire route completed including underwater surveys, findings presented.		

NEXT MEETING

DISTRIBUTION

DATE ISSUED	27 February 2026	FILE REF	

NOTE TO RECIPIENTS:
These meeting notes record AtkinsRéalis understanding of the meeting and intended actions arising therefrom. Your agreement that the notes form a true record of the discussion will be assumed unless adverse comments are received in writing within five days of receipt.

Item	Description and Action	Deadline	Responsible
2.	There are four zones of notification (ZONs) overlapping the Red Line Boundary (RLB). These were discussed in detail using 1st, 2nd and 3rd edition maps, including site notes and photographs, as well as reference to the monitoring undertaken during the SI works. These sites were: ▪ set back from the road ▪ located in developed or landscaped areas ▪ contradictory recording on the maps ▪ road conditions within RLB are dangerous and require a road closure to fully investigate It is proposed that these are not tested pre-planning, but once the road is closed and the site has been secured, these sites will be pre-opened, recorded and resolved in advance of construction, under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist. If a find is discovered, it is recommended that the pipeline be moved to the other side of the road where possible. All finds will be reported. [redacted] noted that any subterrain features would require testing, but also that the feature flagged during the desk study and site walkover (within 4th ZON) was near school and on a dangerous bend; it would not be possible to fully record and resolve without closing the road. The project crosses 29 townland boundaries. Archaeological monitoring will take place at these locations during the works. Cultural landscape to be preserved and included in the assessment, mitigation. Unregistered finds were discussed. These included buildings/architectural features, stone walls and a railway (no longer present); some were impacted by pre-existing infrastructure. Mitigation to avoid and minimise impact to be included in the CEMP and complied with by the Contractor, as follows: ▪ Location of known finds and proposed mitigation to be communicated to Contractors in advance of works. ▪ Finds to be avoided as primary mitigation measure. ▪ Where a find cannot be avoided, it must be fully resolved. ▪ Mitigation to be monitored by an archaeologist.		

Item	Description and Action	Deadline	Responsible
3.	Proportionate approach to testing is proposed. The pipeline will be predominantly laid within paved roads or adjacent to existing pipeline, where testing pre-application is not requested. Pre-application testing is required in green field sites. Where it is not possible to carry out testing (e.g. no access to a site), this needs to be communicated to NMS. The following locations were identified for potential pre-planning testing: ▪ Mains between Lisglennon RWPS and WTP (Ballinteen townland) ▪ Sections of mains between Lisglennon and Lough Talt (Garrankeel townland; Behy More & Corimla South townland) ▪ Bonniconlon BPS site would be beneficial, however access is not permitted by the landowners. ▪ Windy Gap site is green field, however it is located on commonage with multiple landowners making access difficult. Site investigations undertaken on this site found that the peat is shallow on top of bedrock; archaeological features were not found during associated monitoring. ▪ [redacted] enquired about potential features within Belleek Manor. No finds were discovered during testing and monitoring for SI works or walkover, and the grounds are landscaped. Access is not expected to be permitted by the landowners for additional testing pre-application. A licence is required for testing works, to be completed pre-planning. [redacted] agreed that a variation to the existing licence for the SI works would be suitable in principle, to be confirmed once she has reviewed a method statement for the works (based on coordinates). A revised method statement will be sent to NMS for amendment of the existing Geotech licence. No testing is required pre-planning for the remainder of the route, instead monitoring is required during works, as well as site management and briefing of contractors prior to works so that they can avoid features. Any sites that were flagged as being of potential interest are to be opened post site set-up (fencing, etc.) but pre-construction to enable them to be fully recorded and resolved.		

MEETING NOTES

Item	Description and Action	Deadline	Responsible
4.	Mitigation proposed is monitoring during the works ▪ Mitigation for known and unknown features to be included in CEMP, including reporting procedure. ▪ Contractor to be required to comply with proposed mitigation. ▪ No testing required in the roads. Once off paved roads, monitoring by an archaeologist will be required. ▪ Pre-works testing required within the 4 ZONs and sites that were flagged as being of potential interest. ▪ Methodology to include: ▫ Topsoil stripping ▫ Metal detection where needed ▪ Where an archaeological discovery is made, best practice is to avoid disturbance via micrositing within the RLB. Where this is not feasible, full resolution is required.		
5.	Content of the EIAR Chapter was discussed. [redacted] confirms that chapter covers registered and unregistered buildings, cultural landscapes. Underwater heritage is included, as indicated during the last meeting with [redacted] Features are labelled with a CH number as well as SMR, RMP and are colour-coded. It was noted that new legislation due to be enacted in 2027 will automatically assign all new reported monuments as RMP. This will not impact this chapter as both SMR and RMP are reported. Any mitigation, monitoring or conditions to be included in the CEMP.		
6.	Digital Repository Island UÉ to be considered for this project. A reporting template will be shared by [redacted] for potential inclusion in the CEMP.		

AtkinsRéalis

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
c/o The Manager, Development Applications Unit
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

OUR REFERENCE:
0089328_PM0024

Dear Sir/Madam

15 January 2026

AtkinsRéalis
150-155 Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin
K67 K5W4

Tel: +353 1 810 8000

[redacted]

AtkinsRéalis on behalf of Uisce Éireann are in the process of compiling an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report and an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report / Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (if required) for a water supply upgrade comprising existing assets, essential upgrades, and new infrastructure (the Proposed Development). It involves increasing raw water abstraction from Lough Conn in County Mayo at the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake site. Currently, two Water Treatment Plants (WTPs); Wherrew and Lisglennon WTPs are supplied with raw water pumped from the intake on the northern shore of Lough Conn.

Details of the Proposed Development are provided below. The proposed planning application will be lodged with An Coimisiún Pleanála in Spring 2026, as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID).

We would like to request a meeting in early February to present key details of the Proposed Development and discuss any opinions, queries or background information specifically on environmentally related considerations you may have. Can you please review the enclosed information and forward your availability?

We would greatly appreciate it if you could revert back at your earliest convenience to [redacted] or to the AtkinsRéalis Dublin office address provided.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of AtkinsRéalis,

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
To:
Subject: RE: G Pre00013/2026 - Consultation Request: Ballina
Sent: 26/01/2026 12:58:10

H[redacted]

The NPWS have had a look at this and have "no comment" to make at this time.

Regards,

[redacted]

An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Executive Officer
Aonad na nIarratas ar Fhorbairt
Development Applications Unit
Oifigí an Rialtais
Government Offices
Bóthar an Bhaile Nua, Loch Garman, Contae Loch Garman, Y35 AP90
Newtown Road, Wexford, County Wexford, Y35 AP90

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday 26 January 2026 12:12
[redacted]
Subject: G Pre00013/2026 - Consultation Request: Ballina

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[redacted]

Can I request an update on the below meeting request?

Thanks,

[redacted]

AtkinsRéalis

AtkinsRéalis - Baseline / Référence

From: Housing Manager DAU <Manager.DAU@npws.gov.ie>
Sent: 15 January 2026 11:09
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Consultation Request: Ballina

Our Ref: G Pre00013/2026 (Please quote in all related correspondence)

A Chara

I acknowledge receipt of your pre planning meeting request.

I have set up a meeting request on our system and will be in touch in due course.

Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted]

An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Executive Officer
Aonad na nIarratas ar Fhorbairt
Development Applications Unit
Oifigí an Rialtais
Government Offices
Bóthar an Bhaile Nua, Loch Garman, Contae Loch Garman, Y35 AP90
Newtown Road, Wexford, County Wexford, Y35 AP90

[redacted]

Sent: Thursday 15 January 2026 09:53
To: Housing Manager DAU <Manager.DAU@npws.gov.ie>
[redacted]
Subject: Consultation Request: Ballina

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Dear sir/madam,

AtkinsRéalis, on behalf of Uisce Éireann, are in the process of compiling an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report and an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report / Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (if required) for a water supply upgrade comprising existing assets, essential upgrades, and new infrastructure (the Proposed Development). It involves increasing raw water abstraction from Lough Conn in County Mayo at the existing Wherrew Raw Water Intake site. Currently, two Water Treatment Plants (WTPs); Wherrew and Lisglennon WTPs are supplied with raw water pumped from the intake on the northern shore of Lough Conn. Details of the Proposed Development are provided in the attached letter. The proposed planning application will be lodged with An Coimisiún Pleanála in Spring 2026, as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID).

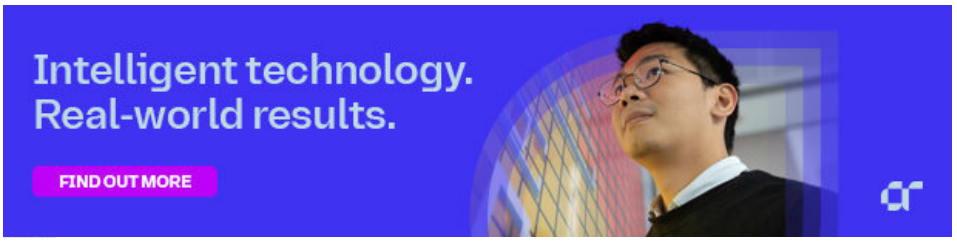
We would like to request a meeting in early February to present key details of the Proposed Development and discuss any opinions, queries or background information specifically on environmentally related considerations you may have. Can you please forward your availability to us at your earliest convenience to [redacted] We can be reached at [redacted] or at the number in my signature below.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

AtkinsRéalis



Podcasts Beyond Engineering Careers

AtkinsRéalis

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The Proposed Development

This Proposed Development is intended to secure water supply for Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS) and Ballina RWSS area.

Abstraction for the Lough Talt RWSS will cease in 2029 and the preferred solution (the Proposed Development) is to provide a treated water supply from Lough Conn in County Mayo. This will involve the upgrade of Lisglennon Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and the installation of approximately 30 km of pipeline from the Lisglennon WTP to Lough Talt RWSS.

The proposed project would involve increasing the current raw water abstraction from Lough Conn from approximately 13,400 m^3/day to 26,35 $0m^3$/day.

The increases in water abstracted from Lough Conn will be pumped north via the existing trunk main for approximately 11 km to the existing Balancing and Storage Tanks at Lisglennon Raw Water Pumping Station (RWPS), located south of the existing Lisglennon WTP. From there, raw water will be conveyed through 1 km of upgraded mains to the Lisglennon WTP for treatment. To accommodate the increased supply, upgrades to the existing pumping equipment at the balancing and storage site will be required.

As part of the Proposed Development, the Lisglennon WTP will undergo expansion to increase treatment capacity. This will include upgrades to process infrastructure and the construction of a new storage reservoir at the WTP site.

To deliver treated water from Lisglennon WTP to the Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS), a new trunk main network approximately 29.5 km in length will be required. The majority of the pipeline route will be laid on road (i.e. online) (approx. 25.7 km) but there are some sections of the pipeline that will require river crossings and placement in agriculture land (i.e. offline) (4.2 km). Treated water will flow by gravity from Lisglennon WTP to Ballina and onward toward Bonniconlon, after which pumping will be required due to local topography.

A new Booster Pumping Station will be required near Bonniconlon to facilitate the ascent over the Ox Mountains. From this area, treated water will be pumped via a new rising main to a Break Pressure Tank at Windy Gap, Knocknasliggaun, in the Ox Mountains. From Windy Gap, water will flow by gravity to the existing Lough Talt WTP site, which will be modified to function as a treated water storage facility. Treated water will then gravitate into the existing Lough Talt RWSS network.

Decommissioning works will be carried out at the current Lough Talt WTP site as part of its conversion to a storage facility. Upon completion of the Proposed Development, abstraction from Lough Talt will cease.

An overview of the scheme is provided in Figure 1 below.

Scheme Overview

SCOPE

1. Wherrew RWPS Upgrade
2. Lisglennon RWPS Upgrade
3. Lisglennon WTP Upgrade
4. New Lisglennon to Lough Talt Treated Water Pipeline
5. New Treated Water Booster Pumping Station
6. New Bonniconlon Reservoir
7. New Break Pressure Tank
8. Lough Talt WTP Repurposed for Treated Water Storage

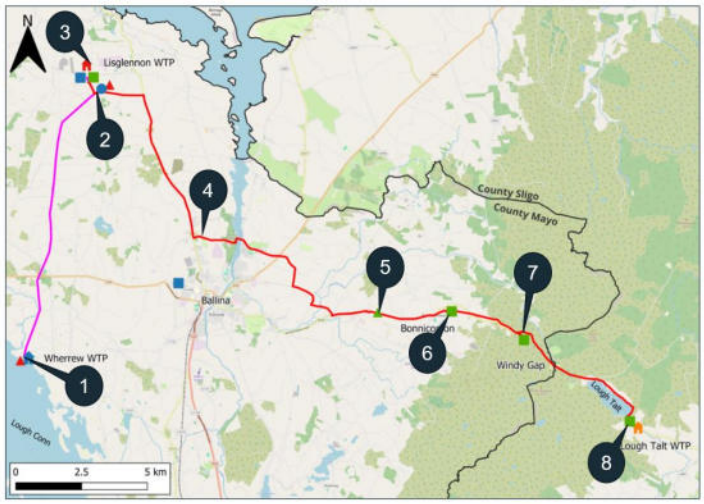


Figure 1 – Scheme overview.

Interaction with Natura 2000 Sites

River Moy SAC and Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA: The proposed project will result in increased water abstraction from Lough Conn at the Wherrew Site Intake and Lough Conn forms part of the River Moy SAC and Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA.

In addition, the proposed pipeline route will cross the Glenree River which is within the River Moy SAC. The proposed pipeline route also crosses 8 no. other watercourses all of which flow into the Glenree River. The Glenree River outfalls into Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC/SPA.

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC/SPA: The proposed pipeline route utilises an existing pipeline crossing Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC at Belleek Woods, with no interaction with the estuary. The proposed pipeline route also crosses 9 no. watercourses which flow into Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC/SPA.

Lough Hoe Bog SAC: A section of the proposed pipeline route is aligned directly alongside the boundary of Lough Hoe Bog SAC at Lough Talt. The pipeline route also crosses 1 no. unnamed watercourse which flows into Lough Talt which is within Lough Hoe Bog SAC.

Watercourse Crossings

There are 30 no. surface water feature crossings which have been identified along the pipeline route, 18 no. EPA identified watercourses and 12 no. field drains. All watercourses (EPA) have been subject to ecological surveys, and watercourses identified as having fisheries value were subject to aquatic surveys (Q-values). The majority of the EPA watercourses will be crossed using trenchless techniques (pipe jacking or directional drilling). The largest watercourse to be crossed is the River Moy Estuary at north Ballina,

where the Proposed Development will utilise an existing watermain located under estuary between Belleek Woods and Quay Village; no works will be required. The pipeline crosses one other large order watercourse; the Glenree River (aka Brusna River), which will be crossed via Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) techniques. Trenchless technique 'pipe jacking' is a preferred methodology for crossing of the other small order watercourses. Open cut methodology is the preferred option for crossing field drains, many of which are dry.

Surveys and Studies

The Proposed Development site has been assessed through a combination of ecological and environmental field surveys, as well as desktop research.

Approximately 85% of the development follows existing roadways. Comprehensive site surveys have been completed for all off road and greenfield areas, including habitat assessments; targeted mammal surveys for badger, otter, and bats; aquatic surveys of watercourses; and invasive species surveys across the full development footprint.

Hydrological and Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessments have been undertaken for the proposed new intake and increased abstraction at Lough Conn. These assessments confirm that the increased abstraction will not affect water levels in the lake. The project design also incorporates new fish screens and a fish return system at the intake. Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) has been consulted as part of the intake upgrade design process.

The proposed pipeline route passes through improved agricultural grassland in two main off-road sections: approximately 2 km at Lisglennon and approximately 1 km in the townland of Behy More between Ballina and Bonniconlon. Some hedgerow removal will be required; however, all hedgerows will be reinstated following pipeline installation in accordance with Uisce Éireann policy.

Short off-road sections are also required to facilitate crossings of surface water features. As described above, the preferred methodology for watercourse crossings is trenchless installation (pipe jacking and drilling beneath the watercourse). This approach ensures no direct impact on fisheries sensitive watercourses. IFI has also been consulted in relation to these crossings.

The pipeline will traverse Belleek Woods in north Ballina. The alignment has been designed to follow existing roads and established horse rides within the woodland, ensuring that no trees will be removed. Coillte has been consulted regarding this element of the development.

The Proposed Development will also result in the cessation of abstraction from Lough Talt, County Sligo. This will eliminate the current issue of water level drawdown on the lake. Ongoing studies are examining the potential reintroduction of Vertigo snails and restoration of their associated habitats at Lough Talt.

In addition to the hydrological and WFD assessments, the Proposed Development is being informed by a full Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), currently in preparation. This will include a comprehensive Ecological Impact Assessment with appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant effects during construction. An Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement are also being developed for the project.