



Environmental Licensing Programme
Office of Environmental Sustainability
Environmental Protection Agency
PO Box 3000
Johnstown Castle Estate
Wexford

Uisce Éireann
Teach Colvill
24-26 Sráid Thalbóid
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 NP86
Éire

Irish Water
Colvill House
24-26 Talbot Street
Dublin 1
D01 NP86
Ireland

T: +353 1 89 25000
F: +353 1 89 25001
www.water.ie

30/03/2022

IW ref: LT0554

Re: Dripsey WWDL Application; Reg. No. D0426-02 – Reg. 18(6)(b) Notice

Dear Inspector,

In response to the Regulation 18(6)(b) request for information notice dated 03rd March 2022, please see below relevant information addressing the request.

Please find enclosed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report, which concludes that there is no significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and it is considered that an EIA is not required for the authorisation to which this application relates.

I trust the above is satisfactory but please contact me if you have any queries in relation to this.

Enclosed – EIA Screening Report

Yours sincerely,

Peter Keegan

Wastewater Strategy

Irish Water Report

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening as part of
the Dripsey Waste Water Discharge Licence Review
Application D0426-02

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1. Introduction

In accordance with Regulation 18(6)(b) of the European Union (Waste Water Discharge) Regulations 2007 to 2020, the EPA have concluded, based on a preliminary examination, that there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development (*i.e.*, the operational discharges from the new Dripsey WwTP in so far as they relate to the risk of environmental pollution of the receiving waters, the Dripsey River (Dripsey_020).

The Agency has requested Irish Water to submit the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, for the purposes of a screening determination. In accordance with Regulation 18(7), the Agency have requested that the Schedule 7A information:

- a) shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account; and
- b) may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.

Sections 2 to 6 of this Screening Report provide the relevant Schedule 7A information, and **Section 7** of the Report provides the assessment of the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

2. Dripsey WWTP & Operational Discharges

Dripsey is located between Macroom and Cork City on the R618 (**Figure 1**). The settlement located approximately 19 km west of Cork city and 1 km north of the River Lee at the Inniscarra Lake Reservoir.

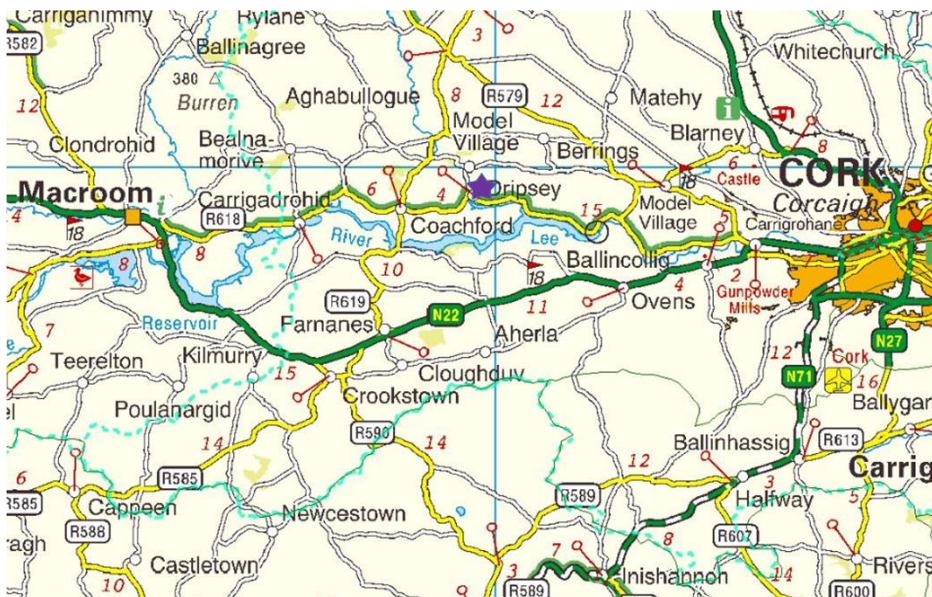


Figure 1: Dripsey Agglomeration Location (as indicated by purple star)

WwTP

The main objective of the Dripsey WwTP project was to design and construct a new WwTP and outfall pipeline to serve the agglomeration of Dripsey (Model Village) and design and construct remedial network upgrade works to ensure compliance with the WWDL - Licence Register Number: D0426-01, issued by the EPA in accordance with the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations (S.I. No. 684 of 2007) (now S.I. No. 214 of 2020) on the 30th July 2012.

The new WwTP, located at NGR 148619E, 074844N with a design capacity of 600 p.e, will provide secondary treatment to waste water generated within the Dripsey agglomeration. The core treatment process consists of an inlet stormwater overflow chamber, preliminary treatment (screening & grit removal), stormwater storage followed by primary settlement, secondary biological treatment using a Rotating Biological Reactor (RBC) and a final settlement tank. The construction of the new Dripsey WwTP was completed in November 2021 and is scheduled to be fully commissioned in Q1 2022.

As part of the upgrade project, remedial network upgrade works have been completed. This work will have the following benefits to the agglomeration: (i) mitigate risk of hydraulic impact to the WWTP; (ii) mitigate risk of dilution of biological load damaging WWTP process; (iii) retain additional reserve storage capacity in foul network; and (iv) reduce overflows from the stormwater overflows.

Operational Discharges

Primary Discharge (SW001)

Treated effluent from the new WwTP will discharge to the Dripsey River at NGR 148611E, 074819N. The primary discharge will be monitored continuously and recorded at the electromagnetic flowmeters which will be installed at the WwTP.

The proposed effluent standards for the new WwTP, which are tabled below, shall ensure that the discharge from the Dripsey WwTP contributes towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020 and contributes towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027.

Table 1 - Effluent Standards for New WwTP (as per D0426-01 ELVs)

Parameter	ELV	Units
pH	6-9	pH units
BOD, 5 days with Inhibition (Carbonaceous BOD)	25	mg/l
COD-Cr	125	mg/l
Suspended Solids	35	mg/l
Ammonia-Total (as N)	10	mg/l
Ortho-Phosphate (as P)	5	mg/l

These ELVs were set by the EPA, and as detailed in **Appendix D.2.1 Impact Assessment Report** of the WWDA application, will ensure that potential effects on the receiving water body are strictly limited and controlled and will ensure the compliance with standards and objectives established for associated protected areas in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Water Framework Directive.

Storm Water Overflows from new WwTP (SW002 & SW003)

There will be 2 no. SWOs from the new WwTP. SW002, from the inlet stormwater overflow chamber and SW003 from the Storm Tank 2, will both discharge to the Dripsey River *via* the primary discharge outfall at River at 148611E, 074819N.

Both overflows have been designed in compliance with the definition of 'Storm Water Overflow' as per Regulation 3 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007, as amended and the criteria as set out in the DoEHLG 'Procedures and Criteria in Relation to Storm Water Overflows', 1995.

The SWOs will be monitored continuously and recorded at the electromagnetic flowmeters which will be installed at the WwTP. There are no emergency overflows from the agglomeration.

3. Key Measures to Avoid/Prevent Significant Adverse Effects

The Waste Water Treatment Works at Dripsey has been designed and incorporates the following key measures to avoid prevent significant adverse effects on the receiving aquatic environment *i.e.*, Dripsey River:

- The Dripsey WwTP and its primary effluent discharge (SW001) have been designed to meet the standards to satisfy all relevant regulatory requirements including the Surface Water Regulations (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations (S.I. No. 254 of 2001).
- SWOs (SW002 and SW003) have been designed in compliance with the definition of '*Storm Water Overflow*' as per Regulation 3 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007, as amended and the criteria as set out in the DoEHLG '*Procedures and Criteria in Relation to Storm Water Overflows*', 1995.
- Provision of 45m³ of storm storage provided at the WwTP
- All alarms will be linked to level measurement to alert to any spillage and will be linked to SCADA with alarms sent to operators in the result of an emergency event.
- Connection for temporary generator. Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) backup for telemetry/plant controllers.
- An Emergency Response Plan and Procedures, Operation and Maintenance Procedures for all equipment will be in place and implemented by the appointed plant operator, as required.
- All operators will be fully familiar with all operational plans and procedures pertaining to the plant and network *etc.*
- All flows will be monitored continuously and recorded at the electromagnetic flowmeters which will be installed at the WwTP.
- The remedial network upgrade works will mitigate the risk of hydraulic impact to the WwTP, will retain additional reserve storage capacity in foul network and will lead to reduced overflows from the stormwater overflows.

The Dripsey WwTW has been designed to prevent unintended discharges from the works and to ensure that all emissions from the agglomeration comply with or will not result in the contravention, of any national or European legislation.

4. Compliance with EU & National Legislation

The effluent discharge standards (*i.e.*, Proposed ELVs: BOD 25mg/l, Total Ammonia 10mg/l, Ortho-P 5mg/l, COD 125 mg/l, Suspended Solids 35mg/l), the design of the overflows, along with the positive residual effects from the remedial network upgrade works, will ensure that the operational discharges from the agglomeration (i) contribute towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020, (ii) contribute towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027 in accordance with the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and (iii) will ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment as a result of the discharges from the agglomeration.

Based on the above once fully commissioned, the new WwTP is expected to have a positive impact in terms of reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the Dripsey River. The discharge activities will not cause a deterioration in the chemical status in the relevant receiving waterbody and will not compromise the achievement of the objectives and EQSs established for any European sites water dependant species and natural habitats, or any other designations.

In summary, the Dripsey WwTW has been designed to ensure that the emissions from the agglomeration will comply with, and will not result in the contravention of, EU and National legislation. Please refer to **Attachment B.6 Compliance with EU Directives / National Regulations** of the WWDA application, as submitted to the EPA on the 23rd December 2021, for further confirmation of same.

5. Description of the Receiving Water Environment

The receiving water of the operational discharges from the Dripsey WwTP is the Dripsey River (Dripsey_020). Dripsey_020 is within the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay Catchment (Hydrometric Area 19). This catchment includes the area drained by the River Lee and all streams entering tidal water in Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay and between Knockaverry and Templebreedy Battery, Co. Cork, draining a total area of 2,153 km².

The draft 3rd Cycle Catchment Report (2021) for this hydrometric area, determined that for river waterbodies excess nutrients remain the most prevalent issue, along with morphology, organic pollution, and hydrology. Pressures identified affecting the greatest number of waterbodies within Hydrometric Area 19 include hydromorphology, followed by agriculture, urban run-off, urban wastewater, domestic waste water, forestry, mines and quarries and industry. The Dripsey agglomeration is not listed as a significant pressure in At Risk waterbodies in the 2nd or draft 3rd cycle catchment assessment. The Dripsey_020 is not listed as an area for action under the 3rd cycle (or the 2nd cycle).

The WFD status of the Dripsey_020 is Good and At Risk. The WFD objective of this waterbody is to achieve High Ecological status by 2027. The significant pressure for the Dripsey_020 has been determined, within the draft 3rd Cycle Catchment Report, as Hydromorphology (overgrazing) which is totally outside the control of Irish Water.

Based on the 95%ile River flow (0.40 m³/s), and the Dripsey WwTP DWF (135 m³/d), there are 256 dilutions estimated immediately in the proximity of the WwTP discharge point.

The EPA undertake biological monitoring of the Dripsey River at various locations. Upstream of the WwTP at RS19D060300 (*ca.* 2.8 km upstream), the 2020 monitoring reported a Q value of 4-

5 (High Status, Unpolluted). Downstream of the WwTP at RS19D060400 (ca. 1 km downstream) the 2020 monitoring also reported a Q value of 4-5.

Results from Jan 2019–June 2021 ambient monitoring upstream and downstream of the primary discharge location are shown in **Table 2** and **Table 3**.

Table 2 - Ambient Monitoring – Upstream of the Primary Discharge Location at RS19D060340 (Data Source: EDEN Compliance Jan 2019 - June 2021 Data)

Parameter	pH	BOD	Ortho-P (mg/l)	Total Ammonia (mg/l)	DO (mg/l)	DO (%sat)	Temp (°C)
Number of Samples	12	12	12	12	13	14	11
Max result	7.7	2.5	0.084	0.702	13.9	114	4.3
Min result	7.2	0.1	0.015	0.01	9.5	93	2.4
Average result	7.48	0.98	0.035	0.0784	11.07	99.9	3.5
Mean EQS as per S.I. No. 77/2019 Good Status *		≤1.5	≤ 0.035	≤0.065			
Mean EQS as per S.I. No. 77/2019 High Status *		≤1.3	≤ 0.025	≤0.04			

*Mean High & Good status under S.I. No. 77 of 2019

Note: Where data was reported as less than the limit of detection, LOD/2 was applied

Table 3 - Ambient Monitoring – Downstream of the Primary Discharge Location at RS19D060400 (Data Source: EDEN Compliance Jan 2019 - June 2021 Data)

Parameter	pH	BOD	Ortho-P (mg/l)	Total Ammonia (mg/l)	DO (mg/l)	DO (%sat)	Temp (°C)
Number of Samples	12	12	12	12	13	13	11
Max result	8.1	2.6	0.101	0.289	13	115	4.9
Min result	7.4	0.5	0.012	0.01	9.6	95	2.6
Average result	7.70	1.00	0.041	0.0488	11.05	101.6	3.8
Mean EQS as per S.I. No. 77/2019 Good Status *		≤1.5	≤ 0.035	≤0.065			
Mean EQS as per S.I. No. 77/2019		≤1.3	≤ 0.025	≤0.04			

Parameter	pH	BOD	Ortho-P (mg/l)	Total Ammonia (mg/l)	DO (mg/l)	DO (%sat)	Temp (°C)
High Status *							

*Mean High & Good status under S.I. No. 77 of 2019

Note: Where data was reported as less than the limit of detection, LOD/2 was applied

Based on ambient monitoring results upstream and downstream of the current discharge for the period between January 2019 to June 2021, the mean concentration for BOD is within the mean EQSs for Good and High status. In terms of Ortho-P, the mean concentration only meets the mean EQS for Good status upstream of the discharge. In terms of Ammonia, the mean concentration only meets the mean EQS for Good status downstream of the discharge.

It is worth noting that the Dripsey_020 waterbody trends (at Drispey Br, downstream of the operational discharges) for Ortho-P and Total Ammonia for 2013-2018 are Downwards (decreasing concentrations). For 2013-2018, Ammonium and Ortho-P are noted as High status under the WFD.

There are no designated shellfish waters, designated bathing waters, nutrient sensitive waters, Margaritifera Sensitive Areas, within the region of the Dripsey WwTP and/or the discharge points.

The River Dripsey, at the proposed site, is not designated under the Salmonid Regulations. The River Lee downstream of Inniscarra Dam (ca. 7.5 km downstream) is protected under the Salmonid Regulations. However, effluent standards of the new WwTP, along with the large dilution factor available within the downstream River Lee, means that the operational discharges will not have a significant impact on the downstream Salmonid Water. It should be noted that the Dripsey River (below the agglomeration discharge point) has achieved a Q4-5 (High, Unpolluted) status from 2011-2020.

The Dripsey River is likely to provide habitat for Annex II species such as brook lamprey and otter. Compliance with the ELVs as set by the EPA in D0426-01 will ensure that any Annex II species that are likely to be present within the Dripsey River will not be adversely affected.

The nearest European sites to the operation discharges are The Gearagh SAC and The Gearagh SPA located ca. 26 km and 27 km upstream of the operational discharges on the River Lee (i.e., upstream of the confluence with the River Dripsey). The nearest European site downstream of the primary discharge is the Cork Harbour SPA (ca. 30 km d/s). The Great Channel Island SAC is located ca. 34 km d/s of the primary discharge. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been produced separate to this EIA Screening Report, to assess potential effects on European sites. The AA Screening concluded that there were no likely significant effects on any European sites arising from the operational discharges, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. A Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is not required. Refer to **Attachment D.2.2** of the WWDA application for a copy the AA Screening Report.

There are 10 pNHAs and 1 NHA within 15 km of the WwTP and the operational discharges, the closest of which is Glashgarriff River pNHA (ca. 5.25 km west of the agglomeration). No pathway exists by which the operational discharges could impact upon The Glashgarriff River pNHA as it is upstream of the agglomeration. The Lee Valley pNHA is located ca. 6.0 km downstream of the operational discharges at its closest point and comprises a diverse range of riparian semi-natural

habitats. None of the habitats it is designated for (*i.e.*, wet broadleaved woodland, freshwater marsh, wet grassland, dry unimproved grassland) are highly sensitive to changes in water quality.

There are no downstream drinking water abstraction points on the River Dripsey. Drinking water abstraction point (Code: 0500PUB3401) on Inniscarra Lake/Reservoir is ca. 6.5 km downstream of the discharge point and ca. 5 km downstream of the confluence of the Dripsey River with the Lee/Inniscarra Lake. The reservoir covers an area of ca. 489 hectares, which offers significant dispersion capacity, and the Dripsey River has a current Q4-5 (High, Unpolluted) status before it meets the confluence. At the abstraction point the raw water intake and treated water is tested weekly for *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. The risk assessments completed by IW/Cork County Council for this abstraction do not identify the Dripsey discharge as a risk.

6. Waste Assimilative Capacity

A WAC calculation was carried out by the EPA inspector in 2012 using Notional Clean River values and the design capacity of 600 p.e. (135m³/day). ELVs were set for BOD, Total Ammonia and Ortho-P in order to maintain the Good status of the Dripsey River as per the requirements of the European Communities Objectives (Surface Water) Regulations, 2009, as amended (now S.I. No. 77 of 2019). These limits came into effect from the 30th July 2012, as per D0426-01.

To inform the licence review, WAC calculations were completed using the ELVs as per D0426-01, the Notional Clean River background concentrations, and the actual mean background concentrations based on January 2019 to June 2021 ambient monitoring data, and the EPA Flow Estimation of 0.4m³/s (Flow data confirmed by the EPA Hydrometric & Groundwater Section on the 12th November 2021) (Refer to **Attachment D.2.3** of the WWDA application for a copy of the WAC calculations).

For this calculation, due to the High status Objective (2027) for the Dripsey_020, the High status EQSs for BOD, Total Ammonia and Ortho-P under S.I. No. 77 of 2019 were also used, unlike the Good status EQSs which were only used by the EPA in 2012.

It is important to reiterate again at this stage that the Dripsey WwTP is not listed as a significant pressure in At Risk waterbodies in the 2nd and draft 3rd cycle catchment assessments. The significant pressure for the Dripsey_020 has been determined as Hydromorphology (overgrazing). The discharge from the Dripsey WwTP will not contribute to this significant pressure, and its resultant adverse effects on this waterbody.

It was important to determine if the discharge from the new Dripsey WwTP on its own is likely to cause a deterioration in the current status of the Dripsey_020, or if the discharge will impede the river achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027. This was determined using the EPA's Notional Clean River approach.

When the notional clean background approach (*i.e.*, BOD 0.26mg/l, Total Ammonia 0.008mg/l & Ortho-P 0.005mg/l) was applied, the resultant downstream concentrations for BOD, Total Ammonia and Ortho-P comply with the relevant High status EQSs for each parameter (see **Table 4**).

Based on the mean actual background concentrations, the WAC calculations shows that there would be sufficient assimilative capacity in the receiving water to receive flows and loads in terms of BOD. For both Ammonia and Ortho-P however, resultant concentrations of 0.117mg/l and 0.054mg/l respectively are predicted downstream, both of which are above the relevant High status EQSs (see **Table 5**).

It is worth noting that in terms of the current Good status EQSs (current WFD status of the Dripsey_020 waterbody), the resultants downstream concentrations for BOD, Total Ammonia and

Ortho-P are well within the Good status EQSs based on the actual mean background concentrations (January 2019 to June 2021) (see **Table 6**).

Table 4 - WAC for 600 p.e. – Notional Clean River Background & High Status EQSs

Parameter	Notional Clean River Conc	ELV	Contribution from Primary Discharge (mg/l)	Predicted D/S Conc (mg/l)	Relevant Standard (mg/l) (High Status)
BOD	0.260	25	0.097	0.36	≤2.2 ^{Note 1}
Ortho-P (MRP)	0.005	5	0.019	0.024	≤0.045 ^{Note 1}
Total Ammonia	0.008	10	0.039	0.047	≤0.09 ^{Note 1}

Note 1 European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment). Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019)

Table 5 - WAC for 600 p.e. - Mean Ambient Background (January 2019 to June 2021 Data) & High Status EQSs

Parameter	Upstream River Conc ^{Note 1}	ELVs as per D0426-01	Contribution from Primary Discharge (mg/l)	Predicted D/S Conc (mg/l)	Relevant Standard (mg/l) (High Status)
BOD	0.975	25	0.097	1.072	≤2.2 ^{Note 2}
Ortho-P (MRP)	0.035	5	0.019	0.054	≤0.045 ^{Note 2}
Total Ammonia	0.078	10	0.039	0.117	≤0.09 ^{Note 2}

Note 1: Based on grab sampling carried out between 2019-2021.

Note 2: European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment). Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019)

Table 6 - WAC for 600 p.e. - Mean Ambient Background (January 2019 to June 2021 Data) & Good Status EQSs

Parameter	Upstream River Conc ^{Note 1}	ELVs as per D0426-01	Contribution from Primary Discharge (mg/l)	Predicted D/S Conc (mg/l)	Relevant Standard (mg/l) (Good Status)
BOD	0.975	25	0.097	1.072	≤2.6 ^{Note 1}
Ortho-P (MRP)	0.035	5	0.019	0.054	≤0.075 ^{Note 1}
Total Ammonia	0.078	10	0.039	0.117	<0.14 ^{Note 1}

Note 1: Based on grab sampling carried out between 2019-2021.

Note 2: European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment). Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019)

In summary, based on the Notional Clean River approach, the ELVs as per D0426-01 will ensure that the discharge from the Dripsey WwTP contributes towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020 and contributes towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027 in accordance with the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and will ultimately ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment as a result of the primary discharge from the new WwTP.

7. EIA Screening Criteria Assessment

This section of the Screening Report considers the proposed development (*i.e.*, operational discharges from the Dripsey WwTP) against the Schedule 7 criteria. Schedule 7 specifies ‘*Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment*’ under these three headings.

1. Characteristics of proposed development
2. Location of proposed development
3. Characteristics of potential impacts

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations sets out ‘*Information to be provided by the Applicant or Developer for the Purposes of Screening Sub-threshold Development for Environmental Impact Assessment*’. This information includes:

1. A description of the proposed development
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7

This Screening Report includes the relevant Schedule 7A information. This is contained in **Sections 2 to 6** above, and in the Schedule 7 criteria commentary provided in the tables below.

7.1 Characteristic of the Proposed Development	
a. The size and design of the whole of the proposed development	<p>The Dripsey agglomeration is a small catchment area currently serving ca. 420 p.e. with a maximum of design p.e. of 600. The source of the wastewater in the agglomeration is largely domestic in nature.</p> <p>The primary discharge ELVs have been set to ensure that the discharge from the Dripsey WwTP contributes towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020 and contributes towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027 in accordance with the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and will ultimately ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment as a result of the discharge from the new WwTP (Refer Appendix D.2.1 Impact Assessment Report of the WWDA application).</p> <p>In terms of the 2 no. SWO’s from the new WwTP, both have been designed in compliance with the definition of ‘<i>Storm Water Overflow</i>’ as per Regulation 3 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007, as amended and the criteria as set out in the DoEHLG ‘<i>Procedures and Criteria in Relation to Storm Water Overflows</i>’, 1995.</p> <p>Refer to Sections 2 and 3 of the EIA Screening Report for further details.</p>

7.1 Characteristic of the Proposed Development	
b. cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects	<p>There are no IPC or waste licensed activities discharging to the Dripsey River upstream or downstream of the agglomeration.</p> <p>There are no other existing waste water discharges in the vicinity of the Dripsey WwTP's operational discharges.</p> <p>Cork County Council planning portal was reviewed to identify any planning applications which have been submitted and/or granted within the last 5 years (from March 2022). The majority of applications are domestic dwellings. This review did not identify any other projects, either existing or approved, which have the potential to interact with the Dripsey WwTP's operational discharges, and result in significant cumulative impacts.</p>
c. the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	<p>The operational discharges have been designed and incorporate key measures to avoid and prevent significant effects on the receiving Dripsey River (refer to Section 3 of this Report). The new WwTP is expected to have a positive impact in terms of the reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the Dripsey River.</p> <p>The effluent discharge standards, the design of the overflows, along with the positive residual effects from the remedial network upgrade works, will ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment or its associated biodiversity as a result of the discharges from the agglomeration.</p> <p>As such, the use of these resources is not considered significant.</p>
d. the production of waste;	Not applicable for operational discharges.
e. pollution and nuisances;	<p>The Dripsey WwTP's operational discharges have been designed and incorporate key measures to avoid and prevent significant effects on the receiving Dripsey River (refer to Section 3 of this Report). The new WwTP is expected to have a positive impact in terms of the reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the Dripsey River.</p> <p>The effluent discharge standards, the design of the overflows, along with the positive residual effects from the remedial network upgrade works, will ensure that the operational discharges from the agglomeration (i) contribute towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020, (ii) contribute towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027 in accordance with the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and (iii) will ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment or its associated biodiversity as a result of the discharges from the agglomeration.</p> <p>Refer to Section 6 of this Report and Attachment D.2.3 of the WWDA review application for details on the WAC of the Dripsey River.</p> <p>An assessment of the potential for impacts on receiving waters from priority substances in the primary discharge has been carried out to inform this WWDA review application. It concluded that none of the substances listed in the Specific Pollutants, Priority and Priority Hazardous Substances as outlined in the Surface Water Regulations, are likely to be present in the effluent</p>

7.1 Characteristic of the Proposed Development	
	<p>discharge to the Dripsey River, at concentrations above the specified standards as per European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009, as amended (now S.I No. 77 of 2019) (Refer to Attachment D.2.4 of the WWDA review application for a copy the Priority Substances Assessment Report).</p> <p>There are no other nuisances that would cause unusual, significant, or adverse effects of a type that would, in themselves require an EIA.</p>
f. the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	<p>The Waste Water Treatment Works at Dripsey has been designed and incorporates a number of key measures to prevent unintended discharges to the Dripsey River. Refer to Attachment C.2 of the WWDA review application and Section 3 of this EIA Screening Report for further details.</p> <p>It is considered that there is minimal potential for major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to operational discharges on the basis of best scientific knowledge.</p>
g. the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	<p>There are no downstream drinking water abstraction points on the River Dripsey. The drinking water abstraction point (Code: 0500PUB3401) on Inniscarra Lake/Reservoir is ca. 6.5 km downstream of the discharge point and ca. 5 km downstream of the confluence of the Dripsey River with the Lee/Inniscarra Lake. The reservoir covers an area of ca. 489 hectares, which offers significant dispersion capacity, and the Dripsey River has a current Q4-5 (High, Unpolluted) status before it meets the confluence. At the abstraction point the raw water intake and treated water is tested weekly for Cryptosporidium and Giardia. The risk assessments completed by IW/Cork County Council for this abstraction do not identify the Dripsey discharge as a risk.</p> <p>There are no risks to human health from the operational discharges that would cause unusual, significant, or adverse effects of a type that would, in themselves require an EIA.</p>

7.2 Location of Proposed Development	
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
(a) the existing and approved land use;	Not applicable.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land,	The receiving waterbody of the operational discharges is the Dripsey River (Dripsey_020). Dripsey_020 is within the Lee, Cork Harbour, and Youghal Bay Catchment (Hydrometric Area 19). The Dripsey WwTP is not listed as a significant pressure in At Risk waterbodies in the 2nd and draft 3 rd Cycle catchment assessments. The significant pressure for the Dripsey_020

7.2 Location of Proposed Development	
<p>water, and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;</p>	<p>has been determined as Hydromorphology (overgrazing). The discharges from the Dripsey WwTP will not contribute to this significant pressure, and its resultant adverse effects on this waterbody.</p> <p>Based on the proposed ELVs and assimilative capacity of the Dripsey_020, along with design of the SWO's and the measures in place to prevent unintended discharges, it is considered that operational discharges are not likely to have a significant effect on the abundance, quality, or regenerative capacity of the Dripsey River.</p> <p>Refer to Sections 2 to 6 of this Report for further details.</p>
<p>(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</p>	<p>(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p> <p>The operational discharges will not give rise to significant effects on the absorption capacity of the natural environment of the Dripsey River and its riparian areas. Refer Point (b) above.</p> <p>(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment</p> <p>The operational discharges have no potential to impact on these features of the natural environment due to the location of the discharges.</p> <p>(iii) mountain and forest areas</p> <p>The operational discharges have no potential to impact on these features of the natural environment due to the location of the discharges.</p> <p>(iv) nature reserves and parks</p> <p>The operational discharges have no potential to impact on these features of the natural environment due to the location of the discharges.</p> <p>(v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;</p> <p>There are no designated shellfish waters, designated bathing waters, nutrient sensitive waters, Margaritifera Sensitive Areas, within the region of the Dripsey WwTP's operational discharges or within its zone of influence.</p> <p>The nearest European sites to the operation discharges are The Gearagh SAC and The Gearagh SPA located ca. 26 km and 27 km upstream of the operational discharges on the River Lee (<i>i.e.</i>, upstream of the confluence with the River Dripsey). The nearest European site downstream of the primary discharge is the Cork Harbour SPA (<i>ca.</i> 30 km downstream). The Great Channel Island SAC is located <i>ca.</i> 34 km downstream of the primary discharge. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been produced separate to this EIA Screening Report, to assess the likelihood of significant effects on European sites. The AA Screening concluded that there were no likely significant effects on any European sites arising from</p>

7.2 Location of Proposed Development

the operational discharges, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. A Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is not required. Refer to **Attachment D.2.2** of the WWDA review application for a copy the AA Screening Report.

There are 10 pNHAs and 1 NHA within 15 km of the WwTP and the operational discharges, the closest of which is Glashgarriff River pNHA (ca. 5.25 km west of the agglomeration). No pathway exists by which the operational discharges could impact upon The Glashgarriff River pNHA as it is upstream of the agglomeration. The Lee Valley pNHA is located ca. 6.0 km downstream of the operational discharges at its closest point and comprises a diverse range of riparian semi-natural habitats. None of the habitats it is designated for are highly sensitive to changes in water quality. The effluent discharge standards, the design of the overflows, along with the positive residual effects from the remedial network upgrade works, will ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment, and the downstream Lee Valley pNHA, as a result of the operational discharges.

The Dripsey River, at the discharge point, is not designated under the Salmonid Regulations. The River Lee however downstream of the Inniscarra Dam (ca. 7.5 km downstream) is protected under the Salmonid Regulations. The effluent standards of the new WwTP, along with the large dilution factor available within the downstream River Lee, will ensure that the operational discharges will not have a significant impact on the downstream Salmonid Water.

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure

There are no areas which the environmental quality standards of the EU have already been exceeded.

(vii) densely populated areas

Not applicable.

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance

Not applicable.

7.3 Type and characteristics of the potential impact

The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in points 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

Dripsey_020 River, and downstream waterbodies.

7.3 Type and characteristics of the potential impact	
(b) the nature of the impact;	<p>The operation of the new WwTP is expected to have a permanent positive impact on the Dripsey River in terms of the reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the river.</p> <p>This impact is not likely to be significant, within the meaning of the EIA Directive.</p>
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	<p>The operational discharges will not result in transboundary impacts.</p>
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	<p>The intensity and complexity of impacts associated with the operational discharges are not considered significant within the meaning of the EIA Directive.</p>
(e) the probability of the impact;	<p>There is a high probability of positive water quality impacts. The effluent discharge standards, the design of the overflows, along with the positive residual effects from the remedial network upgrade works, will ensure that the operational discharges from the agglomeration (i) contribute towards maintaining at least Good status of the Dripsey_020, (ii) contribute towards achieving its High WFD status Objective by 2027 in accordance with the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and (iii) will ensure that there is no environmental risk posed to the receiving water environment as a result of the discharges from the agglomeration.</p> <p>Based on the above, the new WwTP is likely to have a positive impact in terms of the water quality of the Dripsey River. This impact however is not likely to be significant, within the meaning of the EIA Directive.</p>
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact	<p>A permanent long-term positive impact on the Dripsey River can be anticipated.</p> <p>The Waste Water Treatment Works at Dripsey has been designed and incorporates a number of key measures to avoid /prevent significant adverse effects on the receiving environment. The operational discharges are expected to have a positive impact in terms of reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the Dripsey River.</p> <p>This impact however is not likely to be significant, within the meaning of the EIA Directive.</p>
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects	<p>As noted earlier there are no IPC or waste licensed activities discharging to the agglomeration or to the Dripsey River upstream or downstream of the agglomeration. There are also no existing waste water discharges within the vicinity of the operational discharges.</p> <p>There are a number of other permitted and proposed projects in the locality however none of these have potential to contribute to significant effects within the meaning of the Directive when considered in-combination with the effects of the operational discharges from the new Dripsey WwTP.</p>
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	<p>The Waste Water Treatment Works at Dripsey has been designed and incorporates a number of key measures to avoid and prevent adverse effects on the receiving aquatic environment. Refer to Section 3 of this Report.</p>

Based on the review against the Schedule 7 criteria as detailed above, the environmental impacts associated with the operational discharges are not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

8. EIA Screening Conclusion

Based on the information as contained in this EIA Screening Report, there is no significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development (*i.e.*, the operational discharges from the new Dripsey WwTP in so far as they relate to the risk of environmental pollution of the receiving waters, the Dripsey River) and it is considered that an EIA is not required for the authorisation to which this application relates by virtue of its nature, size and location. The main reasons and considerations on which this conclusion is based are as follows:

1. The population equivalent (p.e) to which this application relates is 600 which is significantly below the 10,000 p.e mandatory threshold for EIA
2. The Dripsey agglomeration is a small catchment area currently serving ca. 420 p.e. with a maximum of design p.e. of 600.
3. The source of the wastewater in the agglomeration is largely domestic in nature which is readily biodegradable.
4. There are no IPC or waste licensed activities discharging to the agglomeration or to the Dripsey River upstream or downstream of the agglomeration.
5. There are no existing waste water discharges within the vicinity of the proposed waste water discharge.
6. The Dripsey WwTP and its primary effluent discharge (SW001) have been designed to meet the standards to satisfy all relevant regulatory requirements including the Surface Water Regulations (S.I. No. 77 of 2019) and the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations (S.I. No. 254 of 2001).
7. The new WwTP is expected to have a positive impact in terms of the reduction in the levels of nutrients being discharged into the Dripsey River.
8. The capacity of the receiving water to assimilate the discharges from the agglomeration.
9. The design of the Storm Water Overflows (SW002 and SW003) in compliance with the definition of 'Storm Water Overflow' as per Regulation 3 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007, as amended and the criteria as set out in the DoEHLG 'Procedures and Criteria in Relation to Storm Water Overflows', 1995.
10. The Waste Water Treatment Works has been designed and incorporates a number of measures to avoid /prevent significant adverse effects on the receiving aquatic environment.
11. The remedial network upgrade works completed will mitigate the risk of hydraulic impact to the WwTP, will retain additional reserve storage capacity in foul network and will lead to reduced overflows from the stormwater overflows.
12. Cumulative effect with other existing and planned discharges are not likely to give rise to significant effects.
13. Downstream of the WwTP at RS19D060400 (ca. 1 km downstream), a Q value of 4-5 has been reported since 2011.
14. The Dripsey_020 waterbody trends (at Dripsey Br, downstream of the operational discharges) for Ortho-P and Total Ammonia for 2013-2018 are Downwards (decreasing concentrations). For 2013-2018, Ammonium and Ortho-P are noted as High status under the WFD.

It is therefore concluded that there is no requirement for the EPA to conduct an EIA in respect of this application, and there is no requirement on Irish Water to either prepare or submit an EIA Report.