

APRIL 2018

Water Supply Project, Eastern and Midlands Region Consultation Newsletter No.5

Parteen Basin confirmed as Preferred Scheme

Irish Water has published a report summarising feedback from the latest consultation on the preferred scheme for the Water Supply Project, Eastern and Midlands Region (WSP) that will deliver a secure, reliable and sustainable long-term water supply for the region for future decades and generations.

Background

Extensive research work and public consultations undertaken by Irish Water, and previously by Dublin City Council, have concluded definitively that existing water supply sources do not have the capacity or resilience to meet future requirements of homes and businesses in Dublin and the midlands.

The review of the project, its alignment with the National Planning Framework and analysis of all of the feedback has confirmed definitively that existing water supply sources do not have the capacity or resilience to meet future requirements of homes and businesses in Dublin and the midlands.

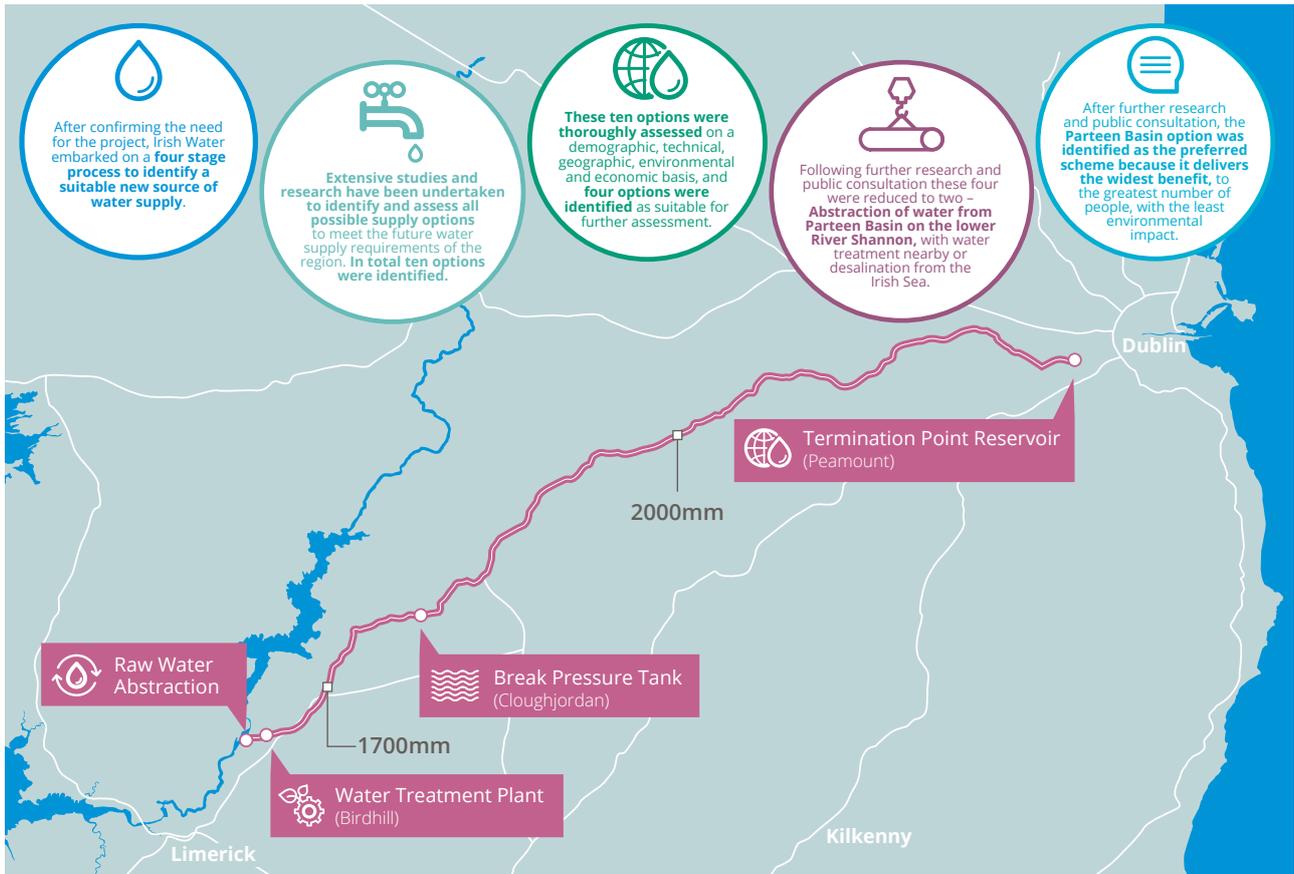
Forecast population and economic growth will generate a demand for an additional 330 million litres of water per day in the Eastern and Midlands Region by 2050. The preferred scheme to meet this demand and allow for growth comprises the abstraction of water from Parteen Basin on the Lower River Shannon, with water treatment nearby at Birdhill, County Tipperary. Treated water would then be piped 170km to a new reservoir at Peamount in south County Dublin, connecting to the Greater Dublin network. Provision of treated water supplies to communities in North Tipperary, Offaly, Laois, Westmeath, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow is also enabled by the preferred scheme.

Parteen Basin is the option which delivers the widest benefit to the greatest number of people, with the least environmental impact and in the most cost effective manner. In February 2017, Irish Water concluded the fourth non-statutory public consultation on the preferred scheme for a new water supply for the Eastern and Midlands Region and the proposed methodology for environmental assessment.

How the preferred scheme was selected

Since Irish Water took over the management of the project extensive studies and research along with considerable public consultation have been undertaken to identify and assess all possible supply options to meet the future water supply requirements of the Eastern and Midlands Region. The various steps involved in arriving at the preferred option are outlined in the diagram overleaf.

How the Preferred Scheme for the Water Supply Project, Eastern and Midlands Region was selected



Pending planning consent, the project, when constructed, will be the first major comprehensive upgrade to Ireland's new water source infrastructure in the region in over 60 years and will help to meet the domestic and commercial needs of over 40% of the population up to 2050 and beyond while delivering long-term social, economic and environmental benefits along the entire length of the pipeline.

Public Consultation

Over 1,000 stakeholders participated in the last consultation stage on the preferred scheme, which ran for fourteen weeks from 8 November 2016 to 14 February 2017.



All feedback received has been considered and responded to by the project team and is summarised in the Consultation Submissions Report, which is available on the project website www.watersupplyproject.ie

Feedback was invited on the preferred scheme as well as issues to be addressed in preparing the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. Irish Water has sought, listened to and responded to public feedback at every stage, from assessment of the need right through to identification of the preferred scheme, and this informed the development of the WSP.

Irish Water is committed to staying in close and active contact with stakeholders as it moves towards submitting the planning application.

Feedback received

All feedback received by the project team as part of this fourth, non-statutory period of consultation on the WSP was acknowledged and recorded and is documented in the Consultation Submissions Report. The quantity of feedback received through each channel during the consultation period was as follows



Engaging with Landowners

Since 2016, Irish Water has been and will continue to engage with landowners along the preferred pipeline route corridor, and currently there are four dedicated Landowner Liaison Officers working on the WSP Project.

The role of the Landowner Liaison Officer is to provide landowners with a dedicated point of contact throughout the project, and to address any issues related to the project which may be of concern to individual landowners regarding the proposed pipeline route, construction impacts and future operations. Concerns and issues raised by landowners have been taken into account in the consultation process. Irish Water has considered in detail, on a case-by-case basis, all 124 requests for alterations to the pipeline route received during the consultation period. A summary of this can be found in the Consultation Submissions Report.

Consultation Submissions Report

Irish Water has fully considered all submissions and queries received, and listened carefully to the views expressed by stakeholders throughout the consultation period. The Consultation Submissions Report outlines Irish Water's response to this feedback. Please see the key issues below.

Summary of Key Issues





What is happening now?

Irish Water will continue to progress the preparation of a planning application that will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in 2019 for their independent assessment.

In December 2017, the Government approved the commencement of work on a General Scheme of a Water Environment (Abstractions) Bill which it intends to publish in summer 2018 and to have enacted by the end of 2018. As a result Irish Water will have to apply for a water abstraction licence under this new regime.

Furthermore, An Bord Pleanála, when carrying out its Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of WSP, will have to assess the cumulative effects, including those of impacts on habitats arising from the abstraction. All potential impacts of the scheme, including abstraction, will therefore be addressed in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and the Natura Impact Statement, which are currently being prepared and will accompany Irish Water's planning application to An Bord Pleanála for their independent assessment.

Further information can be obtained by calling **1890 252 848**

Contact Us

Should you have any questions or queries about this project, wish to request hard copies of any of the publications mentioned in this newsletter or wish to be included on a mailing list for project updates, please do contact us using the details below.

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