

Water Supply Project

Eastern and Midlands Region

The Preferred Scheme for a New Water Supply for the Eastern & Midlands Region

Information for Landowners

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NOVEMBER 2016

Irish Water has launched the fourth public consultation phase on the Preferred Scheme for a New Water Supply for the Eastern and Midlands Region (WSP). This will represent the first major comprehensive upgrade of 'new source' infrastructure in over 60 years and will meet the domestic and commercial needs of over 40% of Ireland's population into the medium to long term future.

Irish Water's remit includes the delivery of a sustainable and resilient Water Supply nationally. One of the key elements in the successful delivery of that remit is finding a new source of water supply for the Eastern and Midlands region of the country. Simply fixing the leaks, important though that is, will not deliver the additional 330 million litres of water a day this region will need by 2050.

In order to identify a new Source for the Eastern and Midlands Region, Irish Water has, over the past few years, carried out extensive research, environmental and technical assessments of various options and three rounds of public consultation.

What is happening now?

Phase Four of the consultation process has now begun with the publication of the Final Options Appraisal Report (FOAR)

and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Report. The FOAR confirms that the preferred scheme is:

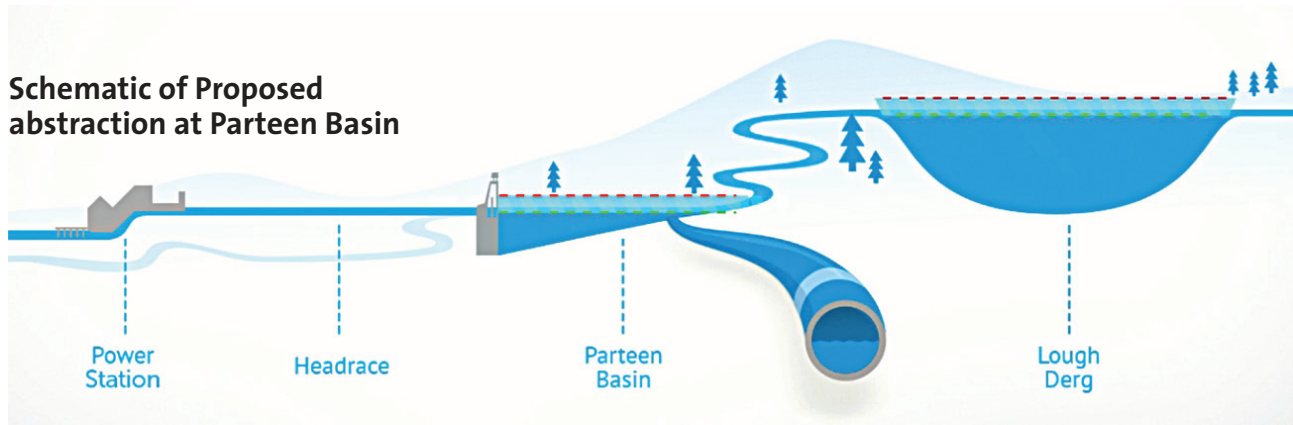
- Abstraction of water from the Lower Shannon at Parteen Basin
- Water treatment nearby at Birdhill
- Treated water piped to a termination point reservoir at Peamount in South County Dublin, with supplies of treated water available to Midland communities along the route.

The EIS Scoping Report considers potential issues which may arise from the preferred scheme and describes how any impacts will be assessed.

We are now undertaking a **14 week** non-statutory public consultation on these two reports and invite submissions from the general public and key stakeholders.



Parteen Basin, Lower Shannon



The Preferred Scheme

The preferred scheme involves the sustainable abstraction of water on the eastern shore of Parteen Basin in Co. Tipperary, with water treatment nearby at Birdhill. Treated water would then be piped to a termination point reservoir at Peamount in South County Dublin. Supplies of treated water would be made available to Midland communities along the route.

This would provide a reliable and sustainable water supply to present and future domestic, commercial and industrial consumers along the proposed pipeline's 170 km route.

The water abstracted from Parteen Basin would comply with the normal water level range operated by ESB in Lough Derg. Minimum statutory flow requirements along the Shannon which are maintained by the ESB would also remain unaffected.

The FOAR identifies a preferred 200m pipeline corridor and an indicative 50m pipeline corridor within which environmental, technical and geographical constraints can be accommodated.

How was the Preferred Scheme Identified?

After three rounds of public consultation and over two years of technical and environmental assessments the preferred scheme was identified as the most appropriate and widely beneficial, out of the initial ten, and subsequent four technically viable options examined.

The other options which had been under consideration were two options based in North Eastern Lough Derg and also a Desalination option located on the East coast. All options were assessed on a number of Environmental, Economic, Socio-Economic and Technical criteria and the preferred scheme has emerged following this detailed analysis. Earlier Reports concluded that the abstraction from North East Lough Derg had the potential to negatively impact the Shannon system from an environmental perspective and were therefore set aside.

Why is this the Preferred Scheme?

While Desalination is technically viable it is significantly more expensive than the Parteen Scheme, which also offers greater benefits across a wider area in accordance with Irish Water's 25 year Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP). Desalination would also be Dublin focussed, and would not address problems with existing, small and vulnerable Midland water supplies, which is an objective of the WSSP. Desalination also posed a potentially greater negative environmental impact through its use of chemicals and high energy consumption.

Abstraction of water from the Shannon at Parteen Basin (Lower Lake) has been identified as the option which best meets the objectives of the WSSP because:

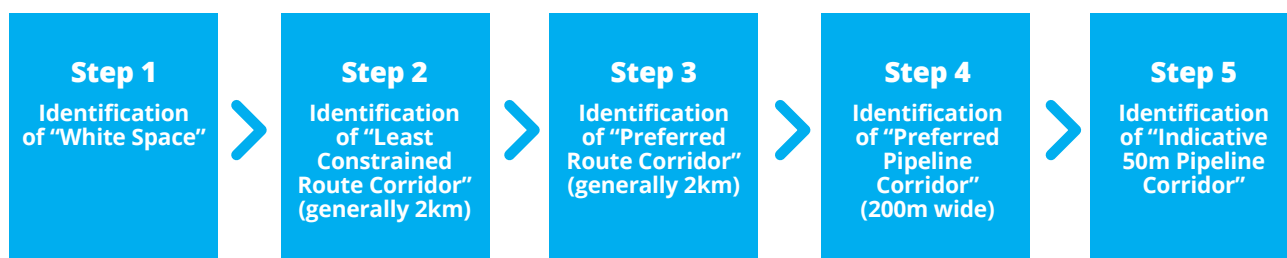
- It has, by far, the least environmental impact of any of the Shannon options which have been under consideration. It is the closest location to the river estuary with all of the water having already flowed through the Shannon to Parteen.
- The pipeline from Parteen has the potential to serve treated water to more locations, towns and communities along the route from Shannon to Dublin than any other option.
- Parteen Basin is already highly regulated because of the presence of the hydro-power plant, and water abstracted for supply will be counterbalanced by a corresponding reduction in water used in power generation. The proposed abstraction of water is, in essence, an abstraction of water from the hydro-power scheme. Abstraction of water from hydro-electric power schemes is commonly employed worldwide to enable environmentally sustainable availability of drinking water.

Site and Route Selection Process

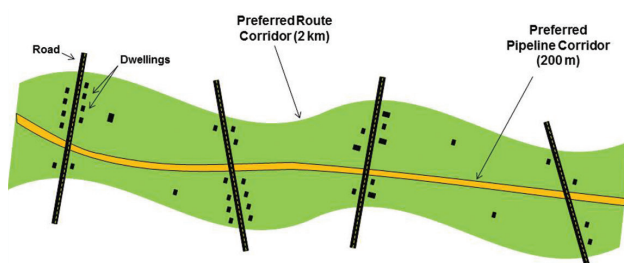
As part of the selection of the "Preferred Pipeline Corridor" and "Indicative 50m Pipeline Corridor" various technical constraints/requirements or datasets were mapped and classified by experts from the following specialist areas:

- Engineering
- Cultural Heritage
- Ecology
- Noise & Vibration
- Air Quality
- Traffic
- Landscape and Visual
- Agronomy
- Soils/Geology
- Water Quality/Hydrology
- Hydrogeology

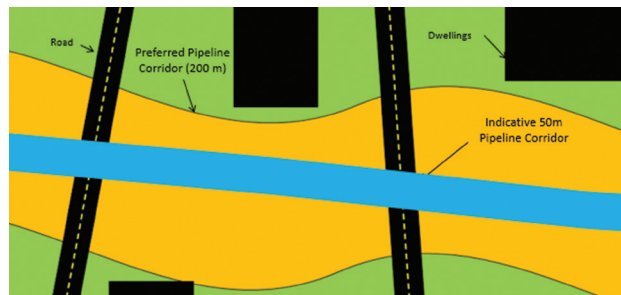
Steps taken to establish the preferred corridor are illustrated below. In addition, information gathered during environmental walkover surveys facilitated by landowners was considered in the route selection process.



Steps taken to establish the Preferred Corridor



Positioning zoom Pipeline Corridor within 2km Preferred Route Corridor



Positioning Indicative 50m Pipeline Corridor (within zoom corridor)

How would my land be impacted?

Subject to receipt of planning permission for the project, it is anticipated that construction and commissioning of the entire scheme would take approximately three to four years. The impact on any landholding would typically be approximately 18 months duration, following which the land would be fully reinstated to its original condition.

The extensive experience of Irish Water's sister company, Gas Networks Ireland (formally Bord Gáis Networks), which has successfully delivered over 2,400km of natural gas transmission pipelines through the lands of over 5,600 landowners since 1977, would be brought to bear during the planning, wayleave acquisition, construction and reinstatement phases of the project.

Throughout the planning and construction phase of the project, landowners will be kept informed by Landowner Liaison Officers (LLOs) of the planned construction activities and schedule for the start and finish of construction on their land. A pre-entry agreement would be entered into with each landowner in advance of construction commencing to document existing conditions and individual requirements in terms of fencing, water supply for stock, crossing points and drainage etc.

A temporary working width of approximately 50m wide would be required during the construction stage to manage the operations involved in construction of the pipeline and ancillary valve chambers. This would include space to properly store the excavated topsoil and subsoil separately,

to transport materials along the working area, to excavate the trench, and for workers and machinery to work safely and efficiently. Additional space might also be required at particular points such as crossings of motorways, railways, canals, etc. It is expected that construction works would last approximately 4-6 months in each landholding, with the temporary working width required for a period of 18 months in total (from the time



Pipeline corridor showing pipe before trenching and welding



Pipeline corridor post reinstatement

of installation of temporary fencing to the completion of reinstatement and removal of the temporary fencing).

Irish Water is committed to the full and proper restoration of all land disturbed by its operations and to reinstating any affected boundary walls and fences. Reinstatement would take place in accordance with an agreed Code of Practice outlining how topsoil and subsoil will be stripped, stored and protected, the disposal of excess excavated material, management of land drainage, and how the temporary working width would be prepared to receive subsoil, and then topsoil, prior to seeding.

Pipeline construction works would generally not take place on agricultural lands in winter. Following completion of the works a permanent right of access (or wayleave) would be required to inspect and maintain the pipeline and ancillary valve chambers.

This permanent wayleave would be legally documented by way of a Deed of Easement and registered as a burden on the title of the affected land and would typically be 20m in width. While the land could be farmed in the normal way, as the pipeline would have a minimum depth of cover of 1.2m, the Deed of Easement would restrict building development and forestry within the permanent wayleave.

Moving to a Final decision- What Happens Next?

This is the fourth phase of non-statutory public consultation on this project. The feedback from this consultation period, alongside further technical and environmental studies and engagement with landowners and the general public, will inform the selection of the final scheme. This will be detailed in the EIS and will accompany Irish Water's planning application to An Bord Pleanála.

During the consultation period, six landowner information evenings and eight public open days will be held at various locations along the proposed pipeline route where



Example of valve chamber in a field at field boundary

members of the project team will be available to answer any questions.

Following on from the conclusion of the consultation process in early 2017, Irish Water will continue to be in direct contact with landowners affected by the proposed pipeline route. The planning application, which is due to be lodged in late 2017 / early 2018 will be subject to a period of statutory consultation which will provide the public with an opportunity to have their say, following which An Bord Pleanála will determine whether consent should be granted.

Subject to planning permission being granted, construction and commissioning would take approximately three to four years. The new water supply would be made available along the pipeline at the end of the 3 to 4 year period.

Where can I get further information and how can I make my views known?

Your dedicated Landowner Liaison Officer is available to meet with you if you require further information or to discuss any aspect of the project. You can also contact them if you wish to make your views on the project known or if you would like to meet with other members of the project team.

Alternatively you can get in touch with the Landowner Liaison Team on **021 4239000**, at watersupply@water.ie or at **Water Supply Project, Eastern and Midlands Region, Irish Water, PO Box 900, Webworks, Eglinton Street, Cork.**

Hard copies of the FOAR and EIS Scoping Report are available to view in County Libraries and at Local Authority Planning Counters across the area or can be downloaded from www.watersupplyproject.ie.