

# Draft Cork Wastewater Strategy

## Consultation 1

## Cork Wastewater Strategy

The Cork Wastewater Strategy will assess wastewater treatment and network infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area to determine what future investment will be required in the medium and long term and to identify sustainable drainage strategies and solutions for the growing Cork Metropolitan Area.

### What is a wastewater strategy?

As our population and economy grows, so too does the volume of wastewater. We must collect and treat this wastewater so that the treated water can be safely returned to the environment. The purpose of a Wastewater Strategy is to assess wastewater treatment and network infrastructure in a defined geographic area to identify what future investment will be required in the medium and long term. Having adequate wastewater infrastructure is essential to facilitate housing provision and commercial development, and to support sustainable growth.

### Challenges facing The Cork Metropolitan Area in relation to wastewater collection and treatment, include:

- Increase in population.
- Current compliance challenges at a number of wastewater treatment plants and sewerage networks.
- Wastewater treatment and network capacity requirements to deal with current and future loads from the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- Pressures on the receiving waterbodies from wastewater discharges within the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- Climate change.

### The aims of the Cork Wastewater Strategy

The principle aim of the Cork Wastewater Strategy is to assess wastewater treatment and network infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area to identify what future investment will be required in the medium and long term.

The study will identify sustainable wastewater management and treatment strategies, and propose a prioritised options list for the planning horizon of 2030, 2055 and 2080.

The aims of the Cork Wastewater Strategy are to;

- Support the future growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area by providing the necessary capacity in wastewater drainage, management and treatment systems.

- Protect the environment through effective wastewater management.
- Prioritise sustainable solutions for effective wastewater management that deliver multiple benefits.
- Identify key strategic options that will provide the necessary capacity in drainage, management and wastewater treatment systems up to 2080.

## What is the Cork Metropolitan Area?

The Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) is a major regional metropolitan area, identified as such in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

## The Study Area

The Study Area encompasses Cork Harbour and the Port of Cork, containing over 25 towns and villages in addition to the Cork Metropolitan Area.



## How will the Cork Wastewater Strategy be developed?

The Cork Wastewater Strategy will include an analysis of the existing wastewater infrastructure along with data gathering, population and economic growth assessments, strategic environmental assessment, consultation with interested stakeholders to identify medium and long-term solutions to the wastewater needs of the region.

The Cork Wastewater Strategy will deliver a sustainable strategy that will address the needs of wastewater infrastructure. The study will offer achievable, strategic, and sustainable drainage, management and treatment options, providing capacity in the wastewater infrastructure to support economic growth for the Cork Metropolitan Area.

The sustainable drainage, management or treatment solutions will be consistent with statutory obligations and regulatory drivers designed to meet both national and international environmental objectives outlined in the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Urban Wastewater Treatment Directives (UWWTD).

*Figure 1: Inniscarra Cork River Basin.*



# Draft Cork Wastewater Strategy

The economic success of the Cork Metropolitan Area has led to very significant growth in Cork City and surrounding areas. As a result of this growth, the wastewater drainage infrastructure is challenged to keep pace with the increased demand for new serviced land needed for housing, commercial developments, and industry.

## Current Challenges Facing Cork

- Increase in population.
- Current compliance challenges at a number of wastewater treatment plants and sewerage networks
- Wastewater treatment capacity requirements within the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- Pressures on the receiving waters from wastewater discharges within the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- Effects of Climate Change.

## What is a Wastewater Strategy?

The purpose of a Wastewater Strategy is to assess wastewater treatment and network infrastructure in a defined geographic area to identify what future investment will be required in the medium and long term. Having adequate wastewater infrastructure is essential to facilitate housing provision and commercial development and to support sustainable growth and protecting the environment.

## The Study Area

The Study Area encompasses Cork Harbour and the Port of Cork and contains over 25 towns and villages in addition to the urban core of Cork City.

## What is the Cork Metropolitan Area?

The Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) is a major regional metropolitan area in County Cork, identified as such in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032.

## How is the study being developed?

The Draft Cork Wastewater Strategy will include:

1. Analysis of the existing wastewater infrastructure along with data gathering.
2. Population and economic growth assessments.
3. Strategic environmental assessment.
4. Consultation with stakeholders and the public.

## When will we Consult?

### Consultation One:

The first round of consultation will take place in 2024 and will seek feedback and comments on the Issues Paper, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report.

### Consultation Two:

Feedback from consultation one will be considered in the development of the draft Cork Wastewater Strategy which will be published for consultation in 2025 along with the associated environmental reports.

## Where can I get more information?

Email: [CWS@water.ie](mailto:CWS@water.ie)

Website: [www.water.ie/cws](http://www.water.ie/cws)



## What is happening now?

Uisce Éireann is seeking feedback on the Cork Wastewater Strategy Issues Paper and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.



## Consultation 1

Public consultation will be undertaken for eight weeks from 15 May to 9 July 2024. The Issues Paper, SEA Scoping and AA Screening can be viewed and downloaded at [www.water.ie/cws](http://www.water.ie/cws).

### To make a submission:

Email: [CWS@water.ie](mailto:CWS@water.ie)

Post: Cork Wastewater Strategy, Uisce Éireann, PO Box 860, South City Delivery Office, Cork City

All stakeholder feedback on this Issues Paper and the SEA Scoping Report and the AA Screening, will be reviewed and taken into account as we prepare a draft of the Cork Wastewater Strategy, the SEA Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Statement.

## Consultation questions

In order to assist stakeholders in making a submission as part of this public consultation, we invite feedback on the following consultation questions; however, this is just an aide and all relevant submissions received in response to the consultation will be considered.

- 1.** Do you have any suggestions that you would like Uisce Éireann to consider in the preparation of its Cork Wastewater Strategy?
- 2.** The Cork Wastewater Strategy study area comprises the CMA and the Cork Harbour and Cork Outer Harbour Water Framework Directive waterbodies. Do you have any comments on this?
- 3.** Do you have any comments on the approach to the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Cork Wastewater Strategy?
- 4.** Section 2.1 in chapter 2 of the SEA Scoping Report outlines the objectives of the Cork Wastewater Strategy. Do you have any comments on these objectives?
- 5.** Uisce Éireann has reviewed plans, policies and programmes relevant to the Cork Wastewater Strategy in chapter 4 of the SEA Scoping Report. Are there any others that should be considered?
- 6.** Chapter 3 of the SEA Scoping Report sets out the current baseline environment conditions and future trends. The environmental issues are summarised in table 3.16. Do you have any comments on these?
- 7.** Chapter 5 of the SEA Scoping Report sets out the environmental objectives that will be used to assess the Wastewater Strategy and its potential effects on the environment. Table 5.1 summarises these objectives. Have you any comments on these?
- 8.** How would you like Uisce Éireann to communicate with you as the plan progresses?

Submissions will be acknowledged collated into a consultation report and responded to in the Draft Wastewater Strategy.

All submissions made on the SEA Scoping Report will be reviewed and relevant feedback incorporated into the environmental reports and the draft Cork Wastewater Strategy as appropriate. Submissions from individuals will be reported anonymously and feedback from organisations will be attributed to them.

## Next Steps

Once the draft Cork Wastewater Strategy and associated Environmental Reports are developed by Uisce Éireann, we will commence the second round of public consultation in 2025 on the draft Cork Wastewater Strategy and associated Environmental Reports

*Figure 2: Cobh Wastewater Pumping Station.*

