



Circular on Developer Led Infrastructure (DLI) Initiative for Wastewater Services to support Housing Delivery

Number: NSP 01/2026

6th March 2026

To: Directors of Planning in each Local Authority

CC: Chief Executives
Senior Planners
An Coimisiún Pleanála
Office of the Planning Regulator
Directors of Regional Assemblies
Mayor of Limerick
Land Development Agency

Developer Led Infrastructure (DLI) Initiative for Wastewater Services to support Housing Delivery

Purpose of Circular

The Government's Housing Action Plan, '*Delivering Homes, Building Communities*' seeks to deliver 300,000 new homes by 2030. It identifies the need for the provision of enabling infrastructure, including wastewater infrastructure, to support the delivery of new residential development, particularly in locations where wastewater infrastructure capacity is constrained or absent. This objective is set out in Action 1.11 of the Housing Action Plan and is further referenced in Action 15(ii) of the '*Accelerating Infrastructure Taskforce Report & Plan*'.

Wastewater infrastructural constraints have been identified as a limiting factor for housing delivery in settlements where existing Uisce Éireann wastewater treatment capacity is not immediately available.

To address this, the Government is now enabling housing developers to deliver new wastewater infrastructure as part of their housing schemes. The Developer-Led



Infrastructure (DLI) Initiative for wastewater services includes the following key coordinated elements:

- a structured partnership approach between Uisce Éireann and developers, enabling developers to construct wastewater infrastructure to Uisce Éireann standards, with transfer of ownership to Uisce Éireann for long-term operation and maintenance;
- regulatory reform to simplify environmental authorisations for discharges from small-scale treatment facilities; and
- specific guidance for developers from Uisce Éireann and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in relation to standards and requirements.

This Circular is accompanied by a **Procedural Advice Note** to set out the procedural arrangements associated with the DLI Initiative in the context of planning applications lodged by developers for such infrastructure as part of proposals for new housing development.

For clarity, the Advice Note does not comprise statutory planning policy or guidance and does not alter the statutory planning functions of the planning authority under the Planning and Development Acts.

DLI Initiative

A collaborative delivery model between developers and Uisce Éireann for the provision of new wastewater infrastructure is the core of the new arrangements. Under this model, the developer will finance and construct the required infrastructure in accordance with Uisce Éireann standards, with Uisce Éireann then taking ownership and responsibility for ongoing operation and regulatory compliance.



A registration-based authorisation process for small-scale wastewater discharges of 150 population equivalent (about 40 residential units) has recently been established by new regulations¹ (pursuant to the European Communities Act 1972). This new regime safeguards environmental protection through General Binding Rules, while in tandem enabling developers to build wastewater infrastructure as part of new housing schemes. This approach allows for a time-efficient regulatory pathway for small-scale developments by replacing the requirement for individual EPA discharge authorisations/licences for each development.

Under the DLI initiative, Uisce Éireann will assume responsibility for securing EPA registration of the wastewater infrastructure built by developers to Uisce Éireann standards and will take ownership of the infrastructure once completed. The EPA, however, retains clear responsibility for regulatory oversight and enforcement.

Also enabled under the DLI Initiative, are arrangements for temporary bridging infrastructure for wastewater facilities to support the activation of housing developments. This is where, by agreement with Uisce Éireann, a developer can provide a temporary wastewater solution for their housing scheme during an interim period only before a scheduled increase in the capacity or provision of Uisce Éireann infrastructure is delivered, with removal of the temporary facilities thereafter.

Lodgment of a Planning Application

Prior to the lodging of a planning application for a housing development supported by the DLI Initiative, the developer will be required to submit a Pre-Connection Enquiry (PCE) to Uisce Éireann for their proposed development and subsequently submit a technical proposal for their review where appropriate.

The developer will then proceed to submit their planning application for the housing development to the planning authority in the normal manner, demonstrating that the

¹ SI No 65 of 2026 - European Union (Water Policy) (Small Waste Water Discharge Registration) Regulations 2026.



proposed infrastructure is in compliance with EPA Guidance, national, regional and local planning policy and relevant European Directives.

The DLI initiative is intended to support the timely delivery of new housing through implementation of the relevant statutory City or County Development Plan while maintaining robust environmental protections.

Any enquiries relating to this Circular should be labelled 'DLI Wastewater Initiative' and emailed to forwardplanning@housing.gov.ie.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claragh Mulhern', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Claragh Mulhern,

Principal Adviser

*Attached - Procedural Advice Note for Planning Authorities: Developer-Led
Wastewater Infrastructure Initiative to support Housing Delivery*