

Request for Observations from Public Bodies MUL230037 Newport Bay and Clew Bay

Proposed Activity:

Marine surveys within Newport Bay and Clew Bay to inform the outfall discharge location for a proposed new Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) to serve the Newport agglomeration in Co. Mayo. The survey works are to inform water quality models supporting Uisce Éireann's capital delivery programme to improve wastewater treatment for the public good. No permanent works are proposed, all survey equipment will be removed following completion of data acquisition.

BIM comments:

BIM acknowledge the reference to fisheries and aquaculture within Section 4.5 of the AIMU report. *“Clew, Newport, and Westport Bay accounts for the largest number of licenced aquaculture sites in County Mayo. There are numerous aquaculture licences held within the Bay for various aquaculture species, including - Atlantic Salmon, Pacific Oyster, Manila Clam, Great Atlantic Scallop, Blue Mussel, European Lobster and seaweed. The proposed marine surveying will not impact any of the aquaculture sites within the survey area. The proposed types of surveys are common in Ireland and indeed similar surveying was completed prior to the development of Newport wastewater treatment plant. The surveying will be short in duration and will not be place within a licenced aquaculture area (as listed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine); as such there will be no negative or adverse impact on any aquaculture area or fisheries activities.”*

Section 4.5 does not refer to the Clew Bay Oyster Fishery Order 1979 which is vested in the Clew Bay Oyster Cooperative Society Ltd. The natural flat oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) beds in Clew Bay are of both national and international importance. They are one of only nine such national native oyster beds in the country. The Clew Bay Oyster Co-operative Society Ltd. (CBOC) manages these naturally occurring beds of native flat oysters under the Clew Bay Oyster Fishery Order which was established in 1979, covering some 17,500 hectares of the inner Bay.



BIM do not envisage any issues with the survey activity, Bathymetric, water sampling locations and Dye and microbial tracing activity with regard to aquaculture and fisheries and a normal notice to mariners would suffice. The applicant and assigned survey contractor would need to be cognisant of the presence of structures such as oyster trestles and navigational poles close to oyster licenced sites which will not be navigable directly above them even on high tides.

However, to avoid any issues, timely notification to notify fishers on the ground, through direct contact to The Clew Bay Oyster Co-operative Society Ltd. (CBOC), and usual channels of communication, such as Marine Notices, the Producer Organisations such as the IS&EFPO, IIMRO, NIFA, local RIFF, all the relevant harbour port offices and local authority offices, and local media including Marine Times where possible covering the impacted area.