

## Attachment 4.11

### **Additional information for the overall purpose of the proposed Maritime Usage (strategic National/European policy objectives, national targets, research objectives)**

The proposed Maritime Usage will provide essential baseline environmental data to inform the design and location of a new marine outfall associated with the upgrade to existing wastewater treatment plants (WWTP). The existing Lahinch WWTP facility has been on the EPA's Priority Action List since 2016 due to inadequate treatment performance. Upgrading the system and decommissioning the existing non-compliant plants in Lahinch and Ennistymon will significantly reduce pressures in receiving waters.

At a national level, the site investigation surveys align with Project Ireland 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018–2027, which emphasise balanced regional development and investment in critical water infrastructure to protect public health, support economic growth, and ensure environmental compliance. The proposed upgrade supports these objectives by providing infrastructure capacity to meet the needs of a growing resident and seasonal population, in line with circular economy and climate resilience goals.

The project also supports implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (EU 2024/3019), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC), by ensuring that treated discharges are designed and located to minimise ecological impact and achieve good ecological and chemical status of coastal waters. The required site investigation surveys will assess bathymetry, sediment quality, currents, and ecological sensitivity, ensuring that outfall siting and design meet EU environmental protection standards.

Regionally, the site investigation surveys are consistent with the Clare County Development Plan, which identifies Ennistymon/Lahinch as a Linked Service Town and key growth area in North Clare. Both settlements provide business, retail, and employment services catering for the local population, while Lahinch, situated on the Wild Atlantic Way, is noted for its national and international tourism product which includes recreational activities associated with its seaside location. Lahinch is a popular, well-established seaside resort situated on the picturesque Liscannor Bay. Famous for its long sandy beach and championship links golf course, Lahinch also has excellent water for surfing and sea kayaking which attracts many tourists to the area. The upgrade of wastewater infrastructure will support sustainable population growth, tourism, and recreation—particularly along the Wild Atlantic Way, where clean coastal waters underpin visitor appeal and local economic activity.

By generating robust scientific data to inform infrastructure that protects both public health and marine biodiversity, the proposed site investigation surveys advance national and European strategic objectives.