

MI Observations on MUL260036 - Uisce Éireann, River Suir Estuary marine site investigations.

FEAS – Marine Institute – Version 1 – 11/05/2026

Request

Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services (FEAS) Marine Institute, were asked by DAFM for observations, by the 11th of May, on the MUL260036 application being made by Uisce Éireann (UÉ) to conduct marine Site Investigations and environmental surveys within the River Suir Estuary adjacent to the townlands of Kilmurry, Gorteens, Little Island, Ballycanvan Big and Faithlegg to support an upgrade project to Waterford City Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Response

In the view of Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services (FEAS) the site investigation works will have minimal to no impact any fish stocks, fisheries or aquaculture sites.

Summary

- Considering the short nature and small areas of proposed operations, they should not interfere with fishing activities or fish ecology/biology.
- Investigations are required to inform selection, design and environmental assessment or a marine outfall as part of an upgrade project to Waterford City Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Survey investigations would comprise:
 - **Geophysical** surveys: Magnetometer; Sub-bottom profiler (SBP); Side-scan sonar (SSS); Multibeam Echo Sounder (MBES); Marine Refraction Seismic; Marine Electrical Resistivity Tomography.
 - **Geotechnical** surveys: Drop-down camera survey; Boreholes; Standard Penetration Testing (SPT); Grab samples; Surface water samples;
 - **Other**: Intertidal walkover survey; Intertidal core/grab samples; Bathymetric Survey; CCTV survey of the existing outfall; Archaeological surveys and other investigations (i.e., underwater inspections, walkovers, metal detectors, dive surveys); Metocean monitoring buoys for physical oceanographic data.
- No permanent structures are to be erected and all site investigation works will be temporary in nature.
- The operation is expected to take 16 weeks, the licence is requested for 3 years to allow for planning/ delays/ consent.
- There are no aquaculture sites within the survey area, though there are licensed Aquaculture sites further downstream in the Shelfish Water Directive area of the estuary¹.
- The site sits in a Special Area of Conservation.

¹ <https://dafm-maps.marine.ie/aquaculture-viewer/>