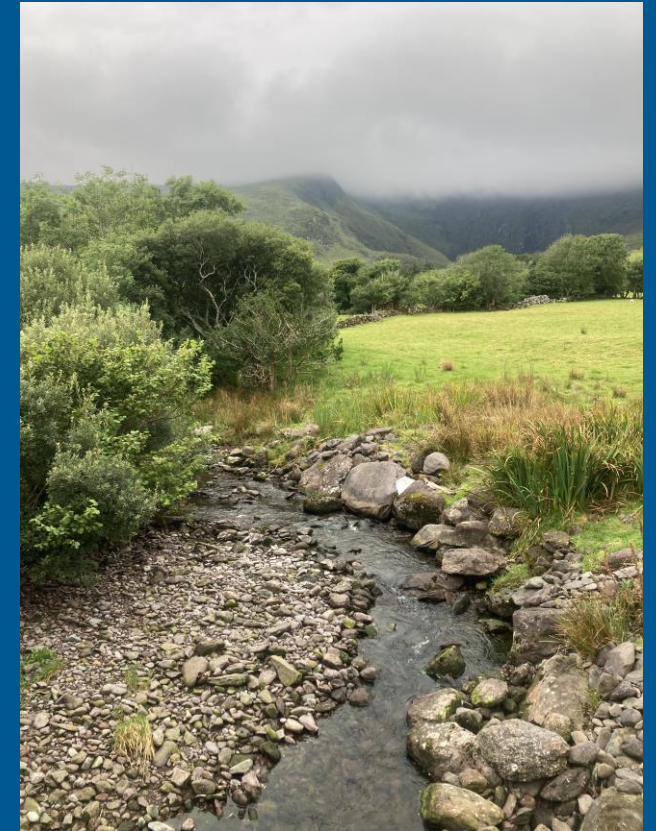
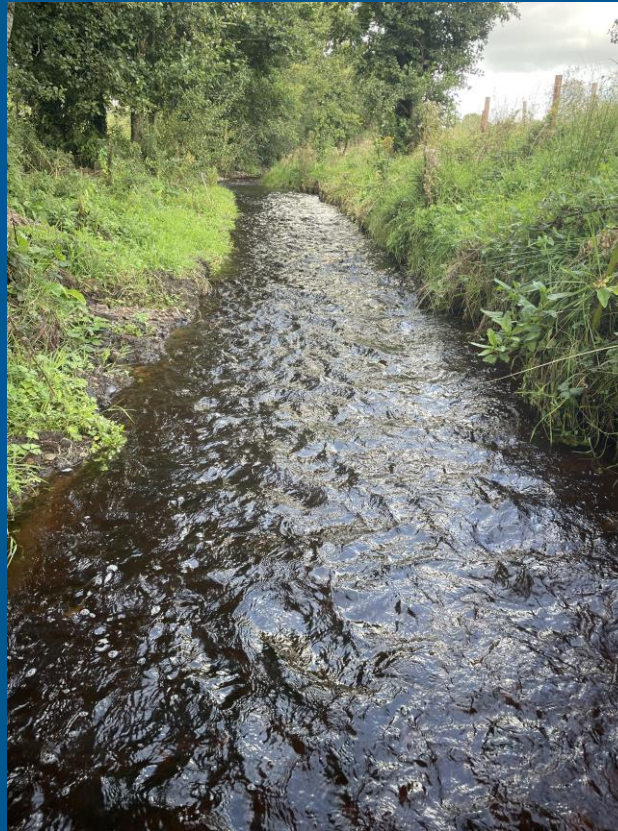


Registration of small wastewater discharges – a new regulatory approach

Jim Moriarty 17 June 2026





Regulating wastewater discharges is essential for protection of our water environment and public health.

- Announced by Housing Minister Browne in November 2025
- Accelerate housing delivery by allowing builders develop, in conjunction with Uisce Éireann, wastewater treatment facilities for small developments
- Discharges to be registered with EPA

Housing Minister James Browne announces new private sector role in developing wastewater systems

From: [Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage](#)

Published on: 4 November 2025

Last updated on: 11 November 2025

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage James Browne has announced today that builders will be able to develop new wastewater treatment facilities in collaboration with Uisce Éireann for smaller housing developments of up to 40 homes.

The significant initiative brought to Cabinet today aims to accelerate housing delivery by introducing regulatory changes that allow low-volume wastewater systems (serving up to 40 homes) to be authorised through a registration system. This system will operate under General Binding Rules (GBRs) prescribed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030

An Action Plan on Housing Supply and Targeting Homelessness

Government will bring forward measures for developers to deliver new standalone wastewater treatment plants to bolster the service provided by Uisce Éireann. The development of these proposals are at an advanced stage. The introduction of any such proposal would unlock additional housing supply. It will require regulatory reform relating to the granting of discharge authorisations. Arrangements will be established for the transfer of infrastructure to Uisce Éireann for operation and maintenance thereafter.

Nov 13th



Waste Water Regulation



Aglomeration size	Pre-Existing Form of Regulation	New form of regulation
<10pe	Registration of DWWTS & Code of Practice. Enforcement by LA to a National Ins. Plan	Registration of DWWTS & Code of Practice. Enforcement by LA
>10<500pe	Certificate of Authorisation from EPA . Enforcement by EPA	>150<500 pe Certificate of Authorisation from EPA . Enforcement by EPA
>500pe	WWDL from EPA. Enforcement by EPA	WWDL from EPA. Enforcement by EPA
>10<150pe	Certificate of Authorisation from EPA . Enforcement by EPA	Registration & Compliance with GBRs. Enforcement by EPA

Regulations S.I. 65 of 2026



- Signed 24 February 2026
- Registration Criteria required within 2 mths
- General Binding Rules (n=21) specified in a Schedule
 - Limitations on size, capacity & discharge
 - Operation & Maintenance
 - Incident Reporting
 - Treatment Performance Standards
 - Discharge & ambient monitoring



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

S.I. No. 65 of 2026

EUROPEAN UNION (WATER POLICY) (SMALL WASTEWATER
DISCHARGE REGISTER) REGULATIONS 2026

Treatment Standards & Monitoring



15. The wastewater works shall be designed, operated and maintained so as to achieve at least secondary treatment standards prior to discharge as follows:

Parameter	Concentration (after secondary treatment)
cBOD	25 mg/l O ₂
COD	125 mg/l O ₂
Total Suspended Solids	35 mg/l

Discharge monitoring and ambient monitoring

18. Uisce Éireann must inspect and sample the treated effluent discharge twice a year and analyse it for the parameters set out in Rule 15.
- 21.1. Uisce Éireann must carry out a small stream risk score assessment or other suitable ecological assessment at a suitable location upstream and downstream of the discharge point once every 3 years.

Small Waste Water Discharges Registration Criteria

Summary: This document sets out the registration criteria that will need to be satisfied when registering a discharge.



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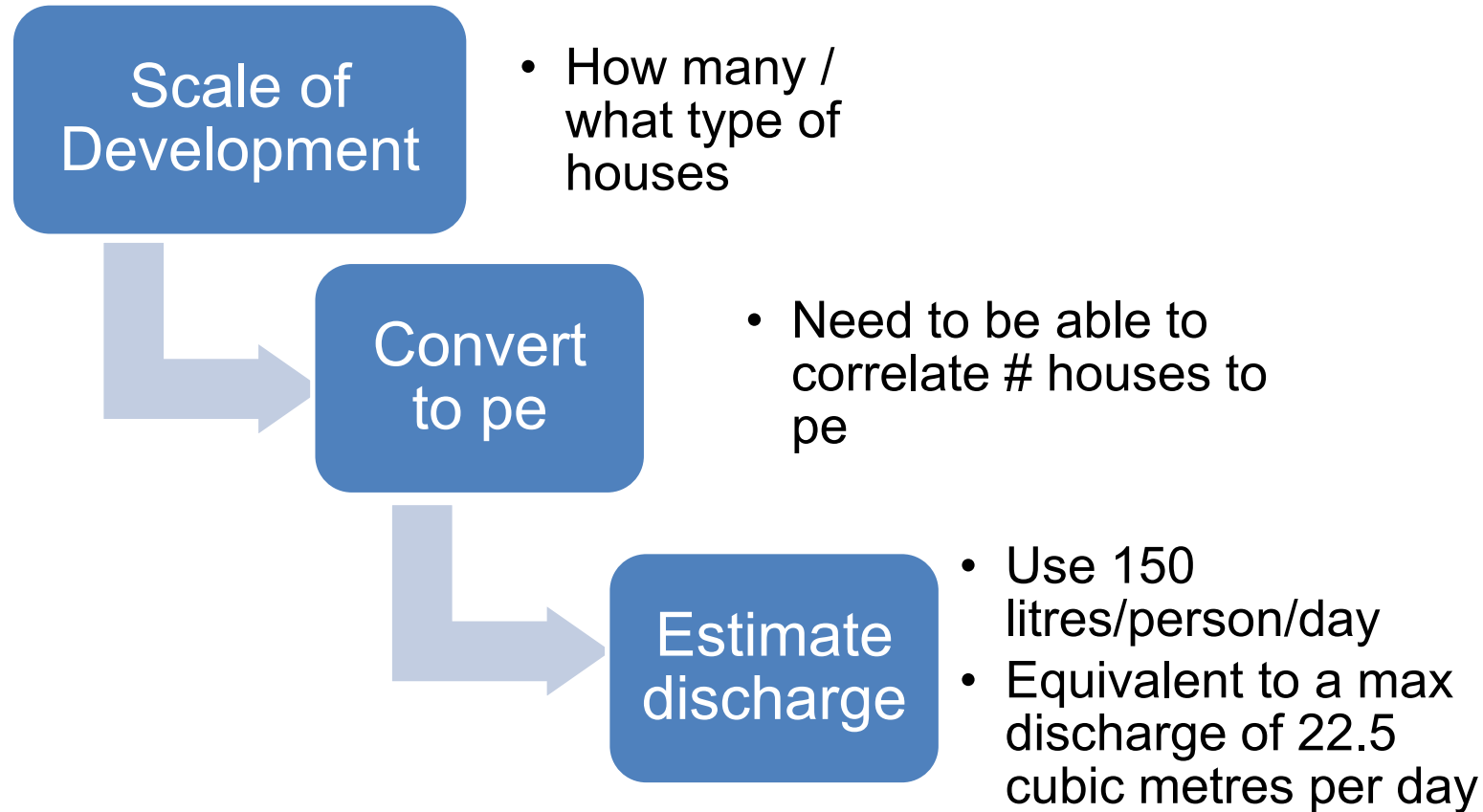
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Elements in Registration Criteria



- Scale of the Development
- Assimilitative capacity of the receiving water
- Examination of potential to connect to sewer must be carried out and recorded
- Planning permission must be granted

Scale of development / Discharge Characteristics



Calculations for pe



Table 1. Population equivalent (p.e.) associated with different house sizes

House Type	Population Equivalent (p.e.)
1-2 bedroomed	4
3 bedroomed	5
4 bedroomed	6
5 bedroomed	7
6 bedroomed	8

The population equivalent for a given housing development is calculated by totalling the p.e. for each house type in the development and then applying a scaled factor, as set out below:

- 0.9 for housing developments with a p.e. of between 10 and 25
- 0.8 for housing developments with a p.e. of between 26 and 50
- 0.7 for housing developments with a p.e in excess of 50.

The scaled factor is applied to allow for the balancing effects on the daily flow of multiple houses connected to the treatment system.

Sample Calculation



Worked example

What is the p.e. for a development of 30 x 3-bedroomed semi-detached houses and 10 x 4-bedroomed detached houses?

Each 3-bedroomed house is equivalent to 5 p.e, thus the 30 houses of this type corresponds to 150 p.e.

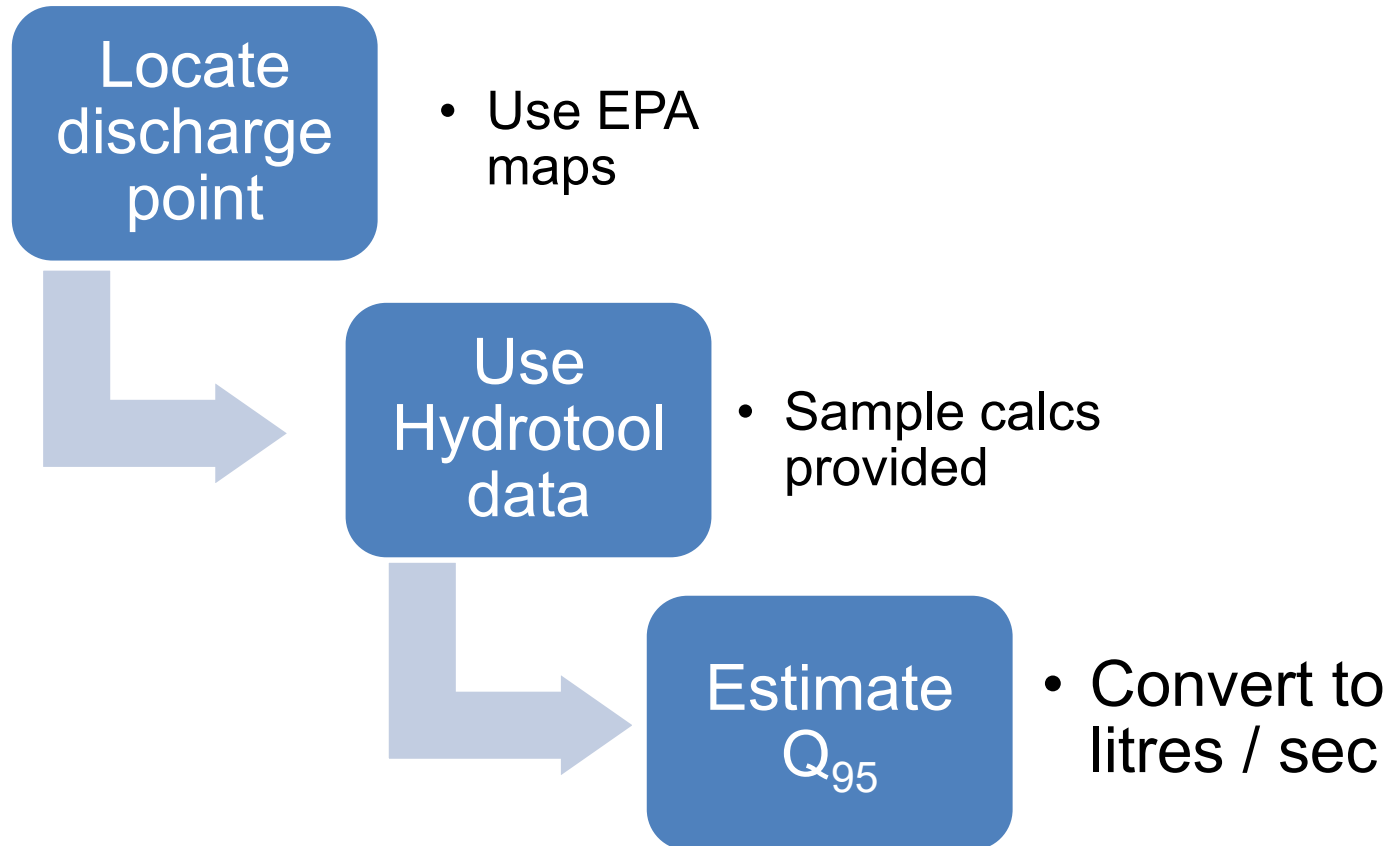
Each 4-bedroomed house is equivalent to 6 p.e, thus the 10 houses of this type corresponds to 60 p.e.

The combined p.e. is $150 + 60 = \mathbf{210 \text{ p.e.}}$

The p.e. is greater than 50, so a scaling factor of 0.7 is applied to 210, yielding a p.e. for the development of **147 p.e.**

This notional development, having determined its p.e. to be 147, therefore falls within the scope of the regulations.

Flow in Receiving Water



Must be 10 dilutions available in the Receiving Water; is the Q₉₅ 2.25 l/s?

EPA Maps - Hydrotool layer



**1. Sewer
proximity
assessment**

**2. Assimilative
capacity
assessment**

**3. Planning
permission**

**Register the
discharge**

No

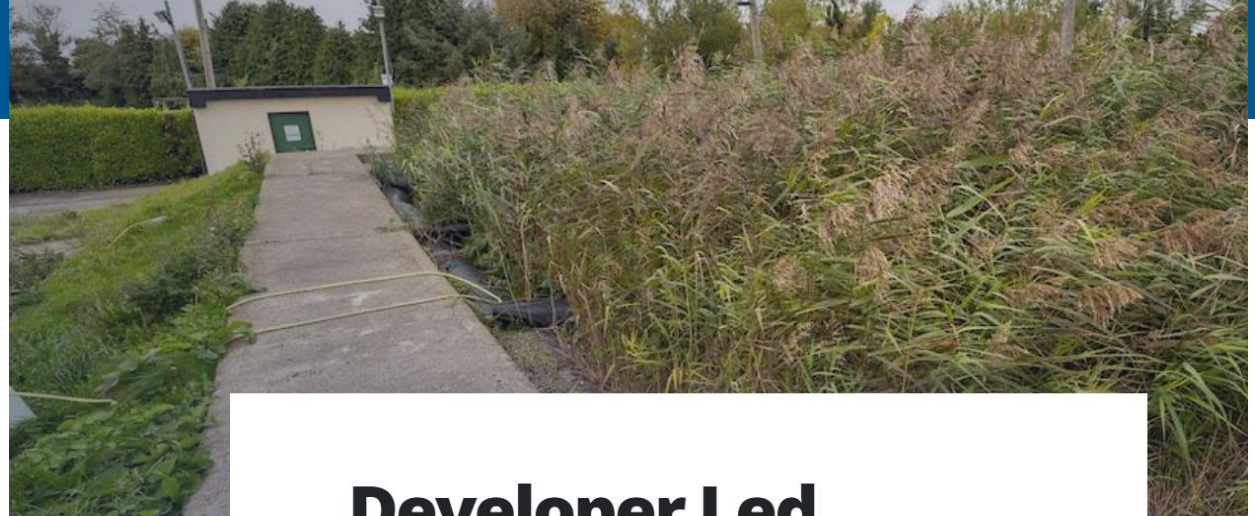
No

No

Do not register the discharge

Uisce Éireann Role

- Uisce Éireann will;
 - provide standards for NBS & non-NBS
 - Respond to Pre-Connection Enquiries
 - Register the discharges with EPA
 - Assume responsibility for the WWTPs
 - Manage and maintain the WWTPs
 - Ensure compliance with GBRs



Developer Led Infrastructure



IN YOUR AREA

HELP

BUSINESS

CONNECTIONS

PR

Developer-Led Infrastructure (DLI) refers to permanent Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure provided by a Developer, in accordance with Uisce Éireann's Relevant Standards, to facilitate eligible residential development where Uisce Éireann's existing wastewater network has not been extended to the area in question.

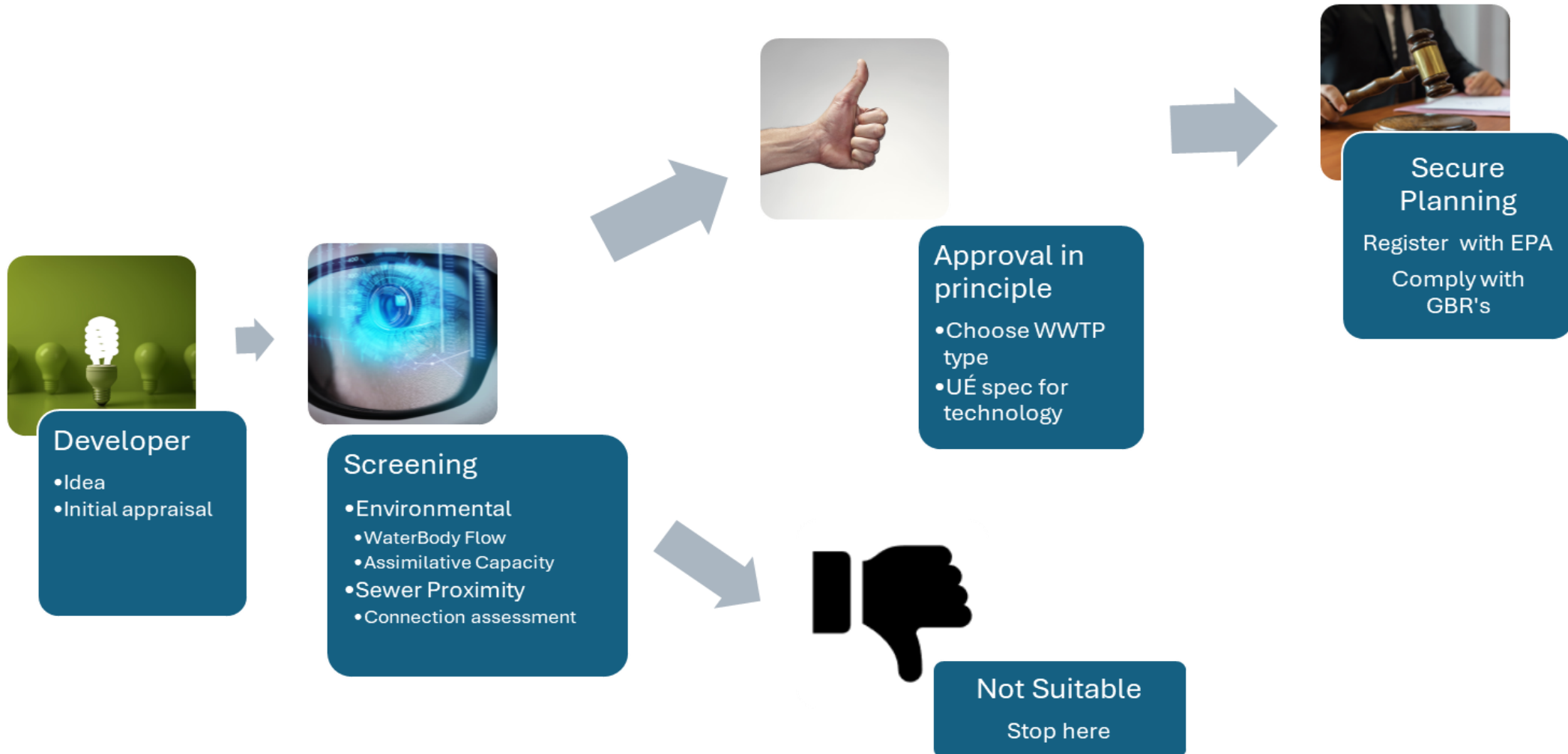
Story so far



- Early days
- Some enquiries
- Difficult to forecast take-up

- For more information see [Registration of small waste water discharges | Environmental Protection Agency](#)
- UÉ - s [Developer Led Infrastructure | Uisce Eireann](#)

Summary & Process Flow





Thank you