

EIA Screening Opinion Request

**Request for a Screening Opinion for the
installation of a 9.4km below-ground water
pipeline - Hallgates to Elms Farm**

Prepared by Fisher German LLP on behalf of
Severn Trent Water Limited

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared on behalf of Severn Trent Water Limited (“STWL”) to formally request a Screening Opinion pursuant to Part 2, Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (“EIA Regulations”), for a proposed 9.4km below-ground water pipeline. The development will start on land located north of Roecliffe Road, where it will connect to the Hallgates Distribution Service Reservoir (DSR) outlet main (approximate Grid Reference: SK 54145 11582) and head south to the Brickyard (approximate Grid Reference: SK 52657 05963), where it will tie into the existing network. The scheme also includes a 0.2km cross connection between existing pipelines, located just south of Ratby (at approximate Grid Reference: SK 52219 05473). This project spans the jurisdiction of three Local Planning Authorities (“LPAs”): Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council and Blaby District Council.
- 1.2. STWL is a regulated business with statutory responsibilities for providing water and sewerage services to over 4.6 million households and businesses in an area stretching across the heart of the UK, from the Bristol Channel to the Humber, and from the West to the East Midlands. STWL is currently beginning to implement its Asset Management Plan for AMP8 (April 2025 to March 2030), which is the mechanism by which the regulator OFWAT (Water Services Regulation Authority) defines a five-year capital expenditure programme for all water companies. Investment during the AMP8 period is in response to a number of key challenges, including population growth, climate change and the importance of protecting the environment.
- 1.3. Severn Trent’s core purpose is “taking care of one of life’s essentials”, which means they aim to deliver a reliable supply of water to all their customers, now and in the future. Severn Trent’s 2050 strategic priority, outlined in their Long-Term Delivery Strategy (LTDS), is to ensure that all Severn Trent customers have water supplies that can withstand an asset or source outage during a 30-day hot weather event. The Hallgates to Elms Farm scheme is required to protect STWL’s customers’ supplies of clean water during times of ‘peak flow’ and provide supply resilience to the catchment at times of hot weather or high demand. Specifically, this project will enable 65MI /d to be transferred between Hallgates DSR and the Elms Farm Distribution Booster Station (DBS), helping STWL meet their goal to improve the resilience, securing supply to circa 279,731 customers.
- 1.4. This project is referred to as ‘Hallgates to Elms Farm’, despite the proposed pipeline not physically extending between Hallgates DSR (Grid Reference SK 53348 11425) and Elms Farm DBS (Grid Reference SK 50627 03733). The original scope of the scheme involved a new 13.4km pipeline between these two assets; however, hydraulic modelling identified existing pipelines within the network which had the capacity to transfer water from the Brickyard to Elms Farm, reducing the pipeline scope by 3.17km. Furthermore, the decision has been taken to connect the new pipeline to the DSR outlet main outside of Bradgate Park, rather than directly to Hallgates DSR, which is within Bradgate Park. The overarching objective remains the delivery of a continuous pipeline spanning the full extent between Hallgates DSR and Elms Farm DBS, now partially utilising existing assets.
- 1.5. The aim of the Environmental Impact Assessment process is to protect the environment by ensuring that projects which have the potential to have significant effects on the environment are assessed appropriately, and that such effects are taken into account in the decision-making process. The regulations set out a procedure for identifying those projects which should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, and for assessing, consulting and coming to a decision on those projects which are likely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.6. Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations sets out that a developer can ask the Local Planning Authority to give an EIA Screening Opinion to determine whether a proposed project falls within the remit of the Regulations, and whether it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment and therefore requires an Environmental Statement.
- 1.7. Schedule 2 Part 10 (I) of the EIA Regulations sets out that the threshold for the ‘Installation of long-distance aqueducts’ is a working area of over 1ha. The proposed working area for the water pipeline will exceed the threshold for an EIA Screening Opinion, and we therefore formally request a Screening Opinion. The site does not pass through any sensitive areas, as defined in Part 1 of the EIA Regs 2017.

- 1.8. This report, along with the supporting documents, provides the LPAs with sufficient information to formulate a Screening Opinion in accordance with Regulation 5(1) and (2) of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. It informs the relevant authorities about the potential for significant environmental effects from the construction and operation of the proposed scheme, in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
- 1.9. Fisher German LLP has considered the proposed project in line with the screening selection criteria listed under Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations. Following this assessment set out in Section 4 of this Report, it has been concluded that the scheme will be delivered without the likelihood of significant environmental effects and does not therefore comprise Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Development, requiring the submission of an Environmental Statement.
- 1.10. STWL are seeking confirmation that the proposed scheme *is not* an EIA development.

2. Proposed Development

- 2.1. This report has been prepared on behalf of STWL to formally request a Screening Opinion pursuant to Part 2, Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations, in relation to the installation of a 9.2km water pipeline proposed from land located north of Roecliffe Road to the Brickyard, as well as a 0.2km cross connection between existing pipelines, south of Ratby. The project falls within the jurisdiction of Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council and Blaby District Council.
- 2.2. The Hallgates to Elms Farm scheme is required to protect STWL's customers' supplies of clean water during times of 'peak flow' and provide supply resilience to the catchment at times of hot weather or high demand. Specifically, this project will enable 65MI /d to be transferred between Hallgates DSR and the Elms Farm DBS, helping STWL meet their goal to improve the resilience, securing supply to circa 279,731 customers.
- 2.3. The main pipeline will have an internal diameter of 1000mm, and the 0.2km cross connection will have an internal diameter of 200mm. The proposed route will be associated with a temporary 40m wide working area and several temporary construction compounds to facilitate the works. The working area will roughly centre on the pipeline for the majority of the route, resulting in a 20m wide working area on either side of the pipeline. However, in places, this working area will be reduced to avoid certain areas/ constraints. Figure 1 below shows a typical cross-section of the working width.

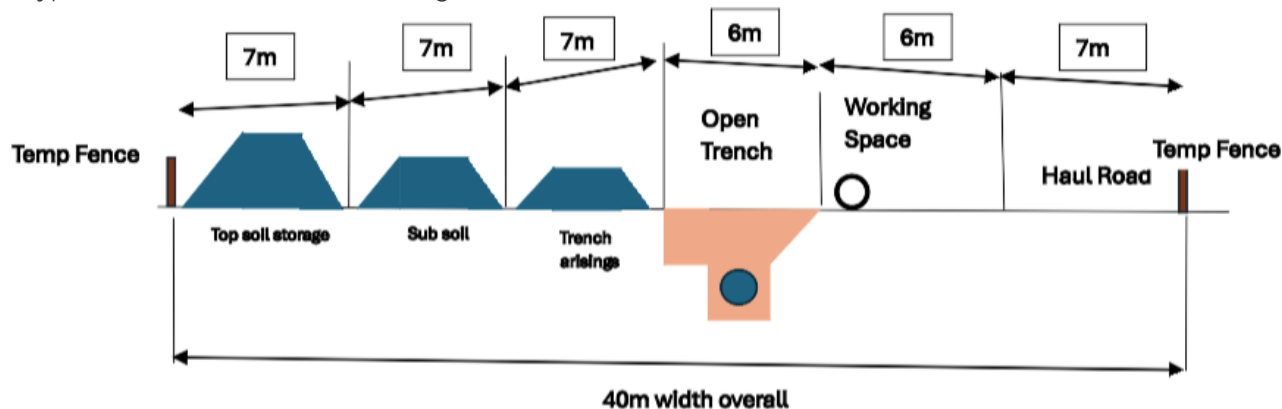


Figure 1 - Typical Working Width Cross Section

- 2.4. STWL are a Statutory Undertaker for the provision of water and sewage services and are granted permitted development rights by Central Government as required for the effective implementation of the undertaker's responsibility in providing public services. These are set out in Schedule 2, Part 13 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("GPDO"). The laying of below-ground development required in connection with the supply of water is included in Part 13 Class A(a):

"development not above ground level required in connection with the supply of water or for conserving, redistributing or augmenting water resources, or for the conveyance of water treatment sludge".

- 2.5. The proposed pipeline therefore benefits from STWL's permitted development rights as a Statutory Undertaker, and this scheme could be delivered utilising permitted development rights if the scheme is not considered to be EIA development.
- 2.6. The entirety of the proposed route, and the local authorities it passes through, are shown on drawing reference: STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Overview_Pipe Only, with individual sections shown on plans: STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Pages 1 – 6, which have been prepared by Fisher German and submitted in support of this EIA Screening Opinion Request. The majority of the route will be laid within private land. Various options have been explored to address the required operational output, with the proposed route outlined in this Screening Opinion Request being considered the most suitable and associated with the least potential impact.

- 2.7. Following a careful and thorough review of the proposed development in the context of the surveys undertaken and in accordance with the EIA Regulations, it is our view that the proposed works *do not* comprise EIA development.
- 2.8. This request for an EIA Screening Opinion seeks to confirm with Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council and Blaby District Council that the proposed pipeline will be brought forward without the likelihood of significant environmental effects. This report sets out the justification as to why this position has been arrived at following the close working with technical consultants, local stakeholders and relevant consultees. The Screening Opinion request should be read in conjunction with the following submitted plans, documents and correspondence:

Table 1 Supporting Plans

Title of Supporting Drawings	Reference Number	Produced by
EIA Plan (Sheet 1 of 6)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 1	Fisher German (November 2025)
EIA Plan (Sheet 2 of 6)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 2	Fisher German (September 2025)
EIA Plan (Sheet 3 of 6)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 3	Fisher German (September 2025)
EIA Plan (Sheet 4 of 6)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 4	Fisher German (September 2025)
EIA Plan (Sheet 5 of 5)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 5	Fisher German (September 2025)
EIA Plan (Sheet 6 of 6)	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 6	Fisher German (September 2025)
Route Overview with LPA Boundaries	STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Overview_Pipe Only	Fisher German (November 2025)

Table 2 - Supporting Documents

Title of Supporting Document	Reference	Produced by
Preliminary Ecological Assessment	10480.001 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0001)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (June 2024)
Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Section 2, Revised Alignment)	10480.008 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0006)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (October 2024)
Ecological Technical Note	10480.016 2.0	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (September 2025)
Ecology Technical Note: EIA Screening Opinion Addendum	10480.031 1.0	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (November 2025)
Protected Species Report: Badgers	10480.013 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-RP-EN-0005)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (October 2024)
Protected Species Report: Great Crested Newt	10480.004 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0003)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (August 2024)
Protected Species Report: Crayfish	10480.014 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0007)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (November 2024)
Protected Species Report: Otter and Water Voles	10480.009 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0008)	The Environment Partnership Ltd, (October 2024)
Winter Bird Habitat Assessment	10480.010 (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0009)	The Environment Partnership Ltd (October 2024)

Arboricultural Technical Note	10480.01.001 Version 2.0	The Environment Partnership Ltd (February 2026)
Tree Constraints Plan	D10480.01.001-051 Rev B	The Environment Partnership Ltd (January 2026)
Arboricultural Survey Data Sheets	D10480.01.002-051	The Environment Partnership Ltd (September 2025)
Tree Effects Plan	D10480.01.052-080 Rev B	The Environment Partnership Ltd (January 2026)
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment	294341.02	Wessex Archaeology (July 2025)
Road Closure & Diversion, Bradgate Road	RHTM/RJA/5299/001	RH Traffic Management (June 2025)
Road Closure & Diversion, Bradgate Road	RHTM/RJA/5299/002	RH Traffic Management (June 2025)
Road Closure & Diversion, Anstey Lane	RHTM/RJA/5299/003	RH Traffic Management (June 2025)
Road Closure & Diversion, Reservoir Road	RHTM/RJA/5299/010	RH Traffic Management (September 2025)
Construction Best Practice Statement	CPC Civils – Construction Best Practice Statement	CPC Civils

- 2.9. For the purpose of design/project management, the Hallgates to Elms Farm project has been split into the 3 sections, as described in Table 3. These section references are used in multiple of the supporting reports.

Table 3 - List of Route Sections

Section 1	Land north of Roecliffe Road to Bradgate Road	Circa 4.3km
Section 2	Bradgate Road to the Brickyard	Circa 4.9km
Section 3	Land south of Ratby (Brickyard to Elms Farm Cross Connection)	Circa 0.2km

Wider Context of Severn Trent's Drought Resilience Projects

- 2.10. The Hallgates to Elms Farm project is one of several drought resilience projects being carried out by Severn Trent. In the long term, STWL's goal is to improve the resilience of their water supply network so that it can cope with the impacts of climate change. Driving this transformation will require a multi-AMP investment strategy to ensure that all customers have water supplies that are resilient to climate change. The best available science forecast means they need to plan for a 30-day extreme event in order to protect services for the next 25 years.
- 2.11. STWLs 25-year Long Term Delivery Strategy ("LTDS") aims to improve the resilience of their water network so that it can cope with the effects of climate change and their customers' increasing consumption of water in hot weather. STWL have two key objectives:
- **Objective 1:** Withstanding extreme peaks. All customers have water supplies that can withstand a 30-day hot weather / extreme peak demand event.
 - **Objective 2:** Minimising the impact of failures in extreme peak. Assets and systems can withstand the conditions they will need to operate under during a 30-day hot weather / extreme peak demand event. This element of the strategy builds resilience against low-probability, high-consequence events as well as climate change impacts

3. Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1. The proposed pipeline begins in Charnwood Borough, on land north of Roecliffe Road, before veering east and then broadly progressing in a south-westerly direction, crossing Bradgate Road. South of Bradgate Road, the route enters Hinckley and Bosworth District, continuing south-east and crossing the A46. The pipeline then briefly passes through Blaby District, crossing the A50, before continuing south-west and re-entering Hinckley and Bosworth District. It recrosses the A46 and continues further south, with the final section terminating within Blaby District. The cross-connection located south of Ratby Road also lies within Hinckley and Bosworth District. Figure 2 illustrates the proposed route and the relevant Local Authority Boundaries.

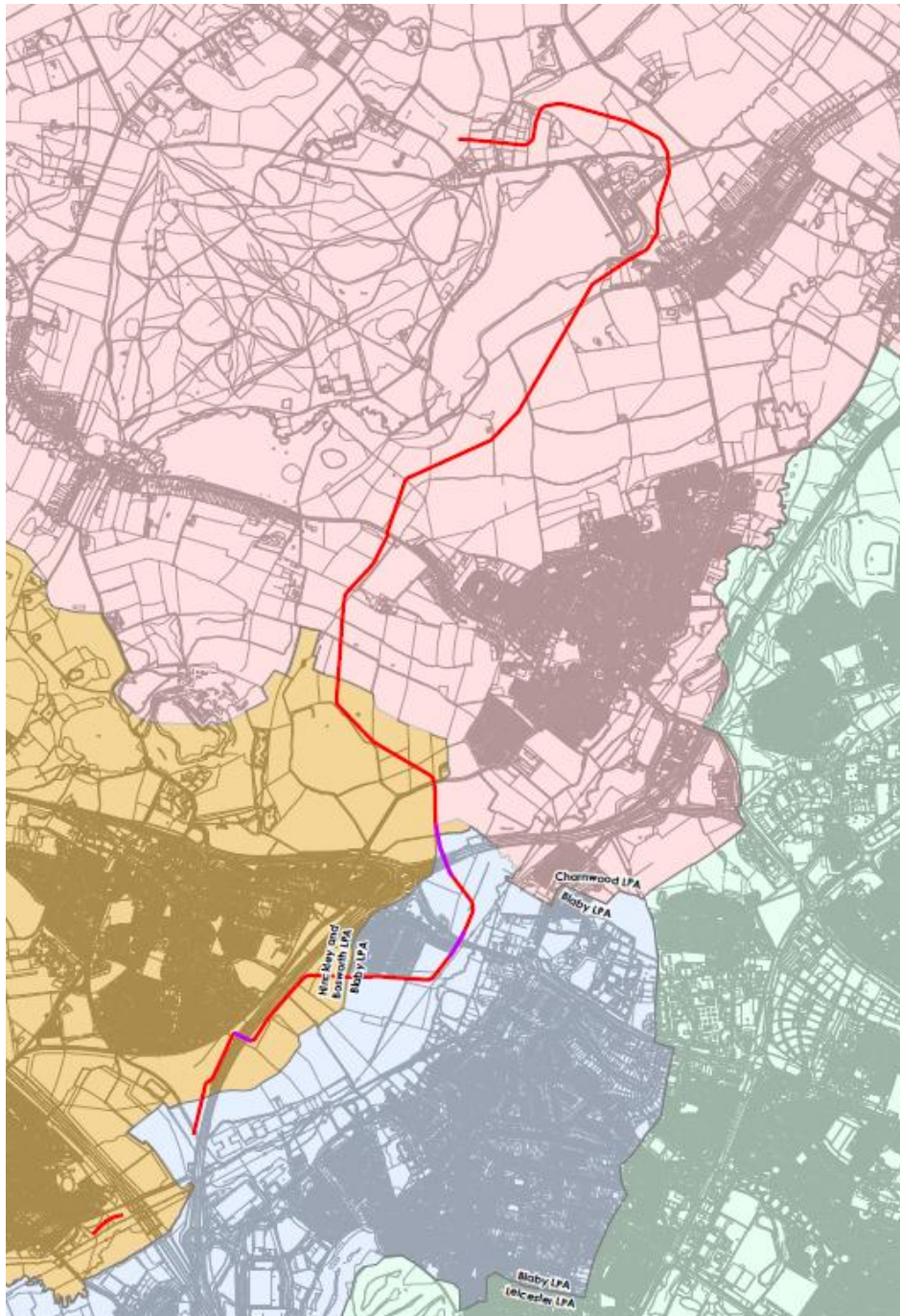


Figure 2 – Hallgates to Elms Farm proposed pipeline route and Local Authority boundaries.

- 3.2. The pipe lengths within each Local Planning Authority are approximately as follows:
- Charnwood Borough Council – 5,400m

- Hinckley and Bosworth District Council – 2,400m
- Blaby District Council – 1,600m

- 3.3. The proposed 9.4km pipeline will travel through a mainly rural setting characterised by agricultural fields separated by hedgerows and scattered wooded areas. The pipeline will be located outside settlement boundaries, within the countryside. The proposed route has been designed to avoid existing urban settlements where the likelihood of effects may be higher than in a more rural location. The proposed route passes approximately 50 metres west of Cropston, approximately 150 metres west of Anstey, before passing approximately 50 metres east of Groby. The cross connection is located approximately 50m south of Ratby. For the avoidance of doubt, the pipeline will not pass under any existing buildings.
- 3.4. There are no Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) within 10km of the route. There are several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 5km. Most notably, the route is 0.22km from the Bradgate Park and Cropston Reservoir SSSI and 0.08km from the Swithland Wood and the Brand SSSI. The route also passes through Bradgate Park and Swithland Wood National Nature Reserve (NNR) for approximately 60m at the northern end of the route.
- 3.5. There are three designated ancient woodlands within a 1km radius of the proposed works (Hallgates Spinney Wood, Swithland Wood and Sheet Hedges Wood), however, the works will remain outside the minimum 15m protective buffer around all of these ancient woodlands, and no trees within these buffers will be removed.
- 3.6. The proposed route does not cross through any designated heritage assets or their curtilage. Designated assets within the study area include Bradgate Park Registered Park and Garden, 1 no. Scheduled Monument, 18 no. Grade II Listed Buildings and two Conservation Areas. The closest Listed Buildings (Grade II) are located within Cropston Water Treatment Works and Cropston village.
- 3.7. Given the undeveloped nature of the route, there is the potential for the presence of archaeological remains. For further details, please see the submitted Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (294341.02) (ADBA).
- 3.8. The majority of the proposed route is located within Flood Zone 1, meaning there is a low probability of flooding, with the majority of the route also being at very low risk of surface water flooding. However, there are sections of the route which pass through Flood Zones 2 and 3. These locations are land to the east of Cropston Reservoir (along Bradgate Road), and land adjacent to the Rothley Brook.
- 3.9. The proposed pipeline route crosses multiple Public Rights of Way (PRoW), which will be temporarily impacted during the construction period. Formal temporary closure or diversions will be obtained where required.
- 3.10. There are no proposed development allocations within the relevant Adopted or Draft/ Emerging Local Plans which are considered to be relevant to the proposed route. In Charnwood, the entire route is within the Countryside and passes through an area of Local Separation between Anstey and Newtown Linford. In Hinckley and Bosworth, and Balby, the pipeline is within an area designated as a Green Wedge.

Detailed Route Description

- 3.11. For clarity, the route has been divided into individual numbered plans, which show greater detail, starting with Plan 1 north of Cropston Reservoir, working south to Plan 6 at The Brickyard and the cross connection. Each Plan identifies which council(s) the pipeline will travel through.
 - a) [Plan 1](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 1) – Located in Charnwood, this section starts north of Roecliffe Road and the pipeline heads east, briefly passes through the Bradgate Park and Swithland Wood NNR for approximately 60m, before turning north to avoid Bradgate Park and Cropston Reservoir SSSI. The pipeline route then continues around the east side of Cropston Reservoir, crossing Bradgate Road and Reservoir Road, where temporary road closures and small sections of TPO removal will be required. This section will be installed entirely using open-cut methods. There will be a temporary access from Bradgate Road, within the working width.

- b) [Plan 2](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 2) – Within Charnwood, this section continues southwest towards Bradgate Road and will be installed entirely using open-cut methods. Construction access will be via an existing farm access off Cropston Road to the east. A compound area will be located at the end of the haul road from this access point, within the working area.
 - c) [Plan 3](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 3) – Still within Charnwood, this section heads south and crosses Bradgate Road, where a temporary road closure will be required. At this crossing, a small section of TPO trees will need to be removed to facilitate construction on the southern side of Bradgate Road. Access north of Bradgate Road will be via an existing farm access off Bradgate Road, with a compound area just north of Bradgate Road at this access point. The pipeline then continues south and enters Hinckley and Bosworth. This entire section will also be installed using open-cut methods. Access south of Bradgate Road will be via the working area to the south.
 - d) [Plan 4](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 4) – The pipeline route progresses southeast through Hinckley and Bosworth to Anstey Lane, where a temporary road closure will be required. Construction access north of Anstey Lane will be via an existing field access off Anstey Lane to the south and to the south there will be a temporary access from Anstey Lane, within the working width. The pipeline then continues south, crossing between the boundaries of Charnwood, Hinckley and Bosworth, and Blaby, before the first trenchless crossing of the Leicester Western Bypass (A46). The remainder of this section will be installed using open-cut methods.
 - e) [Plan 5](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 5) – The route continues south within Blaby, crossing Groby Road (A50) using trenchless techniques. Access north of the A50 will be via an existing access off the A50. The pipeline then continues west through a group TPO before re-entering Hinckley and Bosworth. It then heads southwest, running parallel to the A46. This section will be installed using open-cut methods, except for the A50 crossing. This section also includes the main site office, which will be established on land adjacent to Mill Lane Industrial Estate. This compound will also serve as the main construction access for this section of pipeline.
 - f) [Plan 6](#) (Plan STW-2025-08-JS-EIA-Hallgates to Elms Farm_Page 6) – The route continues west, crossing the A46 for the second time using trenchless techniques, before heading south towards the Brickyard, where the route terminates within Blaby. This section will be installed using open-cut methods, with the exception of the A46 crossing. Construction access to the west of the A46 will be off Sacheverall Way, through an existing field access point. This section also includes the 200m cross-connection to the south of Ratby. Construction access for the cross connection will be via an existing access off Taverner Drive.
- 3.12. The proposed route is the result of extensive optioneering. Alternative alignments were considered but dismissed due to greater impacts on communities, environmental and archaeological constraints, and hydrological challenges. The selected route best meets operational requirements while minimising adverse effects.

Optioneering

- 3.13. The original scope of the scheme included a new 13.4 km pipeline between Hallgates DSR (Grid Reference SK 53348 11425) and Elms Farm DBS (Grid Reference SK 50627 03733). However, subsequent hydraulic modelling identified that existing pipelines within the network have sufficient capacity to transfer water from the Brickyard to Elms Farm. This optimisation reduces the required new pipeline length by approximately 3.17 km without compromising network performance.
- 3.14. In addition, the decision has been taken to connect the new pipeline to the Hallgates DSR outlet main, located outside Bradgate Park, rather than directly to Hallgates DSR within the park. This further reduces the pipeline length by approximately 0.83 km. The rationale for this decision is set out below.
- 3.15. Bradgate Park is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a National Nature Reserve, and a Registered Park and Garden. Engagement with Natural England, Historic England, and the Bradgate Park Trust has therefore been critical. The original proposal involved a direct connection to Hallgates DSR 4 within Bradgate Park, and several route options were assessed. The preferred route (S1-C) (green line) was presented to Natural England in December 2024; however, Natural England advised that they would be unlikely to provide

assent due to potential adverse impacts on acid grassland, a key feature of the SSSI. They requested consideration of an alternative route (S1-E) (pink line) through Hallgates Spinney SSSI, which is designated as replanted ancient woodland. Further assessment of S1-E identified significant challenges, including the need for deep excavation (~6 m) in difficult topography and proximity to an existing 54" main, creating health and safety risks and potential structural integrity concerns of the existing pipeline. This will be reviewed in more detail in AMP9 to enable an appropriate solution to be developed.

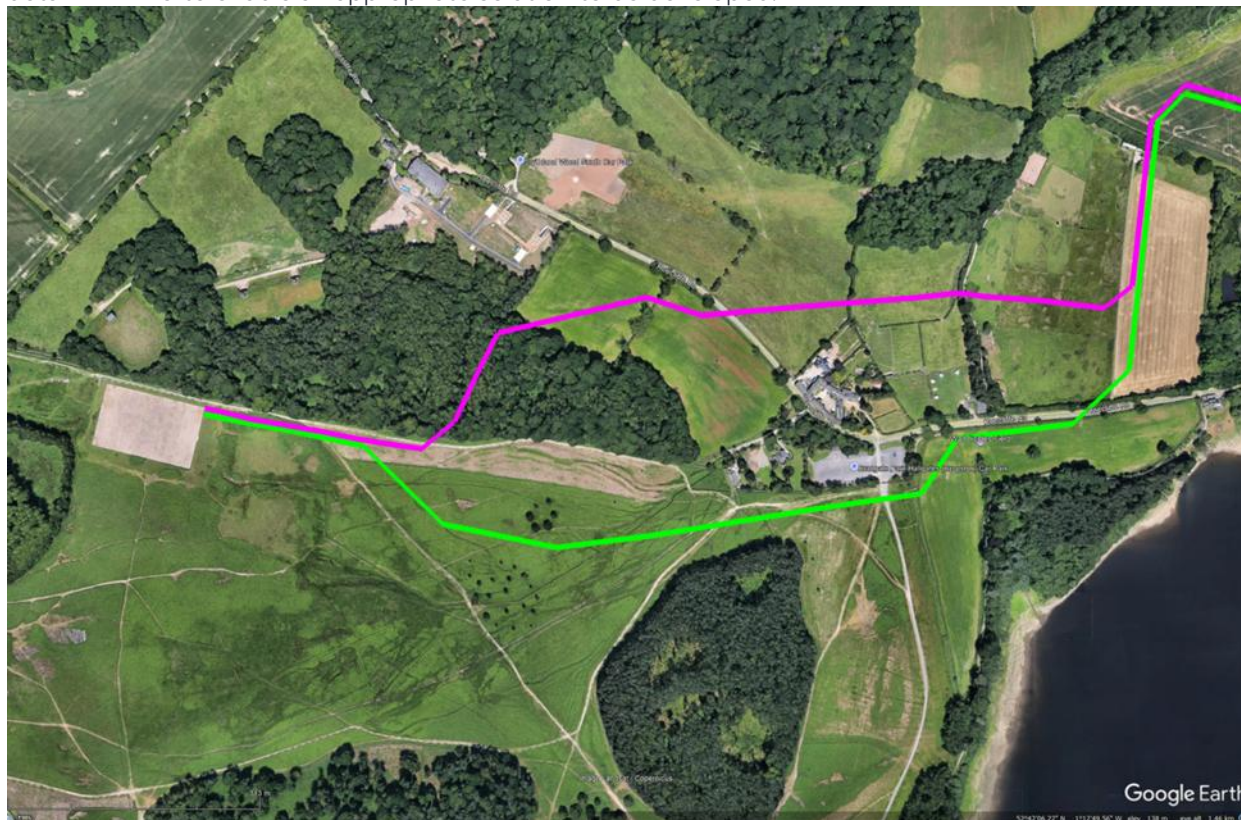


Figure 3 - Bradgate Park Route Options

- 3.16. Additional hydraulic modelling has confirmed that new inlet and outlet connections to Hallgates DSR 4 will be required as part of AMP9 (2030–2035). Hallgates DSR 4 is also scheduled for a reservoir clean and inspection in 2033, providing an efficient opportunity to deliver these works concurrently. Consequently, the Bradgate Park section of the pipeline has been removed from the AMP8 scope and deferred to AMP9, when both inlet and outlet connections can be installed together. This approach avoids multiple interventions within Bradgate Park and ensures that environmental impacts are minimised.
- 3.17. The AMP8 works remain a standalone, hydraulically viable project that achieves its objectives without reliance on the deferred AMP9 works. Deferring the Bradgate Park section:
 - Reduces environmental impact by avoiding unnecessary disturbance to a sensitive SSSI and heritage landscape.
 - Avoids programme delays of 8–12 months that would result from additional surveys and design work for route S1-E.
 - Aligns with future planned works to deliver a more efficient and less disruptive solution during AMP9. Hydraulic modelling confirms there is no operational benefit to completing the Bradgate Park section in AMP8. The revised scope, therefore, represents a proportionate and environmentally responsible approach.

Consultation

- 3.18. In the pre-main works phase, following the design finalisation, a detailed customer letter will provide a comprehensive overview of the planned works. A customer drop-in session will be held close to the start of construction, complemented by a press release and targeted social media advertisements. Communication

efforts will extend to local Facebook groups, and direct outreach will be conducted with MPs, councillors, affected businesses, and schools where applicable.

- 3.19. Affected landowners have been identified and consultation is taking place, including discussing the route through their land, construction access and surveys such as ecology.
- 3.20. An introductory meeting with the relevant Local Planning Authorities along the route was held on 17th September 2025. This proactive approach is intended to ensure a collaborative planning process and to support consistency in the consideration of the scheme across administrative boundaries.

4. Assessment of the EIA Regulations 2017

- 4.1. Part 2 of the EIA Regs 2017 provides development thresholds for which an EIA is a mandatory requirement (Schedule 1) and where it is a discretionary requirement (Schedule 2).
- 4.2. The proposed development is not listed in Schedule 1. The threshold set out in Schedule 2, relevant to the proposed pipeline, have been presented in Table 2 below:

Table 1 - Schedule 2 Development Extract

Description of development	Applicable thresholds and criteria
10. Infrastructure Projects	
(i) Installation of long distance aqueducts	(i) The area of the works exceeds 1 hectare

- 4.3. The relevant threshold listed in Column 2 of Schedule 2, for the 'Installations of long-distance aqueducts' is 1 hectare, which will be exceeded by the overall proposed pipeline and working area. Therefore, the proposed development is deemed to be 'Schedule 2' development for the purposes of the EIA Regulations. This prompts a consideration of the potential significance of any environmental effects likely to arise as a result of the works. The proposed development does not pass through any 'sensitive areas' as defined within regulation 2(1).
- 4.4. To consider the potential 'significant' environmental effects in more detail, the proposed development has been assessed below against the selection criteria as detailed within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regs 2017, in accordance with Paragraph 58 of the Planning Practice Guidance 2020.
- 4.5. Schedule 3 of the regulations outlines the criteria for assessing Schedule 2 projects to determine whether an Environmental Statement is required. These criteria can be summarised as follows:
- Characteristics of the development.
 - Location of the development.
 - Characteristics of the potential impact.
- 4.6. An assessment of the proposal against these criteria is therefore made in Tables 4-6 below.
- 4.7. Table 4 provides an assessment of the proposal against the criteria for consideration of the characteristics of the development.

Table 2 Characteristics of the development

The characteristics of development must be considered with particular regard to:		
Applicable Criteria	Threshold/	Assessment
a.	The size and design of the whole development;	The proposed development comprises the installation of a 9.2km below-ground pipeline between land north of Roecliffe Road and the Brickyard, and a 0.2km cross connection between existing pipelines, located just south of Ratby. The proposed pipeline route will be associated with a working area measuring an average of 40m in width, which will broadly follow the pipeline as a centreline, resulting in a working area measuring 20m either side of the route, where appropriate. This working area has been minimised in certain locations to reduce the potential impacts associated with the scheme, whilst facilitating the safe and efficient installation of the pipe. The pipeline will be constructed predominantly via open-cut techniques. Open-cut techniques will utilise an excavator to excavate a 1.8m wide and 2.5m deep trench, in which the pipe will be laid, allowing for a 1m depth of cover. The excavation will be benched on one side and sloped on the other, with an width of approximately 4m at the top of the trench. The main pipeline

	will have an internal diameter of 1000mm, and the 0.2km cross connection will have an internal diameter of 200mm. A drawing showing the typical cross-section for the pipeline working area is included in Chapter 2 of this Report. A dual trenchless installation will be used in 3no. locations to install circa. 616m of pipework beneath the Leicester Western Bypass (A46) (x2 crossing) and Groby Road. This will be completed by horizontal directional drilling (HDD). HDD is achieved from ground-level pits by launching a pilot bore at the required depth and length. The pilot is then reamed until it's a suitable diameter for the main to be pulled through.
b. cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;	Severn Trent Water will be continuing to upgrade their network across AMP8 (2025 to 2030) as part of their Long-Term Delivery Strategy, which will include the installation of several new pipelines across the Midlands. There are no approved developments which are considered to result in the likelihood of significant environmental effects in cumulation with the pipeline proposed as part of this Screening Opinion Request.
c. the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	Land / Reinstatement The land parcels used along the proposed route are predominantly arable and grassland fields. Once the proposed pipeline has been installed, the affected land will be returned to the state which existed prior to the commencement of works. This will largely be achieved by the retention of the topsoil and subsoil and their storage within the working area adjacent to the excavated trench. Once the pipeline has been installed, the subsoil will be returned to the trench, followed by the topsoil. Arable fields will be reinstated by preparing the subsoil and topsoil to a condition that can be incorporated into the remaining fields' crop rotation. Therefore, following the completion of the works, there will be no lasting impact on the land. Tree and hedgerow removal will be kept to a minimum. Where vegetation removal is unavoidable, appropriate replanting will take place in the first appropriate planting season following the completion of the works. Therefore, following the completion of the works, there will be no lasting impact on land along the pipeline route. Soil Topsoil will be stripped and stored in a bund to one side of the working width. Subsoil removed from the trench will be stored in a separate bund to the topsoil. Once the pipe has been laid, the removed soil will be replaced in line with the aforementioned methods. The installation of the pipe will inevitably create a volume of surplus subsoil which cannot be backfilled into the trench. However, this volume of surplus subsoil will be distributed across the working area, prior to the topsoil being replaced. The differential in height created by the subsoil will be almost unnoticeable. Any dug material from the site which cannot be reinstated on site will be sent off-site to appropriate recycling facility. Water No major water courses will be crossed by the pipeline. Various minor water courses, such as small streams and ditches, will be crossed via an open-cut method, associated with a reduced working corridor. A method statement will be produced detailing measures to prevent pollution or any adverse impacts to the watercourse. Ordinary watercourse consents will be obtained by the applicant's build contractor, prior to the works in such areas.

	Land Drainage Land drainage surveys are being undertaken. These surveys involved using a hand-held auger to determine the nature and depth of topsoil along the route of the proposed pipeline. The survey assessed the nature of the subsoil and identify areas that may require drainage as part of the restoration / reinstatement programme. The survey results, along with consultation with landowners, will be used to identify the requirements for pre-construction and post-construction land drainage work. Biodiversity Providing that the proposal is considered permitted development, it will be exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. As part of the PEA, condition assessment information for the habitats along the route was recorded in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. Any planning applications, such as for temporary accesses to facilitate construction, may be required to demonstrate statutory 10% BNG, depending on the impacts. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and appropriate BNG work undertaken as necessary. The project shall be designed and delivered to align with the STWL ODI commitment in relation to embodied carbon reduction. The STWL Carbon Tools shall be used to demonstrate compliance.
d. the production of waste;	Installation of a linear pipeline through the open countryside does not typically produce significant levels of waste. However, the installation of the pipe will inevitably create a volume of surplus subsoil which cannot be backfilled into the trench. However, this volume of surplus subsoil will be distributed across the working area, prior to the topsoil being replaced. The differential in height created by the subsoil will be almost unnoticeable. Any dug material from the site which cannot be reinstated on site will be sent off-site to appropriate recycling facility. In the event of contamination, work will be stopped, and the situation will be made safe by damping down and covering suspected contaminants, and risks will be reassessed. Only the minimum amount of fuels/chemicals will be stored to reduce the risk of spillage and will be isolated in secure bonded locations.
e. pollution and nuisances;	Due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, as well as the majority of the proposed route being located away from sensitive receptors, the proposed scheme is not considered to be associated with significant levels of pollution or nuisances. Furthermore, due to the nature of the proposed development, any potential impacts will be temporary and only exist for the construction duration associated with that section of the pipeline. Following this period, that section of the working area will be reinstated as the work moves on to another section of the route. This staggered construction duration will ensure that any potential notable levels of noise or disruption in an area will only be temporary and cease to exist when that section of the route is complete. Working Hours Works on site will normally take place during the day (07:00 – 19:00) to ensure that potential temporary disturbances are kept to a minimum. Working hours will be reduced in the winter months due to fewer daylight hours. Throughout the duration of the works, regular contact will be maintained with those directly affected by the scheme by the applicant's build contractor and Fisher

	German Surveyors. This will ensure that any unforeseen impacts are promptly addressed and appropriately mitigated to minimise disruption. Noise, Vibration and Dust Due to the nature of the proposed development, any potential impacts will be temporary and only exist for the construction duration associated with that section of the pipeline. Following this period, that section of the working area will be reinstated as the work moves on to another section of the route. Where the pipeline route runs close to residential properties, e.g. Glenfield Avenue, the layout of the working space will be changed so that topsoil and subsoil stockpiles are located adjacent to the properties to act as a temporary noise bund. These are far more effective than temporary fencing with acoustic blankets attached. The pipeline installation will not create continuous noise due to the nature of the work. The main noise will come from excavators and stone deliveries whilst creating the haul road at the outset, and excavators when the pipe is installed and backfilled. There is no major piling operations planned as part of the works. Construction access points have been selected away from residential areas to reduce the noise impact of vehicle movements on the local population during the works. In terms of ecology and noise, Severn Trent will adhere to any mitigation measures proposed by TEP (project ecologists) for specific hotspots along the route. Dust arising from site vehicles travelling on access tracks and haul roads within and adjacent to sites will be managed by utilising a tractor with a water bowser with spray jets to dampen the running surface in periods of dry weather. Likewise, in wetter months the contractor will use wheel wash facilities and a road sweeper, if required, to minimise the amount of soil/mud on local roads, though through the use of well-constructed haul roads on site from the outset of the work will reduce the likelihood of this occurring. Pollution Due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, and being located away from sensitive receptors, the proposed scheme is not considered to be associated with significant levels of pollution. To ensure the scheme will not be associated with pollution impacts which may have an adverse impact, the applicant's design and build consultants will implement certain measures. Equipment associated with low emissions of carbon dioxide will be used wherever possible across the project. Engine idling will also be minimised to ensure unnecessary emissions do not take place. Whilst unlikely, given the nature of the proposal, should emission levels become significant, mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid these resulting in any adverse impacts. Due to the nature of the proposed development, its construction and operation are not considered to be associated with any pollution or nuisance issues which would be considered to result in significant environmental effects.
f. the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to	The nature of the proposed development is not considered to pose significant risks of accidents or safety issues. The installation methods selected are relatively straightforward, which helps to minimise associated risks.

	the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	The entire route is not subject to any designations by the Mining Remediation authority; however, methodologies have been carefully chosen to ensure risk reduction. As a Statutory Undertaker, the applicant requires its build consultants to adhere to high standards of professional practice. Established safety protocols and best practice measures will be integrated into the project to ensure that all works are carried out safely, responsibly, and in accordance with regulatory expectations.
g.	the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	The above measures will ensure that no risk to human health is created by the proposed works. The driver behind this development is also to improve the supply resilience of the area, which will ensure the catchment of the project will have a more resilient supply of water in the future, particularly at times of high temperature/ drought, which will likely become more common with climate change.

- 4.8. Table 6 provides an assessment of the proposal against the criteria for consideration of the location of the development.

Table 3 - Location of the development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, with particular regard, to:		
Applicable Criteria	Threshold/	Assessment
a.	the existing and approved land use;	The majority of the proposed pipeline is to be installed within agricultural land. Once the development has been completed and the land reinstated to a like-for-like condition, these uses will be able to continue. The proposed route is also largely designated as Green Wedge or Countryside. The proposed development will be installed entirely below ground, and as mentioned above, the affected land will be returned to the state which existed prior to the works commencing. Therefore, there is not considered to be any permanent impact on the openness of the land. Severn Trent has also liaised closely with the affected landowners to ensure the route proposed has the smallest possible impact on their existing land uses and any future proposals they have on their land. During consultations with landowners, Fisher German has been made aware of several potential developments along the proposed pipeline route, one of which was Bloor Homes. Following further discussions with landowners/developers, Severn Trent reassessed and repositioned the pipeline to either avoid or minimise the impact on the parcels of land identified as potential development areas. There are no other approved or pending applications which indicate a constraint to the proposed development.
b.	the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	As previously mentioned, following the completion of the works, all land affected by the scheme will be fully reinstated to the condition which existed prior to the commencement of the works. This, in addition to the underground nature and scale of the development, is not considered likely to result in a significant or permanent loss in the amount or quality of land proposed for the route, or in proximity to it. Vegetation removal, including trees and hedgerows, will be unavoidable along the pipeline route. However, this will be kept to a minimum and reinstated in the next suitable planting season, upon completion of the work.

	The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd have been commissioned by Severn Trent Water to undertake a series of ecological assessments to inform the proposed pipeline route. These include Preliminary Ecological Assessments (PEAs) for the route, Protected Species Surveys and an Ecological Technical Note. These assessments have identified the key ecological receptors and informed a comprehensive mitigation strategy to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice, and to avoid significant environmental effects. Habitats Area-based habitats along the route include woodland, grassland, scrub, ponds, cropland, sparsely vegetated land, gardens, developed land and individual trees. Linear habitats along the route include hedgerows, lines of trees, streams and ditches. Every effort has been made during pipeline route design to avoid crossing through areas of woodland. Hedgerow removal will be kept to a minimum, nominally 25m, and retained as far as possible. Hedgerows will be reinstated, using a diverse native species mix, once works are complete. Watercourses are proposed to be crossed using open-cut methods. Crossing widths will be kept to a minimum, and a method statement will be produced detailing measures to prevent pollution of the watercourse. Habitat impacts will be minimised, with tree removal avoided as far as possible. The route design team have worked closely with TEP ecologists and arboriculturists to minimise impacts on trees and only remove trees where absolutely unavoidable. Upon completion of the works, habitats will be reinstated, or where this is not possible, compensatory planting and habitat creation will be undertaken. Native tree planting will be undertaken along the route where trees are required to be removed, taking into account planting distances in relation to the installed pipeline. Protected and Notable Species <i>Badger</i> Detailed badger surveys were undertaken in September/October 2024, December 2024 and May/June 2025 and evidence of badger activity was recorded. The route design team have worked closely with TEP ecologists to avoid impacts upon badger setts as far as possible, particularly with respect to main setts. The route will be amended to avoid badger setts, including a 30m buffer to avoid impacts. Where impacts are unavoidable, due to other non-ecological constraints, a Natural England badger licence will be obtained prior to setts being closed. Prior to works, an ecologist will carry out pre-commencement checks. If a sett is found, works will stop immediately, and advice will be sought. A 30 m exclusion zone will be established around any active sett, and works may only proceed if monitoring confirms inactivity or a licence is obtained. <i>Otter, Water Vole, and White-clawed Crayfish</i> Further otter, water vole and white-clawed crayfish surveys are currently ongoing. All watercourses which are to be impacted will be surveyed. Mitigation will be informed by the results of further surveys, but could include adjustment of the route, crossing of watercourses by HDD or sensitive
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	clearance measures undertaken under the supervision of an ecologist. If disturbance is unavoidable, a licence from Natural England will be obtained. <i>Bats</i> A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) is currently ongoing, trees with bat roost habitat suitability will be classified as PRF-I or PRF-M. Trees classified as PRF-I require no further survey but must be soft-felled under the supervision of a licensed bat ecologist during removal. Trees with PRF-M suitability for roosting bats will need additional surveys, which may include aerial inspections or nocturnal emergence surveys. If any trees are confirmed to support bat roosts, a Natural England bat licence will be obtained prior to their removal. The survey area itself provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats, including agricultural and grassland fields, hedgerows, lines of trees, watercourses and ditches and is assessed as having moderate suitability overall. To minimise ecological impact, the removal of trees, woodland, and hedgerows will be avoided where possible, with any unavoidable loss kept to a minimum. <i>Birds</i> The route supports a variety of breeding and farmland bird species and further breeding bird surveys have now been completed, with results currently being analysed. A winter bird habitat assessment has been undertaken (A8W14241-TEP-XX-XX-T-EN-0009) including detailed winter bird surveys of habitats around Cropston Reservoir (see paragraphs 2.55 & 2.56 of technical note). The assessment indicates that most of the proposed pipeline route holds low value for wintering birds, particularly waders and wildfowl, due to disturbances from roads and footpaths, limited open sightlines, and generally unsuitable agricultural land use. While there is some potential for finches and skylarks, the narrow field margins reduce the suitability for seed-eating species. All other vegetation clearance will be timed to avoid the nesting season or preceded by nesting bird checks. Exclusion zones and compensatory habitat creation will be implemented where necessary. <i>Amphibians</i> eDNA and traditional surveys in 2024 and 2025 confirmed GCN presence in several ponds. Further surveys are planned for 2026. Terrestrial habitat along the route is suitable for GCN and other amphibians. Due to limited availability of ponds, District Level Licensing (DLL) may not be viable. If DLL is not possible, a Natural England GCN licence will be required. Mitigation may include fencing, trapping, translocation, and identification of receptor sites. <i>Reptiles</i> The majority of habitats to be impacted by pipeline construction are sub-optimal for reptiles. There is only a low likelihood of small numbers of reptiles being present. Therefore, mitigation will comprise precautionary working measures which should be undertaken following a sensitive and staged approach under the supervision of an ecologist to avoid harm to reptiles. <i>Other Mammals</i> The route supports habitat for hedgehog, brown hare, and polecat. Clearance works will be undertaken sensitively to avoid harm. <i>Notable Plants</i>
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	Following completion of the bluebell survey, if large areas of habitats supporting native bluebell are to be removed, translocation will be undertaken. This process is best undertaken when bluebells are visible, typically between April and May. Designated Sites There are no statutory internationally designated sites (Ramsar, Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)) within 10 km of the site. There are 14 statutory nationally designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserves (NNR)) within 5 km of the site. The route intersects Bradgate Park and Swithland Wood NNR for a short section. Natural England have been consulted with regard to potential impacts on the SSSIs within the vicinity of the route. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be implemented to protect designated sites and sensitive habitats during construction. Conclusion The ecological assessments have informed the pipeline alignment and construction methodology to avoid or minimise impacts on sensitive habitats and species. Key ecological constraints include hedgerows, badger setts, and GCN breeding ponds and bats (potential). A CEMP will ensure compliance with ecological legislation and best practice. Consultation with Natural England is also ongoing regarding the survey approach and necessary mitigation through their Discretionary Advice Service (DAS) process. With these measures in place, the proposed development is not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects. Arboriculture TEP were also commissioned by Severn Trent Water to assess arboricultural constraints and opportunities along the proposed pipeline route. The survey was completed in accordance with BS 5837 by qualified arboriculturists and identified multiple arboricultural features which are shown on the Tree Constraints Plans (ref: D10480.01.001-051) and Tree Survey Datasheets (ref: X10480.01.001). The tree population is typical of the agricultural landscape and predominantly comprises largely middle aged and mature individual field boundary trees or boundary trees groups. These are predominantly pedunculate oak followed by common ash. Field boundaries are also largely delineated by native species hedgerow. A preliminary assessment based on the current proposed pipe centreline, finds it possible to avoid significant effects on trees, woodland and hedges and therefore the environment via the implementation of the following measures: - Use of the tree constraints information to design around high-quality trees and the minimum protective buffers for ancient woodland and veteran trees. - Utilisation of existing gaps in tree lines and hedgerows - Narrowing the working corridor at tree-lined and wooded crossings. For short sections, where routing the pipeline through wooded crossings is unavoidable the footprint of the works can be significantly reduced by not using these areas to store soil and material - In-situ hedgerow reinstatement. - Ex-situ tree replacement based on a ratio that's proportionate to the size of those removed.
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	The proposed pipeline route and working area has been designed to minimise loss of TPO trees., Where loss is unavoidable, it will be minimised via routing and working restrictions and a TPO Application for Tree Works submitted to the relevant Local Authority. The assessment concludes that, with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, no significant arboricultural effects are anticipated as a result of the development.
c. the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas— i. wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; ii. coastal zones and the marine environment; iii. iii) mountain and forest areas; iv. nature reserves and parks; v. European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; vi. areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; vii. densely populated areas; viii. (viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	It is important to note that the proposed pipeline route does not pass through any sensitive areas, as defined in Part 1 of the EIA Regs 2017. The ecological assessments, detailed in the above section, have been carried out to identify elements of the natural environment which have the potential to be impacted by the work. The further appropriate surveys and recommendations set out in these assessments to avoid potential adverse impacts will be followed prior to, during and after the proposed work where required. Furthermore, once the pipeline has been laid, all land affected by the works will be fully reinstated to the condition which existed prior to the commencement of works. The methods of how this will be achieved are set out above. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposed works will have a significant or adverse impact on the natural environment. Archaeology and Heritage An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) was undertaken for the proposed Hallgates to Elms Farm scheme to assess the potential for archaeological remains along the route (July 2025). This assessment compiled data from a range of local and national sources, including Historic Environment Records, to evaluate the known and potential archaeological resource and to provide an initial appraisal of its significance. A meeting was held on the 13th May 2025 with Historic England to discuss the project and the potential effects it would have on the Bradgate Park Registered Park and Garden. The meeting followed a prior period of consultation with Historic England as the scheme evolved. Historic England had agreed that there would be no impact on the heritage significance of the Registered Park and Garden through the physical impacts the development would require if it necessitated running through the designated heritage assets (to be considered at AMP9). They also felt that there would unlikely be any setting effects on the Registered Park and Garden. The assessment has established that there is an archaeological interest defined as the potential for the presence of remains dating from the Anglo-Saxon period to the 19th century. These remains are likely to be associated with past agricultural and industrial activity and are anticipated to be of local significance at most. There is also broad potential for archaeology dating to the Prehistoric and Romano-British periods, inferred from known levels of activity as recorded on the historic environment record. These could be of local to regional significance. Due to a lack of previous archaeological investigation, the presence, location and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the Site cannot currently be confirmed on the basis of the available information. As a first step in determining the absence or presence of buried archaeological remains, a Geophysical Survey is currently ongoing along the proposed route. This has,

	to date, found evidence of past agricultural land management in a number of areas and a range of anomalies that could be archaeological in nature. An Archaeological Management Strategy will be prepared, following completion of the geophysical surveys, which will detail further investigations where necessary, based on the information available. This could include an archaeological watching brief during construction to monitor groundworks for unexpected discoveries or targeted trial trenching. All archaeological works will be conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standards and guidance, and the methodologies will be set out in Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI) to be agreed with the relevant planning authorities and County Archaeologist. Severn Trent may also do some local community engagement for archaeology, depending on the results of the investigations. This could include talks with local interest groups or going into schools if archaeological material is recovered. If significant archaeological remains are identified, particularly those of national importance, project redesign may be necessary to preserve them in situ. This would involve consultation with the County Archaeologist. Toolbox talks will also be delivered to construction teams to ensure appropriate procedures are followed if archaeology is encountered unexpectedly. The study has identified no overriding cultural heritage constraints which are likely to prohibit development. Therefore, with the implementation of an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation, no significant adverse impacts on heritage assets are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. The proposed development's relationship with the historic environment is therefore not considered likely to result in significant environmental effects.
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- 4.9. Table 6 provides an assessment of the proposal against the criteria for consideration of the types and characteristics of any potential impact.

Table 4 - Types and characteristics of the potential impact

The likely significant effects of the development on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in [Table 4 and 5] above, with regard to the impact of the development on the factors specified in regulation 4(2) of the EIA Regs 2017, taking into account:	
Applicable Threshold/ Criteria	Assessment
a. the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The proposed development comprises the installation of a 9.2m water pipeline from land north of Roecliffe Road to the Brickyard and a 0.2km cross connection between existing pipelines located immediately to the south of Ratby. The proposed pipeline will be installed via a 40-metre-wide working width to safely and appropriately accommodate excavations, haul roads, storage areas and excavated material stockpiles. This will roughly centre on the pipeline for the vast majority of the proposed route, narrowing in places to avoid potentially impacting certain areas of constraint. The proposed pipeline will pass in proximity to individual or small clusters of residential properties, farms and commercial/industrial premises, with the closest residential properties to the pipeline corridor at the Reservoir Road and Groby Road crossings, approximately 25m away. However, the proposed route has been designed to avoid encroaching on any settlements. Furthermore, due to the nature of the proposed development, any potential impacts will be temporary and only exist for the construction duration associated

	with that section of the pipeline. Following this period, that section of the working area will be fully reinstated as the work moves on to another section of the route.
b. the nature of the impact;	Construction The installation of the pipeline will only last for a temporary period, and the associated impacts will only exist in localised pockets as the applicant's build consultants move along the proposed route. As one section of the pipe is installed, the ground, site and working area will be returned to the state which existed prior to the commencement of works. Furthermore, the construction works will be carried out in accordance with the advice and recommendations received from the applicant's technical consultants, set out in the information submitted in support of the EIA and advice following the future surveys and assessments. The work will also be carried out in accordance with any measures agreed with the relevant authority following future correspondence. Traffic Management Significant road closures have been avoided where possible by the careful design of the proposed route. Where parts of the route simply cross highways, short road closures are required to facilitate the safe installation of the pipe and reinstatement works. The roads requiring temporary closures are Bradgate Road, Cropston; Reservoir Road, Cropston; Bradgate Road, Anstey and Anstey Lane, Anstey. These closures and associated traffic management will be designed and agreed with the corresponding LPA's Highway Department prior to the works in these areas. Draft road closure and diversion plans are submitted as part of this EIA Screening Opinion Request (refs RHTM/RJA/5299/001, RHTM/RJA/5299/002, RHTM/RJA/5299/003 and RHTM/RJA/5299/010). The Leicester Western Bypass (A46) (x2 crossing) and Groby Road will be crossed using trenchless methods to avoid the need for road closures. Access points into the construction area have been located away from village centres and visitor attractions, e.g. Bradgate Park, to reduce the impact of the additional vehicles delivering materials to the site. Construction access will be via existing field entrances along the pipeline route. A construction traffic management plan will be developed and implemented, which, for example, will reduce construction vehicle movements through the village of Cropston. The main site office will be set up on an area of land adjacent to Mill Lane Industrial Estate. This will also operate as the main construction access for the majority of Section 2, so deliveries to this section of the pipeline will have considerably less impact than an alternative access nearer the A50/Glenfield Avenue, which is closer to residential properties. Due to the above, no permanent adverse impacts are considered to be had on highway safety nor cause significant durations of disruptions to the local highway network, other than the unavoidable road closures to allow for safe and efficient working. The proposed development's relationship with highway safety and traffic management is therefore not considered to result in any likelihood of significant environmental effects. Operation Once the proposed pipe has been installed, it will remain below ground level. The proposed pipe's operation will not have any impacts once installed.

		The proposal is therefore not considered to result in any likelihood of significant environmental effects in this area.
c.	the transboundary nature of the impact;	The proposed pipeline route is located within the jurisdiction of Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District Council. The entire route is located entirely within Leicestershire. The proposed route does not cross any national or international boundaries.
d.	intensity and complexity of the impact;	The proposed development, nor its associated construction phase, are considered to be of an intense or complex nature. As mentioned above, the installation of the proposed pipeline will progress along the route in sections, rather than existing along the entire route for the duration of the construction period. The construction impacts are considered minimal, as the trench will be backfilled using the original excavated soil, which will be carefully bunded and stored adjacent to the working area during the installation. The construction work will be informed by the technical surveys and reports submitted in support of this EIA Screening Opinion request and also carried out in accordance with the applicant's community and environmental management plans. This will ensure that the temporary works are carried out without significant environmental effects and without any health and safety risks. Due to the nature of the proposal, the ability to return the proposed site to the condition which existed prior to the commencement of the works is considered easily achievable and will also be carried out in accordance with the applicant's ecology advice, as set out in the PEAs.
e.	the probability of the impact;	The potential impacts which may arise from the proposed development have been identified in the above report. In each instance or potential area for impact, appropriate avoidance or mitigation measures have been specifically designed for the project and will be implemented into the scope of works. The proposed works and the future operation of the development are therefore not considered to result in the likelihood of significant environmental effects.
f.	the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Once the proposed works commence, a ~2.5-year construction programme is anticipated, provisionally starting in November 2025. The Contractor will refine the construction programme when the detailed design has been completed. The development will be commenced and completed sectionally, with the area returned to the state which existed prior to the commencement of the works as work is progressed. Due to the nature of the proposed works and the proposed location, the ability to return the entire site to the condition which existed prior to the commencement of works is considered to be achievable.
g.	the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;	There are no other known developments likely to result in cumulative impacts in conjunction with the proposed pipeline as part of this Screening Opinion request.
h.	the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	The below-ground nature of the development, in addition to the relatively simple method of installation, is considered to result in the proposed site being returned to the condition which existed prior to the commencement of the works without complication or delay. This will be achieved largely by the work being guided and carried out in accordance with the technical environmental reports submitted in support of this Screening Opinion request.

	The proposed site and surrounding area will therefore not experience any adverse permanent impacts, which would result in the likelihood of significant environmental effects.
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4.10. Following this assessment against the selection criteria as detailed within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regs 2017, and the proposed mitigation measures as detailed above, it is concluded that the proposed development *would not* have a likely significant effect on the environment, and an Environmental Statement is therefore not required.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. To conclude, the Hallgates to Elms Farm scheme is required to protect STWL's customers' supplies of clean water during times of 'peak flow' and provide supply resilience to the catchment at times of hot weather or high demand. Specifically, this project will enable 65MI /d to be transferred between Hallgates DSR and the Elms Farm DBS, helping STWL meet their goal to improve the resilience, securing supply to circa 279,731 customers.
- 5.2. Given the nature of the proposed development and the commitment to follow the recommendations set out in the relevant technical assessments, it is concluded that any effects which could arise as a result of the development will be local to the proposed route of the pipeline and its immediate surroundings. Such effects will be temporary and short-term in nature and minimised as far as possible through the design of the scheme and adherence to proposed mitigation measures. As such, no '*significant environmental effects*' are considered likely to arise as a result of the proposed works.
- 5.3. For the reasons set out above, it is our view that the proposed scheme can be brought forward, delivering the required infrastructure provision set out in Section 2, without resulting in significant or adverse impacts on the environment, and so *should not* comprise EIA development or require an Environmental Statement, allowing the applicant to proceed with the project by virtue of their permitted development rights.
- 5.4. We therefore request that Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council and Blaby District Council adopt a Screening Opinion to confirm that the installation of the proposed pipeline is not likely to result in significant environmental effects and that no Environmental Statement is required for the proposed works. In accordance with Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations, we look forward to hearing from you in due course.