Site Visit Report

The site visit process is a sample on a particular day of an installation's compliance with some of its licence conditions. Where non-compliance against a particular condition has not been reported, this should not be construed to mean that there is full compliance with that condition of the licence.

Instructions and actions arising from the visit shall be addressed, or where applicable noted, by the licensee in order to ensure compliance, to improve the environmental performance of the installation and to provide clarification on certain issues.

The licensee shall take the actions specified to close out the non-compliances and observations raised in this Site Visit Report.

Licensee

Name of Installation	Ringsend
Licensee	Irish Water
Licence Register No.	D0034-01
CRO Number	
Site Address	Dublin
Site Visit Reference No.	SV20156

Report Detail

Issue Date	11/03/2020
Prepared By	David Shannon

Site Visit Detail

Date Of Inspection	06/03/2020	**Announced**		Yes	
Time In	10:40	**Time Out**		13:30	
Agency Personnel On Site	David Shannon				
Licensee Personnel and Role	Christina Geraghty (Irish Water) Cathal Kenny (Dublin City Council - working under Service Level Agreement with Irish Water)				
Photo Taken	Yes	**Samples Taken**	No	**Video Taken**	No
Odour Assessment	No				

Scope

To carry out an inspection of the release of raw sewage into the Naniken River, which was caused by a blockage in the waste water collection system.

Media

Emissions to water.

Site Areas Inspected

Naniken River flowing through St Anne's Park, manholes on the waste water collection system upstream and downstream of the blockage.

Documents Inspected

Incident report submitted by Irish Water to the EPA.

1. Site Specific Issues

		Answer	Condition Number	Non Compliance	Observation
1.1	Dicharge of raw sewage to the Naniken River	Checked			

Comment / Corrective Action

On 2nd March 2020 Irish Water informed the EPA that raw sewage was overflowing from the waste water collection system and entering the Naniken River. Irish Water and Dublin City Council were made aware of the overflow on 28th February 2020 by a member of the public, and the overflow may have been ongoing before this date.

Two syphons that convey waste water under a railway line near Brookwood Avenue had become blocked. The blockages prevented waste water from passing through the syphons and caused the waste water to discharge from the collection system into a culverted section of the Naniken River. The culverted section of the river continued underground after the discharge point for approximately 300m before the river emerged at St Anne's Park. The river then flowed south east for approximately 1.7 km through St Anne's Park and entered the estuary to the west of Bull Island.

The 1.7 km stretch of river running through St Anne's Park was cloudy at the time of the inspection, due to the presence of sewage in the river, and a fine sediment covered the river bed in many places. Sewage fungus was visible in some areas of the river. There was also sewage debris (for example rags) along sections of the river bank and caught on tree branches that had fallen into the river. I saw no evidence of a fish kill in the river. The river was still cloudy as it discharged to the mudflats near Bull Island.

I observed that an outflow connecting the river to a small pond near the Roman Tower on the James Larkin Road side of St Anne's Park was blocked off by Irish Water/Dublin City Council to prevent waste water in the river from entering the pond. Irish Water advised that this was blocked on 2nd March, but waste water in the river had entered the pond prior to this. A crew from Dublin City Council was pumping water out of the pond when I arrived on site, to remove any contaminated water. The water in the pond did not look to be significantly impacted by the pollution incident at the time of the inspection.

Dublin City Council had erected several signs along the river to warn users of the park of a pollution incident.

Work to clear the blockage in one of the syphons was ongoing at the time of my inspection. This involved first accessing, then draining, the underground tanks upstream and downstream of the syphon. Next a jetting tool must be inserted into the syphon to clear the blockage. Access to the tanks was difficult and involved working in private gardens.

The exact volume of waste water entering the river is not known but Irish Water's representatives estimated it to be of the order of 4,600 m3/day.

On 9th March 2020, following the site inspection, Irish Water confirmed to the EPA that the blockages in both syphons have been cleared.

Summary

This inspection was carried out in response to an overflow of untreated waste water from the public sewer to the Naniken River. The overflow, which was ongoing for over a week, was caused by blockages in two underground syphons that form part of the waste water collection system.

The Naniken River flows through St Anne's Park and at the time of the inspection the river was cloudy due to the presence of sewage in the river. A fine sediment covered the river bed in many places. There was sewage fungus within the river in some areas and sewage debris (for example rags) along sections of the river bank and caught on tree branches that had fallen into the river.

Work was ongoing to clear the blockages at the time of the inspection.

Irish Water should:

1. Take all steps necessary to ensure the syphon blockages are completely cleared.
2. Take any necessary preventative action to avoid recurrence. This should include regular inspections and maintenance of the syphons and an assessment of the need for a notification / alarm system to highlight when there is a risk of blockages.
3. Ensure that users of St Anne's Park are kept informed of any precautions needed to avoid coming into contact with sewage in the river pending full resolution of the incident.
4. Clean up the sewage debris along the river.
5. Provide updates on resolving the incident to the EPA through the incident notification, This should include results of any monitoring, corrective action taken and preventative action planned to avoid recurrence, and lessons learned from the incident.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

You are required to complete the instructions and actions, as outlined in this report, within the specified timeframe. Where required, you shall respond to actions specified in Compliance Investigations within the required timeframe.The licensee shall maintain documentary evidence, for review by the EPA, that the prescribed corrective actions were completed within the required timeframe.

(i) Compliance Investigations

You are not required to respond directly to items contained in this EPA site visit report; where an issue requires a direct response, the EPA will generate a Compliance Investigation through the EDEN system. You will receive notification when a Compliance Investigation instruction or action is generated.

(ii) Publication of reports and licensee response.

Please note that this Site Visit Report will be made available for public viewing via the EPA's Licence Enforcement Access Portal within one day of the issue date and will be published on the Licence Details Page of the EPA's website, www.epa.ie, that relates to your licence 60 calendar days after the issue date.

You may if you choose submit, within 45 calendar days of the issue date of this Site Visit Report, a Licensee Public Response that will be published alongside the Site Visit Report. This Response, should you wish to avail of it, provides you with an opportunity to inform the public about how you are implementing the actions set out in the report, activities underway, timescales and target completion dates. Please be aware that the content of your Licensee Public Response must be factual and should not breach the EPAs stated online publication standards.

If you wish to submit a Licensee Public Response to an EPA Site Visit Report, you should do this by clicking on the 'Make a Response' link on the Site Visits page in EDEN. A .pdf document containing your response can be attached and submitted from here.

(iii) Response to Site visit report

Where you do wish to respond directly to a site visit report, you should do this by generating a 'Licensee Return' of the type 'Site Updates/Notifications' and the sub-type 'Response to EPA Report' in EDEN.

Please note that you are required to comply with the conditions of your licence at all times, and where noncompliance occurs you must restore compliance within the shortest possible time. These actions will be verified during subsequent EPA visits.

Please quote the above Inspection Reference Number in any future correspondence in relation to this Report.