

REFERENCE

2627222

RELEASE DATE

11 August 2026

SUBJECT

Requested correspondence, documents and reports held by Northern Ireland Water relating to data centres between 1 September 2025 and 20 July 2026.

RESPONSE

You clarified that your request covers records in which a customer, applicant, operator or development is expressly described as a data centre. You also confirmed that the request extends to planning enquiries, statutory consultation responses, water and wastewater connection applications, demand assessments, capacity assessments, internal and external correspondence, reports and other recorded information concerning data centres.

As the requested information concerns water and wastewater infrastructure, capacity and demand, Northern Ireland Water has considered your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Northern Ireland Water does not use a dedicated data centre category within its connection application or customer account records. An applicant may select "Other" and provide a description of the proposed use. Within those particular records, a development can therefore be identified as a data centre only where the description or other recorded information expressly identifies it as such. Northern Ireland Water did not, however, restrict its consideration of the request to information recorded under a dedicated customer or application category.

Northern Ireland Water consulted the relevant business areas and searched the record locations reasonably likely to contain information within the clarified scope of your request. The searches covered records concerning customers, applicants, operators and developments expressly identified as data centres, together with general recorded information concerning data centres within the scope and period specified in your request.

Those searches did not identify any planning enquiry, statutory consultation response, water or wastewater connection application, demand assessment, capacity assessment, correspondence, report or other recorded information falling within the clarified scope that was held by Northern Ireland Water when your request was received.

Regulation 12(4)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 provides that a public authority may refuse to disclose information that it did not hold when the request was received.

On the basis of the searches and enquiries undertaken, Northern Ireland Water has concluded, on the balance of probabilities, that it did not hold recorded information falling within the clarified scope of your request when the request was received. Northern Ireland Water has therefore applied Regulation 12(4)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Northern Ireland Water has applied the presumption in favour of disclosure required by Regulation 12(2) and has considered the public interest test under Regulation 12(1)(b). Northern Ireland Water recognises the public interest in transparency about developments and activities that may affect water and wastewater infrastructure, capacity and demand. However, the searches and enquiries undertaken did not identify any recorded information held by Northern Ireland Water within the clarified scope when the request was received. There is therefore no recorded information that Northern Ireland Water can make available in response to the request. In these circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure.