REFERENCE

2627308

RELEASE DATE

27 August 2026

SUBJECT

The Annual Land Disposal Return 2026/27, identifying land proposed for disposal and associated financial information. Consultation from the Utility Regulator concerning proposed disclosure.

RESPONSE

The Utility Regulator consulted NI Water on the proposed disclosure of its most recent Annual Land Disposal Return. A redacted copy of the Annual Land Disposal Return 2026/27 is provided at Annex A.

NI Water advised that the financial information marked in green is commercially sensitive and asked the Utility Regulator to consider Regulation 12(5)(e) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 in relation to prospective sales. The redactions concern netbook values and estimated proceeds for the proposed disposals.

NI Water recognised the public interest in openness and transparency about land sales and the proceeds received. However, the sites had not yet been sold, and disclosure of anticipated proceeds could limit NI Water's ability to negotiate the best possible price and achieve best value.

NI Water also explained that some sites may not be suitable for the open market and that describing them as having been offered for sale could be misleading.

NI Water considered that the public interest favoured disclosure of information about completed sales while maintaining the exception for sales that had not completed or were proposed for the future. This records NI Water's consultation response, rather than a final disclosure decision by the Utility Regulator.