



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE SHLIGIGH  
HALLA NA CATHRACH SLIGEACH

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL  
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The Minister  
Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government  
Planning Division  
Custom House  
Dublin 1  
D01 W6X0  
8 March 2019

Re: **PL18/210 – Proposed Upgrading of Lough Talt Water Treatment Plant (IROPI)**

A Chara,

In May 2018, Irish Water lodged a planning application with Sligo County Council in respect of the proposed upgrading of the existing water treatment plant at Lough Talt. The Lough Talt WTP serves an extensive catchment of South and West Sligo supplying water to a population of approximately 14,000 persons.

An upgrade is urgently required because of public health issues associated with the deficiencies in the current treatment of the water supplied from the plant. Within the past 12 months, two separate boil water notices have been imposed due to the detection of cryptosporidium in the treated water.

The planning application was accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement which concluded that the proposed development was going to have a significant adverse affect on the integrity of the Lough Hoe Bog SAC. Having reviewed all of the documentation submitted in association with the application, including comments received from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Sligo County Council concurs with the conclusion of the submitted NIS and has determined that:

- the proposed development is likely to have significant adverse effects on the Lough Hoe Bog SAC in view of the site's conservation objectives;
- there is no available alternative solution that would ensure a supply of safe drinking water to a population of 13,663 persons in the short to medium term;
- the failure to remove cryptosporidium and trihalomethanes from the water supply represents an ongoing risk/danger to public health.

In light of the above, Sligo County Council considers that consent should be given to the proposed project for imperative reasons of overriding public interest in accordance with the provisions of Sections 177AA and 177AB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Sligo County Council has therefore prepared a Statement of Case that imperative reasons of overriding public interest exist and which sets out the compensatory measures that are being proposed as necessary to ensure the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

In this regard, the following documents are enclosed:

- Statement of Case prepared by Sligo County Council;
- a copy of the planning application lodged by Irish Water (including Natura Impact Statement);
- a copy of all submissions lodged on the proposed development;
- Planner's Report recommending the invoking of the IROPI procedure.

Section 177AB(1)(a) of the Planning Act requires that the views of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht should be requested regarding the adequacy of the compensatory measures proposed. Sligo County Council will be available for consultations with the two Departments and the applicant, if such consultations are deemed necessary, as provided for under Section 177AB(1)(b).

Please note that Sligo County Council is required to issue a decision regarding this planning application by 26 March 2019, as specified in Section 34(8)(c) of the Planning Act.

Yours sincerely



**Dorothy Clarke**  
**Director of Services**  
**Sligo County Council**