

Sonja Smith

From: Stuart Huskisson
Sent: 19 August 2011 14:09
To: Sonja Smith; Maire Buckley
Subject: FW: Submission on Youghal WWDL Application DO139-01
Attachments: DrMeara 12-11-1981.jpg; Manhole4301Leaking.jpg; Biscuit lifted sewage pouring out.JPG; CCC-KÇ-07-07-2011.pdf; RaisedManhole4303.jpg; BrokenManhole.jpg; JAF-CCC 25-07-2011.eml

Importance: High

Hi Sonja/Maire,

Please can you include all of the attached as a new submission on the Youghal WWDL (D0139-01).

Regards
Stuart

From: Dun Mhuire [mailto:dunmhuire@eircom.net]
Sent: 19 August 2011 13:54
To: Stuart Huskisson
Cc: John Feehan; Martin O' Reilly
Subject: Submission on Youghal WWDL Application DO139-01
Importance: High

John & Ann FitzGerald

Dun Mhuire

Upper Strand

Youghal

Co. Cork

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19th August 2011

Mr. Stuart Huskisson,
OCLR Administration,
EPA Regional Inspectorate,
Inniscarra,
Co. Cork

Dear Mr. Huskisson,

Re: Youghal WWDL Application - D0139-01 - Waste Water Discharge License Application

We wish to include the following information and attachments as part of our submission in relation to the above WWDL.

We wish to state that there are three public mains combined sewer pipelines on our private residential property, the legacy of the two previous Main Drainage Schemes at Youghal. We have repeatedly raised sewerage and drainage infrastructural problems at meetings with the local authority, in correspondence to Youghal Town Council, Cork County Council, An Bord Pleanála and the Minister for the Environment and the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government and in planning submissions to Youghal Town Council. We have raised these issues with An Taisce and in the past year to the EPA in relation to water quality issues.

The planning authority at Youghal Town Council ignored our concerns and our planning submissions and granted permissions/retentions for developments adjacent their public lands at Williamstown. As a result, the sanitary authority, Cork County Council, can no longer access their infrastructure for routine maintenance from lands which were purchased with public money and for such purposes by the former sanitary authority, Youghal UDC now Youghal Town Council. Cork County Council should now be in a position to indicate the relevant sections of public pipelines and manholes which have been affected at Knockaverry and Williamstown.

It is clear that no maintenance can have been carried out for many years and that even basic cleaning/jetting was not possible. We would like to know how Cork County Council propose to provide for current and future maintenance requirements.

We were advised by Cork County Council that all pipelines on our private property were designated as 'redundant pipework' under the new Youghal Main Drainage Scheme and were due to be abandoned'. However, last July we were informed by Cork County Council that the DEHLG did not accept their proposal to decommission these sewers and as a result the decommissioning is now not included in the scope of the Youghal Main Drainage Scheme.

We have had three reported raw sewerage spills in our residential garden from a public mains Manhole 3301 from one of these combined sewerage/stormwater pipelines. Following the first two raw sewerage overspills which lasted several hours and caused flooding, the response from the sanitary authority was to install a metal bar, with a padlock, across the manhole cover to prevent it lifting, (though not from seeping.) On St Stephens Day, 2010, the sealant had partially extruded on the manhole lid and a discharge was bubbling through but this time sewerage discharged from the manhole upstream on our drive. The subsequent sewerage overflow from this sealed Manhole 3301, which occurred in May 2011, lifted the entire manhole biscuit, over a ton and a half of concrete, to discharge raw sewerage all over our garden for several hours, into the open surface water drains, polluting our freshwater spring, and which finally discharged at Front Strand beach when the Lower Outfall was manually cleared of sand/gravel which buried it. Following this raw sewerage spill, no clean up of our garden or the French drains was carried out by Cork County Council and yet again we were left to deal with the aftermath. See attached image, Biscuit lifted sewage pouring out.jpg. This Manhole 3301, the cover level like many others at Williamstown is below the overflow level in the Strand Holding Tank, remains in the same condition as the 4th May 2011 and nobody from Cork County Council has brought the key and lifted the lid to inspect their infrastructure.

When the raw sewerage spills occurred in our garden, our land was flooded at the time as the Upper Outfall and Lower Outfall at Front Strand was buried and unoperational and the discharge entered the floodwaters over several acres. The spill lasted for several hours and contributed to the flooding.

This kind of pressure poses an unacceptable risk to our person and to our home. We are now left with what Cork County Council consider to be redundant sewers on our property which continue to be commercially loaded and overloaded as a result of planning permissions granted by Youghal Town Council and which have caused flooding and pollution. Two of the pipelines have steep gradients, sharp 90 degree bends and the older pipelines are clay. It is unacceptable to expect private individuals to subsidise the sanitary authority and to facilitate private and public development at our expense and at the expense of the environment.

We now request the decommissioning of all the pipelines and manholes on our private property which have caused our family so much aggravation, hardship, pollution which pose an unacceptable risk of personal injury and which continue to prevent us using our land. The level of disruption necessary to maintain these is non-viable.

The existing sewerage network at Williamstown is inadequate and there are known, historical, problems which have yet to be fully addressed by the sanitary authority or by the proposed Youghal Main Drainage Scheme. Please see attached letter, DrMeara 12-11-1981.jpg, , dated 12th November 1981, from John FitzGerald Snr, deceased, to Dr. O'Meara, Chief Medical Officer, Southern Health Board, (The son referred to in this letter is the writer of this submission to the EPA and ended up in hospital following surgery and had to repeat his Leaving Certificate year in

order to sit his Leaving Certificate exam.) Thirty years later, these same problems persist, except there is nobody in the HSE with any responsibility for mains sewer spills on private property even when the resultant pollution is not contained within the boundaries of our property and has such a wide ranging impact on our environment. We have been stopped down for an entire year and a half and cannot carry out any works on our land.

In the townland of Williamstown, each section of the mains sewer pipelines have had at least one manhole where sewerage overflows occur on a regular basis and these sewerage spills enter the surface water drainage network. In the 1980's it was common practice for the sanitary authority to break manholes to relieve the pressure in the network in the area. We have witnessed, recorded and reported sewer spills, including the ones in our garden and on our drive, and unknown discharges into the surface water drainage channels at Williamstown to Cork County Council. We identified two manholes, Manhole 3411, Manhole 4304 which are buried/built upon. We identified manhole 145/145a, from the Strand Holding Tank sewerage overflow pipe adjacent the CIE railway embankment, where we also witnessed evidence of sewerage spillage on several occasions. There is section of a broken manhole lying on the ground at this location, see image BrokenManhole.jpg. The levels of some of the manholes associated with these pipelines are low and they will continue to pose a risk from spillages adjacent our property. They are also below the level of the overflow level in the Strand Holding Tank. The diameter of the pipes and the condition of older, clay pipes will continue to pose unacceptable risks. Sewer spills from manholes into gardens and houses, sewerage flowing into the CIE railway turntable at Youghal Railway Station, (Youghal Register of Protected Structures No; 3036) occurred with such frequency that in the 1980's residents in the Strand area petitioned and lobbied without ever achieving a satisfactory resolution.

In our previous submission, we have highlighted our concerns in relation to the condition and structural integrity of the Strand Holding Tank and the pipelines at Williamstown and await a response from Cork County Council who should now be in a position to do so. They have carried out enough CCTV and other surveys of the system to indicate whether they have detected damage, movement/settlement in the infrastructure at Williamstown, other than Manhole 4301 which we had to advise them of, as sewerage from the network feeds to the Strand Pump House via gravity.

We reported that the raised Manhole 4301, located beside the combined Strand Holding Tank, which is the manhole for the emergency overflow pipe to Front Strand outfall, was damaged and cracked and discharging into the surface water drainage channel which undergrounds at the CIE culvert to the sea outfalls at Front Strand, a bathing area with Blue Flag status. Cork County Council inspected Manhole 4301 and sealed some of the cracks with mastic. They sampled the water in the manhole on one occasion, on a dull weekday morning. However, when we inspected it in the evenings of two sunny weekends, where the populations can swell by up to six thousand people at the height of the tourism season to enjoy the amenities of our Blue Flag beach, the Strand Holding Tank was visibly and audibly full at high tide and a smell of sewerage emanates from both it and, the adjacent open drainage channel by Manhole 4301 and the partially operational Lower Outfall Temporary Interim Extension at Front Strand.

This Manhole 4301 is still discharging, from three sides, each high tide into the surface water drainage channel which exits at Front Strand. Cork County Council appear to be suggesting that the twice daily discharges from this manhole are always 'just seawater' and could never contain untreated, raw sewerage. Cork County Council need to clarify what is the current classification of the emergency overflow outfall from the Strand Holding Tank. How exactly does it operate, with and without manual intervention, and how do they know when the tank is full and overflows, how is such an event actually recorded, not modelled, and how do they warn people during the bathing season? This input of seawater and beach materials should not form part of the operation or either the Strand Holding Tank, the Strand Pump House or the sewerage network. See image Manhole4301Leaking.jpg.

The sanitary authority was aware that seawater enters the sewerage network, as were the previous sanitary authority, Youghal Town Council. Yet to date, Cork County Council have not taken steps to prevent sea water and beach materials enter the sewerage network at Williamstown either via the open ended emergency overflow pipe at Front Strand or any other means. When we recently inspected the emergency overflow pipe at Front Strand at low tide, we noticed that the pipe also has cracks in the concrete, this pipe was constructed at the same time as Manhole 3301, Manhole 4301, and the Strand Holding Tank. See image.

We requested that Cork County Council remove the ad hoc filling/dumping around their infrastructure in the vicinity of the Strand Holding Tank to enable them to actually inspect their infrastructure. We have reported unexplained

discharges into the surface water drainage channel, which we believe to be sewerage from the network, to Cork County Council staff from along the bank of the open drainage channel by the Strand Holding Tank.

We enclose a letter from Cork County Council, Senior Engineer, Kevin Costelloe who outlined their proposed works. However, Cork County Council then proceeded to fill and raise ground levels around the Strand Holding Tank by spreading the garbage which had been dumped around the area of the tank and by importing additional material. Cork County Council misrepresented these works to us, see attached document CCC-KC-07-07-2011.pdf. We attach our response, see attached email JAF-CCC 25-07-2011.eml.

Here is an example of a Manhole 4303, similar in age and construction as the Strand Holding Tank and Manhole 4301 just meters from the Strand Holding Tank which if so overgrown it was necessary to take the photograph from on top of it. The manhole has still not been inspected. See image RaisedManhole4303.jpg.

Pollution & Water Quality

Where the existing or proposed mains sewer pipelines/manholes intersect with the surface water drainage network at Williamstown, the sanitary authority must inspect and verify all of their infrastructure in order to prevent further pollution to groundwater, surface water or bathing water, and to prevent infiltration or intrusion of seawater/beach material and where combined sewer overflows have occurred on a regular basis. These inputs should not form part of the operation of the sewerage network.

All inputs to the surface water drainage system should now be clearly identified and the alterations to drainage network should be accurately mapped by Cork County Council.

As the Strand Holding Tank was formerly surrounded by open drainage channels on all sides, we request that Cork County Council now address the following;

- a) Does the infilled drainage channel, formerly located immediately to the north of the Strand Holding Tank on public lands, and which was a continuation to the east of the drain on our property, still exist and perform any function, or has it been undergrounded because of the sewer pipelines and if so please specify the route.
- b) Where does the drainage channel to the east of the Strand Holding Tank, which runs parallel to the sewer line from the Strand Holding Tank to the Strand Pump House, located on CIE lands, which was partially infilled and a section of it was recently cleared, exit to; does it enter sewerage network via the Strand Holding Tank as it was supposed to do under the last Main Drainage scheme or does it underground the sewerage network pipelines and exit via the Upper or Lower Outfalls at Front Strand.
- c) What is the route of the stream from the upper catchment at Knockaverry, which has a catchment of 45 hectares, through Williamstown and particularly where it intersects with the sewerage pipelines and manholes to exit via the Front Strand Outfalls.

Thank you for your attention,

Yours sincerely,

John FitzGerald

Ann FitzGerald

Dr. O'Meara,
County M.C.H.,
St. Finbarr's Hospital,
Cork.

"un bhuire",
strand,
Youghal,
Co. Cork.
12th November 1981

Dear Dr. O'Meara,

I wish to inform you that I still have trouble with the sewer in Youghal. The sewerage from the public manhole is allowed to flow into the storm water drains and then onto the beach, as the drain is tidal the sewerage backs up onto my land and is left accumulating along the banks. As you are already aware sewerage from a similar manhole flowing into the same drain from June 1979 for twelve months and which I have no doubt resulted in a sons seriously illness, with consequent medical expenses and loss of education in his final year of second level education beginning April 1980 and for the remainder of that year. I have now grand-children residing with me and I do not want a repetition. Kindly give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours sincerely,

John FitzGerald

John FitzGerald.

Comhairle Contae Chorcaí Cork County Council

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John & Ann Fitzgerald
Dun Mhuire
Upper Strand
Youghal
Co Cork

7th July 2011

Re: Lands at Williamstown Youghal - Owners John & Ann Fitzgerald

Dear Mr & Mrs Fitzgerald,

Following my telephone conversation with you on Tuesday last I confirm that I will henceforth be your point of contact with CCC. Yvonne O'Brien, Executive Engineer, will be your contact, when I'm on holiday (contact nos. are given below). I have just recently been appointed to my new post in Wastewater Operations & I'm currently familiarising myself with your case.

I gather from my initial reading of the file & our telecom that this situation is of serious concern to you: Please be assured that I will do all in my power to resolve the many issues involved to your satisfaction.

I have had meetings in recent days with CCC staff, Tim O'Herlihy, Executive Engineer & curator Denis O'Rourke - my proposal, based on these meetings & reading the file is that, due to the urgent nature of the problems involved, that interim works, pending the Youghal Main Drainage Works, are required, & should be carried out, in two phases - Phase 1 works to be carried out, if possible, without having to enter your property; If you are satisfied with the initial works, I would then propose to proceed with Phase 2 works, which, with your co-operation would involve some works on your land.

During our conversation you raised a number of issues to which I now give my initial response:

1. RPS report on stormwater runoff from catchment: RPS have stated today that the report will be available in three weeks - I will send you a copy of same as soon as available.
2. Filling of surrounding lands: you allege that Youghal Town Co. have filled land adjacent to your property - I will contact relevant senior personnel to ensure that no filling takes place on this land without a proper assessment of the flooding impact on your property.



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3. Structural condition of public sewers & MH's on your property : the condition of sewer lines will be tested by proposed camera survey, (Phase 1 interim works); MH's will be inspected & confirmed sound or otherwise during proposed interim works (Phase 2) (see below)

4. Structural condition of Holding Tank (HT): I propose that as part of Phase 1 interim works the ground surrounding the HT be lowered to the prevailing level on the west (i.e. stream) side of HT – you allege that this area has been filled in order to hide possible cracks etc. in HT. The HT can be inspected following lowering of levels; I also intend to reinstate the fencing around the tank as part of above interim works & the removal of the earth will facilitate this.

5. Surface Water Drainage: Williamstown is at the low point of a catchment of approx. 232 hectares & is drained via two outfall pipes, one low & the other high, as you know. The flap valves are old & do not seal the ends of the lines & need replacement - I intend to arrange this ASAP as well as dealing with the issue of blockage of the lower outfall by sand.

Proposed Interim Works

Phase 1 - Survey & jet clean sewer lines, as per attached map (this to be carried out without entry to your property; this, however, depends on being able to gain access to the sewer line, which runs under Tides Restaurant, from the adjacent car park to the east). Survey & jetting will prove what condition the sewers are in, whether there is settlement and/or infiltration, structural condition, blockages etc. Also this work should support the conclusions of the Atkins modelling report, the model being predicated on clear pipelines, upstream & downstream of the MH 3301, that surcharged in May of this year.
Holding Tank works, as per 4. above
Replace flap valves, as per 5. above

Phase 2 - Raise & seal MH 3301, as per above Atkins report & monitor MH's immediately upstream of this to ensure no consequent surcharging of the latter.
Tidy up & remove contaminated material, adjacent to MH 3301



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Finally, with regard to complaint you made to Environment Dep., CCC, on last Sunday, 3 July : I inspected the manhole (located just downstream of the HT outfall – MH 4301 On attached map), with a wastewater technician from my staff, (in similar circumstances to Sunday, at high tide, at 9.45 am on 6th July). The outfall is open ended and during high tide sea water can enter the system. While water was flowing from a crack in the MH, & entering the adjacent open stream, inspection of the holding tank showed that the level of water within the tank is in excess of 1.5m below the level in the manhole. It would appear that the water leaking from the manhole is sea water; we have however taken samples of same, & also a sample of the stream at that point. These have been sent to an accredited lab for analysis & spare samples will be tested in the CCC lab - I will revert as soon as I have results.

Please forgive me, if I have omitted any issues that you raised yesterday - you are, of course, welcome to respond to this email.

Regards,

Kevin Costelloe

Senior Engineer

WW Operations, CCC





Manhole 4301 Leaking



Biscuit lifted sewage pouring out



Raised Manhole 4303



Broken Manhole

Sonja Smith

From: Dun Mhuire [dunmhuire@eircom.net]
Sent: 25 July 2011 09:53
To: Kevin Costelloe
Cc: Yvonne O'Brien
Subject: URGENT
Attachments: Filling to west of Strand Holding Tank.jpg; Filling.jpg; Filling1.jpg; Filling2.jpg; Filling4.jpg; Upper Outfall Buried.jpg; LowerOutfallExtended.jpg

Importance: High

Dear Mr. Costelloe,

You rang and introduced yourself as the new, and third, 'one point of contact' for Cork County Council. The role of a nominated 'one point of contact' means that you deal with all issues and not those relevant to your department. We appreciate that you are on holidays and we so copy this email to your colleague, Yvonne O'Brien, as advised. We have highlighted matters which now need to be urgently addressed.

We ask that you take the time to fully review all issues at your earliest opportunity.

In your letter, dated 7th July 2011, you have misrepresented your proposed interim works with regard to lowering the ground level to the west of the Strand Holding Tank by the stream adjacent our lands at Williamstown, Youghal. These works currently being carried out by MacMahon Underground Services, at Youghal Town Council lands to the rear of MacCurtainstown carpark, are not as you have suggested in your subsequent email "remote" from our property. As of Friday of last week the ground level to the west of the tank by the surface water drain has been raised by over two feet. This area of land is the subject of a complaint by us to the EPA, PAE 2010 199, in relation to filling and raising ground levels and has recently been inspected by the EPA. It is also the subject of a complaint, PAE 2008 68 referred by An Taisce and the Department, in relation to water quality ie; bathing water, surface water and groundwater.

We do not allege that filling took place on adjacent Youghal Town Council lands to the east and west of our property, we state it as a fact, which you can easily verify by reference to level studies carried out at Williamstown and Claycastle.

Whilst you stated in your letter, dated 7th July 2011, that you would contact the relevant senior personnel to ensure that no filling takes place adjacent our land without the proper flood assessment taking place it, you have undermined your credibility by engaging in exactly such works ie. the filling and raising of ground levels surrounding the Strand Holding Tank and stream. (See attached images)

We ask that you immediately suspend these works make arrangements for the material to be removed and the original pre-filling ground levels in the area be reinstated.

In relation to the cracks in your damaged infrastructure, Manhole 4301, we advise you that application of mastic is wholly inadequate and request information of what you intend to do with this manhole. When you inspected this manhole, you cannot possibly compare the circumstances of a weekday to a sunny weekend, at the height of the tourism season, whereby the population can swell by up to six thousand people enjoying the amenities of our Blue Flag beach. The Strand Holding Tank was visibly and audibly full at high tide and a smell of sewerage emanated from it. While you stated that it appeared to be seawater, given the water test results posted at Front Strand on the day of your inspection, we are not satisfied that polluted sea water can enter a small freshwater stream, the surface water drains on our property and our spring.

We reiterate that filling was carried out at this location in March 2010, so close to this manhole that a concrete fence post was knocked into the surface water drain. Given the many inspections of this area by

Cork County Council staff and engineers and Atkins, it is disgraceful that this damaged manhole has been 'overlooked'. We have been flooding all winter as a result of the unoperational outfalls at Front Strand and have endured three pollution events whereby raw sewerage spills into these floodwaters, and to have had an additional input to these waters at high tides is unforgivable. It reflects very badly on CCC, and particularly the Local Area staff, whom we had been engaging with for over a year in order to identify and eliminate any sources of water pollution via discharges into the surface water drain in our area.

We ask that you take the necessary steps to prevent seawater and beach material from entering the sewerage network via the emergency overflow pipe at Front Strand in the first instance.

We note that you have indicated your intention to replace the flap valves to the Front Strand outfalls and welcome this, particularly as both outfalls have been buried for over a week now. (See images)

We ask that the Upper Outfall and Lower Outfall interim extension at Front Strand be cleared of sand as a matter of urgency. We ask that the internal gate be again inspected and if it is not fit for purpose that it repaired/replaced.

In relation to your proposed works to the sewer pipelines, cleaning/jetting/surveying etc., we have co-operated and provided access to our property only last Winter for such works. We had since been informed by several Cork County Council staff that these works can be carried out without access to our property and expect that you will do so.

In the event that you do require access, we will consider such a request when we are satisfied that;

- a) you have provided an accurate and full description of such works
- b) and a frank written explanation as to why you can no longer access your infrastructure from the public road and public car park
- c) you remediate the damage caused to our lands by sewerage spillages and flooding and any works to be carried out by your contractors.

In relation to MH 3301, we again reiterate that we do not consent to raising this manhole based on the conclusions arrived at by Atkins, whose modelling does not include the intrusion of seawater and beach materials into the sewerage network.

This manhole is located on our private residential garden. It is not a comparable location to say, the rear of the public carpark where the Strand Holding Tank and other raised manholes, are located, nor do we wish it to be. That is our right.

You continue to prevent us from using our garden and the delay in resolving this issue is with Cork County Council.

As an interim measure, as previously advised to Cork County Council, we will consider your proposals to replace this manhole with a pressure manhole, the cover level to be at ground level, and that you take the necessary steps to prevent seawater entering the sewerage network.

Yours sincerely,

John & Ann FitzGerald

Dún Mhuire

Upper Strand

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Filling to west of Strand Holding Tank

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Filling



Filling 1

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Filling 2



Filling 4



Upper Outfall Buried



Lower Outfall Extended