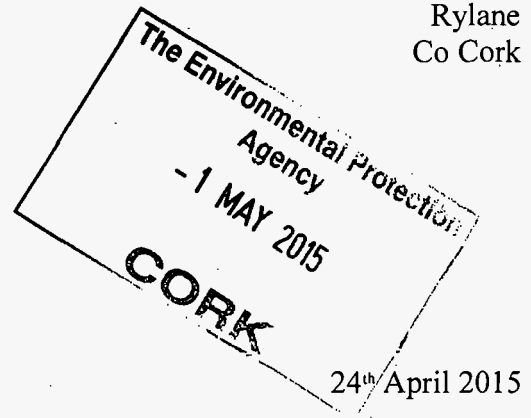


Aghabullogue Coachford Rylane Community Council (ACR CC)

Keel
Rylane
Co Cork

Ms Máire Buckley
Programme Officer
Office of Climate, Licensing & Resource Use
Environmental Protection Agency
Regional Inspectorate
Inniscarra, Co Cork



Re: Coachford Sewerage Treatment Plant – Licence Register Number D0427-01

Dear Ms Buckley

I write to you on behalf of **Aghabullogue Coachford and Rylane Community Council (ACR CC)** seeking information as to the current status of the discharge licence in relation to the sewerage treatment plant located in the village of Coachford Co Cork.

By way of background to our enquiry, the septic tank of the village sewerage treatment plant in Coachford (constructed in the early 1950's) discharges primary-treated effluent into the River Lee reservoir at Leemount – grid ref 145231E 072297N. There are, in addition, two storm water overflow points from the sewerage scheme that discharge into a small stream flowing underneath the main village street in a culvert (grid refs 145955E 073162N and 145947E 073165N). Both septic tank discharge into the River Lee and the storm water overflow into the Coachford stream are causing increasing local environmental concern. We note that the septic tank was originally designed to provide for 402 PEs, whereas the current PE loading is approximately 730 – almost double its intended capacity.

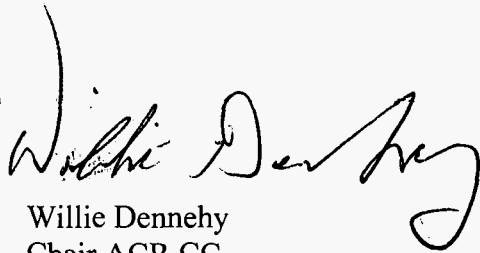
The area of reservoir and littoral adjacent to the discharge are increasingly affected by surface scum (apparent in calm weather) and a thick growth of benthic blue-green algae on the littoral stones, indicating considerable local water pollution and nutrient enrichment. Academic studies carried out by researchers from University College Cork have revealed the strong local biological impact of the sewage outfall on the littoral habitat in the vicinity of the outfall. As the area of lake shore is used extensively by local people for recreation (notably by children and dogs paddling in the water, anglers and boating), and is a short distance upstream from the National Rowing Centre, this is a cause for concern from a health and safety, as well as an ecological perspective.

The stream running through the village discharges downstream into the Dripsey river, and then into Inniscarra reservoir. The stream is seriously polluted, presumably by sewage overflow inputs, where it flows out of the village and has been estimated (informally, by

researchers from UCC) as having a "Q2" water quality rating. Having such a sewage-polluted stream within the village locale is clearly deleterious to the well-being of the village and its inhabitants. Additionally, the village floods on regular occasions during heavy rain events (presumably due to the low discharge capacity of the stream culvert under the village), causing sewage-contaminated water to flow into resident's properties along the main street, presenting a serious health risk.

We understand the sewage discharge licence was granted by the EPA in 2010 and we urgently seek an update on the current status on the licence. The ACR CC would be pleased to discuss the issue in more detail with you.

Yours sincerely



Willie Dennehy
Chair ACR CC

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