



An tOifig Náisiúnta um Sláinte Chomhshaoil
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Urlár 2, Teach na Darach, Ascaill na Teile
Páirc na Mílaoise, An Nás, Co. Chill Dara.

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Date: 23 March 2021

Our reference: 1621

Report to: Environmental Licensing Programme
Office of Environmental Sustainability,
Environmental Protection Agency
Johnstown Castle Estate,
Co. Wexford.

EPA reference: D0297-02

Type of Consultation: Waste Water Discharge Application Review at Castletownbere Waste
Water Treatment Plant, Castletownbere, Co. Cork

Applicant: Irish Water, Colvill House, 24-26 Talbot Street, Dublin 1

Reason for review: The EPA issued a Discharge Licence for the Castletownbere agglomeration in March 2011 (D0297-01). This licence review application is intended to replace the existing Wastewater Discharge Licence for the agglomeration and to take account for the relocation of the Primary Discharge point and proposed changes to emission limit values. The existing licence states that a review of the licence will be required to accommodate loading over 2,000 PE. The proposed development has been designed to cater for the projected load of 2,168 PE at the 10 year design horizon.

Introduction

The following HSE departments were notified of the consultation request for the licence application on 23 February 2021

- Emergency Planning – David O’Sullivan
- Estates – Helen Maher
- Assistant National Director for Health Protection – Kevin Kelleher / Laura Murphy
- CHO – Michael Fitzgerald

This report only comments on Environmental Health impacts of the licence application.

General

The Environmental Health Service supports the proposal to upgrade the Castletownbere sewerage scheme. Upgrade works are planned in order to bring an end to the discharge of untreated wastewater into the environment and to cater for a predicted increase in loading to the plant in future years. The proposal will be beneficial to both the receiving environment and to public health.

The town of Castletownbere is currently served by a number of independent collection systems which collect wastewater within and around the town, including 5 No. septic tanks under the control of Irish Water. Three of these discharge to Berehaven Harbour and two discharge to groundwater via percolation areas.

The existing agglomeration is licenced to serve a population equivalent of up to 2000 and a review is required to accommodate loading over this number. The proposed upgraded Castletownbere agglomeration has been designed to cater for future growth and for the projected load at the ten year horizon of 2168 PE, with the potential to cater for future expansion up to the projected load at the 30 year design horizon of 3247 PE.

Castletownbere has been identified by the EPA as a Priority Area where untreated wastewater is currently being discharged into the environment.

In November 2020 Irish Water was granted Planning Permission for a new WWTP and associated and ancillary works for the Castletownbere Sewerage Scheme. On completion, the new scheme will *‘provide an effective wastewater collection network, treatment capacity and treated effluent outfall for current and future agglomeration loads’* and will *‘eliminate the discharge of untreated wastewater to Berehaven’*. (Planning Applications Cork County Reference 19813 and 19814)

All commitments to future actions, including mitigation and further testing have been taken as read and all data has been accepted as accurate. No additional investigation/measurements were undertaken in the review of this application.

In respect of this application for a discharge licence review, the areas reviewed were those of concern to Environmental Health which are:

- Any potential contamination of surface water or ground water
- Emissions to air, including noise and odour.

Site location

The new Castletownbere WWTP and associated works comprises the following components located across four locations in Castletownbere and environs.

a) A new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in the townland of Drom South, Castletownbere, Co. Cork. The nearest sensitive receptor, an occupied dwelling, is located approximately 105m from the boundary of the WWTP.

b) A new underground wastewater pump station adjacent to the R572 near Brandyhall Bridge, in the townland of Derrymihin West, Castletownbere, Co. Cork;

c) A new control kiosk structure associated with a proposed wastewater pump station within the curtilage of St. Peter's Church (a protected structure), in the townland of Knockaneroe, Castletownbere, Co. Cork;

d) A new control kiosk structure associated with a proposed wastewater pump station in the Came Woods area in the townland of Cametringane, Castletownbere, Co. Cork. The proposed kiosk is located approximately 42m from the nearest dwelling.

1. Any potential contamination of surface or ground water

The Environmental Health Service (EHS) has considered any potential risk of contamination of surface or ground water and makes the following comments:

a) The EHS welcomes the proposed new Castletownbere Sewerage Scheme which, when fully operational, will impact positively on the health of the community and on the local environment, in particular on surface, ground and marine water quality. The proposed sewerage scheme will result in an improvement in water quality in the designated Castletownbere Shellfish Area.

b) Emission Limit Values and monitoring frequencies specified in the EPA licence shall be strictly adhered to ensure the maintenance of surface and groundwater quality and the protection of public health. Water quality in the Castletownbere Designated Shellfish Area should be monitored in order to ensure compliance with the European Communities (Quality of Shellfish) Regulations 2006 as amended.

d) It is recommended that an inspection and maintenance programme for the pumping stations and for the new treated effluent sea outfall pipe is put in place to ensure the early detection of defects/damage.

2. Emissions to air including noise and odour

a) The Environmental Health Service recommends that a complaints procedure is implemented and that a member of staff is designated as a point of contact to deal with any complaints or queries received from members of the public in relation to the WWTP facility. The operator should develop a system for recording and responding to complaints from the public regarding fugitive noise and odour emissions from the WWTP or from any component of the Castletownbere Sewerage Scheme. It is recommended that records of complaints received are included in annual monitoring results reported to the EPA.

b) It is recommended that an Odour Management Plan is implemented and that regular unannounced odour audits of the plant are undertaken.

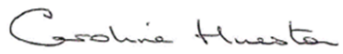
Conclusions

The Environmental Health Service makes the following recommendations in respect of this licence application:

- Emission Limit Values and monitoring frequencies specified in the EPA licence shall be strictly adhered to ensure the maintenance of surface and groundwater quality and for the protection of public health
- Water quality in the Castletownbere Designated Shellfish Area should be monitored in order to ensure compliance with the European Communities (Quality of Shellfish) Regulations 2006 as amended.
- An inspection and maintenance programme for the pumping stations and for the new treated effluent sea outfall pipe is put in place to ensure the early detection and repair of defects/damage.
- A complaints procedure is implemented and that a member of staff is designated as a point of contact to deal with any complaints or queries received from members of the public in relation to the WWTP facility
- The operator should develop a system for recording and responding to complaints from the public regarding fugitive noise and or odour emissions from the WWTP or from any component of the Castletownbere Sewerage Scheme
- Records of complaints received are included in annual monitoring results reported to the EPA.
- An Odour Management Plan is implemented and that regular unannounced odour audits of the plant are undertaken

If you have any queries regarding this report, the initial contact is Ms Caroline Hueston, Environmental Health Officer.

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