

# Lough Talt public water supply & IROPI

Irish Water's journey to upgrading the Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme

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TII Webinar  
February 2021



Lough Talt, Sligo

# Today's presentation

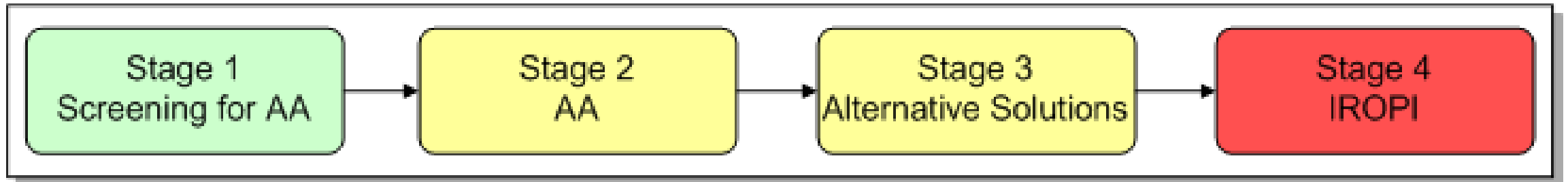
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- What is IROPI
- Background on Lough Talt RWSS
- Need for Upgrade
- 2015 Application, Appeal & Refusal
- 2018 Application
- Mitigation and Compensatory Measures
- Where are we at now.....



# What is IROPI?

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Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI):

- Main derogation process of Article 6(4);
- Where no less damaging alternative solution exists;
- Compensatory Measures

# Background to the Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme

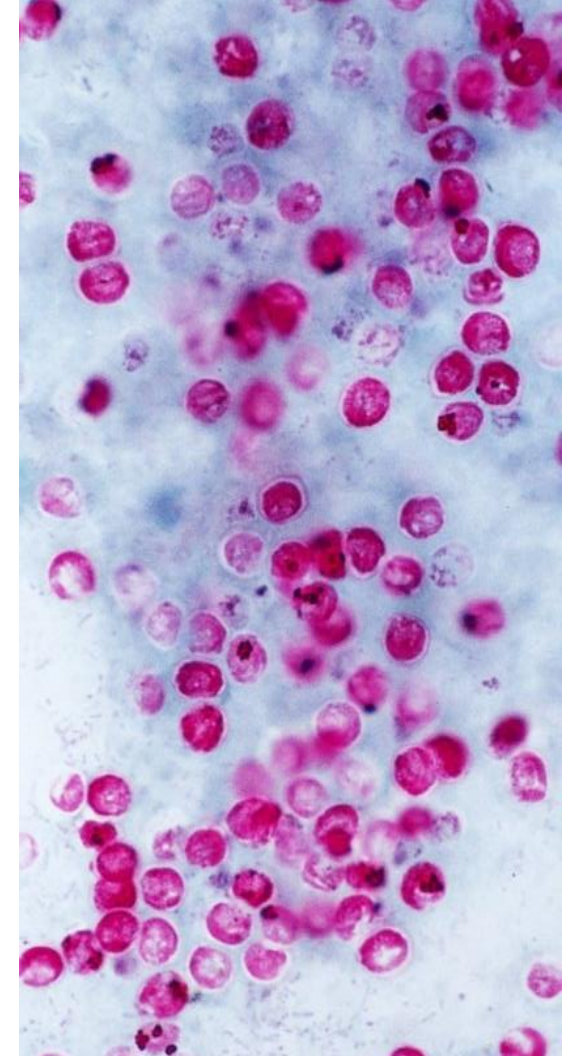
- Lough Talt has been used as a source since the late 1940s.
- Existing treatment plant, constructed in 1972, was designed to treat 5MLD.
- Serves c.13,000 people in Tubercurry and environs.
- Abstraction reached peak of 10MLD in late 1990s. Current abstraction c.8MLD.
- No Water Abstraction Order in place.



# Need for Upgrade: Public Health

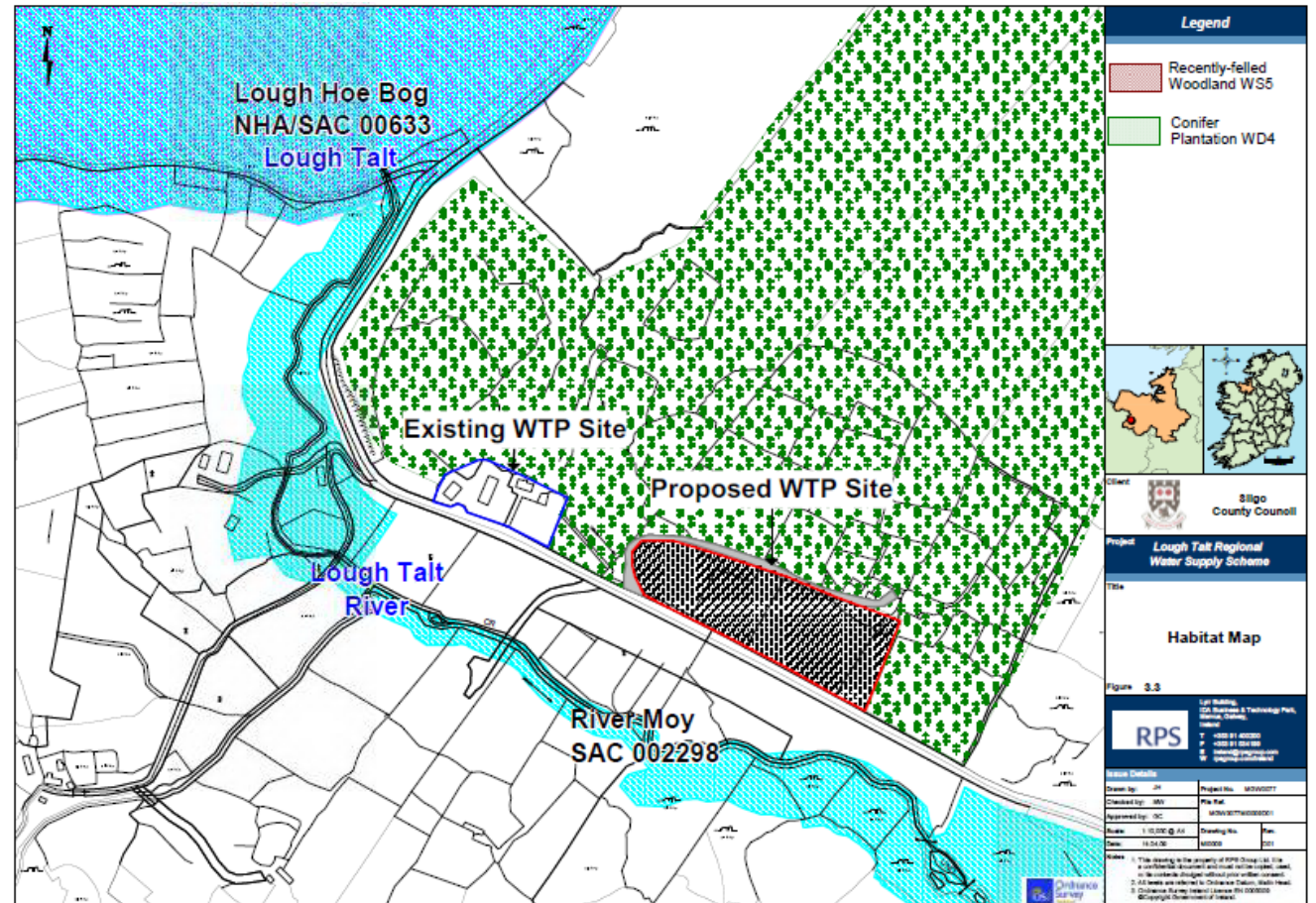
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- Water receives minimum treatment.
- EPA's Remedial Action List:
  - No protection for Cryptosporidium.
  - Fails the Trihalomethane standard.
- Directions from EPA (2014) & EU Monitoring THM compliance.
- Permanent Boil Water Notice Feb 2018 until solution in place.
- No available alternative supply in short term.



# 2015 Planning Application

- IW focus on upgrade works (not supply) so the Appropriate Assessment was focused on construction impacts.
- Sligo also considered the operational impacts (works dependent on supply).
- Sligo Refused Permission: Lack of Certainty on Impacts of Abstraction.
- Revised NIS to ABP on appeal concluded need to reduce abstraction by 50% for 90 days a year; no available alternative for 90 days.



# 2017 ABP Refusal and Next Steps

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- Upgraded water treatment plant is **functionally dependent on the water supply** from Lough Talt,
- ABP not satisfied that the **proposed development, in combination with the water abstraction** on which it relies, would not **adversely affect** the integrity of the Lough Hoe Bog Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000633) or of the River Moy Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002298) in view of the **conservation objectives** for those Sites.
- Next Step: Overcome Reason for Refusal - **IROPI**



*Vertigo geyeri* – Whorl snail

# 2018 Planning Application – IROPI!!!

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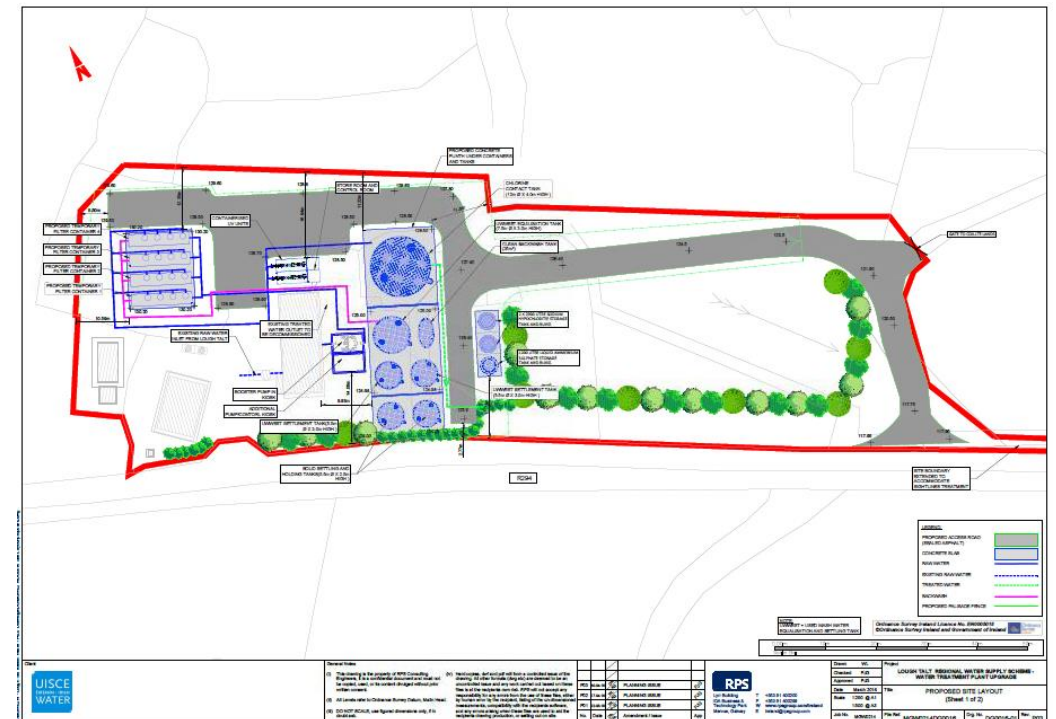
- Prepare robust IROPI application - Engagement between IW / NPWS / Sligo Co Co / DHPLG.
- IROPI a competent authority decision.
- 6(3) v 6(4): Mitigation and Compensation.
- Statement of Case.
- Decision making timelines uncertain.
- Engagement between Ministers.
- IROPI due to Public Health and no alternative in short term.





# 2018 Planning Application

- Permission for the continued use of an upgraded treatment plant for 10 year.
- Upgrade will ensure supply of treated water complies with European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 (crypto and THMs).
- Will not change abstraction.
- Not possible to reduce impacts on QI by avoidance and / or mitigation.
- Could not be concluded beyond reasonable doubt that the operation of WTP would not have a significant adverse effects on the conservation objectives of SAC, in particular *V. geyeri*.



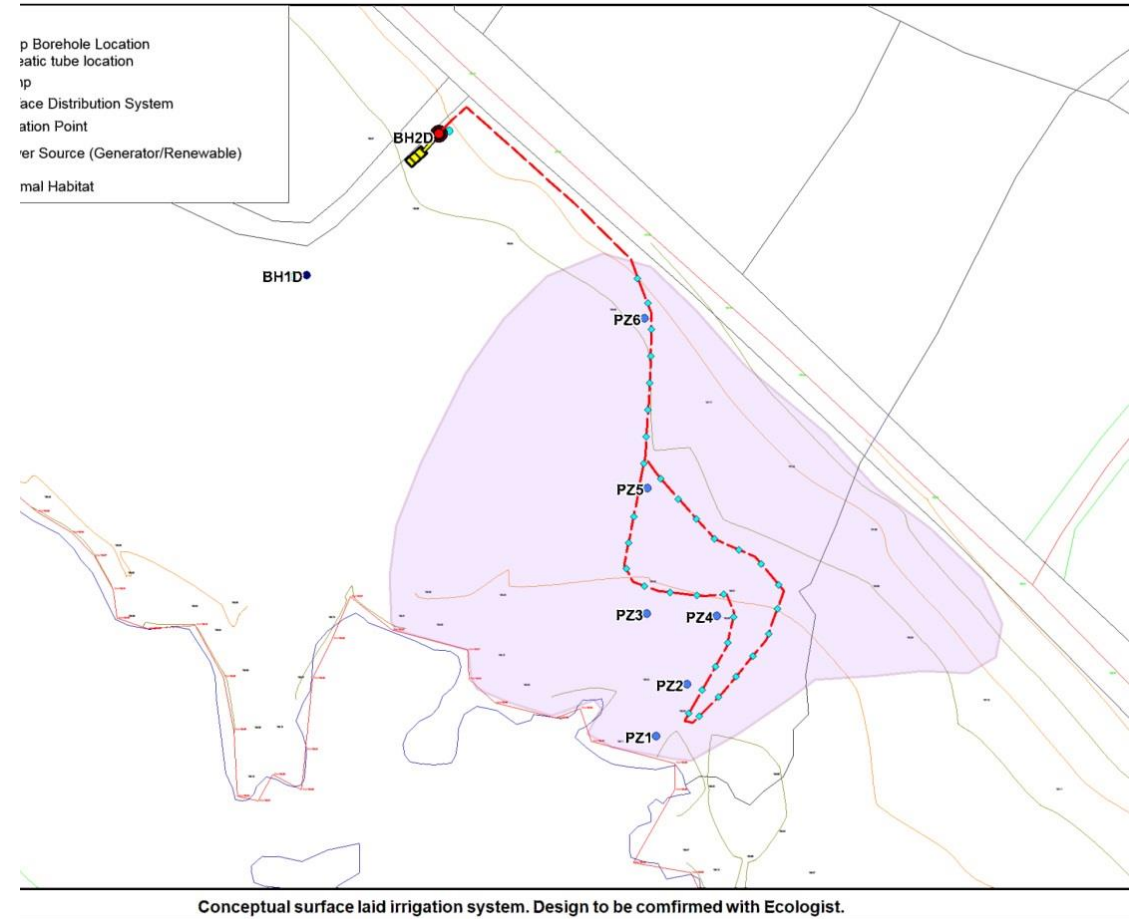
# 2018 Planning Application - Mitigation & Compensatory Measures

## Mitigation:

- Irrigation Measures (irrigation).
- Establish habitat.

## Compensatory Measures:

- Cousin snails (*Year 2*) & Monitor.
- Identify viable *V. geyeri* location (access, quality, impacts).
- Translocate *V. geyeri* (*Year 3, if appropriate*)
- Monitor
- Progress alternative supply (10 years).



# 2018 Planning Application – The Outcome

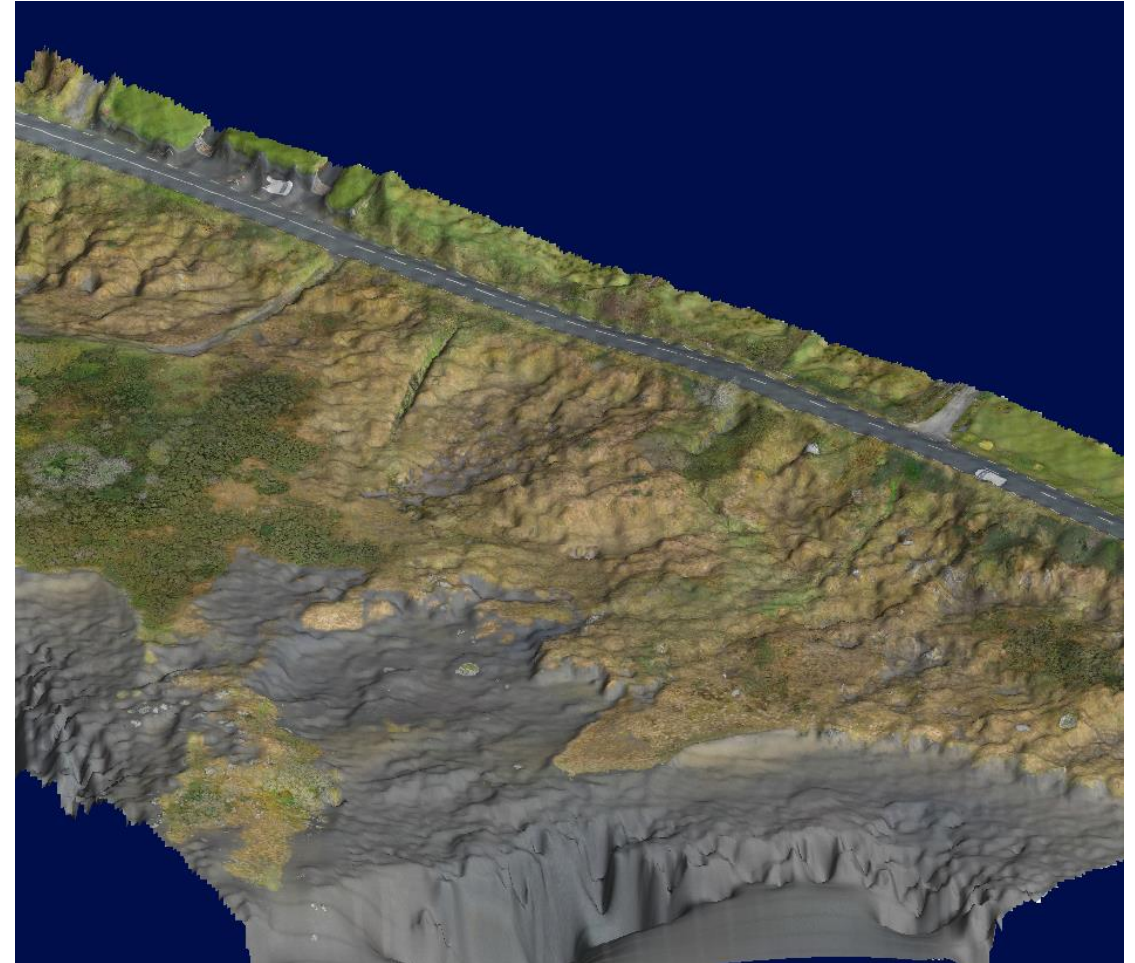
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- May 2019 Grant of Permission:
  - 10 year permission
  - IROPI due to Public Health reasons and no available alternative in short term.
- 15 conditions, including:
  - Trial of semi-permeable barrier membrane to maintain water supply and
  - Detailed info on donor sites.
- 1<sup>st</sup> IROPI in Ireland.
- No appeal or Judicial Review.



# Where are we at now.....

- Compensatory Measures agreed
  - Annual reporting to Sligo Co Co & NPWS and agree next steps
- The 10 year WTP has been constructed and commissioned
- Investigations into Trial Barrier Member nearing completion
  - Site Surveys – Lidar Drone surveys, 5m peat depth probes, electrical conductivity, moisture, temperature
  - New piezometers
  - Model Development
  - Model Calibration
  - Model Predictions
- Specialist Experts are advancing to other elements.



Thank you

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