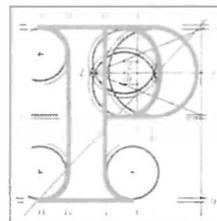


Our Case Number: ACP-323980-25
Planning Authority Reference Number:



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Mattie McGrath TD
Teachta Dála for Tipperary
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Date: 03 March 2026

Re: Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region
in the counties of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Offaly, Kildare, and Dublin.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter. Please accept this letter as a receipt for the fee of €50 that you have paid.

The Commission will revert to you in due course with regard to the matter.

Please be advised that copies of all submissions / observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the local authority and at the offices of An Coimisiún Pleanála when they have been processed by the Commission.

More detailed information in relation to strategic infrastructure development can be viewed on the Commission's website: www.pleanala.ie.

If you have any queries in the meantime please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission. Please quote the above mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,


Eimear Reilly
Executive Officer

Direct Line: 01-8737184

PA04

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	Email	communications@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902



MATTIE McGRATH TD **TIPPERARY CONSTITUENCY**

Submission Objecting to the Proposed Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region

SHANNON TO DUBLIN WATER SUPPLY PROJECT (Ref. PA92.323980)

Applicant: Uisce Éireann

To whom it may concern:

I, the undersigned, formally object to the proposed Shannon–Dublin Water Supply Project. The project, as currently presented, poses unacceptable **environmental, hydrogeological, social, and economic** risks to the Shannon region and to Ireland’s long-term water security. It represents a narrow engineering solution that disproportionately benefits Dublin while imposing significant and lasting impacts on the Shannon catchment and its communities

1. Environmental and Ecological Impacts

The proposed abstraction point at Parteen Basin lies within the **Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**. This area supports critical habitats for protected species including **pollan, salmon, trout**, and several endangered waterbird species. Any alteration to water levels or flow regimes threatens these sensitive ecological communities.

Key concerns include:

- **Modelling indicates dangerously low water levels** in Lough Derg and the Parteen Basin during drought conditions under the proposed abstraction regime.
- **Climate projections** from the ICARUS Institute at Maynooth University show that the Midwest will face more frequent and prolonged summer droughts. Under such conditions, the proposed “2% abstraction” could effectively become **30% of available flow**, dramatically increasing ecological stress.
- Reduced flows will impair water quality, resilience, and the river’s natural self-purification capacity, with consequences for biodiversity and downstream communities.

The mitigation measures proposed by Uisce Éireann are **insufficient, non-binding**, and do not address long-term ecological degradation.

2. Hydrogeological Concerns and the Underutilised Groundwater Resource

*Dáil Éireann, Leinster House,
Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Tel: 01-618 4062 Fax: 01-618 4589*

*Constituency Office, 2 Joyces Lane,
The Quay, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 052-612 9155 Fax: 052-617 0917*

*Mobile: 086 818 4307
Email: mattie.mcgrath@oireachtas.ie
Web: www.mattiemcgrath.ie*

**AG DUL AR AGHAIDH LEIS AN OBAIR!
GETTING THE WORK DONE!**



A major strategic flaw in the project is the **systematic underestimation of groundwater as a viable, sustainable component of Dublin's water supply.**

Professional hydrogeologists have raised the following concerns:

- A reviewer of the original groundwater assessment concluded that the **available groundwater resource was underestimated**, largely because **recharge was not properly accounted for.**
- Ireland now possesses extensive datasets (including **Tellus geophysical data**) and strong national expertise in **fractured-rock hydrogeology**, enabling far more accurate and lower-uncertainty assessments than those used in the original evaluation.
- Groundwater already supplies **over 20% of Ireland's drinking water**, yet Uisce Éireann has employed **only one hydrogeologist** since its establishment, an indication of institutional bias rather than scientific reality.
- A diversified supply strategy incorporating groundwater would be **more resilient, more flexible**, and **less risky** than relying on a single long-distance pipeline.

At the 2019 IAH (Irish Group) conference in Tullamore, hydrogeologists raised these concerns directly with Irish Water. Researchers from Maynooth University also presented evidence of **historic droughts**, including an event in the late 1700s when the **Shannon reportedly ran dry near Athlone.**

Proceeding with a pipeline that depends on a single river system, one with documented historical drought vulnerability is a **strategic risk** to national water security.

3. Construction, Traffic, and Community Impacts

The proposed five-year construction programme will impose severe disruption on local communities:

- Heavy construction traffic on rural and regional roads
- Temporary road closures and safety risks
- Noise, dust, and loss of agricultural access
- Large construction compounds and abnormal load movements
- Impacts lasting up to **24 months per land parcel.**

Local tourism, particularly boating, sailing, angling, and recreation on the Shannon, Foynes Port, and Lough Derg will suffer significant economic harm.

4. Viable Alternatives Ignored

Uisce Éireann has failed to adequately consider several **less damaging, more cost-effective alternatives**, including:

- **Leakage reduction:** Dublin currently loses up to **50%** of treated drinking water through ageing, lead, and Victorian pipework.
- **Optimisation of existing reservoirs**, including Poulaphouca, which is underutilised for electricity generation and could support supply if reconfigured.
- **Closer river sources** such as the Slaney, Boyne, and Barrow, which would involve far less environmental disruption.

- **Phased groundwater development**, which could be implemented while leakage works progress, providing a diversified and resilient supply.

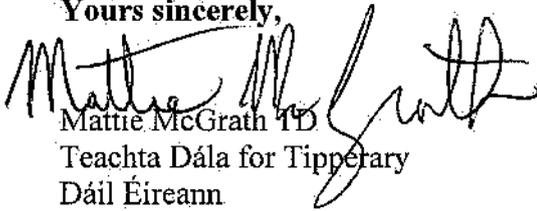
The pipeline is a **single-point-of-failure solution** that ignores the benefits of a distributed, multi-source water strategy.

5. Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, environmental risk, hydrogeological oversight, construction impacts, and the availability of more sustainable alternatives and the significant cost which will put other essential water infrastructure projects at risk, I object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed Shannon–Dublin Water Supply Project.

The project represents an outdated, high-risk engineering solution that fails to protect the Shannon, fails to incorporate modern hydrogeological understanding, and fails to deliver a resilient long-term water strategy for Ireland.

Yours sincerely,



Mattie McGrath TD
Teachta Dála for Tipperary
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2