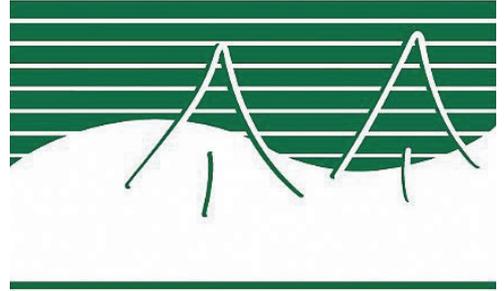


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OBERON



OBERON COUNCIL



Introduction. Oberon Council is considering its position in relation to the provision of reticulated sewerage to the East Oberon Area. The reasons for initiating this project have been previously outlined and include (i) The health and environmental risks of the existing septic tank systems. (ii) Maximising the development potential of the area, as the provision of reticulated sewerage would allow facilitation for subdivision of the existing large lots.

Background. Council commissioned Hunter H2O to investigate options for sewerage approximately 50 properties in the area referred to as East Oberon, comprising Stratford Downs Estate and other neighbouring properties. The consultant reviewed a number of technologies, and shortlisted two options: low pressure system and gravity sewerage. After analysing these options, Hunter H2O recommended the low pressure system on the basis of lower cost and good performance. Most projects of sewerage existing development in the last 10 years have adopted the low pressure technology.

The gravity sewerage option would comprise two sewerage pumping stations and a network of gravity pipes. It is envisaged that one pumping station would be located near the rear boundary of 45 Shakespeare Close and the second near the intersection of Duckmaloi Road and Albion Street. The stations would be underground wells of approximately 1.5 m diameter, with a small electrical cabinet above ground. Gravity sewers would be laid generally in the road reserve or alternatively, along the boundary of lots. The bulk of the sewage from the East Oberon area would gravitate to a proposed pumping station that would be located behind 45 Shakespeare Close within Council's road reserve. From this pumping station sewage would be pumped up into a gravity main via a pressure pipe, and gravitate down to a second pumping station at the very low point of Albion Street and Duckmaloi Road, requiring further transfer via another pressure pipe to the nearest gravity main on the corner of Blenheim Avenue which flows to the Oberon Sewage Treatment Plant.

Consultation. In a consultation meeting on 28 November 2017, and in subsequent correspondence, residents expressed objections to the proposed initiative. Objections focussed on three major issues. Firstly, it was indicated that the existing septic systems operate satisfactorily, and residents saw no need for this project. Secondly, residents expressed a view that the

proposed low pressure system is inadequate. The third concern is that a sewerage service charge would apply to properties in the East Oberon service area (currently \$615 per year).

Next Steps. Council is looking to investigate the issues and gather more information. The first step would include the performance of the existing septic tank systems. This investigation would provide valuable information to the benefit of residents, the Oberon Community and Council.

Proposed Septic Tank Investigation. Council is looking at an option to engage an independent specialist consultant to investigate all existing septic systems in East Oberon and to determine the operational effectiveness of each septic system. The consultant would inspect all the septic systems and prepare a report on their operating effectiveness and any areas of concern or potential environment harm. The report would include an individual inspection report for each system, and a summary report. Copies of the individual reports would be provided to home owners free of charge.

The investigation would assist both Council and the residents to understand what, if any, impacts the systems may be having within the properties and/or the environment i.e. soils and water table and nearby water courses.

The Local Government Act allows Council to carry out regular inspections to ensure that any septic system is working appropriately. Whilst Council can charge to inspect systems, in this instance it is proposing to carry out the investigation at no cost to the residents. Further advice will be provided to all participating residences should this analysis and inspection regime be undertaken.

Conclusion. Council has deferred any debate and decision on the sewerage reticulation proposal for East Oberon, until additional information is available through further investigation.

Further information. Should you have any questions or queries in relation to the proposed inspection process of existing residential septic systems, please contact Chris Schumacher by close of business Friday 27 April 2018. Chris is also available for personal meetings by appointment should you wish to discuss this matter in person.

For more details about the project please contact
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