



Sewerage services in San Isidore

Community information session - Minutes

San Isidore Wednesday 19/08/2015 6-7pm

An estimated 25 community members were in attendance.

Council staff and elected members in attendance:

Mayor Rod Kendall, Director Infrastructure Services Heinz Kausche, Director Planning and Regulatory Services Andrew Crakanthorp, Manager Waste & Stormwater Services Geoff Veneris and Graduate Engineer Samantha Jung.

NOTE: A group meets in the church every Wednesday night and are unable to attend the community meetings. In the future could we please change the night of the meeting?

Presentation

Mayor Rod Kendall opened the meeting with a brief discussion regarding the agenda for the night and that Government Funding was potentially available for the delivery of a new sewer system for the village of San Isidore.

Geoff Veneris provided a brief overview of the funding scheme and how San Isidore became selected as 1 of the 71 projects listed as priority backlog programs. Geoff provided an overview of the stages for funding submissions and the deadline of 31 August 2015 for the Expression of Interest Stage.

Heinz Kausche provided additional information regarding previous village sewer projects and made it clear that Council will not enforce connection to the system if property owners have recently installed new OSMS. However property owners will be encouraged to connect at the end of life for their OSMS.

The rest of the meeting was directed by questions of the community members which are detailed below.

Survey results received on the night for 'do you support connecting San Isidore to Wagga Wagga's sewerage network?' and supporting comments

| Yes - 18 | Maybe - 1 | No - 1 |
|--|---------------------------------|--------|
| Dependant on cost! | I would like costings to commit | NO |
| Good move | | |
| I said no in the post but yes now that I know the details | | |
| As long as I do not have to connect when other system is still working and given extra time to connect without being charged | | |
| Providing waive access fees for ten years for those with current systems in good order | | |
| Cost dependant | | |
| My block runs parallel to the road can I get additional connections | | |

Q: What will be the impact on the sewer rates?

A: It is not possible to accurately determine the impact on the sewer rates at this present time. The impact will be dependent upon if Council are successful in securing government funding and how much funding Council receive. Council are also applying to receive funding for Oura which could free up additional Council funds to subsidise San Isidore which could possibly mean no impact on the rates.

Q: What funding is available?

A: There is \$110 m in the Restart NSW funding for regional infrastructure projects. This has the potential to fund up to 50% of the project costs

Q: Where does the effluent go and how?

A: The effluent will be transported through a

conventional gravity system. The system comprises of a series of trunk mains (pipes) buried in town which transport effluent under the force of gravity. The effluent will then flow to a pump station where it will be pumped over the hill and connects to Council's gravity mains near the Wagga City Golf Club. From here the effluent is conveyed through the city's mains and pump stations to end up at Narrung St treatment plant.

Q: What are the costs associated with connecting to the conventional system?

A: Council provides a spur to the property boundary. It is up to the owner of that property to arrange for a plumber to connect their house to that spur. It is not possible to give an estimated cost as they will largely vary depending on distance and plumber. Council staff encouraged property owners to shop around.

Q: Will there be a forced connection for those within 75m?

A: No. There will be no forced connections. However when a septic system/OSMS is up for renewal, it is encouraged to connect to the Council sewer system rather than install a new septic system. As an incentive to connect Council has agreed to waive section 64 and section 68 fees for the first 12 months of the system being available in other Villages and, subject to Council resolution, intends to do the same at San Isidore.

Q: Where will the mains be located? Private or public property? And when is the project expected to be completed?

A: The project commencement date for construction is expected to be in the 2020/21 financial year.

The majority of the services will be located on public property (in the road reserve). If houses are on the low side of the street it may be required to have an easement running through the back of the property in order to service these lots; however Council will make every effort to minimise the need for easements.

Q: Can I refuse to have an easement in my backyard?

A: Council is willing to work with residents to find the most feasible and acceptable solution to ensure services can be provided. If an easement is necessary to provide services to service all residents who wish to connect then a compulsory acquisition may be required if a single property owner does not wish to form an agreement with Council, however this is a last resort.

Q: I live in Cummins Drive. Will this area be serviced?

A: As of the current concept plans, yes this area will

be serviced however we cannot confirm this until detailed design processes have been undertaken and finalised.

Q: I currently separate my effluent into septic and grey water. Will the sewer system take both?

A: Yes

Q: Will this encourage subdivision? Who gets to decide if subdivision is allowed?

A: San Isidore is currently listed as large lot residential. In order for subdivision to occur, Council must agree to rezone the land. It is preferable that this will be a community decision and is not currently being considered by Council, but will be if the time comes through a request by future development.

Q: What will be the overall costs to the individual?

A: Subject to a resolution of Council, it is intended that if the resident connects within the first 12 months of the service being available the section 64 and 68 fees will be waived. Therefore the only costs to the property owner will be the cost of connecting to the spur and paying sewer rates. The Sewer rates are currently \$453.50. This year was the first rates increase in 4 years.

It is estimated that over a 25 year period, rates will cost approximately \$14 000 compared to the costs associated with septic systems which can be around \$20,000 over the same period.

Q: In low lying areas will we require individual pumps to connect to the system?

A: It may be unfeasible or unreasonable to provide connections for some low lying properties to connect to the system. If the owner desires to connect to the system using an individual pumping system this will be allowed as it has been in the past.

The pipes are often quite deep and will facilitate the connection of houses even in low lying areas. It will depend on the detailed design phase to confirm all servicing areas.

Q: Will EPA force connections in the future?

A: It is seen as an unlikely situation. This has happened in the past in Tasmania and Port Stephens, but this was due to septic contamination leading to serious sickness including death. As long as the septic systems meet minimum public health, environment and safety requirements, it is highly unlikely that there will be forced connections or notification to Council to undertake enforced connections to Council system.

Q: Do we have a choice of the type of system and how big will the mains be?

A: No. At this stage Council is only looking to install

a conventional gravity system in the area. A typical mains size is 150 mm diameter.

Q: I was recently forced to spend a large sum of money to upgrade my septic system to meet licence requirements. Why were we not told of this opportunity sooner? What if other residents are required to upgrade their systems prior to the sewer coming available? How is that fair?

A: Council was only invited to submit an expression of interest for funding 3 weeks ago. Until this time we had no indication that funding would be available. Prior to the opportunity of funding, Council had no plans to sewer San Isidore in the near future due to the community's past decision to decline sewerage services.

If residents have a septic system that breaches public health and environment requirements, the system will be required to be fixed ASAP due to public health, environment and Safety requirements. However, if the funding application is successful and it is agreed to proceed with the provision of a Council sewer system in San Isidore, Council officers will work with residents to meet health requirements in the interim without the full renewal of the system unless unavoidable.

Q: I have invested a large sum of money into upgrading my septic system and I have 8 years left on my license. As such I do not wish to connect immediately but if I wait I will be required to pay the section 64 and 68 charges. Can anything be done about this or will I be out of pocket either way?

A: If Council is provided in writing during the first 12 months of available connection that you wish to connect to our system but not at that current time due to existing new OSMS/Septic systems, Council could seek to waive the section 64 and 68 fees for a nominated period of time.

Q: Where did Council get funding from for Collingullie and Mangoplah?

A: Collingullie, Mangoplah and now Oura have been funded out of the sewer reserve as part of Council's budget. This is due to the strong desire from the communities to receive sewerage services. No government funding has been made available to Council until now which is dedicated towards San Isidore.

Q: Will residents get a chance to have input into spur locations?

A: Yes. During the detailed design stage residents will have the opportunity to have input where they would prefer the spur located, however this can be limited due to gravity flows.

Q: Will we be charged sewer rates if we do not connect to the system?

A: Yes. In normal areas of service, if your residence is location within 75m of a Council main, property owners are required to pay sewer rates, whether they are connected to the system or not. If the property owners of San Isidore provide feedback to the Council on wanting the rates waived for unconnected properties for a nominated period then there is an opportunity for this to be put to the Councillors as a special circumstance consideration. The Councillors will then make a decision on the outcome of user sewer rates.

Q: Will the final decision be made by the 31st of August?

A: No. At this stage we are only seeking feedback from the community and putting in an expression of interest to the Government to receive the funding. If the funding application is successful it will be matter for Council to decide to accept the funding and proceed with the project.

If the funding is declined by the State Government, the project may not go ahead. Or alternatively Council may decide to proceed with the provision of sewer services for San Isidore some time in the future subject to demand and affordability.

Q: Why do our septic get sent to Bathurst? In the past it was disposed of in Wagga.

A: In the past septic was disposed of into the evaporation basins at the sewerage treatment plants. This is no longer allowed. At this time our treatment plants do not have provisions to accept septic wastes and are not licensed to accept them. Council staff is currently reviewing and investigating options for septic receipt for future services.

Q: Will Council be doing this work or a contractor?

A: We cannot determine that at this time. It is dependent upon resources, price and quality.

Q: Where will the pump station be located?

A: The final location of the pump station will not be determined until the detailed design has been finalised however they are usually located at the lowest point within the catchment to ensure the greater area of the catchment can be serviced.

For further information please contact
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