



**Barunga West
Council**

Fisherman Bay Freehold UPDATE • DECEMBER 2023

Infrastructure works at Fisherman Bay are nearly complete.

This could not have been possible without the patience of ratepayers and efforts of Fisherman Bay Management Pty Ltd (FBM), and its main contractor, Bardavcol, who are delivering quality infrastructure in difficult economic times and challenging industry circumstances.

The long-term benefits of the upgrade will outweigh the inconvenience of construction works to ratepayers and visitors to the area. The project is now due for completion in February 2024.



INTRODUCTION

This update is the last of a series provided to residents in Fisherman Bay and in the broader Barunga West Council area.

In this issue, we will:

- Explain the final Bardavcol works that will be undertaken in January and February 2024 and their impact on Fisherman Bay residents.
- Discuss the new wastewater system including how it will work, anticipated commissioning date, plumbing connections, application and approval process, connection fee, and the CWMS annual fee.
- Explain Council works that will be undertaken post February 2024 once the site has been handed over to Council.
- Explain the process for the proposed rezoning of farming land near the existing settlement.
- Provide information about the Community Hall and Dunny Lane.

CHRISTMAS BREAK

Bardavcol will stop work for the Christmas break on 20 December 2023 and will return to work on 8 January 2024 to complete the final works over a 6-week period.



Final works

The final works include:

Roads

- Finalisation of roadside swales on Snapper Road.
- Completion of line-marking and signage.
- Final spray seal to Whiting and Snapper Road following the Australia Day long weekend.

Wastewater

- Completion of the collection network installation on Whiting Road.
- Fit-out of the pump station.
- Commissioning of the network.

Impact on residents

FBM and Bardavcol will continue to advise residents of the timing and possible impact of the works and updates will be provided on Council's social media sites.

There will be significant work undertaken in January and February 2024 and residents should note that access may be restricted at various times.

FBM and Bardavcol will strive to minimise disruptions and will keep you informed.

As always, residents should be safety conscious and stay a conservative distance away from the work sites.

Roads

The roads are being spray sealed; two coats with 10mm and 5mm stones.

Initially, the spray-sealed road surface will contain loose material.

Over time and traffic, the stones will knit together providing a firm and smooth surface.

Spray sealing is a common practice with the majority of the roads in our district being spray sealed.

Wastewater system

The wastewater system has been the most challenging of the infrastructure that is being delivered.

Construction of the collection system has had to deal with clashes with other infrastructure, such as power and water assets, as well as having to manage ground water and poor soil conditions.

Delays in completing this work has had a knock-on effect on roads and this is why the project has extended into 2024.

What is a vacuum sewer system and how does it work?

A vacuum sewer system was the best technical solution for Fisherman Bay due to the location's high groundwater table, sand and unstable soils, restricted construction conditions and sensitive eco-systems.

With a vacuum sewer system, vacuum pumps maintain continuous vacuum pressure on the system. In addition, there are vacuum valves located at each sewage input point that seals the system. When these valves are activated, differential pressure propels the wastewater through the piping to the vacuum station.

Because there is constant vacuum pressure on the system, wastewater never leaks into the ground. Although rare, if a pipe should get punctured or cracked, the vacuum will continue to "suck in" instead of "leak out". For this reason, vacuum sewer systems are significantly better for the environment.

For further information about the system please contact Council or visit www.flovac.com



Pillars

A key part of the vacuum collection system are the 100 vent pillars that are located on the boundary 3 metres (or less) from every pit servicing 5-6 properties.

These pillars act as vents and allow the system to suck in air to create the necessary pressure for the vacuum system to operate. Some of the pillars include monitoring technology that will alert Council of any maintenance is required to the system (e.g. valve, pit, and pipework).

They are not exhaust vents and will not create odour or noise.

Given the evolution of Fisherman Bay with narrow roads and restricted parking, residents are asked to exercise due care around these pillars to minimise the chance of accidental damage.

The pillars are a council asset and if damaged those responsible will be liable. If a pillar is damaged it will impact the system and could cause interruption to wastewater services to the 5-6 properties serviced by the pit and pillar. Any damage to a pillar should be reported to Council immediately on 0467 319 925.

Commissioning

With construction being completed in February 2024, final testing will then be undertaken, and the system commissioned in March 2024.





Plumbing connections

Commissioning will allow connection to the system and residents are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.

As most residents would know from the correspondence sent on 8 November 2023, Council has engaged H2H Plumbing Pty Ltd (H2H) to provide quotes to connect their property to the network.

These quotes have generated a lot of interest as has Council's proposed Separate Rate Agreement, which will enable ratepayers to spread the cost of the plumbing connection over 16 quarterly instalments, added to your rates notices.

The costs and benefits of the scheme have been articulated in the previous correspondence and ratepayers are encouraged to contact Council should clarification be required.

This update is an opportunity to highlight the following.

- Ratepayers are of course able to choose their own plumber and, in this case, the H2H quote will provide a good cost comparison.
- If ratepayers choose H2H, they will be able to engage and pay them direct without any Council involvement.
- Ratepayers may choose to engage H2H through Council,

who will initially pay H2H on their behalf. In this case, they will have the option of re-paying Council in a lump sum up-front, thereby avoiding an interest charge. Alternatively, ratepayers can choose to pay over 4 years and incur an interest charge (equal to Council's cost of borrowing).

Ratepayers can respond by completing and signing the documentation included in the 8 November 2023 correspondence.

If ratepayers opt to engage H2H through Council, they will receive a letter setting out the amount that they will be required to repay should they wish to pay an up-front lump sum, or the quarterly instalments that would be levied should they choose to enter the Separate Rate Agreement.

Clearly, there are a few things for ratepayers to consider and Council has received feedback requesting further time to decide. Accordingly, Council has decided to extend the date for ratepayers to respond to 31 January 2024.

Council is aware that H2H was not able to provide quotes on all properties (mainly due to access) and that H2H will provide those quotes when they return in March/April 2024. Those ratepayers will have a month from the date of the quote to advise Council.

Plumbing connection application/ approval process

An Application – Onsite Wastewater Works Approval form must be completed by the property owner or their plumber before work can commence. A copy of the form was sent with the 8 November letter and is also on Council's website.

The application will be assessed by Council and once approved, the applicant will be notified that work can commence.

When the work is completed, Council will inspect the property. If the work is satisfactory, the plumber will provide Council with a Certificate of Compliance along with "as constructed" drawings of the work.

There is an administration fee of \$305 so that Council can recover some of the costs that it incurs in the application/approval process.

If ratepayers engage H2H, this fee is reduced to \$180 representing a saving of \$125. This is possible because Council will be dealing with H2H on a large scale, enabling the process to be streamlined.



CWMS Fees

Fisherman Bay residents will have the most modern wastewater system in the district and access to an upgraded and expanded wastewater treatment plant at Port Broughton.

Council has a legislative obligation to maintain a sustainable Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) and it must set appropriate fees and charges that enable it to fund, over the long-term, the costs of operating, maintaining, upgrading, and expanding the system.

Accordingly, the fees that will apply to Fisherman Bay properties are:

Annual Service Fee – to be charged from the July/September 2024 quarter (currently \$600):

- Applicable to all land located in Fisherman Bay that can connect to the CWMS, whether the land is developed or vacant and is charged on a quarterly basis.
- This fee covers all operational and maintenance costs (including depreciation) plus creates a fund for capital replacement.
- This fee is reviewed each year to ensure it is charged at a rate that funds a sustainable CWMS.

Connection Fee – a one-off payment of \$2,535:

- For new and existing dwellings and vacant blocks connecting to CWMS.
- This fee is reviewed each year and can be considered as buying the right to connect to the main system, which has been funded by other CWMS users.
- Those who connect through H2H will automatically be able to spread the payment over 16 quarterly equal instalments, commencing July/September 2024 quarter.

Separate Rate – Plumbing

Connection – for those ratepayers wishing to participate in the scheme:

- The rate will be unique to their property and dependent on plumbing costs, an administration fee, and interest.
- The first of 16 instalments will commence in July/September 2024 quarter.

Council works

Council has received feedback over the lack of beach access stairs and landscaping works in the Fisherman Bay area. Council will turn its attention to this work when FBM and Bardavcol complete the infrastructure works and hand over the settlement to Council, which is now due in February 2024.

The rezoning project

Council is proposing to rezone a portion of land currently zoned Rural to allow for the growth and expansion of Fisherman Bay.

Council is aware of the impact the current housing crisis is having on some members of our community.

This crisis is caused in part by the shortage of residential land and the proposal to rezone more land for residential development is one important measure that will assist in addressing this issue.

The proposal also seeks to rezone the Fisherman Bay township to provide greater planning design policy for the area and apply better design principles for new built form.

This Code Amendment was initiated by the State Minister for Planning on 5 May 2023. In early 2024 Council will release more detailed information for community feedback including the following.

- Proposed structure plan showing how the land could be subdivided into circa 266 allotments.
- Residential land supply and demand analysis.
- Infrastructure analysis (including stormwater, CWMS, power and flooding).
- Traffic investigations.
- A History Assessment and aboriginal Heritage and culture survey.

Council will inform the community through public notices, social media posts and notice boards.

The consultation period will run for at least 6-8 weeks.



The Community Hall

With the Fisherman Bay Freeholding project reaching practical completion FBM is seeking to sell the Community Hall located at 146 Snook Road.

There are some in Fisherman Bay that would like to see Council acquire the hall, but Councillors resolved to not acquire the building for several reasons including costs.

The existing building is in average condition, lacks amenities such as toilets, and would need to be significantly upgraded or replaced.

Council does own land on Silver Perch Road and has spoken to the Progress Association about using this land to build a new community facility. The land can accommodate a bigger building and is adjacent a stormwater collection area that will eventually be grassed.

The new facility could hold up to 90 people and would include all the necessary amenities required of a public facility including disabled toilets, kitchen, and storage areas.

The construction of the facility will require State or Federal grant funding and the facility would need to be owned, operated, and maintained by the Fisherman Bay Progress Association. This arrangement is consistent with similar facilities across the district. Under such an arrangement the facility could be licenced and used for events, happy hours, and as a meeting place for the community.

A survey recently completed by the community has shown general support for the concept of a new facility on Silver Perch Road.

In 2024 Council will work with the progress association to finalise a design for the facility and apply for grant funding.

Dunny Lane

Fisherman Bay shack owners may experience some further changes as Council aims to address longstanding concerns about the 'Dunny Lane' shacks.

Most Dunny Lane shack owners are keen to secure freehold title from the State Government and re-develop the area in a similar fashion to the rest of the Fisherman Bay settlement.

This has been a long-standing and un-resolved issue and Council has been approached to help work through the investigations and approval processes. Council is collaborating with the State Government and is confident that a positive outcome can be achieved.



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