

RIVERSDALE BEACH COMMUNITY UPDATE

SEWERAGE SCHEME

Issue No.1

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Sewerage scheme background

In December 2005 a newsletter provided Riversdale Beach property owners with an update on the sewerage scheme proposal. This newsletter identified that four scheme types and arrangements were being considered for the treatment and disposal of sewage from the Riversdale Beach community.

Three of the four schemes proposed would use pond based treatment, with the ponds being located within the greater Riversdale Beach area. The other scheme proposed was a proprietary small bore pumped system using enhanced septic tanks on each property with disposal of treated effluent to be on East Leigh land.

Identifying and securing land suitable for the siting of sewage treatment plants has been one of the major issues delaying progress on this project. It is estimated that pond-based treatment and disposal will require up to 15 hectares of suitable land. To date three sites have been identified, although each has constraints.

Two additional sites capable of siting the treatment plants have been recently identified. Investigation and testing works are currently underway on these sites to determine their suitability.

This newsletter, the first in a series of planned updates, will keep everyone informed of what Council is doing and how **you** can be involved. ●



Progress update

The key issue remains the availability of land suitable for the siting of a sewerage treatment and disposal facility. In other words, where do we put it? Three sites have already been considered.

In the period between this latest update and the December newsletter, Council and its advi-

sors have identified two additional sites with the potential to be used for pond-based treatment. Investigation and testing works are currently underway on these sites.

A report considering these and other sites, together with the East Leigh option, will be considered by the Riversdale Beach Sewerage Steering Group and Council by the end of this month.

The outcome of this reporting will be passed on to **you** as the basis for consultation, with the community indicating a preference for the scheme to be constructed at Riversdale Beach.

The Riversdale Beach Sewerage Steering Group recently met to review progress and to hear reports from council staff on the work currently underway, and works proposed in relation to the sewerage scheme. ●

Findings to go to Council

The aim is for findings to be reported to the Council at its 31st May 2006 meeting, where the five sites will be compared. We will

More information

If you want to see earlier communications with the Riversdale Beach community on the sewerage scheme initiative please contact Masterton District Council, telephone 378-9666, email info@mstn.govt.nz

prepare construction cost estimates for the two new sites and consider updated costs for the other three sites. Costings for the East Leigh proposal, which uses a proprietary pumped system involving small diameter piping with enhanced septic tanks on each property and disposal of treated effluent on East Leigh land, will also be updated and included in the comparison. Using a ranking matrix, we

will identify the preferred scheme.

Each of the schemes has differences with some being reasonably hi-tech while others are conventional in nature. The advantages and disadvantages of each scheme type and location will be summarised, compared and reported on.

The material contained in the report will then form the basis for robust consultation with the Riversdale Beach community. ●

Why is it taking so long?

It has always been our intention to find the best location, hence the groundwork going into choosing the preferred site. Everyone agrees that a sewerage treatment and disposal facility is a necessity and is long overdue.

To get it right we need to consider a range of factors and none of them in isolation. Cost, vehicle access, access for the raw sewage pipeline, distance to a power supply, land suitability, the effect on other landowners and the environment, visual encroachment (or the lack thereof) are just

some of the factors we are considering.

Wanting to get it right, we are now thoroughly checking the two new sites before Council and the Riversdale Beach community makes the important decision of confirming the preferred scheme.

What is happening right now?

We are investigating the new sites with test pits, taking soil profiles and samples, as well as an outline topographical survey to record land forms and levels.

We want to ensure that the effects of the treatment ponds on the Riversdale Beach community are minimised as far as possible, and wish to explore the range of reasonable options to achieve this outcome.

What next?

Once results of these tests have been analysed, and feasibility reports compared, a decision on which of the sites has the best characteristics for sewage treatment and disposal. Results of the tests will also pinpoint where to build the facility. Land-

owner negotiations are integral to this process.

To assist in decision-making and for information purposes, high-level scheme design plans will be prepared for each site. Recommendations will then go to Council and **you** will then be invited to have your say on which site you prefer.

Progress and details, including estimated scheme costs will be passed on to the Riversdale Beach Sewerage Steering Group for their input prior to Council's consideration. ●

Council costs incurred so far

By the time it is built, it is estimated that the scheme will have cost around \$10.5 million; \$1.92 million of which comes from a government subsidy under the Sanitary Works Subsidy Scheme (SWSS). For your information the approval criteria for the SWSS is currently being reviewed by a central government-appointed working group. One of the issues to be considered is the escalation in the costs for schemes between the date they were approved and the date construction was completed. We will keep you informed of progress with this review and its outcome, as this may impact on the amount property owners will be asked to pay.

So far we have incurred costs of \$500,000, with \$250,000 of this paid for from Council's general

reserves.

The balance of the scheme's capital costs will be paid for by all property owners in the serviced area, including contributions from new

subdivisions.

The calculations to establish how much each property owner will pay will not be possible until there is an acceptable scheme. ●



Consultation meeting

The next issue of Riversdale Beach Community Update will feature a summary of the report on options and its recommendations, and this will form the basis for community consultation.

A public meeting is planned at the Riversdale Beach Golf Club on Sunday 4 June 2006 at 2.00pm. Councillor Roddy McKenzie will chair the meeting. Council advisors and officers will be on hand to answer any questions.

After the meeting the scheme options will be up for consideration for about five weeks. **You** will receive a submission paper and be asked to pick your preferred scheme. ●

Submission papers will need to be returned to Council by 7 July 2006.

What will this facility cost Riversdale Beach residents in the long-term?

After applying the government SWSS subsidy and the Council's contribution (set at \$500,000), the balance of the scheme's capital costs will be paid for by those property owners who will connect to the new service.

Capital contributions are expected to be charged as lump sum rates in years 2 and 3 (2007/08 and 2008/09).

Any development which connects to the community scheme will pay a share of the capital contributions, plus any specific capital costs associated with their development.

The status of the Eastleigh Scheme and the proportion of the contribution to be made by commercial properties will all have a bearing on the apportionment of costs to each property. As these factors are still to be determined, no definitive cost per property owner can be provided at this time. Riversdale Beach Community Update, No. 2 will provide an approximate cost per property. ●

A new Riversdale Beach sewerage targeted rate will come into effect from 2006/07.

This will allow part of these costs to be recovered directly from Riversdale Beach properties.

This new rate is included in the Council's Draft Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) currently out for consultation.

The targeted rate is expected to be charged uniformly on each potentially serviceable property or connection and will begin as \$78 for 2006/07.

As the loan balance builds up and depreciation and operating costs of the scheme are added, the annual rate will increase.

2007/08 is forecast to

be \$127 and 2008/09 to be \$428 per property.

The Council will continue to incur debt servicing costs.

Some \$32,000 is an-

anticipated in 2006/07. The Council will fund \$15,000 of this from its Interest Investments Fund with the balance coming from the proposed new rate. ●

Indicative timeline

WHEN	TASK
Feb/March/April 2006	Site investigations continue. Discussions with property owners regarding suitable areas of land continue.
31 May 2006	Scheme recommendation report goes to the Riversdale Beach Sewerage Steering Group and Council.
1 June 2006	Riversdale Beach Community Update No.2 mailed out to property owners. This update will form the basis for community consultation. It will provide details including costs and the impact on rates.
4 June 2006 (Queens Birthday weekend)	Formal consultation period begins with a public meeting on Sunday 4 June 2006 at 2:00pm in the Riversdale Beach Golf Club. Meeting to be chaired by Councillor Roddy McKenzie. Specialist staff on hand to answer questions. Submission papers together with details of the costs of the various schemes will be available at the meeting.
9 June 2006	Submission papers mailed out to Riversdale Beach property owners. This will ensure that all property owners have the information on which to base their choice of scheme.
7 July 2006	Formal consultation period ends and submissions close.
July/August 2006	Results collated and hearings held for those people who want to discuss their submissions.
August/September 2006	Results of submissions and hearings reported to the Riversdale Beach Sewerage Steering Group and council. Decision made by Council on one preferred scheme.
September 2006	Negotiations with landowner to formalise land purchase.
September/October 2006	Resource Consent Applications submitted
December 2006 to January 2007	Resource Consent issued
January 2007	Detailed design, drawing, specifications, etc prepared.
May 2007	Tendering of the physical works.
June/July 2007	Evaluation of tenders.
August/September 2007	Appointment of a contractor to undertake the physical works construction.
October/November 2007	Physical works construction begins.
May/June 2008	Scheme operational.

Costs relating to Riversdale Beach sewerage scheme

Although physical works have yet to get underway, Council has already spent some \$550,000 on preliminary scheme design assessments, site investigations and testing spanning from 2001. These assessments have looked at two arrangements for Riversdale Beach, one that combines the Riversdale Beach and East Leigh sewage into one system, and the second stand-alone systems for the Riversdale Beach community and East Leigh. Within these arrangements are a number of treatment options with capital costs for

these schemes ranging from \$8.8 million to \$12.4 million (these costs have an order of accuracy of plus or minus 30% of constructed cost).

Due to the criteria for subsidy under the Sanitary Works Subsidy Scheme, not all of the schemes are eligible. Accordingly, adoption of a non-eligible scheme would place the subsidy of \$1.92 million at risk.

Funding of the amount spent to date has been from Council's general reserves (\$250,000) and a loan drawn against the future scheme.

Where has the money been spent?

Specialist input into the development and design of the plant is being provided by Opus International Consultants Ltd. Scheme assessments, investigation and testing works - and preliminary and detailed design undertaken by Opus so far - has been converted into reports to the Council. The tendering process in 2004/2005 and negotiations with the East Leigh developers have been other major components of the works undertaken by Council officers and consultants. ●

Decision time-submissions

There will be an opportunity for people to present their views by way of hearings. A report summarising the outcome of the hearings will go to Council and, once considered, the preferred scheme will be adopted.

Once resource consent has been granted, we envisage beginning construction on the scheme sometime in the second half of next year. ●

Thank you for your patience

We realise the process to introduce this sewerage scheme is taking awhile but wish to reiterate that we want to ensure work on the new scheme follows best practice every step of the way. This scheme will be an asset to the Riversdale Beach community and we want to get it right – and that means ensuring careful selection of the site, in consultation with residents, including its long-term operation. ●

Why not install my own septic tank?

You may ask, would we be better off financially putting in a new septic tank of our own rather than being obliged to become part of this scheme? We have therefore provided the following information to assist your consideration of this question.

The design of septic tanks and their suitability in different areas depends very much on the local soil conditions. As you know Riversdale Beach is built mostly on free-draining sand. While good for drainage of surface water, in times of heavy rain such conditions can mean that undesirable contaminants quickly make their way into the groundwater. Many of the septic tanks currently in use are leaking and this was the main reason why work started on planning for a sewerage scheme.

A representative sample of the septic tanks at Riversdale Beach was physically inspected to provide an estimate of the number that had leaks.

If any new septic tanks were to be installed at Riversdale Beach they would need to meet stringent requirements designed to ensure that contamination of the groundwater does not occur. We are advised that to install a septic tank can cost anywhere from

\$5,000 for a small, simple device, to \$20,000 for a larger more hi-tech arrangement. Given the free-draining sand at Riversdale Beach it is thought that residents would need to install tanks that tend toward the more expensive, hi-tech end of the market. As with the proposed sewerage scheme, there would be ongoing costs for maintenance associated with any on-site system. ●

