

Possible sewerage system for Sandy Point,

Currently there is a preliminary discussion among some Sandy Point property owners about a possible “community solar system”. I believe that electricity supply to Sandy Point is just one of the important infrastructure issues for our small community.

Another matter which deserves attention is sewerage treatment for the township. State Government grants for implementing sewerage in rural areas ceased some years ago and therefore our Shire is not likely (if ever) to consider sewerage infrastructure for Sandy Point.

But there is another option! An Australian company (Optimos Group) has developed a small-footprint waste water treatment plant designed specifically to service a small community. Their systems have been installed in Australia, NZ, Pacific Islands and UK. See their website www.optimosgroup.com

By amazing chance, a local Sandy Point property owner (Dan Drew) is one of the principal scientists who is involved in developing this system. As a resource, Dan is very knowledgeable about the system and can give detailed information to our Sandy Point community. Such expertise, “*on our doorstep*” would be of great benefit for helping us research the viability of implementing such important infrastructure for our township. Of course there are immediate questions! For example...

- Q: Where would the system be installed? A: On the vacant land of the old Transfer Station.
- Q: Would the system emit odours? A: No. The system is contained and there are no odours.
- Q: Would the roads be ripped up to install pipes? A: Each house would have a processor which converts the effluent to a slurry, which can be pumped through small diameter pipes. These pipes can be bored under the existing roads without damage to the road surface.
- Q: What would it cost? A: Approximately \$1M for a system suitable to service Sandy Point. A further \$1M (approx.) to connect houses through pipes and pumps.
- Q: How would it be funded? We have about 680 houses, so if each house paid a sewerage levy of say \$3,000 there would sufficient funds. Property values would probably jump by more.
- Q: What are the on-going costs? A: Details like this can be answered by Dan, but from our conversations it seems that the system is very low cost maintenance.
- Q: What power is needed? A: The system’s energy requirements are fairly small and can apparently be supplied from solar panels on the roof of the building which houses the system.
- Q: How big is the system? A: The size of a system for use at Sandy Point would be one of the smallest built by Optimos. For a flow rate of 1,000 cub metre fluid per day, the system has a footprint of about 200 square metres (which is about the size of a average house of 20 Squares).
- Where would the output water be discharged? Not into Shallow Inlet of course, but perhaps pumped to the existing sewerage ponds installed for Waratah township on the nearby hillside.

There are many more questions, of course, but the purpose of this document is to ask that our current community debate on a possible solar farm be expanded to include a possible sewerage system that would be of great benefit to everyone.

I am a personal friend of Dan (for more than 40 years) and I would be willing to arrange for him to give us a presentation towards the end of year. Dan uses his Sandy Point house during holidays.

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