

CM13.2. Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main at SPS01 Project - Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration and endorsement, the proposed scope and Stakeholder Engagement Plan regarding the forthcoming 'Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main/s' major project.

Background

AlburyCity's Main Sewer Pump Station (MSPS) collects and pumps away around 95% of all sewer flows within the city. It was originally constructed in 1916 and can be seen as the historic building on the corner of Smollett Street and Wodonga Place. It forms part of Council's main Works Depot, in the heart of our city.

This aged asset is now approaching its absolute capacity. The situation is made worse by the city's unprecedented development and its population growth in places like Thurgoona.

As most of the city's underground sewer pipes eventually convey flow to this pump station, it is unable to be removed from service and the MSPS now requires a significant upgrade to ensure its ability to meet AlburyCity's future needs.

Accordingly, the project is complex and it seeks to enhance the storage and pumping capacity at the MSPS site, whilst simultaneously continuing to meet the servicing needs of our growing city.

The MSPS project integrates with a possible redevelopment of the AlburyCity Wodonga Depot site (as defined within the Albury CBD Master Plan and the Murray River Experience (MRE) Master Plan) and aims to deliver:

- an overall combined sewer pumping capacity of up to 3,000 litres/second – for context, this is equivalent to an Olympic-sized swimming pool every eight minutes;
- the construction of a new sewer pump station and the rehabilitation of the existing, historic MSPS at its current location; and
- upgrades of the existing, and construction of new, sewer pipelines from the MSPS to the city's wastewater treatment plants.

Currently underway is a Request for Tender (RFT) process that looks to engage suitably qualified consultants to undertake the necessary investigations, gain approvals and deliver design works. The consultant will also provide construction phase (supervision and oversight) services for the duration of the project, which will be funded from within Council's long term financial plan and is expected to support the city for the next 100 years.

The attached Stakeholder Engagement Plan is a working document that identifies parties that may be potentially affected by, or take an active interest in, the progression of this project. It advocates for early community engagement that will see education and awareness provided to our community through the Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate levels of the engagement framework adopted by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).

Issues

The scope of the MSPS and rising main/s project includes:

- an upgrade of the existing MSPS (SPS01) and the design and construction of a new MSPS at the AlburyCity Depot Site located at Smollett Street, Albury. This upgrade will effectively double the pump station's peak capacity to around 3,000 L/s; and
- construction of new 5.5km long rising main/s (which could be configured as 1 x 1200mm or 2 x 750mm nominal diameter pipelines) directly to the Waterview Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

This project overlaps many strategically important proposals regarding use and future amenity of the Wodonga Depot site. It must seamlessly integrate with a wide range of initiatives to ensure that the most suitable and flexible outcome is implemented to enable the city's future growth. This means that the project's delivery timeframes are compressed, as the MSPS upgrade is a 'once-only' opportunity that must be completed before the commencement of any other major works on the Wodonga Place Depot Site.

The project aligns with outcomes contained within *Towards Albury 2050* Community Plan including:

1. *A Growing Sustainable Economy*

- 1.1 Albury is a liveable city supporting sustainable population growth through the provision of high-quality infrastructure, industry-leading services and high levels of amenity.

1.1.1 Responsibly provide residential and commercial development options for our growing city, whilst prioritising sustainability.

2. *An Enhanced Natural Environment*

- 2.1 Albury is a zero emission and climate resilient city.

2.1.4 Albury is resilient and has adapted to a changing climate.

Risk

- **Business Risk** – An upgrade of the MSPS is required in a timely manner. Should the existing pump station be unable to adequately pump and then convey the sewer inflows away to meet the city's economic and residential growth, the sewage system will overflow, causing environmental impacts to occur.
- **Corporate Risk** – An inability to suitably engage with our community prior to and throughout the course of the MSPS upgrade could lead to significant reputational damage for AlburyCity. The area of work is a highly prominent location within the city, and should the work be carried out without the awareness of our community (particularly during this initial stage of the Wodonga Place re-development), then community acceptance of future re-development stages could be compromised. Accordingly, the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan seeks to mitigate this by providing the framework under which stakeholders and the wider community are able to be educated and made aware of the project's scope, whilst having access to associated investigation and design documentation.
- **WHS and Public Risk** – Due to its age, the existing pump station is becoming a Work, Health and Safety (WHS) burden. There is also significant risk associated with the long-term management of the existing pumping infrastructure due to limited system redundancy. The adoption and implementation of an upgrade strategy for the MSPS is an important consideration for Council in minimising operational risks to the reliability of the city's sewer system and the safety of the employees and the community.
- **Environmental Risk** – Without an upgrade of this facility, the site will overflow at a prominent location within the city. This aspect, and the need for the mitigation of this, are to be addressed and communicated to the community through the awareness activities undertaken within the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
- **Delivery Program Risk** – The upgrade of the MSPS is on a 'critical path' to enable redevelopment of the Wodonga Place site, an upgrade of the Waterview Wastewater Treatment Plant, decommissioning of the Kremur Street Wastewater Treatment Plant and ongoing development of the NEXUS industrial precinct. The current procurement activity for a Lead Consultant will enable the progression of activities necessary to finalise the design of the upgraded MSPS, and associated conveyance infrastructure. Delivery risks are also being mitigated through requirements that will be placed on the awarded consultancy to oversee activities for the construction of the necessary infrastructure.

Community Engagement

Under the endorsed Project Governance Structure for the Main Sewer Pump Station project, a Project Working Group - Community Engagement (PWG-Comm) was established. The Working Group developed the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and this was endorsed by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) in December 2023. The Steering Group noted that the document would grow, and be continuously refined, throughout the phases of this project.

Whilst community engagement has not yet commenced, numerous key stakeholders have already been involved with early engagement from AlburyCity regarding this project.

The SEP before Council outlines the following engagement activities which could be undertaken as required, or scheduled, during the course of the project:

- Major Project Updates on Website – as required throughout the project.
- Councillor Briefings – via Pre-Meeting Briefing Sessions (PMBS).
- Council Meetings – various but including:
 - Approval of Stakeholder Engagement plan - March 2024.
 - Award of Lead Consultant - July 2024.
 - Award of Construction Contract Consultant - March 2026.
- Use of social media across various platforms – throughout engagement, as required.
- Media Releases.
- Leveraging off the 'All About Albury' newsletter and website links.
- Conducting engagement information sessions (including potential integrations with other Major Projects).
- Multi-channel promotion and awareness campaigns.
- Face-to-Face Meetings with key stakeholders.

Options

1. Endorse the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the 'Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main/s at SPS01' project. **Recommended;**

This is the preferred option as it will allow the Project Team to provide community engagement at the appropriate time aligned with the project delivery schedule.

2. Not endorse the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the 'Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main/s at SPS01' project, and request amendments. **Not recommended.**

This option is not recommended as the proposed Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been prepared to provide a structured approach to providing the community with ongoing project information updates throughout the duration of the project.

Conclusion

The 'Main Sewer Pump Station and Rising Main/s at SPS01' project is of critical strategic importance to AlburyCity in its delivery of essential public health services that exceed our community's expectations and cater for the needs of a growing city.

Given the synergies of this project to the broad spectrum of strategic activities currently underway concerning the Wodonga Place location, Council's consideration of the attached engagement plan (and its endorsement) is intended to provide the foundations for future community engagement regarding the site.

Recommendation

That Council receive and endorse the proposed project scope and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the 'Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main/s at SPS01' project.

Attachments

1. Main Sewer Pump Station and new Rising Main/s at SPS01 Project – Stakeholder Engagement Plan (DOC19/96360).