

Upper Goulburn Regional Water Supply Project

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Background

In 2008/2009 Goulburn Valley Water will be constructing a water supply pipeline between Alexandra, Eildon and Thornton. This pipeline will provide the upper Goulburn region with a secure high quality water supply for many decades.

In May 2007 the Corporation established a Community Reference Committee comprising of 9 local people, including Robert Chaffe, Kerry Goschnick, Gordon Simpson and Gavin Sutherland of Alexandra. Tom Hammer, Syd Savage, Gary McMillan and Norm King of Eildon and Bob Peters of Thornton. Goulburn Valley Water is working with the CRC to understand and acknowledge the concerns and aspirations of the community and provide feedback to the CRC on how their input influenced the route selection and construction aspects of the project.

The CRC has met on four occasions to discuss the best method of communicating with the wider community and the benefits and disadvantages of the various suggested pipeline routes.

In the previous newsletter dated June 2007 the Corporation outlined seven alignment options that were investigated and highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of three options.

Public Comment

In the June newsletter the public were invited to provide comment on the proposed pipeline alignment. 20

submissions were received. The key comments from the general public included: requests to avoid the Mackenzie Flora reserve, queries regarding the construction of the pipeline and potential impact to private property during construction, a number of requests to consider the construction of a bike path along the pipeline route were received. The other major concern was the proposed pipeline route through the Eildon Township, a number of alternative options were proposed which have since been reviewed.

We would like to thank everyone who has provided comments on the proposed pipeline alignment and the project.

Pipeline Alignment

The preferred pipeline alignment is the Goulburn Valley Highway-Eildon Back Road Alignment. This alignment provides the best environmental approach, is low in risk from a construction and commissioning perspective and will be simpler to design and maintain. As with any option there are some disadvantages, it is the longest

Key Components of the Pipeline

- 25 km pipeline between Alexandra and Eildon and Thornton
- 5 km pipeline from Thornton to Rubicon Village
- 2.7 megalitre per day pump station at the Alexandra water treatment plant.

The pipeline will be connected into the existing clear water storage at Eildon and Rubicon Village and therefore there will be no changes to the existing reticulation system within the towns.

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...running water from the Mountains to the Murray ...

alignment route and the Corporation will need to acquire easement over some properties along the route to avoid remnant vegetation.

We have held discussions with DSE in regard to vegetation and the outcome of these discussions has indicated that there are several areas of significant vegetation within the road reserve along the Goulburn Valley Highway and within the Eildon Bushland reserve. These areas are to be surveyed by botanists to determine the extent of the significant vegetation. Alternative alignments to avoid these areas will be required if necessary.

Our consultant, SMEC, has completed surveying the pipeline route. Further geotechnical (soil) investigation has also been completed. Further flora and fauna survey is to be undertaken, this is expected to commence shortly and will be completed by the end of November.

As mentioned earlier some landowners may be affected by the pipeline route. We have identified 10 properties and we have been having discussions with these landowners. The major concerns raised to date include the need to locate the pipeline within private property, the location of the pipeline, construction impact and will the pipeline be buried and if so how deep will it be.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is an upgrade required for Alexandra, Eildon and Thornton Drinking Water Supply?

The current water supply system at Alexandra, Eildon and Thornton cannot guarantee that the quality of the drinking water will meet the standards set by the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003*. There is the potential for Boil Water notices to be issued in all three towns. An upgrade to the drinking water supply will ensure that the water quality complies with the *Act*.

Why is the water supply for Eildon and Thornton sourced from Alexandra?

Alexandra, as the largest of the three towns, has a significantly higher demand and it was determined that sourcing the regions water supply via the water treatment plant at Alexandra was the most economical solution.

Why is the water being pumped up hill from Alexandra?

The alternative option of supplying water from Eildon would require a larger pipeline to allow for higher flows. It would also require a pump station and control system capable of pumping downhill, these systems are generally very complicated and expensive to operate and maintain.

If we are currently not serviced by Goulburn Valley Water and our property is along the pipeline route, are we able to receive a drinking water service?

Goulburn Valley water is currently reviewing the options and tapings onto the pipeline will be limited to existing dwelling and establishments. The water via this tapping will only be available for domestic use not for farming purposes. If you are interested in connecting to the pipeline you can register your

interest with the Corporation by contacting Lachlan McGregor on 5832 0710.

How will our water service change once we are receiving water from Alexandra?

The only change to your water service will be improved water quality that complies with the *Safe Water Drinking Act 2003*.

Will the pipeline be buried or exposed?

The pipeline will be buried under the ground. The air valves and scour valves will be located within pits that are finished at natural surface.

How will the pipeline cross the river?

The pipeline will either be bored under the river or be attached to the road bridges. The final decision will be based on the feasibility of boring under the river, dependent on soil conditions, and cost.

Can a bike path be constructed at the same time as the pipeline?

The Corporation has received a number of requests to investigate the construction of a bike path in conjunction with the Murrindindi Shire Council. The Corporation has reviewed the requests and has advised the Council that funding of the bike path needs to be provided by Council and other government departments. The Corporation has offered to provide assistance in the project if requested.

Community Engagement

Community engagement that has already been undertaken includes:

- Articles in the GWV News— the Authority's customer newsletter.
- Articles in the Alexandra Standard
- A workshop in Thornton & Eildon with key community members
- Community Open Day at Thornton & Eildon
- Display for a week at the Eildon Visitor Centre
- Display for a week at the Murrindindi Shire offices at Alexandra
- A Community Reference Committee established in May 2007. This committee has met on four occasions to September 2007
- Discussions with Councillors and officers of the Shire of Murrindindi
- Two newsletters on the project has been provided to all residents within Alexandra, Eildon & Thornton and are available on the Goulburn Valley Water Website www.gvwater.vic.gov.au

Planning Process

The current program envisaged by the Corporation is:

Survey of the pipeline alignment is due to commence within the next couple of months.

Geotechnical Investigations and survey has been completed

Discussion with Telstra Nov 2007

Flora & Fauna Investigation Nov 2007

Archaeology & Heritage Investigations Nov 2007

Completion of the pipeline design Early 2008

Competitive Tendering process (After completion of Design) Early 2008

Commencement of Construction Jul 2008

Completion and Commissioning of the pipeline Jun 2009



