

To the Commissioner

Essential Services Commission

Re: Draft Determination for South Gippsland Water Plan 2013-2018

As residents of Nyora we ask that the Commission's Draft Determination to not allow the capital expenditure for South Gippsland Water's proposed Poowong/Loch/Nyora sewerage scheme, as requested in SGW's Water Plan 2013-2018, be reversed to allow the project to proceed without further delay.

The communities of the three towns were aware that the Project had proceeded to the point where South Gippsland Council had, in October 2012, received permission from the Minister for Planning to prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment (C59) which included rezoning to Public Use Zone1 the land at 65 Hills Road, Nyora where the waste water treatment facility was proposed. It was also understood that when the rezoning was approved, the scheme was virtually ready for implementation.

The three communities had, on more than one occasion, made it quite clear to the authorities concerned that the majority of residents were in favour of the implementation of the project. Indeed, it was imperative that a waste water management scheme be installed to eliminate a serious health risk from the contamination of open street drains and neighbouring properties with untreated sewage. The authorities have been aware since the 1970's of the inability of the soils in this region to cope with the discharge from septic tanks. This situation is compounded by the towns being situated in a high rainfall area.

It was with great disappointment that we learnt of the Commission's draft determination to disallow a price increase in South Gippsland Water's rates to fund the scheme. We were also surprised to read the submission from the Yannathan Road Development Group to the Essential Services Commission Water Price Review 2013-2018 wherein they stated:

"The Group's role is to protect the environment, visual and social amenity of the Yannathan Road district of Nyora and Lang Lang East and its charter is to defend the social justice entitlements of our 248 members who live in the South Gippsland and Cardinia Shires."

To our knowledge this Group did not advertise or hold a public meeting within either of the three towns in question, nor contact residents in the vicinity of Yannathan Road, to gauge support of their point of view.

The submission lists the following issues and concerns:

1. Inadequate business planning and project management has led to the unrealistic capital costs proposed in the Water Plan 3.
2. A lack of strategic interagency planning is causing a blowout in statutory charges.
3. The need for review of the South Gippsland Water business plan.

None of these issues and concerns appears to relate to the Group's stated role. We find it very disappointing that a group claiming to represent the views of unnamed local residents can derail a project which is so vital to the well being of three unsewered communities.

We ask the Commission to be concerned about "protecting the environment, visual and social amenity" of the townships of Nyora, Loch and Poowong and "defending the social justice entitlements" of over 2,000 residents who live in these towns, as well as the many hundreds of residents who live in the surrounding areas such as the Yannathan Road area and who use the services and facilities in these towns. Protect and defend them from the degradation of living without a reticulated sewerage system.

Drainage from these three towns, as well as the drainage and runoff water from the rural living zones and farms in the Yannathan Roadarea, all ends up in WesternportBay.

The proposed sewerage scheme should not be delayed any longer. Forty years is a long time to wait!!!

Respectfully,

David Mills

Robyn Mills