

26 April 2021

Refers to: CRM 3172/2021

John Drinan
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Dear John

Bonny Hills Rainbow Beach and Creeks

Thank you for your letter of 9 April 2021 and for your time at our meeting on 15 April 2021. We appreciate the concerns you have raised and the impact sewer surcharges and overflows have on the broader community.

I understand your disappointment in the continued issues experienced in Bonny Hills and assure you, we share this feeling.

As you attest, a number of remediation works have occurred at the manhole and Sewer Pump Station behind Rodley Street, yet we continue to see surcharges. Unfortunately, until the stormwater inflow and infiltration is addressed, the load on this network will not reduce and in times of high rainfall especially, we are likely to see more surcharges.

I appreciate your frustration at not being first on the program for Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) testing. However, as I am sure you can understand, we prioritised the areas, such as Lighthouse Beach and Laurieton, where residents are experiencing sewer surcharges inside their properties. The delivery of this work has been delayed due to the challenges involved in securing an interstate contractor, however we are confident this program will recommence in the 2021/22 financial year.

We acknowledge that our sewer system has some shortcomings and are working to rectify surcharge issues across the Local Government Area. It should be noted, though, that in a heavy rain event, there is little we can do, even with the best sewer system in place, to prevent an overload of the network and subsequent surcharging. The recent flood disaster also had significant impact on our sewer network and has highlighted additional high priority issues across the region.

I assure you that our approval and licencing from the EPA to overflow via Duchess Creek to Rainbow Beach from the Bonny Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant, has considered the discharge location and unfortunately, overflows to public recreation waterways are not uncommon across the State. We saw this in January when a public health warning was issued on Shelly Beach in Manly following a sewer overflow.

Moving forward, we have plans within our 10 year program to undertake a holistic risk assessment of the entire sewer network to establish an overall plan for prioritisation of remediation works and proactive maintenance. While this is still a long way off in terms of


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resources and funding, we are determined to improve our overall network for future generations.

We will endeavour to improve our communications with local residents in relation to future planned works on the sewer network.

Clarification on certain aspects of the Draft 2021/22 Operational Plan as discussed at our 15 April meeting, will be provided under separate cover.

Yours sincerely



Dan Bylsma
Director Infrastructure

Copy to: Mayor
CEO