

WATER SUPPLY NETWORK EXTENSION POLICY

COMMUNITY POLICY



1 Scope

This policy provides parameters for the assessment of requests for extension of Rockhampton Regional Council reticulated water supply network within populated areas of the Region and for the associated connection requirements.

This policy does not apply to the extension of the reticulated water supply network as a requirement of a development approval or in instances where a special water supply arrangement is required.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assist in assessing when extension of the reticulated water supply network is warranted, and feasible, and the relevant costs to be met by affected property owners in existing urban and peri-urban precincts of the Region.

3 Related Documents

3.1 Primary

Nil

3.2 Secondary

Local Government Regulation 2012

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

Fitzroy River Water Customer Service Standards

Notice of Declaration of Service Area

Rockhampton Declared Water Service Area Map Series

Rockhampton Regional Council Revenue Statement

Rockhampton Region Planning Scheme

4 Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Licensed Plumber	A plumber who holds the appropriate Queensland Building and Construction Commission Licence.
Peri-urban Precincts	Areas situated at the fringe of urban centres and may contain a mix of land uses and activities such as urban and rural.
Region	Rockhampton Regional Area defined by the Local Government Areas of Queensland.

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Shared Infrastructure	Comprises of trunk water mains, pumping stations, reservoirs and treatment facilities shared by all users of the water supply network.
Water Network	Reticulated water supply network.

5 Policy Statement

5.1 Basis of Request for Connection

Connection to the water network is not guaranteed for any property outside the declared water service areas, including areas identified within the future connection areas. The future connection area is the area where water and sewerage networks are intended to extend as development occurs, but this area is likely to require further investigation and planning before it can be considered for inclusion in the declared water or sewer areas.

Expansion of the water networks can occur in a variety of ways:

- (a) The most frequent reason for expansion of the water network occurs as a condition of new residential or commercial development. In this instance the requirements for construction of the water reticulation are established by the Planning Scheme and specific development approval conditions. The water reticulation construction cost is borne by the developer and trunk infrastructure charges are imposed on a per lot basis to assist with funding the large, shared infrastructure items such as large trunk mains, pumping stations, reservoirs and water treatment facilities. The new properties are included into the declared water service area and the only cost incurred by the property owner is for the final connection by installation of a water meter by the water service provider, Fitzroy River Water. ***This policy does not apply to this circumstance.***
- (b) Requests are occasionally received from properties adjacent to, or some distance from, the declared water service area which may not have direct access to a water main but can be serviced. In these instances, it is often difficult to fully achieve the adopted Customer Service Standards for pressure or firefighting which results in a Special Water Supply arrangement being offered if approved. Each instance is assessed individually to determine viability and the cost to provide a connection under a private works quotation. ***This policy does not apply to this circumstance.***
- (c) The water network has been expanded from time to time by the construction of water mains along streets adjacent to the existing water network to add properties in a precinct where some of the property owners have approached Council seeking connection to the water network. ***This policy specifically applies to this circumstance.***

5.2 Process Steps

Requests for consideration of water network extensions usually originate from a single or small number of property owners which would initiate an assessment against the Assessable Service Conditions criteria listed in paragraph 5.3 below and a report to Council. Some requests may be declined without full assessment or reporting to Council due to not satisfying basic specified criteria.

Subject to Council support, officers proceed to investigate the feasibility of the extension considering all the Assessable Service Conditions criteria. Report the assessment to Council with a recommendation whether to proceed to consultation with the affected property owners.

Consultation is in the form of a survey to affected property owners detailing the preliminary water network layout and pipe sizes, costs to be borne by the property owners, proposed payment methods and all relevant conditions. The purpose of the survey is to seek responses from property owners regarding their support or otherwise for the extension proposal, including acceptance of their financial contribution, as a primary decision consideration for Council.

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At the conclusion of the consultation phase officers prepare a report to Council providing the survey outcome and a recommendation regarding whether to proceed with the extension. The expansion of the water network would result in all the affected properties in the expansion area becoming liable for the water access charge upon completion of the works, and additional consumption charges when connected.

Affected property owners are advised of the outcome, and in the circumstance of a decision to proceed, the anticipated timeframe for construction to be completed. The works would require a budget allocation, which in some circumstances may cause construction to be delayed until the next financial year.

5.3 Assessable Service Conditions

Council may agree to a connection for a grouping of properties outside the declared water area, including within the future connection area. When considering a request Council will have regard to various matters, before proceeding, including but not limited to the following criteria:

- (a) The proximity of the grouping of properties to the existing water network;
- (b) The technical feasibility of providing a water supply connection;
- (c) The capacity of the existing shared infrastructure to service the properties, by establishing if there is available capacity beyond current and projected Planning Scheme requirements;
- (d) Capacity required to service the properties and other properties that may connect once the infrastructure is in place, or future demand increases arising from intensification of land use;
- (e) The total cost of the extension and any additional works necessary to provide further capacity for other properties;
- (f) Any future water infrastructure planned to be provided in that area and the timeframe for its provision;
- (g) The Council's capacity to fund its share, if any, of the cost, not limited to direct construction costs; and
- (h) The response from affected property owners to the consultation survey setting out costs and conditions, specifically acceptance of the cost and the percentage of property owners supporting the proposal. It is likely some property owners within the grouping boundary will not support the proposal, however, if Council decides to proceed all will be obliged to participate and contribute to the cost.

5.4 Cost Attribution

If Council agrees to a connection for a property outside of the declared water service area by expansion of the water network, property owners are required to pay all associated one-off and ongoing costs. These costs are described below.

5.4.1 Network Extension

Network extension costs include the design and installation of pipelines, fittings, valves and hydrants necessary to provide points of connection for each property included in the network extension scheme. This excludes installation of a water meter at each property. The costs are attributed to each property on a per property or street frontage length basis as determined most appropriate for each scheme.

These costs are determined by the final design and construction costs.

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5.4.2 Shared Infrastructure Contribution

The shared infrastructure contribution charge is a cost related to a property connection utilisation of the capacity of shared infrastructure, such as treatment facilities and reservoirs, which is funded by Council and is essential to ensuring service delivery standards are not compromised by allowing additional connections to the overall water network.

The Shared Infrastructure for Water Supply Contribution Charge is published in the Fees and Charges Schedule and calculated based on the water supply network component of the adopted charge for trunk infrastructure.

5.4.3 Water Meter Installation

This is the standard fee for the supply and installation of a property water meter and is separated from the network extension cost in recognition that there could be vacant properties in the network extension area not requiring a water meter immediately.

This fee is published in the Fees and Charges Schedule.

5.4.4 Private Plumbing

Connection to a water network may result in higher water pressure imposed on the property's private plumbing that can affect the integrity of pipework and connected appliances. Any properties included in a network expansion are advised of the risks and should upgrading or replacement of private plumbing be required it would be a cost borne separately by each owner.

5.4.5 Utility Charges

At completion of commissioning of a network expansion scheme, each property would immediately become liable for paying an access charge and consumption charge for any water used.

The relevant utility charges are adopted annually by Council and published in the Revenue Statement section of the budget document.

5.5 Payment Methods

The payment methods applicable for the various costs are:

5.5.1 Network Extension

Council may choose to require either upfront payment or to apply a special rate or charge to the benefited area to recoup the costs over several years. The payment method is decided by Council for each individual circumstance.

5.5.2 Shared Infrastructure Contribution

Council may choose to require either upfront payment or to apply a Special Rate or Charge to the benefited area to recoup the costs over several years. The payment method is decided by Council for each individual circumstance.

5.5.3 Water Meter Installation

The water meter installation fee must be paid in accordance with the terms stated in the adopted Fees and Charges Schedule.

5.5.4 Private Plumbing

All private plumbing expenses are the responsibility of the property owner.

5.5.5 Utility Charges

Utility charge bills are issued to the property owner who are responsible for payment in the same manner as all other rates and charges levied on the property. Charges are in accordance with Council's Revenue Statement.

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5.6 Plumbing Works

The owners of properties with dwellings included in a network extension are advised that connection to the reticulated water supply may result in higher water pressures than provided by onsite systems. It is recommended that onsite pipework, fittings, fixtures and appliances should be checked by a licensed plumber, or where not required to be undertaken by a licensed plumber under the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018*, checked by a suitably qualified service provider to avoid damage or water loss.

6 Review Timelines

This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

- (a) The related information is amended or replaced; or
- (b) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

7 Document Management

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Regional Services
Policy Owner	Manager Water and Wastewater
Policy Quality Control	Legal and Governance



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