

SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

Standpipe Report

May 2021

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the information and background on the Shire of Merredin's regional standpipe strategy, the current situation, and provide opportunity for Council to have input on the suggested actions.

Currently the Shire of Merredin:

- Has insufficient adopted budget to purchase and install two standpipe controllers.
- Does not identify the advantage or immediate need in having a second swipecard controller installed.

Background:

As of 1 July 2019, the Water Corporation required Local Government Authorities (LGA) to restrict access to high flow rate standpipes to retain their concessional rates. To maintain the lower rate the restricted standpipes could only be used for the operations and works conducted by the Local Government. As part of this change LGAs could nominate eligible standpipes as either commercial or community, for continued access at the increased cost.

As part of this change there were several classifications created for standpipes:

Table 1: Standpipe Definitions

Type of Standpipe:	Description:
Local Authority Standpipe (Shire Use only – no public access)	Use: For use by Shire only – locked and no public access available. Meter: Any size Charges: Non-residential class 1 tariff applied to water use and 100% discount on service charges.
Community Use Standpipe (low flow) (Publicly Available)	Use: Owned by Shire and available to anyone in the community. Meter: Only 20mm and 25mm standpipes. Charges: Farmlands tariff (concessional community purpose rate). 20mm Metre Service Charge.
Commercial Standpipe (Publicly Available)	Use: Privately owned or owned by Local Government and made available. Must be less than 49 kilolitres a day. Meter: Any meter above 25mm. Charges: Based on the appropriate class charge. Service charges vary depending on the size of the metre.
Fire Standpipe (No public access)	Use: Firefighting only. Access by DFES and volunteer firefighting units. Must be locked at all other times. Meter: Any size meter, usually higher than 25mm. Charges: Nil charges.

In response to this change the Shire of Merredin restricted access to all standpipes and made the Bullshead and Booran North road standpipe available for community use. The Class Step 15 standpipe at the Telfer Avenue Depot was nominated as the commercial use standpipe to monitor its usage by other parties in lieu of any other control measures.

Failing to prohibit public usage on the majority of Shire of Merredin standpipes would have made the organisation liable for an additional \$17,208.02 a year in service charges in 2019/2020, and water misused and unaccounted for would be at an increased consumption cost ranging from 200-300%.

Strategic Alignment:

The provision of water supplied by the Water Corporation to the south east quadrant of the Shire of Merredin is significantly reduced when compared to the rest of the Shire. This can be seen in Appendix 1. By providing access via community standpipes in that region we are providing a service that the people within the area lack access to. As part of the Strategic Community Plan for the Shire of Merredin an identified priority was ensuring the continuous supply of potable and non-potable water.

By providing a commercial standpipe, the Shire of Merredin helps enable and support development and works in the region. Currently the Water Corporation provides no supply or alternative access to water in the Merredin region. By eliminating prohibitive costs from the cartage of water over long distances, we reduce the obstacles for local works and development. To reduce the misuse of potable water supply, steps must be taken to ensure the process is monitored efficiently.

Current Business:

In the 2020/2021 Budget the Shire of Merredin allocated \$30,000 for the installation of standpipe Swipe Card Control Units. Originally this allocation was intended for the installation of two standpipe controllers. Since then, we have received an indication that the installation and commission of two units was priced closer to \$40,000. With a single Swipecard Control unit costing the Shire of Merredin \$15,773 (excluding GST) before transport, installation, or ongoing operational costs. As such, there is insufficient budget to carry out the installation of both units.

The original intention was to relocate the commercial standpipe to the Hubeck Road standpipe with a swipecard controller. Currently the Hubeck Road is a Local Authority Standpipe that cannot be accessed by the public. A second swipecard controller was also planned to be installed at a suitable location for community access.

Hubeck Road offers a number of advantages in being the primary commercial standpipe. The Hubeck Road standpipe is charged at a Class Step 9 at \$5.264 p/kl, which is the lowest commercial rate available within the Shire of Merredin. Historically, this has had a higher flowrate than the standpipe at the depot which is also charged at \$8.776 p/kl at Class Step 15. The Hubeck Road standpipe also offers a location relatively central within the Shire of Merredin. It is also available at all times of the day, while the Depot access is limited during work hours.

Table 2: Applicable 2020/2021 Charges

Table A – Meter Based Size Charges Meter Size (mm)	Annual Service Charge
15-20mm	\$278.85
35-40mm	\$1,115.48
50mm	\$1,742.91

Table B – Charges by Town Class Step	Usage Charge p/kl
Step 1	\$2.662
Step 9	\$5.264
Step 15	\$8.776

The main disadvantage of Hubeck Road is that making it publicly available without any method to properly monitor the usage can potentially leave the Shire of Merredin liable for the costs of unreported water consumption and misuse at the inflated commercial charges. To address this, the Hubeck Road standpipe was identified as the main intended site for swipecard controller installation.

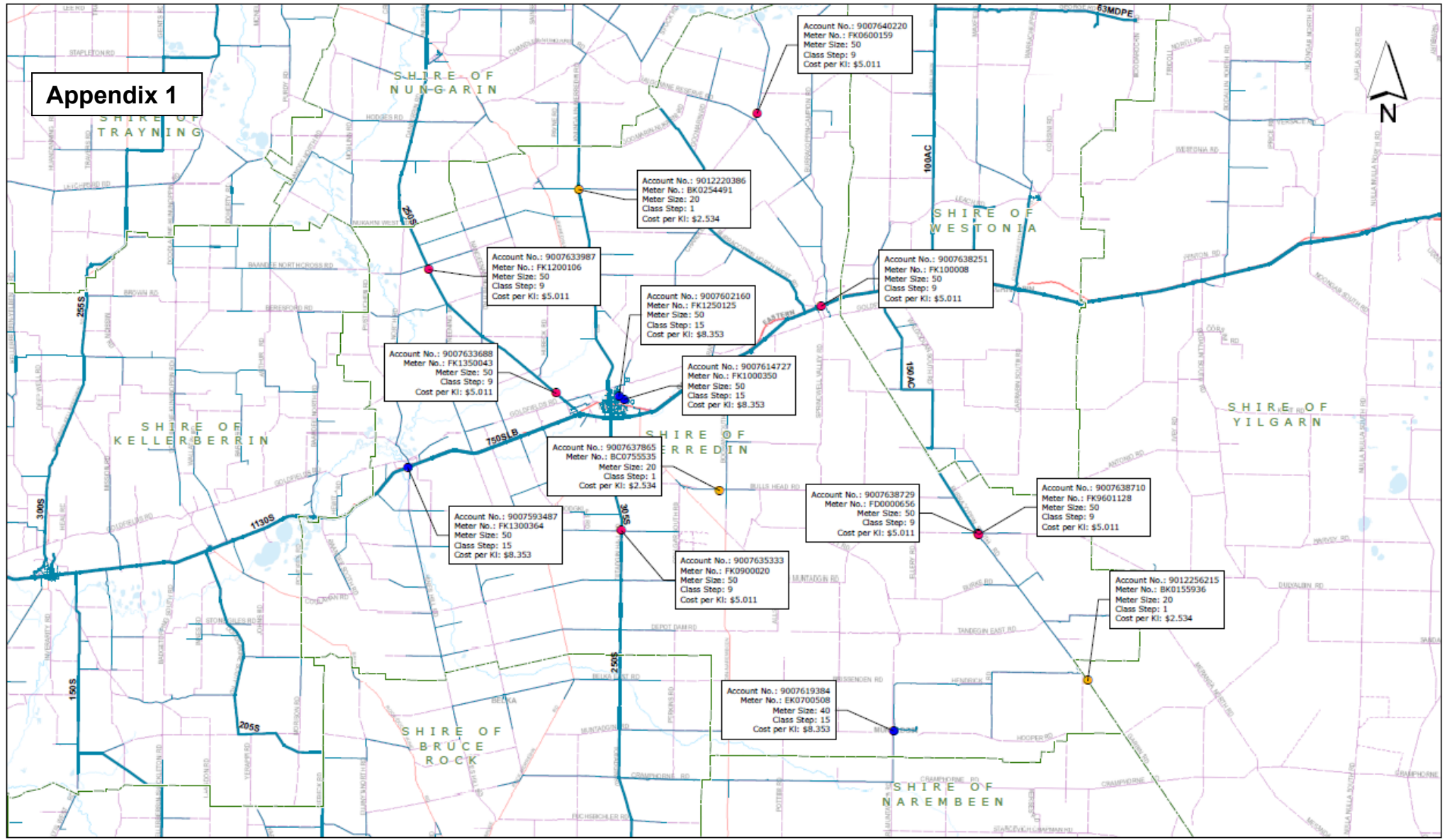
The swipecard controllers are cost prohibitive. At the current surcharge of 10% the Shire of Merredin at a Step 9 it would require just under 27 million litres of water to recover at a rate of \$0.5264 p/kl. Applying this to a community standpipe at the Step 1 concessional rate it would take over 60 million litres of water to recover at a rate of \$0.2662 p/kl. The swipecard controller does provide value however, when installed on a commercial standpipe, as it ensures that the Shire of Merredin is not liable for the increase charges not associated with its own consumption. Instead, the swipe controller ensures all usage is able to be captured and invoiced appropriately with the additional benefit of reduced administration time.

Planned Action:

The presented plan is to:

- Install a single Swipecard Controller as covered in the current budget to the Hubeck Road Standpipe (Meter No: FK1350043) and convert from a Local Authority Standpipe to a publicly available Commercial Standpipe.
- Revert the Telfer Avenue depot standpipe (Meter No: FK1000350) to a Local Government Authority standpipe.
- Downgrade the Burracoppin South Road/Koonadgin Road standpipe (Meter No: FK9601128) from 50mm to 20/25mm to make it eligible to be a community standpipe, with cost to downgrade covered in the remainder of the budget allocation.
- Use logbooks onsite for the existing Bullshead/Booran (Meter No: BC0755535) and Burracoppin South Road/Koonadgin Road standpipes to track and charge community water usage at the appropriate fees and charges on an honour system.
- Continue to monitor the two publicly accessible community standpipes log book records and actual usages to prevent misuse, and identify if there is any need for further action.

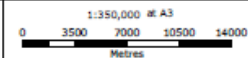
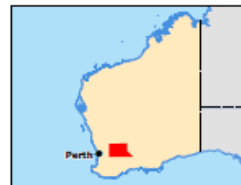
Appendix 1



File: S:\vch\GIS\SpecialSystems\Mapping\State\TAS\0239977_Standpipes\Working\GA_Standpipes_L_A3_250_V2.mxd

Water Standpipe Class

● 0	● 4	● 8	● 12
● 1	● 5	● 9	● 13
● 2	● 6	● 10	● 14
● 3	● 7	● 11	● 15



Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 50
Vertical Datum: AMD

AUTHOR: CHONGVI DATE: 15/1/2018

BRANCH: DTG - MAPPING & GEOSPATIAL

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SHIRE OF MERREDIN Standpipe Locations