

Pumped Irrigation Districts Future Services Strategy

Strategy Consultation Paper

Acknowledgement of country

GMW recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and as the proud representatives of the world's oldest living culture.

GMW respectfully acknowledges Elders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters and the rich cultural connections First Peoples have across our region.

Background

The Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen pumped irrigation districts are located within the Swan Hill region of northern Victoria.

On-demand water is delivered year-round through pump and pipeline networks to support high-value horticulture and the communities associated with it.

This system supplies a diverse range of users, including domestic and stock, irrigation, rural lifestyle properties and a broad mix of enterprises – from small businesses to well-established, multi-million-dollar agricultural producers who are significant national suppliers.

The Nyah and Tresco Irrigation Districts are now facing aging infrastructure and viability challenges.

Both irrigation systems are over 100 years old, and the original channel systems were replaced with low-pressure pipelines in the 1960s and 1970s.

Major elements of the systems are in poor condition and there is an increased risk of service failure. There has also been significant land and water use changes in both districts.

Woorinen is the most recently modified of the three pumped irrigation districts and was updated in the 1990s / early 2000s. Though the infrastructure is newer, the district still faces affordability challenges.

The need for a Future Services Strategy

The Pumped Irrigation Districts Future Services Strategy (the Strategy) will address the growing challenges affecting long-term sustainability of water delivery in the Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen districts.

Keeping the system as it currently stands is not an option – without a clear, long-term service plan and investment, the districts risk viability challenges, outages, reduced plantings, declining confidence and economic loss.

Service reliability is already under pressure, with aging infrastructure leading to more breakdowns and customer disruption. Key assets are now at, or nearing, the end of life, with failure risks increasing and fewer options to avoid outages.

Where the Strategy is at now

A number of proposals have been developed for each irrigation district to outline a sustainable, affordable water delivery service into the future. These proposals are outlined in the draft strategy summary sections of this paper.

The proposed outcomes for the Pumped Irrigation Districts will improve reliability of the network and offer better outcomes by:

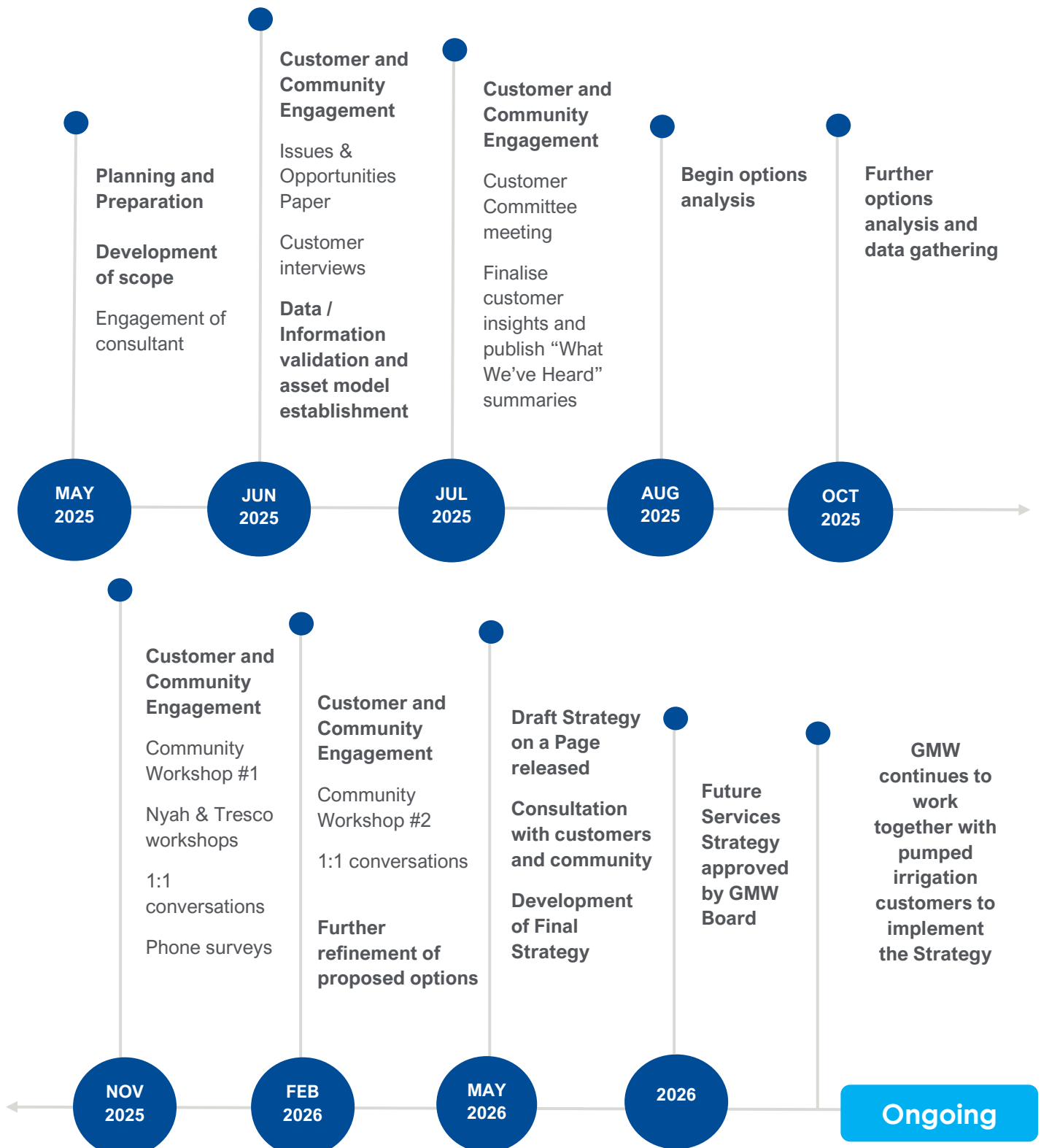
- Right-sizing the districts for future irrigation sustainability, including creating opportunities for expansion and improving infrastructure in areas where there is high demand, and scaling back infrastructure where demand is low
- Improving pressure and reliability
- Reducing unplanned outages

The Strategy will stabilise the districts for the future, instead of continuing to limp along with poor reliability.

How we developed the Strategy

The development of the Strategy began in mid-2025.

Engineering firm Fifteen50 were appointed to develop initial drafts of potential future options for Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen. Following extensive discussions, conversations and engagement with our customers, these proposals are now being refined into the final Strategy.



What customers have told us

Consultation and engagement for the Strategy was led by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) and supported by Fifteen50 and Jumbleads.

It included speaking with a broad range of customers in Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen to gauge sentiment on the current service levels and asset conditions, and what was needed to ensure sustainable delivery of water over the next 30 years.

We spoke to customers via:

- Two Customer and Community workshops in November 2025 and February 2026
- Extra drop-in days held in November
- One-on-one customer interviews
- Two rounds of phone surveys, one undertaken by newfocus and a second undertaken by GMW's Customer Experience team
- Meetings with our Pumped Districts Customer Committees
- Online surveys

Several consistent themes emerged from these discussions, which helped shape the draft strategy summaries:

- Reliability and service performance issues, particularly during peak demand and power outage events, were seen by customers as a priority to resolve
- Customers consistently indicated a threshold of 1.5 times the current tariffs was the maximum they could accept
- Water quality concerns are ongoing, particularly in the Tresco network
- Clarity and certainty around the future of the service, delivery share and compensation arrangements are critical to support future investment and land-use decisions
- Conversion to a domestic and stock (D&S) service in some low-use areas is seen as acceptable, but there are concerns around land value, planning outcomes and cost structures.

Phone and online surveys indicated that customers were generally satisfied with current service levels offered by GMW, but discussions in workshops and one-on-one highlighted that some irrigators experience limitations during peak period.

Customers generally agreed that leaving the system "as is" is not sustainable over the long term, but flagged the importance of staged and transparent changes, with GMW continuing to work closely with them on the future of the region.

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WATER

Consultation with Nyah customers has highlighted a number of challenges affecting service delivery, including:

- Maintenance gaps across the irrigation and drainage network
- Reduced system reliability, including pump power outages
- Localised water pressure issues in Nyah North
- Increasing costs to maintain and operate the ageing system

The Future Service Strategy will focus on improving service outcomes to minimise impacts while minimising current pricing changes.

The following assumptions have been used to develop the proposed options:

- Compliance with Metering Standards is required.
- The district Delivery Share is assumed to remain mostly unchanged.
- GMW will work with local government on planning overlays (e.g. long-term housing strategies, including consideration of change to property values).

Pipeline Maintenance

Whole District

Customers have identified some critical maintenance shortfalls.

Maintenance priorities will be assessed for triage and GMW will prepare program to match pipeline upgrades. Strategic valves installation to assist in subsystem pipe isolation.

Pump Upgrades

Whole District

Improve water supply reliability through **pump system improvements** to address power outage impacts, supported by more timely customer notifications about power outages.

A **new header tank** arrangement will replace the existing channel to help improve water pressure issues, resolving localised outlet pressure issues during peak demand periods.

Targeted Asset Renewals

South and Inner North Nyah

Strategic meter upgrades and right-sizing pipelines in the Nyah South and Inner North subsystems to improve efficiency and reduce forecast maintenance cost escalation.

Timing to address #2 pipe system as highest priority.

Expansion

North-West Nyah

Support to expand the Nyah pumped irrigation district in areas where there is customer interest will result in more customers and improved system efficiency.

Domestic & Stock Service Conversion

Central-West Nvah

Low asset utilisation means there is a need over time in Nyah Central-West to transition to a domestic & stock (D&S) service. Timing of the change is medium term so that clear policies are developed and discussed with customers throughout the transition.

GMW will implement necessary policy changes to support the delivery of the proposed solutions. These may include:

- **Delivery share transfers** between willing buyers and sellers where network capacity allows.
- **Termination fee discounts or waivers** where cost reductions offset revenue loss.
- **Tariff review** if dedicated D&S sub-systems have materially different costs (further investigation required).
- **Reconfiguration planning powers** under the Water Act if voluntary agreement cannot be achieved.
- **External funding** as a key enabler to avoid adverse impacts on remaining irrigators.

Any policy changes would be developed transparently and informed through ongoing engagement with customers.

This strategy will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it supports customer needs and reflects adaptable, sustainable and efficient pumped irrigation districts.

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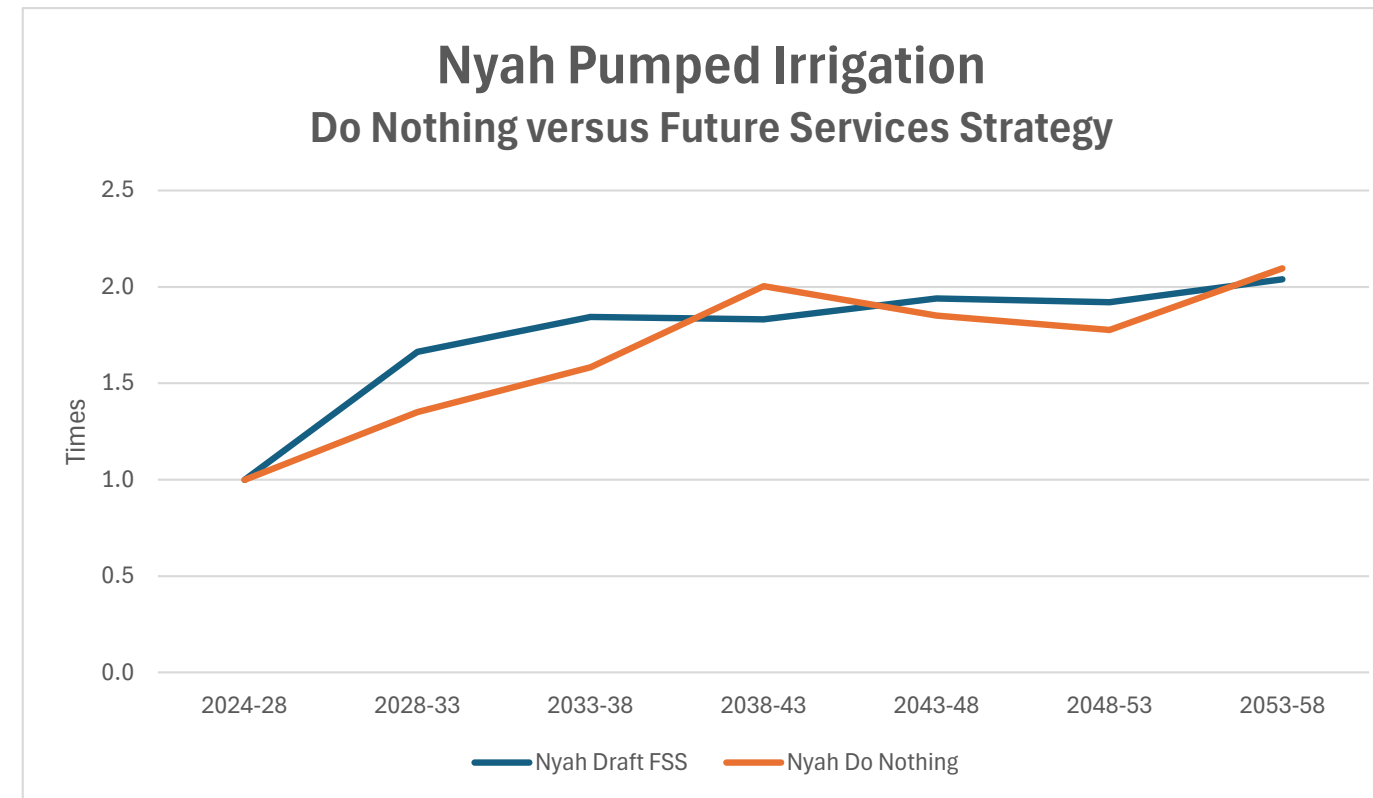
NYAH DISTRICT DRAFT STRATEGY SUMMARY

DRAFT PRICE PATH FORECAST

Do-Nothing / Current future

- Meter fleet replacement
- Increasing maintenance cost
- Pipeline replacements

The prices and financial information provided are for indicative purposes only. Updated prices and typical bills will be provided as part of the 2028 Price Submission.



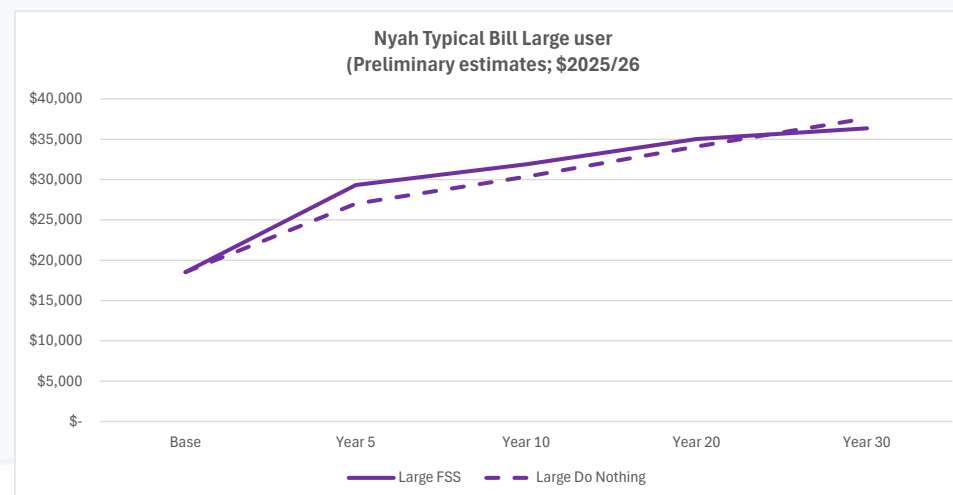
Draft Strategy / Alternate future

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- Balance maintenance increases with asset renewal
- Pipeline replacements program (longer term)
- Transition to right-sized services

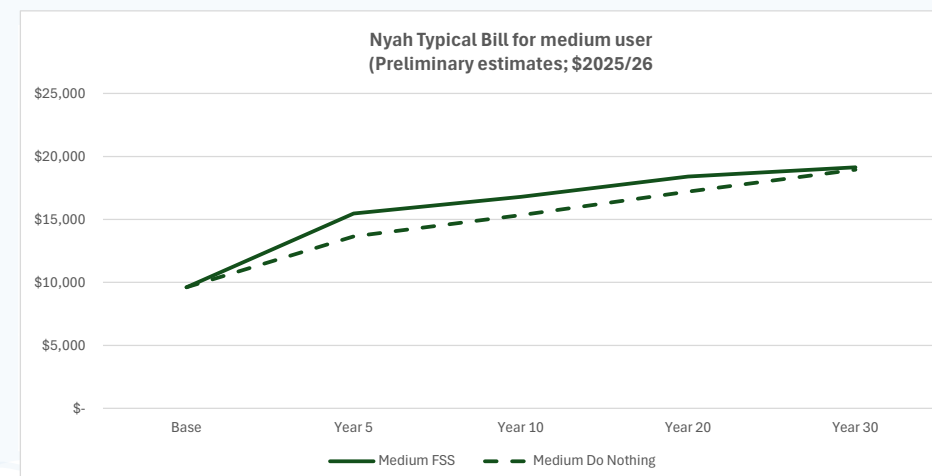
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

THREE TYPICAL EXAMPLE CUSTOMER BILLS

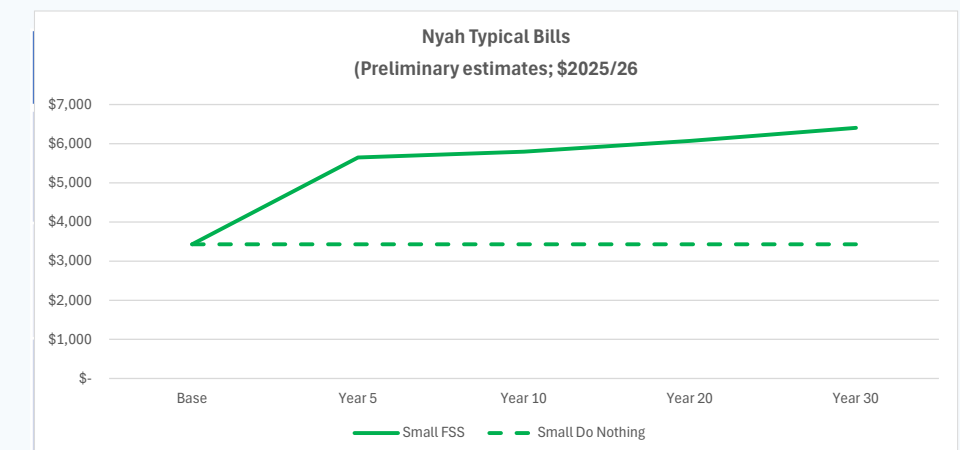
CUSTOMER WITH **2.0** DELIVERY SHARE & WATER USAGE OF **150ML/YR**

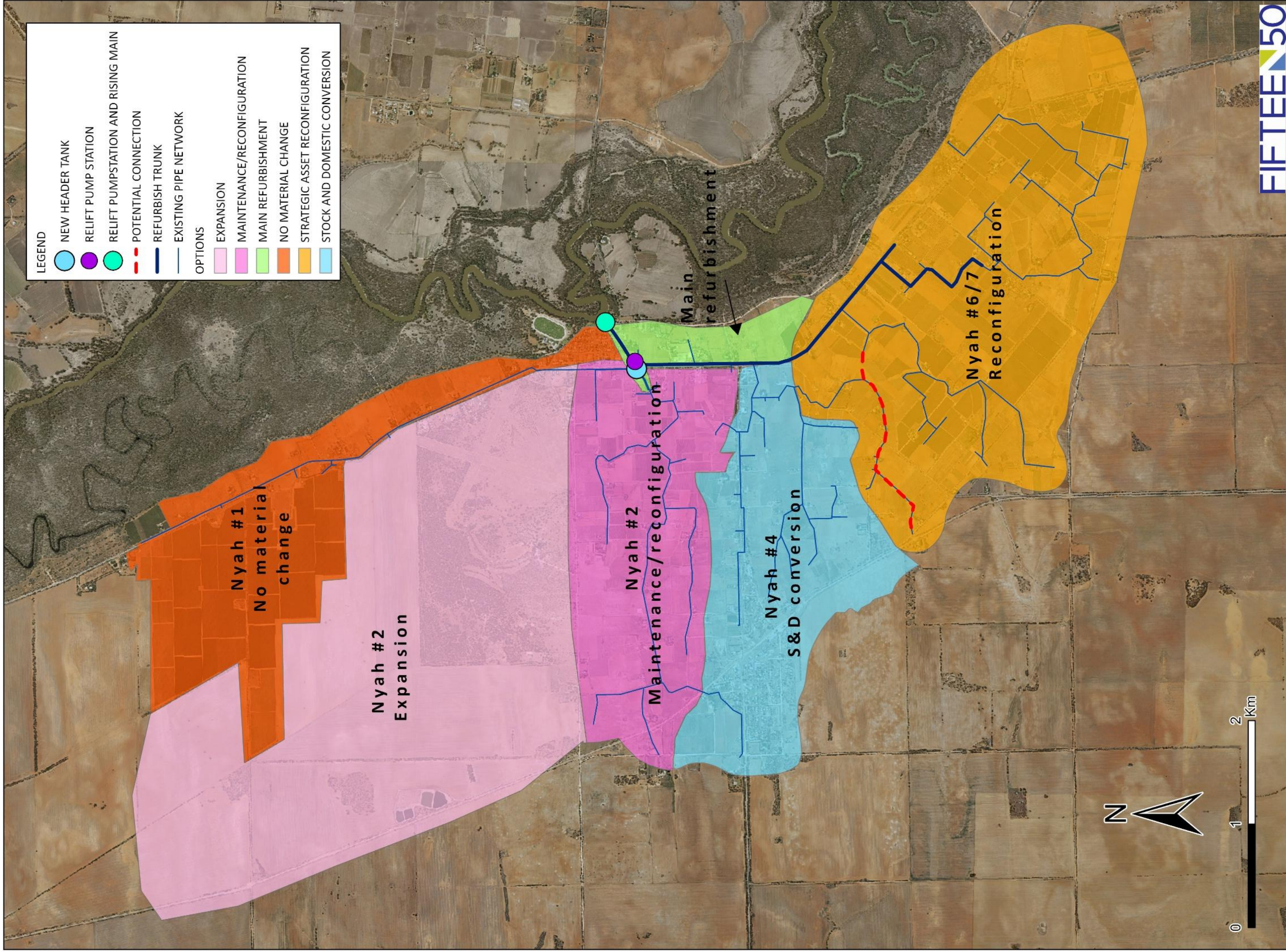


CUSTOMER WITH **1.1** DELIVERY SHARE & WATER USAGE OF **70ML/YR**



CUSTOMER WITH **0.5** DELIVERY SHARE & WATER USAGE OF **20ML/YR**





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PROBLEM DEFINITION

Consultation with Tresco customers has highlighted a number of challenges affecting service delivery, including:

- Maintenance gaps across the irrigation and drainage network
- Reduced system reliability with pressure issues in Tresco West, including pump power outages
- Water quality issues especially turbidity and salinity
- Increasing costs to maintain and operate the ageing system

The Future Service Strategy will focus on improving service outcomes while minimising current pricing changes.

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ASSUMPTIONS

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Investment Initiatives	
Pipeline Maintenance	Whole District
Customers have identified some critical maintenance shortfalls. Maintenance priorities are being assessed for triage and GMW will roll out program to match pipeline upgrades. Strategic valves installation to assist in subsystem pipe isolation.	
Water Quality Improvements	Whole District
Water quality will be investigated to identify appropriate solutions. These may include local actions (such as filtration at channel outlets) or broader, catchment-wide measures (such as changes to Kerang Lakes operations).	
Strategic Asset Renewals	Tresco West
Strategic upgrades to the booster pump, pipelines and outlets in Tresco West will improve system service levels and reduce long-term maintenance costs. This will include investigating options such as pipeline replacement re-profiling.	
Review of Service Level	Tresco East
The existing trunklines will be reviewed to identify opportunities to extend asset life and to rebalance services according to actual customer usage. No immediate service changes are proposed. A further review is recommended in five years to reconsider customer needs.	
Selective Domestic & Stock Service Conversion	Tresco South
Conversion of the Southern parts of Tresco area to a domestic & stock (D&S) service will involve targeted customer engagement to understand potential connection of larger users to back to trunk pipelines when transition occurs.	

Whole District

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Tresco South

Conversion of the Southern parts of Tresco area to a domestic & stock (D&S) service will involve targeted customer engagement to understand potential connection of larger users to back to trunk pipelines when transition occurs.

TRANSITION TOOLS

GMW will implement any necessary policy changes to support the delivery of the proposed solutions. These may include:

- **Delivery share transfers** between willing buyers and sellers where network capacity allows.
- **Termination fee discounts or waivers** where cost reductions offset revenue loss.
- **Tariff review** if dedicated D&S sub-systems have materially different costs (further investigation required).
- **Reconfiguration planning powers** under the Water Act if voluntary agreement cannot be achieved.
- **External funding** as a key enabler to avoid adverse impacts on remaining irrigators.

Any policy changes would be developed transparently and informed through ongoing engagement with customers.

STRATEGY REVIEW PROCESS

This strategy will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it supports customer needs and reflects adaptable, sustainable and efficient pumped irrigation districts.

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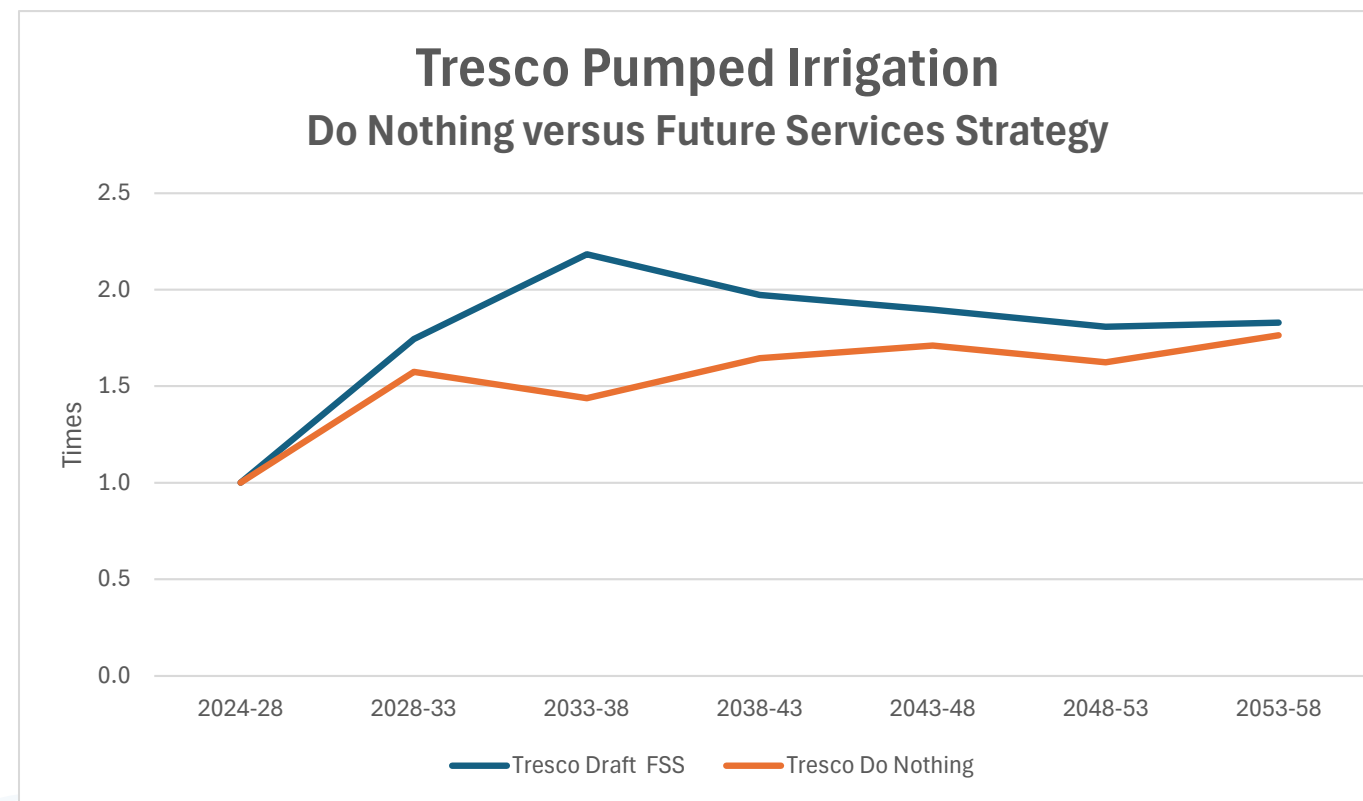
TRESCO DISTRICT DRAFT STRATEGY SUMMARY

DRAFT PRICE PATH FORECAST

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- Pipeline replacements

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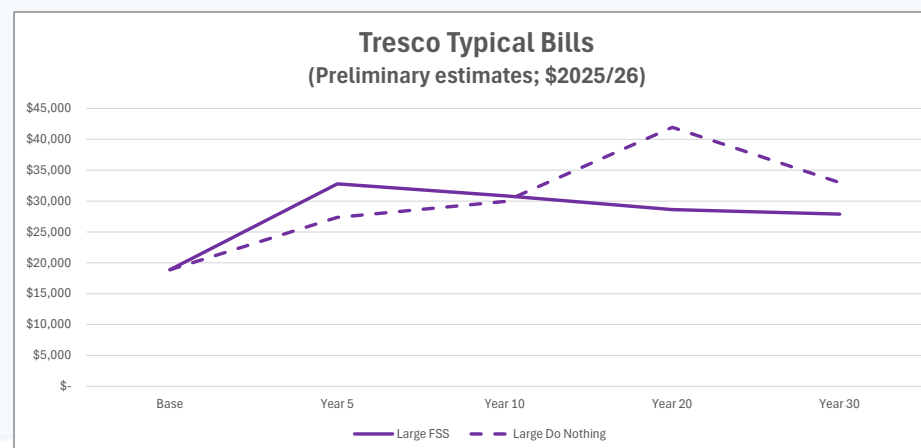
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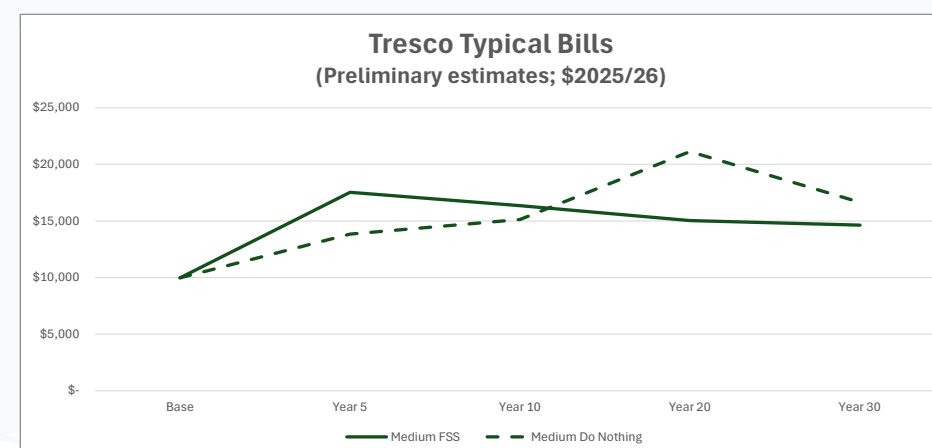
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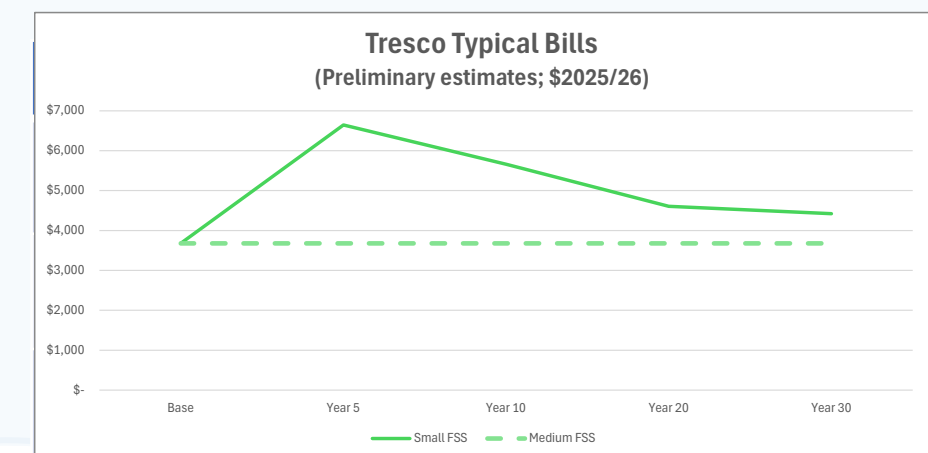
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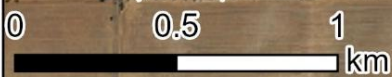
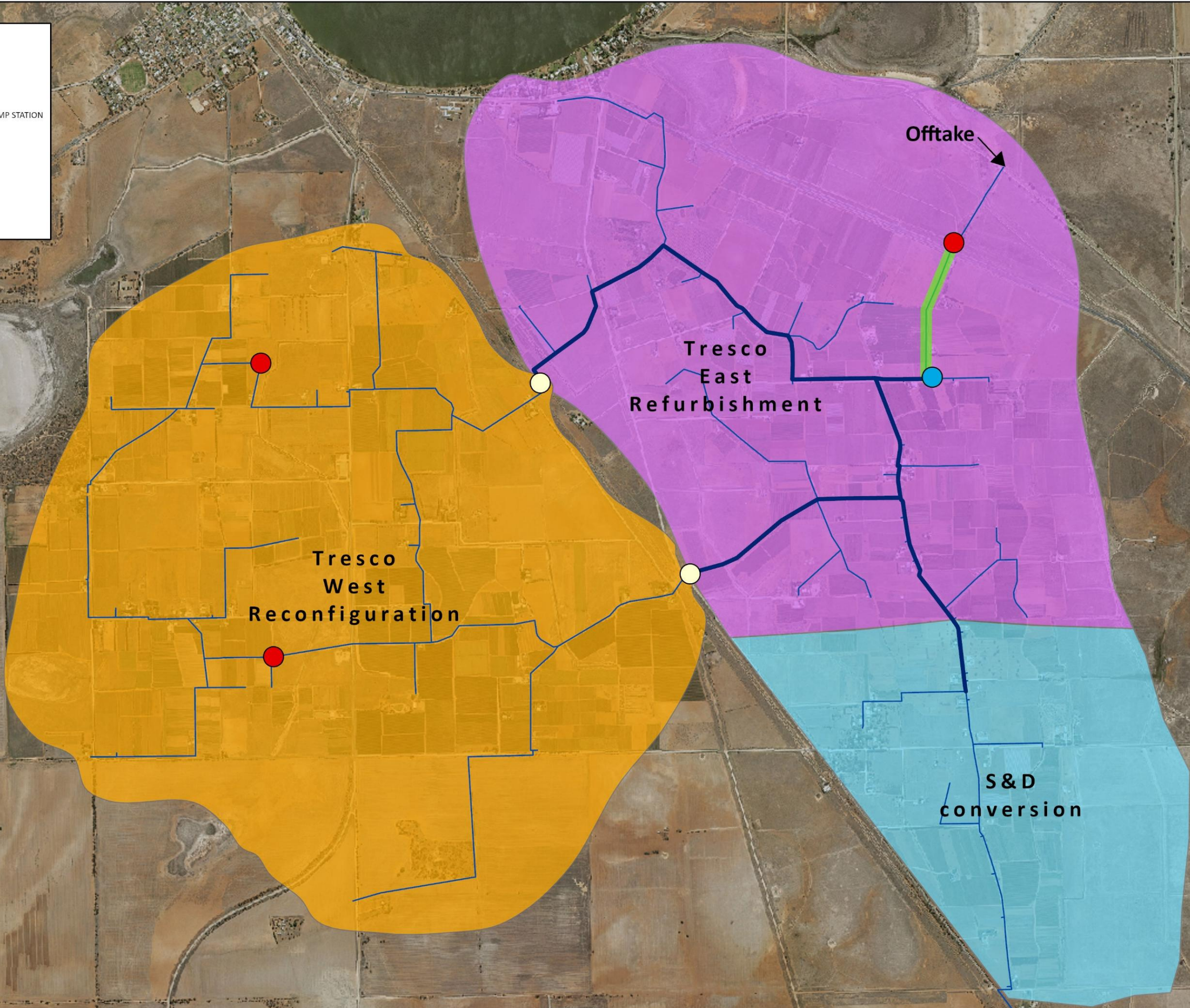


LEGEND

- EXISTING PUMP/ASSET
- EXISTING TANK
- NOMINAL LOCATION FOR NEW RELIFT PUMP STATION
- REFURBISH TRUNK
- RISEING MAIN
- EXISTING PIPE NETWORK

OPTIONS

- REVIEW OF SERVICE LEVELS
- STRATEGIC ASSET RECONFIGURATION
- STOCK AND DOMESTIC CONVERSION



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Future Service Strategy will focus on improving service outcomes as well as scheduled pump system maintenance / replacements.

The following assumptions have been used to develop the proposed options:

- Compliance with Metering Standards is required.
- The district Delivery Share is assumed to remain unchanged.
- GMW will work with local government on planning overlays (e.g. long-term housing strategies, including consideration of property values).

Maintenance priorities are focussed on meter fleet and pump station component renewals. Pump station maintenance and upgrades over the next 10-15 years, including high voltage electricity metering cabinet, variable speed drive (VSD) replacements, high voltage transformer renewal, switchboard renewal, and pumps and motors renewal.

Meter assets will be reviewed as part of the ongoing asset renewal program and maintained as required.

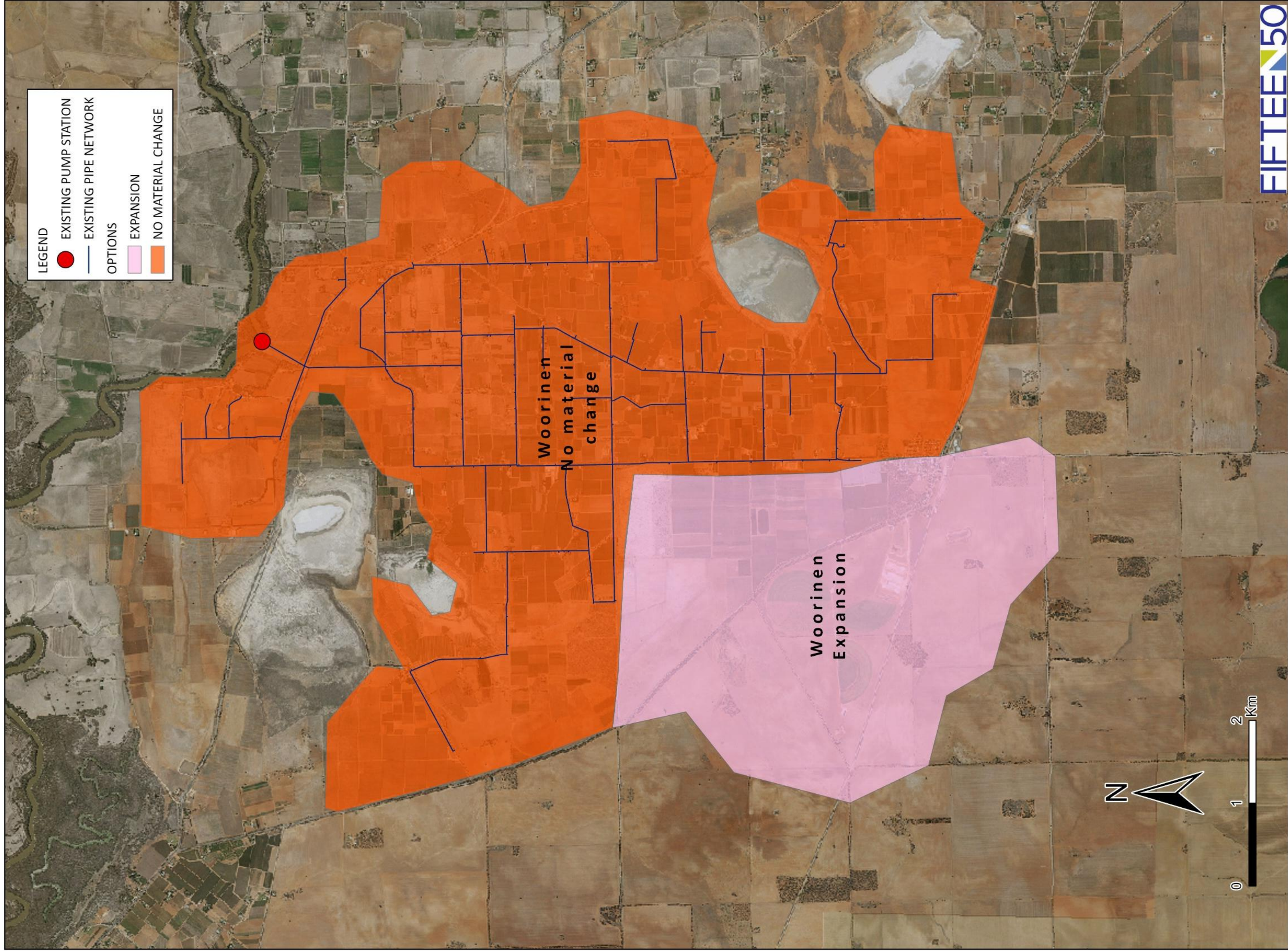
Where customer interest is demonstrated, GMW may investigate opportunities to expand the Woorinen service through servicing new areas or increasing flow rates and delivery shares.

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Tell us your thoughts

GMW is now seeking feedback on the draft strategy summaries for the Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen pumped irrigation districts.

Your feedback will help inform the refinement of the final Future Services Strategy.

What we're asking

To give your feedback, we ask that you consider the below questions:

- **What impact do you expect the draft strategy could have on you, your business or your property?**
- **What are your views on the draft strategy overall?**

How to give your feedback

There are a number of options available to tell us your thoughts on the future options for Nyah, Tresco and Woorinen.

The feedback period will open Thursday 7 May and close Thursday 4 June 2026.

Fill out our survey

The information in this document, as well as a survey to give feedback, is available at **yoursay.gmwwater.com.au/pumped-irrigation-FSS**

If you would prefer to fill out a paper copy of this survey, please contact us at **yoursay@gmwwater.com.au**, phone us on 1800 013 357, or drop into our Kerang Customer Service Centre.

Make an appointment

If you are unable to make it to one of our workshops or drop-in sessions during this period (the full list of dates can be found at **yoursay.gmwwater.com.au/pumped-irrigation-FSS**) or would prefer to have discussions in a smaller environment, you can make an appointment to speak with us.

If you would like to book an appointment, please fill out the form at **yoursay.gmwwater.com.au/pumped-irrigation-FSS** and we will be in touch to organise a time and day.

Next steps

Following the four-week feedback period, the proposals will be refined into the final Pumped Irrigation Districts Future Services Strategy.

The Strategy is anticipated to be finalised and approved by GMW's Board in the second half of 2026.

We will continue to partner with our customers to determine the best outcomes for the future of the districts – thank you for working with us on this vital project.