



Media Release

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UPDATE ON TEST BORES FOR TENTERFIELD WATER

With the Tenterfield Dam level now at 28%, drilling continues in the hope of finding a sustainable water supply to supplement the Tenterfield Dam during this current drought and into the future.

Council is now drilling bore numbers six, seven and eight, on its list of potential bore sites, with the drilling rig now sinking test bores behind the Tenterfield Transport Museum near the Tenterfield Showground.

Unfortunately the Archery Club bore site can only contribute three litres of water per second to council's goal of an absolute minimum overall volume of 9-10 litres per second. Drilling at the other four sites, including near Tenterfield Station, all came up empty.

Drilling on bores six, seven and eight, reach down to depth of around 136 metres. This creates some technical challenges that keep the drill operators focused.

Compressed air is used to blow out the crushed rock. At 136m, if any larger sized stones become prevalent, there is a chance that the compressed air isn't strong enough to blow the larger stones out of the drill hole. If these larger stones then end up between the drill bit and the bored hole, the rock pieces may cause the drill bit to become stuck.

After these test bores are finished, the rig will be moving to the unformed section of East Street and The Common off Steinbrook Road. There are still other sites to the north of town but as the sites become more remote from Tenterfield Dam, they become more expensive to pipe, and the piping will take longer to install too.

As the days heat up the sense of urgency increases, with evaporation rates at the dam set to rise. Council's Chief Executive Terry Dodds said that currently the dam is expected to drop 8.6mm a day during summer due to evaporation alone, more than twice the winter evaporation rate.

The cost for the test bores is now circa \$500,000. \$3.2 million was first projected, but Mr Dodds said this was an open-ended estimate as no-one knows what the final outcome will be with everything depending on where the water is found and how many sites is required. The bill is being shared 75/25% by the NSW Department of Industry and Water and Council.

"However, on a positive note, the Tenterfield community has embraced the need to conserve water and are currently holding a consumption rate of 110 litres per person per day, well in excess of the target 170-240 litres per person per day for Level 4.5 water restrictions. This shows that residents and businesses are supporting Council in conserving water, with consumption dropping by about 70 litres per person per day since January 2019. For this I thank you all", said Mayor Peter Petty.

Mayor Peter continued, "I have read that unfortunately this level of water awareness is not prevalent in some areas of Southern Downs Regional Council, but I note that Wallangarra/Jennings does not fall into this category".

ENDS



Drilling for Water