

**Objection to**  
**Catherine Hill Bay Water Utility Pty Ltd - Network Operator Variation**

Currently Approved Licence 16\_035

**I would like to register my objection to the proposed licence variation on the following grounds:**

The current licence states that “All wastewater produced in the scheme is managed onsite within the footprint of the approved residential subdivision by a combination of non-potable reuse at individual lots and via controlled irrigation of public space” (refer para.4.2.6, 4.3.6).

What has changed since the original licence was issued to create a need for a variation? My answer to this would be **nothing that the Water Utility would not have been able to reasonably foresee when they applied for their licence.** They should have known how much public space would be left once the development was completed. They should have known how many lots were being developed and how much waste would be produced. **This is the due diligence that would be expected from any company providing a service like this to a community.** So if they knew from the start why do they need a variation. The answer is purely an economic one where they are looking for the cheapest possible solution to get rid of the waste that they knew was going to be produced by the estate. As a resident of the Historic Village of Catherine Hill Bay I pay a substantial amount of money to have our waste pumped every fortnight from our septic tanks and carted by tanker for disposal through a mainstream sewerage treatment plant. Why should Solo Water be allowed to take the cheap option and pump waste water into a creek that empties into the ocean right next to one of the most beautiful patrolled beaches in Australia. Lake Macquarie City Council that manages the installation and use of private waste treatment systems in the Historic Catherine Hill Bay Village has very strict rules about the use of envirocycle systems ensuring that all treated water is contained within the individual's property and that these systems cannot be operated in close proximity to waterways. It would seem that If Solo Water were to be allowed to pump waste water into the creek it would be one rule for individuals and a different rule for big business.

From my understanding of the original licence agreement there was to be a very high level of treatment resulting in water which would be able to be reused in the homes of the Beaches estate and used to irrigate public spaces. It would appear the variation being applied for involves a downgrading of this process and the pumping of a large volume (162,000 litres per day) of treated

effluent into the creek which runs behind my home (separated by some bushland) and the homes of a number of other residents (who live quite close to the creek). Do the operators of this system genuinely believe that this is not going to have any environmental impact on the area. My rainwater tank is 40,000 litres so every day they are going to pump 4 of my water tanks of treated effluent into the creek and this is going to end up in the lagoon behind the beach. This lagoon is supposed to be open to the sea 73% of the time.. The Solo Water maths doesn't stack up as I am a permanent resident in the village who spends a lot of time walking on the beach and in the last 18 months I have only seen the creek open once for maybe 2 or 3 days. So the general rule is that the lagoon is closed. The result of the extra water being added to the system is that the lagoon will either be forced open by the increased volume of water being pumped into the creek (that's a pretty major environmental impact as far as I'm concerned) or the treated effluent will remain in the lagoon which is often used by kids to swim when the sea is rough (treated effluent at whatever level of treatment is not supposed to be used for drinking or bathing). If as is being suggested by Solo Water the lagoon does open to the sea then the extra water/effluent will flow into the ocean right next to the patrol area of this beach which services an extended local area which includes Catherine Hill Bay Village, the Beaches Estate, Nords Wharf, Cams Wharf, and many of the suburbs south towards the Central coast as well as being a tourist attraction for local and overseas visitors.

Solo Water should be required to meet the requirements of the original licence and deal with the waste created by Beaches Estate as originally proposed.

If they cannot achieve this then they should be required to transport any waste they cannot manage on their property to a recognised treatment facility.

or they should connect Beaches Estate to the sewerage system at Swansea as originally intended.

Anyone I speak to whether they live in Catherine Hill Bay or not, cannot believe that anyone in authority would actually allow this to happen. This is a case of a business trying to manipulate the system to achieve an economic benefit at the expense of the environment.

Yours Faithfully

Neil Pratten