

**IN THE MATTER OF**

The Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

An application made to Manawatu-Wanganui  
(Horizons) Regional Council (MWRC)

(Consent Authority)

**BY**

**TARARUA DISTRICT COUNCIL**

(the Applicant)

For the hearing of **APP-200511178.01** for resource consents associated with the operation of the Eketahuna Wastewater Treatment Plant, including a discharge into the Makakahi River, a discharge to air (principally odour), and a discharge to land via pond seepage, Bridge Street, Eketahuna.

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**MEMORANDUM 5 TO PARTICPANTS**

**Directions**

7 July 2017

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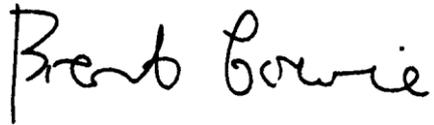
## BACKGROUND

- 1 The initial hearing of the application by Tararua District Council to discharge treated wastewater from the Eketahuna Wastewater Treatment Plant ("the WWTP") commenced on Wednesday 5 April 2017 and was adjourned on Friday 7 April.
- 2 At that initial hearing the Applicant presented a proposal to provide additional treatment to the present wastewater discharge. This included a clarifier and UV treatment of the discharge. They sought a term of seven years: one year to collect further information to characterise the discharge, three years to design, build and optimise the proposed treatment, and three years to monitor the effects of the upgraded discharge on the receiving environment of the Makakahi River.
- 3 Additional wetland treatment of the wastewater was proposed; however at that time the Applicant could not tell us at which of two possible locations the wetland would be sited, and so where the wastewater discharge from the wetland would take place.
- 4 Accordingly in our 3<sup>rd</sup> Memorandum we asked the Applicant to respond to the following questions and to report back to us at the re-convened hearing on Tuesday 23 May.
  - (a) Does the Applicant still wish to proceed with the present proposal to provide additional wastewater treatment with a discharge to the Makakahi River?
  - (b) If the Applicant wishes to proceed with the present proposal, can they provide more definitive information on the exact location of the proposed discharge, and whether or not wetland treatment will be provided?
  - (c) Alternatively, do they wish us to further adjourn the hearing for a period of up to six months pursuant to s41C(3) of the RMA to allow land based treatment options to be investigated further and to discuss the design of feasible options with submitters and Horizons Regional Council?
- 5 At the re-convened hearing the Applicant confirmed that they wished to proceed with the present proposal, and that the proposed wetland would be located on land beside the Makakahi River on land owned by the local golf course. We saw that site when we inspected the Eketahanua WWTP and its surrounds on Monday

22 May. Additional resource consent applications are now necessary to construct and discharge from the wetland.

- 6 We told the applicant on 23 May that the proposed discharge of wastewater via the wetland would need to be subject to Cultural Values Assessments by each of Rangitane o Tamaki nui a Rua Inc. and Kahungunu ki Tamaki nui-a-rua, and that these would need to be provided with the additional resource consents for the wetland. We also asked the Applicant on what legal grounds we could further adjourn this hearing to allow time for the logistics and design of the wetland to be undertaken, and the Cultural Values Assessments carried out.
- 7 The Applicant responded more formally to our questions in a Memorandum from their solicitors dated 29 May 2017. We then informally sought further detail about when the additional consent applications would be lodged, and we were advised that this would be by 2 February 2018.
- 8 We direct that the further applications necessary to authorise the proposed wetland be lodged with Horizons Regional Council by 2 February 2018.
- 9 While this is a long delay we can accept that the Applicant's proposal, as modified by the addition wetland treatment of wastewater at a specific location, reasonably meets the tests of sections 103, 37 and 37(A)(5) of the Resource Management Act regarding the timeframes in which hearings must be held. In particular, we think it is in the public interest that the Applicant's modified proposal be subject to scrutiny by local Tangata Whenua, as it is they who are most offended by the existing discharge.
- 10 We reiterate that further work to characterise the quantity and quality of inflows and outflows from the Eketahuna WWTP (including a water balance assessment to determine pond leakage) should continue at least until the hearing is re-convened.
- 11 We anticipate the hearing will be re-convened during the second quarter of 2018.

12 Any questions about this memorandum or the directions given should be directed to Carina Hickey at Horizons Regional Council. She will confer with the Commissioners as necessary.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Cowie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Signed by Brent Cowie (Chair)  
on behalf of the Hearing Panel

7 July 2017