

Horizons Regional Council
Winstone Pulp International Discharge Consent Reconsenting
Hearing Panel Minute 3

1. In Minute 2, we vacated previous directions for evidence exchange leading up to a hearing on 20-23 April, and directed that the applicant file any amendments to its application it proposes, together with a revised assessment of environmental effects based on the changes it proposes, on or before 30 April 2026. We did not consider it appropriate to issue revised directions for exchange of evidence at that time. Our intention was that we would issue procedural directions following receipt of this additional material.
2. The applicant filed a comprehensive planning report on 30 April 2026, supported by 8 technical memoranda. We asked the Hearing Manager to circulate this material along with a request for feedback from the parties as to what directions we should now issue.
3. We have received inputs from the applicant and from the Council reporting officers (though counsel).
4. The reporting officers advise that there are a number of issues that they need to work through with the applicant arising from the revised applications. They note in particular that the proposed earthworks consent is entirely new, and that a decision will need to be made regarding its notification, that they will need further information regarding aspects of the revised applications, and that additional applications will likely be required. The reporting officers foreshadow a concern that the nature of the outstanding issues put the viability of a June hearing at risk.
5. The reporting officers do not suggest any specific directions that might be made but note their intention to discuss the issues they have raised with the applicant this coming week.
6. The applicant's response (though counsel) suggests that further discussions are required with the Council reporting officers before a hearing timetable can be set down. Counsel suggests that the Council and the applicant file a joint memorandum by 20 May.
7. Counsel for the applicant has provided an indicative timetable showing that a hearing in the week of 22 June may still be viable, depending on the progress made in discussions with the Council.
8. The Panel agrees with the view of counsel for the applicant that it is premature to fix a hearing timetable at this point, and that the most efficient route forward is for the applicant and Council reporting officers to report back in two weeks time regarding the outcome of their discussions on procedural issues.

9. It is fair to say though that the Panel is dubious as to whether the number and nature of the issues raised by the applicant's revised applications will be able to be sufficiently resolved to permit the hearing to proceed in late June.
10. For the moment, however, the only direction the Panel makes is that by **3pm on 20 May 2026** the Council and the Applicant file a joint memorandum with the Panel that addresses the next steps required to progress the application to a hearing, and, if applicable, any extant issues arising between the Council and the Applicant in that regard.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'T. Robinson', with a large loop at the end.

Trevor Robinson (Hearing Panel Chair)

6 May 2026