

December 2006

**TURANGANUI A KIWA WATER QUALITY POSITION  
STATEMENT  
GISBORNE WASTEWATER**

This Position Statement is between:

- Te Runanga O Turanganui A Kiwa
- Te Aitanga A Mahaki Trust
- Rongawhakaata Charitable Trust
- Ngai Tamanuhiri Whanui Trust
- Te Runanga O Ngati Oneone
- Awapuni B2B Trust
- Oho Ake
- Gisborne Environment Centre
- Department of Conservation
- Medical Officer of Health
- Gisborne District Council

1. This position statement has been agreed to by the parties represented in the Wastewater Adjournalment Review Group (WARG).

It is to be read in conjunction with the conditions sought by WARG to be imposed on a consent to treat and discharge treated wastewater into Poverty Bay (Turanganui-a-Kiwa). This position statement provides a context to the suggested conditions, and is designed to be a guide to future generations on how the conditions emerged, and how they should be interpreted.

However, it is recognised that this position statement has no formal status in respect of the Resource Management Act 1991 and does not affect the rights or responsibilities of any member of the group to advocate its position in respect of the current consent application or any other consent applications which may be applied for by the applicant in respect of the wastewater discharge.

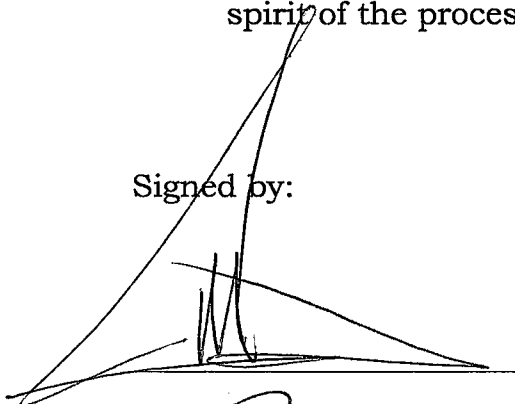
2. This position statement follows from the WARG review process. The group reviewed the original Gisborne District Council application for wastewater discharge into Poverty Bay (Turanganui-a-Kiwa). That application provided for treatment through primary sedimentation, an activated sludge secondary process and ultraviolet disinfection before discharge into the sea.

3. The outcome of the WARG review process was an agreement between those parties that instead of the activated sludge treatment plant, it would be culturally preferable to treat the human wastewater through a low load biological trickling filter followed by additional treatment such as clarifiers, solids contact and ultraviolet disinfection processes. The main reason for this is that the biological trickling filter, to some extent, mimics the natural biological processes of traditional Maori 'through-land' practices of human waste disposal.
4. The Gisborne District Council has accepted this approach because it will lead to similar water quality outcomes, and the capital cost of the works involved are less than the original proposal, as are the long-term operational costs.
5. The parties recognise that the alternative proposal does not fully and immediately address the fundamental cultural issue to Maori of human waste disposal into the sea. The sea is regarded as representing life force, (Mauri) and is a current and potential source of seafood (kai moana). To Maori, these roles are fundamentally inconsistent with the use of the sea as receiving water for the discharge of human wastewater, even if this has been treated to remove its potential to damage human and environmental health, effects on kai moana and ecology.
6. Likewise, the parties recognise that Maori have a long-term wish to also remove industrial waste being discharged into the sea.
7. The parties recognised that there are fiscal constraints that may limit action. While costs are determined by limitations in current technology and the physical nature of Poverty Bay, parties agree to work together to explore future feasible options for alternative use or land disposal.
8. The parties agree that wastewater technology is subject to fast change, and that it is not possible to predict with any certainty the development of new methods and insights for a period of 35 years, which is the period of consent sought.
9. The consent conditions will commit the Council to undertaking a series of actions including the commencement of Alternative Use and Disposal (AUD) research, and using its best endeavours to adopt AUD options that are identified as "feasible". The conditions also require

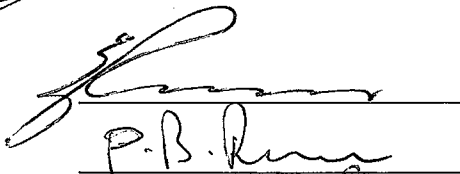
the creation of a Wastewater Management Committee as a standing Committee of Council, and the establishment of a Turanganui-a-Kiwa Water Quality Enhancement Project.

10. The parties agree that they will accept these conditions in good faith, and that the ultimate aim of the community should be to develop a feasible and affordable alternative method of partial and preferably complete discharge of domestic and ultimately industrial wastewater to marine discharge.
  
11. The parties agree that the concepts of "feasible" and "best endeavours" should be interpreted against the background of cultural unacceptability of marine discharge to Maori, who are "kaitiaki" (stewards) of the marine environment and the affordability of such options to the urban community. As such the parties agree that these concepts should be interpreted alongside the wider goals of promoting economic and social opportunities for all communities living in the Gisborne urban areas. In the long-term an environmentally sustainable and realistic solution to this matter needs to be arrived at taking into account these wider goals also. This should happen in the spirit of the process which the WARG group employed in 2006.

Signed by:



Mayor Meng Foon  
On Behalf of Gisborne District Council



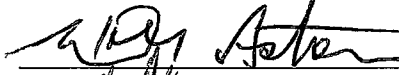
Te Runanga O Turanganui A Kiwa



Te Aitanga A Mahaki Trust



Rongāwhakaata Charitable Trust



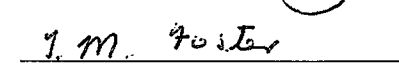
Ngai Tamanuhiri Whanui Trust



Te Runanga O Ngati Oneone



Awapuni B2B Trust



Oho Ake



Gisborne Environment Centre

K P Hogan

Department of Conservation

Brookline

Medical Officer of Health

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