

Notice of Requirement Taupō District Council

3071 State Highway 1, Kinleith Forest Taupō

Atiamuri: Waste Water Treatment Plant

27 February, 2025



Planz Consultants

Quality Assurance Statement:

Application Prepared By:

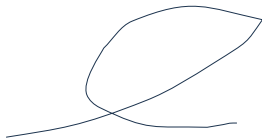
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Project Number: J17536

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Date: 27 February, 2025

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NOTICE OF REQUIREMENT FOR DESIGNATION PURSUANT TO S168 OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

1 Introduction

Pursuant to s168 of the Resource Management Act (**the Act / RMA**), Taupō District Council hereby gives notice of its requirement (**Notice**) for a new designation in the Taupō District Plan for the continued operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment plant (**WWTP**) and associated infrastructure as described below.

Taupō District Council, as a local authority, is an approved requiring authority under s166 of the RMA. The designation is required in order to enable the continued treatment of wastewater to the Atiamuri community.

2 Description of the site to which this notice applies

The site is 3071 State Highway 1, Kinleith Forest, Taupō, legally described as Lot 1 DPS Auckland 61121 under Record of Title 509227. The entire property is 1.25Ha as owned by the Taupō District Council. The proposed designation relates to a site area of 0.093Ha within the property.

The location (and details) of the site to which this Notice relates to is shown in **Attachment A**, and a designation table in accordance with the format required by the National Planning Standards is provided as **Attachment B**. The Record of Title is provided in **Attachment C**.

The site and surrounds are rural in nature and are zoned as General Rural Environment in the Taupō District Plan.

The site is located approximately 400m to the west of Atiamuri village and is accessed from State Highway 1 via an unsealed crossing. There is considerable mature planting located along the perimeter with State Highway 1.

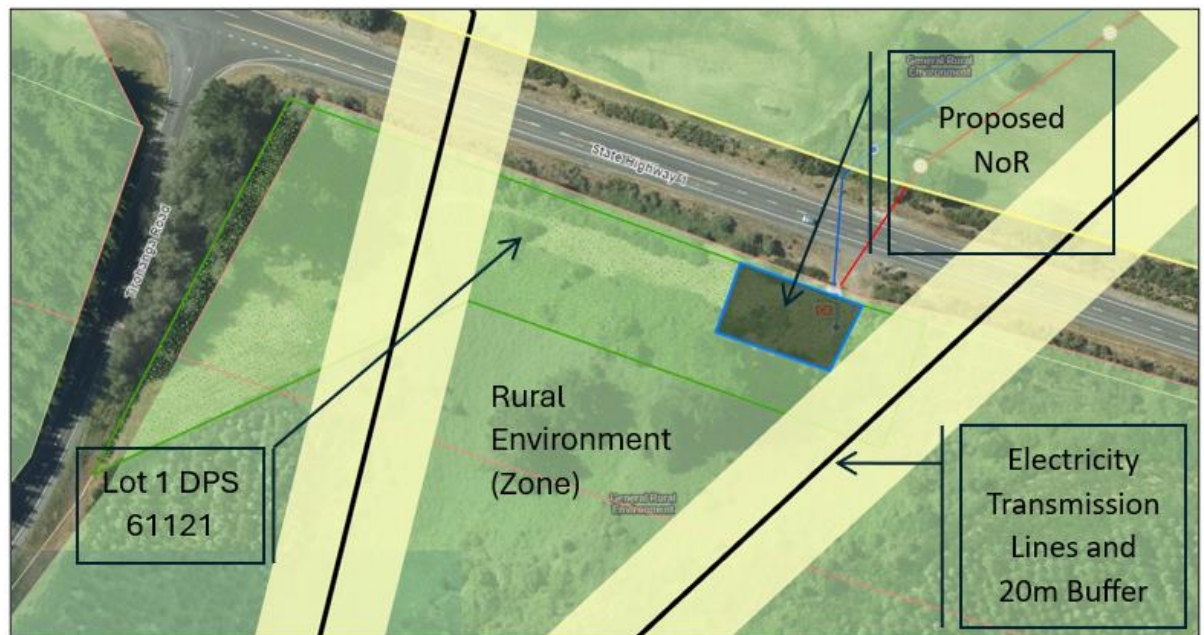
The existing WWTP was built in the 1950's to serve the local community constructing the hydro dam on the Waikato River. Currently the WWTP services 35 dwellings on the western side of the village. There are a further 25 dwellings in the village that are connected to individual privately owned septic tanks.

The WWTP is comprised of

- an Imhoff Tank with a design capacity of 64 cubic metres per day which is gravity fed from the reticulation system;
- a siphon tank is trickle fed liquid wastewater from the Imhoff Tank; and
- when the wastewater reaches a set level in the siphon tank, the primary treated wastewater is discharged continuously to the disposal field.

There are two High Voltage Transmission lines (and 20m Taupō District Plan buffers¹) that span the property but are outside that part of the site proposed to be designated under this Notice. The property is identified as 'known contaminated site' in terms of being an identified HAIL (Hazardous Activities and Industries List) site (Category G.6 Wastewater Treatment). Refer **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: NoR and surrounds (modified from Taupō District Plan)



3 Nature of the proposed works

This Notice relates to a new designation for the **purpose** of the operation, maintenance and upgrade of infrastructure for wastewater treatment. This allows for the continuing operation of the existing WWTP, tanks and ponds and to provide for an upgrade of the existing WWTP as provided for in the Long-Term Plan (LTP) as scheduled for 2026.

The designation is necessary to continue to provide wastewater treatment to the Atiamuri community.

¹ Taupō District Plan Rule 4b.2.6

4 Assessment of Effects

The designation allows for continued operation and maintenance of the existing wastewater infrastructure. The effects associated with the operational and maintenance of the site are described below.

4.1 Construction effects

Infrastructure associated with the WWTP on the site is already present and operating.

Any additional construction effects will come from regular maintenance activities, and incremental increases in capacity and efficiency to address improvements in discharge quality and the forecast growth in the size of community served as associated with the planned LTP upgrade programmed for 2026.

Any construction and maintenance effects will be short term, localised and temporary, and will not materially change the scale of the infrastructure already present on the site. Existing perimeter planting will be retained, therefore visual effects or those associated with rural character will not change. The distance to sensitive receivers will mean that noise impacts will be considered negligible.

4.2 Operational effects

The operation of the site involves pumping wastewater, and associated treatment.

Wastewater treatment will operate automatically, however there are periodic visits by Taupō District Council Officers to take water samples and confirm efficient operations. There will be other visits for reactive maintenance as and when required. None of these site visits will generate material transport trips to the site.

There is no other material effects associated with the operation of the site.

5 Statutory considerations

s171(1) of the RMA sets out that when considering a Notice, a Territorial Authority must, as subject to Part 2, consider the effects on the environment of allowing the requirement, having particular regard to matters s171(a) – (d), as are considered below.

5.1 Section 171(1)(a) Relevant provisions

For completeness, s171(1)(a) of the RMA requires consideration having regard to –

a) any relevant provisions of—

(i) a national policy statement:

(ii) a New Zealand coastal policy statement:

(iii) a regional policy statement or proposed regional policy statement:

(iv) a plan or proposed plan; and

National Policy Statements (NPS)

There are eight National Policy Statements. The only NPS of relevance is the NPS-Freshwater Management given the nature of the discharge. However, discharge of treated wastewater is not undertaken at the site, nor can it be sought by way of designation and remains governed by Regional Council consent. Taupō District Council is renewing its land-based wastewater disposal consents for Atiamuri and a component of the purpose of the Notice is to ensure that the WWTP is able to be maintained and upgraded to an extent that ensures that an appropriate level of treatment to comply with those consent requirements.

As the proposed designation does not extend into that area as associated with the 20m buffer for Electricity Transmission Lines that extend across the wider property, the NPS-Electricity Transmission (2008) is not applicable to the Notice.

The Notice site is not classified as Highly Productive Land under clause 3.5(7) the NPS-Highly Productive Land. The Land Use Classification for the site is Land Use Capability Class 4².

There are no explicit implications in terms of the requirements of the National Policy Statements to the designation.

National Environment Standards (NES)

As the proposed Notice does not extend into the 20m buffer associated with the existing Electricity Transmission Lines that traverse the wider property, there is no conflict with works able to be established under the NES-Electricity Transmission Activities.

² <https://waikatomaps.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Viewer/?map=3e5673e57fa24e89a30e54b7fb8511d5>

As the site is recognised as a HAIL site, the requirements of the NES-Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health prevail over a Designation³.

Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS)

Part 3 – Topic EIT Energy, Infrastructure and Transport relates to the integration of land use planning with infrastructure.

Policy EIT-P1 seeks that the built environment is managed having particular regard to ensuring that the effectiveness and efficiency of existing and planning regionally significant infrastructure is protected.

Part 3 – Topic Urban Form and development relates to co-ordinating growth and infrastructure, including **Policy UFD-P2** which seeks that *‘the efficient and effective functioning of infrastructure ... is maintained, and the ability to maintain and upgrade that infrastructure is retained’*.

This Notice is considered to be consistent with the WRPS objectives and policies, specifically IM-O1(4), EIT-P1 and UFD-P2.

The designation of this site will enable the effective continued operation of the wastewater network to provide for the social and economic wellbeing of the Atiamuri community.

Waikato Regional Plan

Made operative in September 2007, the Waikato Regional Plan does not contain rules specifically relating to infrastructure assets.

In terms of discharges, Section 3 – Water Module seeks to enable discharges to water with only minor effects, with Policy 3 seeking alternative land-based treatment systems being promoted. These matters are the subject of the relevant discharge consent APP145993 (as issued in 2024 and expires in 2059, **Attachment D**) and are not affected by the designation proposal.

Matters associated with nuisance odour are addressed under Conditions 30 to 32 of discharge consent APP145993 (**Attachment D**) which respond to Part 3 / Air of the Waikato Regional Plan, including **AIR-O1(3)** and **AIR-P3** that seek to manage air quality in a way that avoids, where practicable, adverse effects on local amenity values from discharges of odour with objectionable effects to be managed at the property boundary.

Taupō District Plan

The Taupō District Plan recognises Wastewater Treatment Plants as Regionally Significant Infrastructure⁴.

³ Section 43D(4)

⁴ Taupō District Plan. Chapter 10 Definitions.

Strategic Objectives in the Taupō District Plan seek that the district develops in a cohesive, compact and structured way, including that ensuring infrastructure is efficiently and effectively integrated with land use (**Objective 2.3.2.1**).

Strategic Objective 2.5.2.1 seeks that:

The wider benefits and strategic importance of Nationally and Regionally Significant Infrastructure, to the District and wider, are recognised in decision making and land use planning.

Associated Policies 2.5.3.4 and 2.5.3.5 seek:

Planning and development of national and regional infrastructure will consider the needs and the well-being of current and future communities.

Recognise that national and regional infrastructure can have important environmental, economic, cultural and social effects.

The Taupō District Plan seeks (**Objective 3n.2.1**) to enable the operation, maintenance and upgrading of network utilities (which extends to networks for the reticulation of wastewater), which ensuring that network utilities are designed and located to manage adverse effects on the environment and protect the health and safety of the community (**Objective 3n.2.2**). A specific policy (**Policy 3n.2.1(iii)**) requires regard be had to the contribution of network utilities to the functioning and wellbeing of the community.

The proposed designation site has been in operation for a number of years, and is located on land owned by the Taupō District Council. The site is located some distance from the nearest sensitive residential dwelling, and is also located behind mature landscape screening along the frontage with State Highway 1. The site and associated infrastructure provide for the wellbeing of the local Atiamuri community.

5.2 Section 171(1)(b) Adequate consideration given to alternatives

For completeness, s171(1)(b) of the RMA requires consideration having regard to –

(b) whether adequate consideration has been given to alternative sites, routes, or methods of undertaking the work if—

(i) the requiring authority does not have an interest in the land sufficient for undertaking the work; or

(ii) it is likely that the work will have a significant adverse effect on the environment; and

Taupō District Council as owner of the site has financial interest in the site. In addition, it is not considered that the works associated with the designation will have significant adverse effects on the environment.

The site has been operating as a community WWTP for a number of years and is the subject of appropriate Regional Council consents.

In conclusion, no consideration of alternative sites has been given, and the effects of continued operation and maintenance will be negligible. No other methods have been considered.

5.3 Section 171(1)(c) reasonably necessary

s171(1)(c) of the RMA requires a consideration having regard to whether the work and designation are reasonably necessary for achieving the objectives of the requiring authority for which the designation is sought.

It is considered that the new designation, as a planning tool, is necessary to allow the Taupō District Council, as Requiring Authority, appropriate management and control to ensure a safe and secure wastewater treatment network is supplied for the Atiamuri community. The alternative, as is the existing status quo is continued reliance on the Taupō District Plan rules and / or the resource consent process. It is considered that these options do not provide certainty or a long term solution to effectively and efficiently address the ongoing use of the existing WWTP. Designation is also necessary across the wider network of the Taupō District Council's network of water and wastewater infrastructure.

5.4 Section 171(1)(d) 'any other matter'

Improving resilience and reducing environmental impacts through appropriate maintenance and upgrades of infrastructure associated with WWTP Infrastructure is a primary objective of the Notice.

The Notice and associated works will assist the Taupō District Council in terms of managing the effects of wastewater, including ensuring appropriate levels of treatment and reducing nitrogen levels. Noting again that the Notice (and any subsequent Outline Plan as required pursuant to s176A of the RMA) does not extend to wastewater discharges or treatment. The quality and volume of discharge is provided for by Regional Council consent APP145993.

Broader engagement between the Taupō District Council and local iwi and hapu has identified common ground to secure improvements within the wastewater treatment train and to avoid wastewater (including treated wastewater) entering waterways in the district. Maintenance and upgrades to the Atiamuri WWTP will be consistent with the approach undertaken by the Taupō District Council as facilitated at its largest wastewater plants (Taupō, Tūrangi and Mangakino) as well as smaller plants (Motuoapa and Whakamaru) to reduce nitrogen discharges into the Lake Taupō catchment.

It is acknowledged that Ngāti Tūwharetoa hold mana whenua and kaitiakitanga over the Central North Island including the Lake Taupō catchment and part of the Waikato River, Upper Waikato, Whanganui, Rangitikei and Rangitaiki catchments.

It is understood that in the preparation of the AEE as associated with discharge consent APP145993 the Council discussed the proposal with Ngāti Tahu/Ngāti Whaoa.

This approach is also consistent with key policy documents which are aimed at improving water quality throughout the Taupō catchments. These documents include Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River for the Waikato River catchment, Te Ara Whānui o Rangitāki – Pathways of the Rangitāki for the Rangitāki catchment, and Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki', a plan developed for the Taupō catchment.

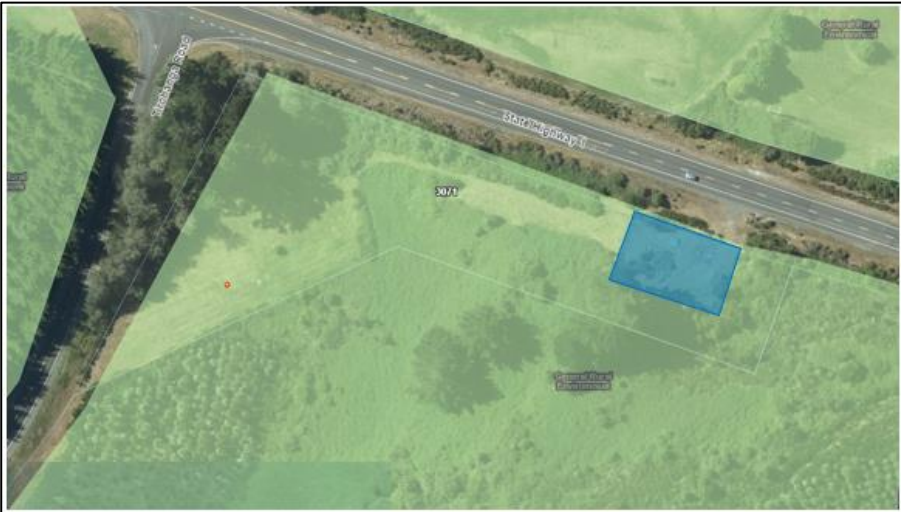
6 Consultation

No consultation has been undertaken or is considered necessary.

7 Conclusion

Taupō District Council gives notice of its requirement to designate land related to an existing WWTP. The preceding assessment of effects concludes that the effects associated with the maintenance and operation of the facility will be minimal. Overall, it is concluded that the designation is consistent with the relevant statutory provisions and the principles and purpose of the RMA.

Attachment A: Atiamuri WWTP (3071 SH 1)

Designation	Detail
Legal Description	Lot 1 DPS 61121 
Site Address	3071 State Highway 1, Kinleith Forest, Taupō
Landowner	Taupō District Council
Purpose of the Site	Operation, maintenance and upgrade of infrastructure for wastewater treatment purposes.
Area of Designation / Site Plan	0.0930ha 

Site Plan (Existing)	
Site Plan (Proposed)	No Change
Description of the activity	The following provides a description of the works and environment using s176A(3) as a basis. Consideration against the requirements of s171(1) is provided in the main report. General: Operating Wastewater facility <i>The height, shape, and bulk of the public work, project, or work:</i> The site includes a single 16m² pump station and associated ponds. The site is fenced and gated for security. <i>The location on the site of the public work, project or work:</i> The site is located to the south of Atiamuri Village on State Highway 1, some 200m to the west of the intersection with Tirohanga Road. The nearest residence is located some 300m to the northeast. <i>The likely finished contour of the site:</i> No further works are planned for the site within the life of the Taupō District Plan. The contour, which is level, will not change.

	<i>Vehicular access, circulation and the provision for parking:</i> Activities will not generate material vehicle trips on the network. The site is accessed directly from State Highway 1. Access to the site is not formed, however there is a 15m separation between the security gate and sealed road reserve which provides ample space for vehicles accessing the site to pull off the State Highway. Ample parking and circulation exist in the vicinity of the WWTP for any service vehicles. <i>The landscaping proposed:</i> There is considerable mature landscaping existing along the boundary with the State Highway, as well as along the internal boundaries to the east and south. No further landscaping is proposed. <i>Any other matters to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment:</i> There are no effects from arising from the site and activities that require consideration. Odour is managed through both the design and management of the WWTP and separation to sensitive receivers.
Established / Upgraded	The WWTP is pre-existing.
Relevant Resource Consents	Regional Discharge Consent 145993 (Issued 2024 expires 2059)
Recommended Conditions	Not applicable
Zoning and Overlays	Zone: General Rural Zone Overlays: Noise Corridor Boundary Overlay (NA to designated activity)

Attachment B: Designation Table

Atiamuri Wastewater Treatment Facility	
Designation unique identifier	TDCXX
Designation Purpose	Wastewater Treatment Facility
Site Identifier	3071 State Highway 1, Kinleith Forest, Taupō
Lapse Date	Given effect to
Designation hierarchy under s177 of the Resource Management Act	Primary
Conditions	No
Additional information	n/a

Attachment C: Record of Title



**RECORD OF TITLE
UNDER LAND TRANSFER ACT 2017
FREEHOLD**

**Guaranteed Search Copy issued under Section 60 of the Land
Transfer Act 2017**




R.W. Muir
Registrar-General
of Land

Identifier **509227**
Land Registration District **South Auckland**
Date Issued 22 December 2009

Prior References
SA51A/453

Estate Fee Simple
Area 1.2512 hectares more or less
Legal Description Lot 1 Deposited Plan South Auckland
61121
Purpose Local Purpose Reserve (Sewage)
Registered Owners
Taupo District Council

Interests
Subject to the Reserves Act 1977

HCNZ File 3/5013/150/2

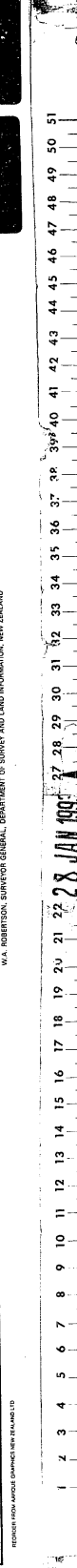
Approvals
Approved for and on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen for Electricity purposes.
John Slattery
Manager (Electricity)
Housing Corporation of NZ as agents.
Pursuant to a Resolution of the Taupo District Council passed on the 2nd day of July 1991 approving pursuant to Sec 305 of the Local Government Act 1974 this survey plan and certifying that the plan is in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Operative District Scheme the common seal of the Taupo District Council was affixed hereto in the presence of
R. G. D. Baker
Chief Executive
Mayor R. G. D. Baker

Total Area 1.2512 ha
Comprised in Crown Land 9564672
i. Ross, Malcolm Dean
Registered Surveyor and holder of an annual practicing certificate for who may act as a registered surveyor pursuant to the provisions of the Survey Act 1976. The plan has been made from surveys executed by me or under my directions. That both plan and survey are correct and have been made in accordance with the Survey Regulations 1972 or any regulations made in substitution thereof.
Dated at Taupō this 15th day of March 1991
Signature *R. G. D. Baker*
Field Book p. 641 p. 95-96
Reference Plans SO 44225, 56210, DPS 11436
Examined C. J. Kavanagh Correct
Approved as to Survey
11/10/91 *R. G. D. Baker* Chief Surveyor
Deposited this 10th day of November 1991
File
Revised 29.8.91
Instructions
DPS 61121

TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY...TAUPO DISTRICT
Surveyed by HARRISON GIBSON CONSULTANTS LTD.
F. 7357012
Scale 1:1000
Date December 1990

LAND DISTRICT SOUTH AUCKLAND
SURVEY BLK. & DIST. VI. ATIAMURI
NZMS 261 SH1
RECORD MAP NO. 1417/H1

W.A. ROBERTSON, SURVEYOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND LAND INFORMATION, NEW ZEALAND



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51
CENTIMETRES

Attachment D: Signed s42A Report Resource Consent 145993

Consent Evaluation Report

Applicant: Taupo District Council **File No.:** 60 01 86A
Address of Site: (Atiamuri Village) SH1, **Project Code:** RC13012
Application Number: APP145993

Reference Id	Activity Subtype	Activity Description
AUTH145993.01.01	Land - sewage	To discharge treated municipal sewage wastewater into the ground and associated discharge of odour to air.

1 Introduction

Taupo District Council (the applicant) have applied for resource consent to discharge treated wastewater to land and discharge odour to air from the Atiamuri Village wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) located at 3071 State Highway 1, Atiamuri at or about map reference NZTM 1864115 E 5745916 N.

The applicant seeks to replace AUTH109488.01.01 (discharge to land), which commenced on the 6 May 2004 and expired on 1 March 2024. As this application was lodged on 31 August 2023, s124 protection applies under the RMA.

The applicant has contracted GHD Limited to provide information assisting the above application and to assess the effects of the wastewater proposal. Any reference to “the applicant” in this report should be understood to signify the applicant and/or any consultant representing the applicant.

The application documentation is recorded in the Waikato Regional Council document management system titled “APP145993 - RC Appln - Discharge to Air & Liquid Waste - Atiamuri Wastewater Treatment Plant - Taupo District Council - 31/08/2023” (WRC document number 27142506).

2 Background and Description of Proposal

The WWTP is located at 3071 State Highway 1, Atiamuri with a total site area of 12,512 square metres. The WWTP is located on the southern side of State Highway 1, approximately 300 metres from Atiamuri Village and 300 metres from the Waikato River. The plant was built in the 1950’s to serve the local community constructing the hydro dam on the Waikato River. Currently the WWTP services 35 dwellings on the western side of the village. There are a further 25 dwellings in the village that are connected to individual privately owned septic tanks.

2.1 Existing system

The treatment plant is comprised of

- an Imhoff Tank with a design capacity of 64 cubic metres per day which is gravity fed from the reticulation system;
- a siphon tank is trickle fed liquid wastewater from the Imhoff Tank;
- when the wastewater reaches a set level in the siphon tank, the primary treated wastewater is discharged continuously to the disposal field;

- 140 square metres basal trench loading area, comprising of eight trenches, each 35 metres in length, of which two of the beds are stated to rest at any one-time during operation.
- solids settle to the bottom of the Imhoff tank and into the sludge zone beneath which are broken down through anaerobic digestion into a humus sludge;
- the settled sludge from the Imhoff Tank is drained twice annually to sand drying beds on site;
- the sludge is allowed to dry before being transported to a landfill for disposal.

Historical wastewater discharge quality results (2003 – 2022) indicates that the treated wastewater quality is similar to primary wastewater, with elevated concentrations of Total Suspended Solids (TSS), cBOD₅ and nitrogen species.

2.2 Proposed Upgrade

Due to projected population growth by 2050 from the current population of 95 people to 362 people, the applicant is proposing staged upgrades to the WWTP with design flow volumes as per Table 1. Stage 1 upgrades are expected to begin on the treatment plant in 2025 and are expected to be completed in early 2026 (WRC document number 28391469). Stage 1 capacity is estimated to be reached by 2035, and Stage 2 capacity estimated to be reached by 2050. It should be noted that the rate of additional connection and actual treatment plant performance will determine when each stage reaches capacity and the next stage of upgrades implemented.

The applicant is currently authorised to discharge up to a maximum of 64 cubic metres per day of treated domestic wastewater and is proposing to increase this through each proposed stage to a maximum discharge of up to 226 cubic metres per day once Stage 2 capacity is reached. Table 1 shows the average and maximum flows anticipated per day for each stage.

Table 1: Wastewater design flows

Parameter	Current	Stage 1	Stage 2
Average Daily Flow (cubic metres per day)	24	55	90
Maximum Daily Flow (cubic metres per day)	59	137	226

The wastewater is expected to be treated to the following secondary standard:

Table 2: Discharge parameters (taken from the application documentation)

Parameters	Units	Median Discharge Standard
cBOD ₅	mg/L	20
Total Suspended Solids	mg/L	20
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	mg/L as N	5
Total Nitrogen	mg/L as N	25

The applicant has identified two options for the site that can achieve the targeted wastewater quality for the projected increase in discharge, for which a commitment to an option has not been made:

- Recirculating Packed Bed Reactors (rPBR)
- Submerged Aerated Filters (SAF)

2.2.1 Recirculating Packed Bed Reactors

The first option proposed to manage the wastewater treatment is using the AX100 modular system which consists of a textile filter bed above a recirculation chamber as per the system layout in Figure 1.

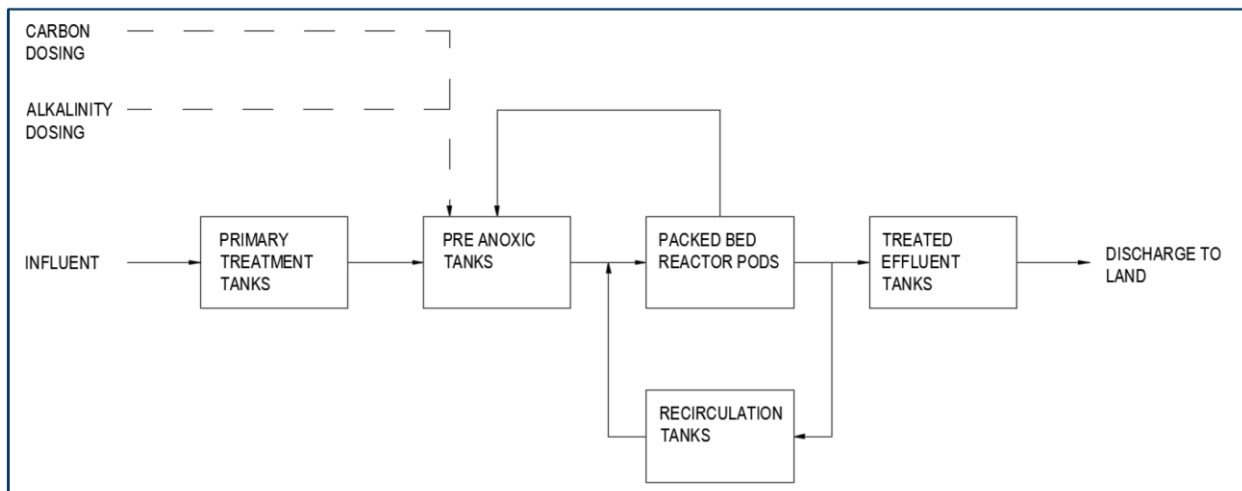


Figure 1: Schematic of recirculating packed bed reactor process, taken from the application documentation

2.2.2 Submerged Aerated Filters

The second option proposed is the Fixed Activated Sludge Treatment (FAST®) process by Smith and Loveless. This consists of biological treatment of the wastewater in a submerged media carrying a biofilm in an aerated tank as per the system layout in Figure 2.

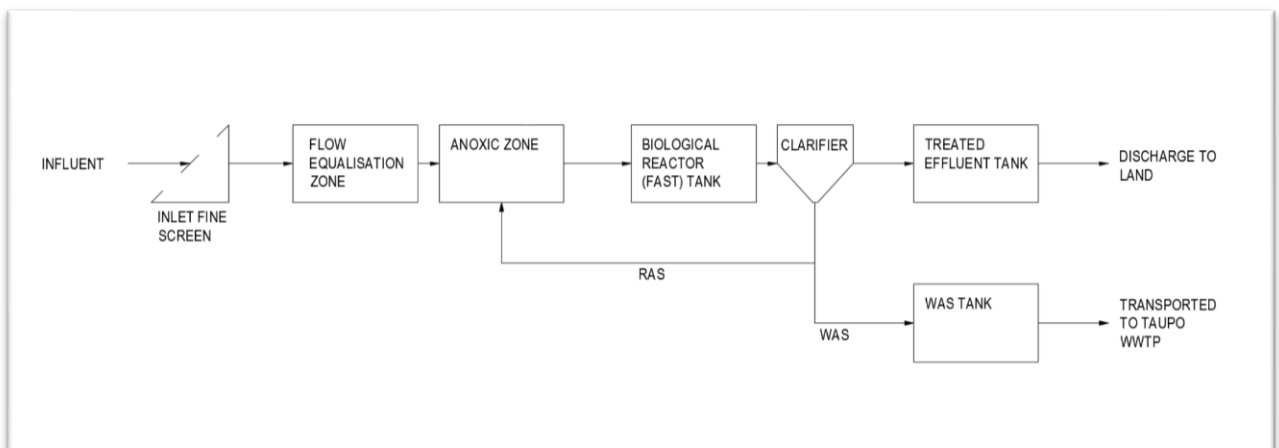


Figure 2: Schematic of recirculating packed bed reactor process, taken from the application documentation

2.2.3 Disposal System

The wastewater disposal system will be upscaled during the proposed stages (Figure 3).

- Currently: 530 square metres
- Stage 1: maximum area of 1,830 square metres
- Stage 2: maximum area of 3,960 square metres
- 50% reserve area of 1,980 square metres is available.

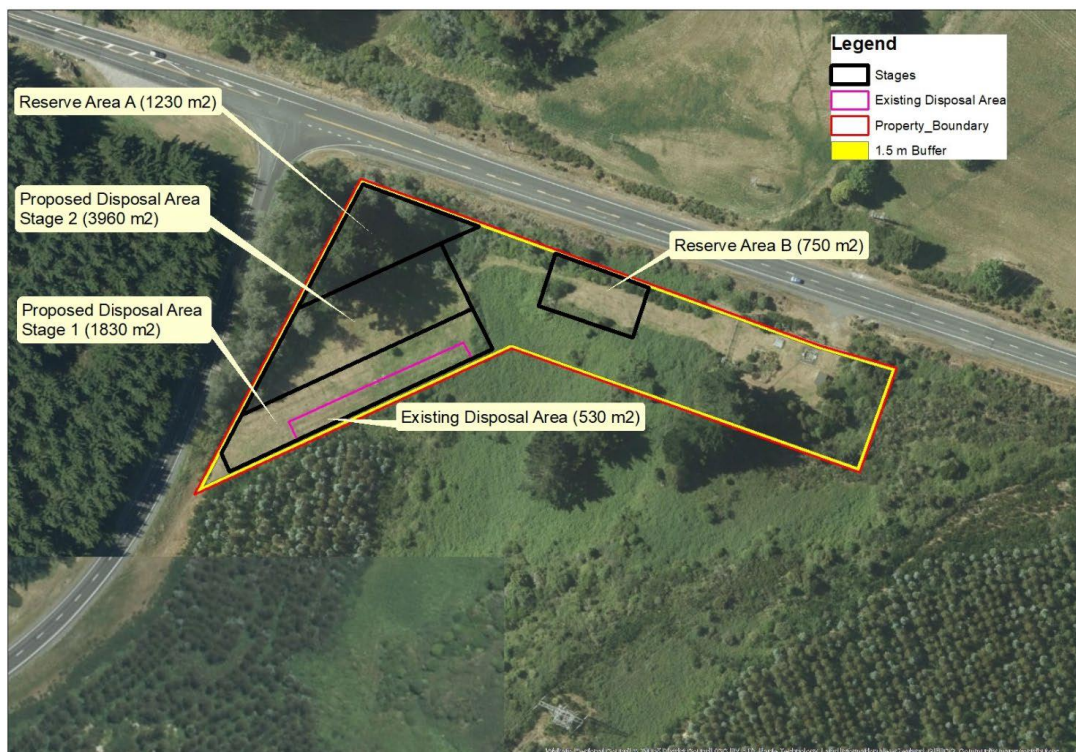


Figure 3: Current and proposed disposal areas, taken from the application documentation.

The disposal area located on site is comprised of subsurface trenches (1.5 metres below ground level) utilising low rate drip irrigation and high rate infiltration trenches with infiltration up to 203mm/day. The applicant has provided a Disposal Field Environmental Report as Appendix D to the AEE. This includes discussion of hydrology, hydrogeology, and results of field investigations to determine maximum and appropriate infiltration rates. It further provides information on appropriate siting and setbacks for the disposal area. It concludes that the soils and subsurface geology are suitable for the proposed discharge of wastewater. This report has been considered by WRC hydrogeologist John Hadfield as will be discussed later in section 6.1.1 of this report.

The applicant has advised that the existing Imhoff and siphon tanks will be either decommissioned and removed, or they can be potentially repurposed for use in the new plant (WRC document number 27732174). At the time of writing this report, the applicant cannot confirm a set date that the existing system will be removed, however, works are expected to commence on the plant upgrades in 2025.

3 Status of Activities under the Plan

Section 15 of the Resource Management Act, 1991 states that no person may discharge any contaminant to water or into or onto land in circumstances which may result in that contaminant entering water unless the discharge of the contaminant is expressly allowed by a rule in a regional plan [and in any relevant proposed regional plan] or by a resource consent.

The Waikato Regional Plan (WRP) became operative on 28 September 2007 therefore no other plans apply.

The discharge of treated wastewater from a municipal wastewater treatment plant onto land is not specifically provided for by any rule and is classified as a **discretionary activity under rule 3.5.4.5** of the WRP.

The discharge of contaminants into air does not comply with all of the conditions of permitted activity Rule 6.1.18.1, in particular condition (b) as the proposed upgrades will result in a change in the activity that will increase the scale of any discharge to air and (d) as the treatment process does not exclude the treatment of hazardous substances. The discharge to air is classified as a **discretionary activity under rule 6.1.9.2** of the WRP.

4 Consultation/Affected Party Approvals

4.1 Iwi

The proposed activity occurs in the rohe (area) of Ngati Tahu/Ngati Whaoa, Ngati Tuwharetoa and Raukawa iwi.

The applicant has advised that they have spoken with Ngāti Tahu/Ngāti Whaoa; who sought clarification and are satisfied with the process (WRC document number 27733145). The applicant has advised that discussions have been had with Mokai, Raukawa, Te Arawa River Iwi Trust (TARIT) but no feedback has been received (WRC document number 27732174). Ngati Tuwharetoa have advised the applicant that they do not wish to be involved in the process (WRC document number 28391469).

4.2 Other Parties

No consultation with other parties has been undertaken as part of this application.

As potential environmental effects associated with the proposed discharge are anticipated to be less than minor as outlined in section 6.1, I consider this level of consultation is appropriate.

5 Process Matters

The application was lodged with WRC on 31 August 2023 and deemed to be complete under Section 88 of the RMA at initial review.

The applicant has given permission for a section 37A(4)(a) extension to the timeframe for technical reviews to be completed. The timeframe extension occurred on the 11 September 2023 and ended on 13 November 2023 (WRC document number 27227063). A further s37A(5)(a) timeframe extension was applied from 4 December 2023 to 15 May 2024 to allow for further technical reviews, and the review of draft conditions (WRC document number 29196436).

6 Statutory Considerations

The application was lodged on 31 August 2023 and consequently all RMA amendments apply. The matters to which the WRC as the consent authority must have regard to when considering applications are set out in Section 104 of the RMA.

Due consideration has been given to Section 104 of the RMA. The actual and potential effects have been discussed in the sections below along with measures being taken to avoid, remedy or mitigate these effects.

6.1 Assessment of Environmental Effect (s104(1)(a))

The discharge of contaminants in wastewater into the environment can have adverse effects on receiving soils, groundwater, and nearby surface waters. Even in the case of a conservatively designed, appropriately installed and well-maintained system, it is likely that there will still be gradual change in the condition of the receiving soils in the long term. The goal of a conservative approach to wastewater system design is to achieve a system that will be sustainable in the long term with any effects remaining negligible. It is critical that the potential future effects of a system are considered at the design stage and are minimised in the long term by good system management. The key environmental effects that should be considered are:

- Groundwater quality
- Surface water quality
- Soils
- Amenity Values
 - Public Health
 - Odour

6.1.1 Effects on Groundwater Quality

There is the potential for nitrate and bacterial contamination of potable water sources if the disposal area is too close to a water supply, or if discharge exceeds the infiltration capacity of the soil or infiltration rate of the trench resulting in ponding and/or saturation which may cause a concentrated plume to the water table due to the elevation of contaminants in one area.

Groundwater was not encountered during site investigation soil infiltration tests and pit tests at depths up to 1.5 metres, which was undertaken in November 2022 and January 2023. Therefore, the separation distance will meet the recommended setback range of 0.5 to 1.5 metres assessed against the *On-site Wastewater Management in the Auckland Region Guideline Document 2021/006 Version 1*.

In terms of human health risk, the applicant has stated that there are 19 bores located within 1 km of the disposal field, with the closest bore being 720m away. However, a search of WRC mapping system shows that there are a cluster of bores located approximately 300m upgradient of the disposal field (WRC Located IDs 68_938, 68_93, 68_940 and 68_941) and one bore located approximately 700m downgradient (WRC Located ID 68_628). WRC Scientist Mr John Hadfield reviewed the effects of wastewater discharge on groundwater quality (WRC document number 27335339) and states that:

“The principal contaminants of concern in respect to groundwater quality are generally micro-organisms and nitrate. There are currently no down-gradient users likely to be impacted in this predominantly forested area. Micro-organisms are expected to be progressively attenuated through filtering and die-off before reaching surface waters. A contaminant plume can be expected to result from the discharge, most significantly expressed in elevated nitrate concentrations. The extent of the plume is uncertain. Groundwater redox conditions, for example, could significantly influence and mitigate mass transport of nitrogen to the Waikato River receiving water. Given no groundwater quality information has been provided, however, conservative nitrate transport must be assumed. Dispersion alone is likely to substantially reduce nitrate concentrations during migration. There would, as reported, also be substantial dilution within the Waikato River. The primary consideration therefore is whether there is likely to be an increased total mass load of nitrogen to the river.

The AEE indicates that there would be some improvement in effluent treatment such that the total nitrogen concentration would be reduced. The total mass discharge of nitrogen after phase 2 would, however, increase from about 1.4 kg d-1 to 2.3 kg d-1. Under proposed Plan Change 1 (in effect but under appeal) this is unlikely to be acceptable.”

The applicant provided further information on the total nitrogen (TN) mass loads for the current unconnected 25 properties, which currently have separate onsite wastewater systems/septic tanks and which are anticipated to be connected to the plant by the end of Stage 2 (WRC document 27451849).

Mr Hadfield's assessment did not consider the current unconnected properties being included in the loads. The loads will remain the same as they are currently when Stage 1 is at capacity, and whilst there will be an increase in loads once Stage 2 is at capacity, there will be an overall reduction in total loads once the current unconnected properties are connected (Table 3).

I consider there will be an overall decrease in TN loads to the Waikato River catchment over the longer term and therefore the proposal will result in betterment to the catchment (discussed in section 6.3.1). Conditions have been recommended to ensure that total nitrogen mass loads are discharged within the design capacity of the WWTP.

Table 3: Total Nitrogen load (WRC document number 27451849)

	Current Connected	Current Unconnected	Stage 1	Stage 2
Properties	35	25	81	134
Population	95	68	219	362
Average Flow (m3/d)	24	17	55	90
	Effluent TN ~ 58mg/L (median) assume septic tank effluent is the same as existing Atiamuri WWTP, an Imhoff tank		Effluent TN of 25 mg/L (median)	
TN Mass Loads (kg/d)	1.4	0.99	1.4	2.25
	Current TN load to receiving environment: 2.4kg/d			

The applicant has provided proposed consent conditions in Appendix E of the AEE, whereby groundwater monitoring will be undertaken quarterly from a control bore and downgradient monitoring bores (yet to be installed), with analysis of the following proposed:

- Nitrate-nitrogen (NO₃-N)
- Ammoniacal-nitrogen (NH₄-N)
- Conductivity (COND)
- Escherichia coliform bacteria (Ecoh)
- Chloride (Cl)

Mr Hadfield has provided his support of this monitoring and advised *"This proposed condition requiring one up-gradient control and down gradient piezometers is supported. Had this work already been undertaken there would have been more groundwater quality information to discuss, and redox conditions would likely be known. Although not necessarily expected, it may have indicated further nitrogen attenuation during transport. It is also proposed that nitrate-N, ammoniacal-N, conductivity, chloride and E-coli be monitored on a quarterly basis, which is supported. An initial more comprehensive suite of analyses should also be undertaken, including all major ions, D.O., pH, iron and manganese."*

The proposed conditions provide clear limits and monitoring requirements to ensure adherence to the magnitude of the groundwater plume and TN loading to the river expected by this proposal.

6.1.2 Effects on Surface Water Quality

Wastewater discharges can cause water quality problems in aquatic environments when:

- plant and weed growth accelerates in response to wastewater sourced nutrients,
- aquatic organisms are adversely affected by oxygen levels being reduced by the BOD load from the wastewater,
- aquatic organisms are adversely affected by the toxic effects of ammonia from wastewater,
- the presence of microbiological contaminants in wastewater can cause a risk to human and animal health.

Such outcomes are not necessarily attributed to any single wastewater discharge, rather through the cumulative effects of discharges within a catchment.

In this case it is considered that the risk of adverse effects is low. The nearest surface waterbody is the Waikato River which is approximately 330m north and upgradient of the disposal area. The Mangatutu Stream is located approximately 640m southwest and downgradient of the disposal area.

The historical median of the wastewater quality over the period from 2003 to 2022 is:

- cBOD5 <111 mgO/L
- Total Suspended Solids < 62 mg/L
- Ammoniacal Nitrogen < 48 mg/L as N
- Total Nitrogen < 58 mg/L as N

Once the new WWTP is commissioned, planned for 2026, the proposed treated wastewater quality is to be to a standard:

- cBOD5 <20 mgO/L
- Total Suspended Solids < 20 mg/L
- Ammoniacal Nitrogen < 5 mg/L as N
- Total Nitrogen < 25 mg/L as N

The discharge is authorised only to land with no overland flow authorised. Given the proposed system design, I consider overland flow to surface water is highly unlikely.

6.1.3 Soils

While some contaminants in wastewater can have negative impacts on soil by bio-accumulation, wastewater from domestic sources does not generally contain heavy metals and environmentally harmful compounds in concentrations likely to lead to soil contamination or problems that would render the soil unusable. While there is no data recorded, it is considered that chemicals should be diluted and removed in the treatment system or renovated by the microbial action in the soil itself. Due to the domestic nature of the discharge, I consider that the discharge is unlikely to have any significant effects on the site or potential future use of soils.

The wastewater loading rates applied will ensure that overloading of the soil is avoided and will facilitate the further removal of contaminants by soil processes. Conditions have been proposed to ensure that the loading rate and the absorptive capacity of the soil are not exceeded.

Therefore, I consider that the nutrient impact and effects on surface water, groundwater and soils is less than minor.

6.2 Amenity Values

6.2.1 Public Health

The current treatment of the wastewater results in discharges containing high concentrations of pathogens, which may have human health related effects if people are exposed to the wastewater. Contact with wastewater could occur if it were to run across the ground surface, or when partially treated wastewater enters surface or groundwater. The potential for these types of effects typically arises when a system provides only limited treatment, when the system is not properly designed, installed or maintained, or a combination of these factors. I am satisfied that public health effects will be avoided by the proposed upgrades to the wastewater treatment system. The applicant has advised that the disposal field is fenced and has vegetation screening to prevent public access. Signage is in place warning of potential biohazard risks associated with the site. Conditions have been included to ensure that the system is properly operated and maintained.

6.2.2 Odour

While there will be an increase in the volume of wastewater treated and discharged, the method of treatment is also changing, therefore by taking a cautious approach it will not meet condition (b) of permitted activity Rule 6.1.18.1. Also, due to the process involving the treatment of a hazardous substance, condition (d) of the Rule cannot be met:

- (b) Any change in the activity shall not increase the scale, frequency, intensity, nature or duration of any discharge to air compared to when the activity was established or authorised.
- (d) The process does not involve the treatment of hazardous substances.

However, I note that both options for the new wastewater treatment systems are modern technology, which generally generate less odour as they are closed systems. These systems are also readily able to be fitted with carbon filters, or other odour control devices should any unanticipated odours arise. I am satisfied that the proposed system is appropriately designed for this site, and do not consider that its operation will result in objectionable odour. Nevertheless, conditions have been recommended to ensure the minimising of odour onsite.

The site is 300m from the closest residential dwelling. No complaints or concerns have been received during the current consent period. Nevertheless, conditions have been included for the provision of a Complaints Register and the follow-up action required should a complaint be received.

In summary, I consider that the potential environmental effects will be less than minor.

6.3 Assessment against Policy Statements, Plans and Regulations (s104(1)(b))

6.3.1 Vision and Strategy

Under s12 of the Ngati Tūwharetoa, Raukawa and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act 2010 and other river “settlement” legislation, the Vision and Strategy is deemed to be part of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement. Under s104(1)(b), the Council must “have regard to” the RPS when considering any application for resource consent. However, additionally, the river settlement legislation also requires that the Council must have “particular regard” to the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River when carrying out any of its functions under RMA 1991. Through case law, the Vision and Strategy is acknowledged as the primary, direction-setting policy for the River. Case law indicates that activities which are subject to the V&S are required to provide for the protection and restoration of the River, and that this will require “betterment” to an extent proportionate with the scale of the activity and its effects.

The applicant has advised that the proposal will have *“a net positive effect on the ultimate receiving environment of the Waikato River as the new system will see a reduction of contaminant concentrations compared to the existing plant and a significant reduction when compared to the water quality parameters assessed for the existing consent. This therefore works towards restoring the water quality of the Waikato River.”* I agree with this statement that betterment will occur via progressive upgrades.

I have had particular regard to the Vision and Strategy which is part of Waikato Regional Policy Statement, and the above statute and I consider the proposal is proportionate to the scale of activity and effects. Nevertheless, I have recommended the inclusion of conditions which are designed to maintain the quality of groundwater and to avoid, remedy or mitigate any potential adverse effects on the receiving watercourses.

6.3.2 National Environmental Standards

As of May 2024, there are ten NESs that have come into effect - the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality; Sources of Human Drinking Water, Electricity Transmission Activities, Telecommunication Facilities, Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to protect Human Health, Commercial Forestry, Freshwater, Marine Aquaculture; Outdoor Storage of Tyres; and Greenhouse Gases from Industrial Process Heat.

National Environmental Standard for Sources of Human Drinking Water

A search of the Taumata Arowai public register shows that the nearest drinking water supplier is located approximately 700 metres from the disposal field. The supplier is Taupo District Council for the Atiamuri Village via a bore (WRC Located ID 72_11250) that supplies 229 people. Therefore regulations 11 and 12 apply.

The nearest drinking water supplier located downstream is over 100 km from the disposal field. The supplier is Waipa District Council and water is taken from the Waikato River for the communities of Cambridge and Karapiro Village and supplies 21,794 people. Therefore regulations 7 and 8 apply.

As discussed in section 6.1 of this report, the effects of the proposed activity are less than minor and not considered to adversely affect drinking water quality, so the application is consistent with regulations 7 and 8, and with regulations 11 and 12. Therefore, I do not consider that this activity has the potential to adversely affect registered drinking supplies.

6.3.3 National policy statements (including NZ Coastal Policy Statement)

As of May 2024, there are eight national policy statements in effect – for Freshwater Management, Renewable Electric Generation, Electricity Transmission, Urban Development, Coastal, Highly Productive Land, Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Industrial Process Heat, and Indigenous Biodiversity.

Of relevance to this application is the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. The objective of the NPSFM 2020 is to ensure that natural and physical resources are managed in a way that prioritises, first, the health and wellbeing of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems, second, the health needs of people, and third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. There are 15 policies to achieve this objective. It is my view that this application is not inconsistent with the objective of the NPS.

6.3.4 Regional Policy Statement

The RPS identifies the significant resource management issues of the region and sets out the objectives, policies and methods to address these issues and to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the Region. The RPS aims to ensure the way we use our resources does not tip the balance and compromise the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs.

The WRC's RPS was made operative on 20 May 2016. I have reviewed the following objectives and policies of the RPS with regard to this application.

Objectives & Policies

IM - O1 - Integrated management

IM - O2 - Resource use and development

IM - O3 - Decision making

IM - O4 – Health and Wellbeing of the Waikato River

IM-O6 – Ecosystem services

IM - O7 - Relationship of tāngata whenua with the environment

IM - O8 - Sustainable and efficient use of resources

IM - O9 - Amenity

LF-O1 – Mauri and values of fresh water bodies

LF-O4 - Values of soil

AIR-O1 – Air Quality

- IM - P1 - Integrated approach
- IM - P2 – Collaborative approach
- IM - P3 - Tāngata whenua
- IM - P4 - Regionally significant industry and primary production
- IM - P5 – Maintain and enhance areas of amenity value
- LF- P1 – Approach to identifying fresh water body values and managing fresh water bodies.
- LF -P3 - All fresh water bodies
- LF-P9 – Soil contaminants
- AIR – P2 – Manage discharges to air
- AIR – P3 – Manage adverse effects on amenity

I do not consider that the activity will be contrary to the RPS provisions provided that the activity is carried out as per the consent conditions I have proposed.

6.4 Regional Plan

The WRP is operative. The purpose of regional plans is to help the Council carry out its functions under s30 of the RMA.

Chapter 3.2 - Management of Water Resources

- 3.2.2 Objective
- Policy 4: Waikato Region Surface Water Class
- Policy 6: Contact Recreation Water Class
- Policy 7: Fishery Class

Chapter 3.5 - Discharges

- Policy 3: Alternative of discharging to water
- Policy 4: Discharges to land
- Policy 5: Groundwater
- 3.5.4.5 Discretionary Activity Rule

Chapter 6.1 - Regional and Local Air Management

- 6.1.2 - Objective
- Policy 2: Managing Effects of Other Discharges
- 6.1.9.2: Discretionary Activity Rule

Policy 3 and Policy 4 of Chapter 3.5 acknowledge that discharging contaminants into land is an appropriate alternative to direct discharges to water where soil conditions and topography allow, and where the adverse effects would be less. It is also recognised that by applying wastes to land the available nutrients and water can be reused. Policy 5 recognises that groundwater quality can be adversely affected by inappropriate use of soils to treat waste discharges. Correct design and operation of wastewater treatment and disposal systems is required to avoid adverse effects on groundwater and surface water resources.

The nearest mapped water body is the Waikato River which is 300 metres from the WWTP. It is classified as a Contact Recreation, Trout Fishery and Indigenous Fishery water body under the WRP. These classifications aim to provide a safe water quality environment for contact recreation and to maintain or enhance existing water quality and aquatic habitat in water bodies that currently have fisheries values. Given that the discharges are to land and the distance between the Waikato River and the disposal areas I consider the proposal is not contrary to the water classifications.

Overall, I consider that this application is consistent with the policies and objectives of the Waikato Regional Plan.

6.5 Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

The proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 (PWRP – Change 1) is applicable to the Waikato and Waipa River catchments. The PWRP – Change 1 was notified on the 22 October 2016. The purpose of the proposed plan change is to reduce point source and non-point sources of contaminants – nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and bacteria - entering waterbodies (including groundwater) within the Waikato and Waipa River catchments. The proposal is within the Waikato River Catchment.

As outlined in section 6.1 of this report, once the upgrades are completed to the WWTP, there are notable improvements expected to the discharge quality. These improvements will continue throughout the implementation of each proposed stage and the lifetime of the proposed consent. I am satisfied that the proposed discharge improvements provide a meaningful progression toward the short-term and 80-year attribute states.

6.6 Other Matters

6.6.1 Ngāti Tahu- Ngāti Whaoa Iwi Environmental Management Plan 2018

The iwi environmental plan is a living document developed by iwi, for iwi and to inform others about things important to iwi. It provides a guide to how management and protection of the environment can be achieved based on cultural and spiritual values of tangata whenua. The purpose of this plan is to identify environmental resources and issues within the Ngati Tahu- Ngati Whaoa rohe, and to guide the management of these resources from an iwi perspective. Enhancement, restoration and protection of iwi environmental and cultural values are an important focus of this plan. Three key approaches are identified which applies to all resources; recognition and representation, positive relationships, and engaging rangatahi.

I consider that the proposal is not inconsistent with the Ngāti Tahu-Ngāti Whaoa Rūnanga Trust Iwi Environmental Management Plan.

6.6.2 Raukawa Environmental Management Plan 2015 (Te Rautaki Taiao A Raukawa)

The Raukawa Environmental Management Plan 2015 represents the views and perspectives of Raukawa with regards to environmental resource management. The plan provides a statement of Raukawa values, experiences, and aspirations pertaining to the use and management of their environment.

I am satisfied that this proposal is not inconsistent with the Raukawa Environmental Management Plan 2015.

6.6.3 Ngāti Tūwharetoa Iwi Environmental Management Plan (NTIEMP)

The Ngāti Tūwharetoa Environmental Iwi Management Plan provides a background to, and identifies, key resource-based issues for Ngāti Tūwharetoa Whanui.

I consider this proposed activity will not adversely affect the natural resources or taonga in the area and as such the activity is not inconsistent with the Ngāti Tūwharetoa Environmental Iwi Management Plan.

6.7 Section 105 matters

I have had regard to the nature of the receiving environment. The type of treatment and disposal systems proposed are considered reasonable and realistic for this site. I am satisfied that the proposal is consistent with s105 of the RMA as the upgrades will result in an improvement in the quality of the wastewater discharge.

6.8 Section 107 matters

I have reviewed the provisions of s107 and consider that the proposed activity is unlikely to give rise to the effects listed in the Act.

7 Relevant Part 2 Considerations

The WRP and other relevant policies have been prepared with regard to Part 2 of the RMA and therefore the proposed activity has been considered subject to Part 2. Provided that the activity is carried out as per the consent conditions proposed, in my opinion, the proposed activities do not compromise any of these issues and therefore the overall purpose of the Act.

8 Discussion/Conclusions

Taupo District Council has applied for consent for the ongoing operation of wastewater infrastructure for the current and future needs of the Atiamuri community, including consent for discharges to land and discharges to air.

This activity has been assessed as a discretionary consent activity and has been considered in accordance with s104B of the Resource Management Act and the relevant policies and plans.

The main potential adverse environmental effects associated with the discharge are considered to be;

- Effects on groundwater;
- Effects on surface water;
- Soil quality; and
- Amenity effects.

I consider the environmental effects that have been assessed in this report can be avoided, remedied or mitigated, and that the effects will be less than minor, provided that the recommended consent conditions are complied with.

Consent duration

The applicant has requested a consent duration of 35 years given the significant investment and improvement with the proposed new treatment and disposal system. I consider a 35 year term appropriate for the wastewater discharge consent.

9 Monitoring

WRC has a statutory obligation under section 35 of the RMA to monitor the effects of resource consents being exercised in its region. The actual and reasonable costs incurred by WRC when undertaking this monitoring will be recovered from the consent holder. It should be noted that if a condition(s) of consent is not complied with, the activity may receive an elevated level of monitoring until WRC is satisfied that the consent is being exercised in accordance with consent conditions.

To provide certainty that the wastewater treatment and discharge system will perform as intended I consider that the conditions of consent should include:

- The control of surface water/stormwater to ensure it does not affect the wastewater treatment system and disposal system,
- A management plan, including a programme of maintenance and inspections that is implemented and retained for the duration of the consent,
- An as-built plan to scale, including the location of all key components of the wastewater system.
- Recording and provision of wastewater flow volume data,
- Groundwater monitoring, and,
- Wastewater quality monitoring.

I have considered all matters of relevant policy in recommending conditions of consent that in my view, are in line with the policy provisions of the WRP and recommended review provisions. I also consider that relevant administrative conditions should be included.

10 Recommended Decision

I recommend that in accordance with 104B resource consent application APP145993 be granted in accordance with the duration and conditions prescribed in the attached Resource Consent Certificate for the following reasons:

- The activity will have less than minor actual or potential adverse effects on the environment
- The activity is not contrary to any relevant plans or policies
- The activity is consistent with the purpose and principles of the Resource Management Act 1991



Rosemary Towl
Consents Officer
Resource Use Directorate

Date: 13 May 2024

11 Decision

That the resource consent application is granted in accordance with the above recommendations.



Donna Jones
Team Leader - Consents
Resource Use Directorate

Date: 15 May 2024

RESOURCE CONSENT CERTIFICATE

Resource Consent: AUTH145993.01.01

File Number: 60 01 86A

*Pursuant to the Resource Management Act 1991, the
Regional Council hereby grants consent to:*

Taupo District Council
Private Bag 2005
Taupo Mail Centre
Taupo 3352

(hereinafter referred to as the Consent Holder)

Consent Type: Discharge Permit

Consent Subtype: Land - sewage

Activity authorised: To discharge treated municipal wastewater into the ground and associated discharge of odour to air.

Location: (Atiamuri Village) SH1 - Atiamuri

Map reference: NZTM 1863940 E 5745905 N

Consent duration: This consent will commence in accordance with section 116 of the Resource Management Act 1991 and will expire on 14 May 2059.

Subject to the conditions overleaf:

CONDITIONS

General

1. The discharge of treated municipal wastewater to land and associated discharge of odour to air authorised by this consent must be undertaken in general accordance with the following application documentation “APP145993 - RC Appln - Discharge to Air & Liquid Waste - Atiamuri Wastewater Treatment Plant - Taupo District Council - 31/08/2023” (Waikato Regional Council document number 27142506), and as identified in the resource consent conditions below which must prevail in the event of any inconsistency between the aforementioned documentation and the conditions.
2. The consent holder must be responsible for all contracted operations relating to the exercise of this resource consent and must ensure contractors are made aware of the conditions of this consent and ensure compliance with those conditions.
3. The consent holder must notify Waikato Regional Council in writing no more than 10 working days after confirmation of the selected wastewater treatment design as per the application document. Any variation from this design must be of suitable scale and treatment capacity to meet the discharge standards of conditions 5, 6, 7 and 8.
4. The consent holder must notify Waikato Regional Council in writing at least 10 working days prior to commencement of construction works associated with each Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) upgrade and no later than 10 working days when each WWTP upgrade is fully commissioned, whereby the upgrades must occur no later than:
 - a. Upgrades to the WWTP must be completed by 31 December 2026; and
 - b. Subsequent upgrades to the plant to increase treatment capacity when required.

Advice note: all upgrades must ensure compliance with Condition 7 is maintained

Discharge Quantity

5. The volume of treated wastewater discharged to land must not exceed:
 - a. A maximum daily flow of 64 cubic metres of treated wastewater for the current WWTP operation until such time as the WWTP upgrade is commissioned, following which condition 5(b) applies.
 - b. A maximum daily flow of 137 cubic metres of treated wastewater for the upgraded WWTP until such time as the 25 properties currently on septic tanks in Atiamuri Village are connected, following which condition 5(c) applies.
 - c. The maximum daily flow must be within the design capacity of the WWTP and the disposal system and must not in any instance exceed 226 cubic metres of treated wastewater.

Advice note: A day is defined as the 24 hour period from midnight to midnight.

Discharge Quality

6. The consent holder must ensure that the mean daily Total Nitrogen (TN) discharged to land does not exceed:
 - a. 1.4 kilograms per day until such time as the 25 properties currently on septic tanks are connected, following which condition 6 (b) applies.

- b. 2.25 kilograms per day following connection of the properties 25 properties currently on septic tanks.

The mean must be calculated as the mean of the prior twelve consecutive monthly samples, required by condition 18.

7. The consent holder must ensure, that three months after the WWTP upgrade is commissioned, the quality of the discharge does not exceed the following parameters:
 - Annual mean of 20 milligrams per litre of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (20mg/l BOD₅),
 - Annual mean of 20 milligrams per litre of Total Suspended Solids (20mg/l SS),
 - Annual mean of 5 milligrams per litre of Ammoniacal Nitrogen (5mg/l N),
 - Annual mean of 25 milligrams per litre of Total Nitrogen (25mg/l N).

Advice Note: *The allowance of three months after the upgrades are commissioned will allow for stabilisation of the new process.*

The mean must be calculated as the mean of the prior twelve consecutive monthly samples required by condition 18.

8. Treated wastewater must be discharged onto the ground at a loading rate that does not exceed 203 millimetres per day (203 litres per square metre per day) or the absorptive capacity of the soils, whichever is the lesser.
9. The discharge must be uniformly distributed over the wastewater disposal area.
10. There must be no overland flow or ponding of wastewater from any part of the wastewater treatment and disposal system.
11. A reserve area that is equal to 50% of the disposal area must be available at all times. To this end, the consent holder must ensure that no permanent hard surfaces (for example concrete) is placed over the reserve area for the duration of the consent.
12. The consent holder must ensure that there is no activity undertaken on top of the disposal area that may cause damage to the disposal system (e.g. stock grazing, deep rooting trees or car parking etc.).

Site Management

13. The consent holder must retain, review and update as necessary a Management Plan for the wastewater treatment and disposal operation. The Management Plan must address (but not be limited to):
 - a. A description of the WWTP and disposal system, including a map and aerial photos;
 - b. A description and schedule of the routine inspection, operating parameters, set-points, monitoring and maintenance procedures to be undertaken;
 - c. A description of the sampling location/s and a map showing their locations, frequency and methodology for sampling the treated wastewater discharge;
 - d. A schedule of the critical aspects of the WWTP and associated hazardous substances and the detailed response and incident management plans to remedy any possible variations from normal plant operation that could potentially affect the quality of the discharges to air, land and water;

- e. Details of contingency plans and procedures to address power or equipment failure at the WWTP;
 - f. A contingency plan for action to be taken in the event of wastewater breakout from the treatment system and/or disposal areas.
 - g. Details of emergency contact persons or positions, including contact phone numbers;
 - h. Procedures for recording routine maintenance and all major repairs that are undertaken; and
 - i. A schedule or checklist of maintenance requirements for the wastewater treatment system and disposal areas. The maintenance requirements must also specify that the systems must be maintained on a minimum six-monthly frequency.
14. The Management Plan must be reviewed and certified by a suitably qualified wastewater specialist and provided to the Waikato Regional Council within three months of the date of commencement of this consent and after each upgrade thereafter.
15. The wastewater treatment and disposal system must be operated, maintained and managed by appropriately trained operators in accordance with the Management Plan pursuant to condition 13 of this consent.

Monitoring and Maintenance

16. Within one month of completion of any upgrade to the new wastewater treatment or disposal system, the consent holder must submit to the Waikato Regional Council the following:
- a. An 'as built' plan of the treatment and disposal system; and
 - b. The design report for the treatment plant that states the maximum flow rates and daily nitrogen load limits.
 - c. Verification from the installer of the treatment and disposal systems that it has been installed in accordance with the information submitted in support of the application and best practice.
17. Within one month of commissioning any upgrade of the wastewater treatment system, the consent holder must, to the satisfaction of Waikato Regional Council, provide evidence that a maintenance contract or maintenance programme for the system exists, and which is to be applied for the duration of consent.
18. The consent holder must provide the Waikato Regional Council with a Monitoring Plan within 6 months of the consent being granted to a) determine the quality, quantity and variability of the treated wastewater prior to discharge, and b) determine the effects of the discharge on groundwater. The Monitoring Plan must include at least the following:
- a. Provision of sampling at an appropriate sampling point immediately prior to discharge, to determine the total-nitrogen, nitrate-nitrogen, ammoniacal-nitrogen, dissolved reactive phosphorus, five-day biochemical oxygen demand (BOD5) concentrations and E.Coli numbers at monthly intervals throughout the year.
 - b. Provision of sampling from at least three groundwater monitoring bores to be installed within 6 months of the consent being granted (one upgradient of the disposal field, and two bores downgradient within the influence of the discharge) to determine:
 - i. Dissolved Oxygen, E Coli, Conductivity, pH, Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen, Nitrate Nitrogen at three monthly intervals (i.e. four times) throughout the year (see note 1)
 - ii. Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus, Iron, Manganese, Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Chloride, Sulfate and Bicarbonate at annual intervals (i.e. once per year)

- c. The consent holder must measure the groundwater levels in the monitoring bores at three monthly intervals (i.e. four times) throughout the year.

Advice note: *A separate landuse consent is required prior to drilling of the monitoring bores.*

The monitoring plan must be certified in writing by the Waikato Regional Council acting in a technical certification capacity prior to any monitoring required by this consent commencing and the consent holder must undertake all monitoring required by this consent in accordance with the certified monitoring plan.

All wastewater quality analyses must be undertaken by an IANZ accredited or equivalent laboratory. All methods used must be appropriate for the wastewater analyses undertaken.

Sample collection, storage, and reporting of results must be carried out in accordance with IANZ, Telarc or other similar method approved in advance by the Waikato Regional Council. Sample results must be forwarded to the Waikato Regional Council at quarterly intervals. Results must be provided in an electronic format.

19. The monitoring programme developed under condition 18, must be reviewed and updated five years from the commencement of this consent and every five years thereafter, or earlier if required due to any significant changes to the wastewater quality, the WWTP infrastructure, or the operation or management of the Atiamuri WWTP. Any updated monitoring programme must be submitted to Waikato Regional Council for approval in a technical certification capacity. Monitoring undertaken under any updated monitoring programme may not commence until Waikato Regional Council has approved the updated monitoring programme. Waikato Regional Council may direct the consent holder to review and update the monitoring programme if, in their opinion, any significant changes to wastewater quality, infrastructure, operation or management of the Atiamuri WWTP occurs.

Advice note: *review of the monitoring programme can include, but is not limited to, the reduction of the parameters requiring sampling under condition 18 (b) ii*

For the avoidance of doubt: *Monitoring under an existing monitoring programme must continue until an updated monitoring programme is approved.*

20. The consent holder must install a flow measuring system to record the volume of treated wastewater discharged from the WWTP on a cumulative basis. The system must have a reliable verification and must be maintained to an accuracy of +/- 5 percent. Prior to exercising this consent, evidence from a suitably qualified person showing that the water measuring system is verified as accurate to +/- 5 percent must be provided to the Waikato Regional Council.
21. The total flow discharged every day must be recorded.
22. Access to the meter must be provided to the staff and agents of the Waikato Regional Council at all times.
23. The consent holder must engage a suitably qualified person to undertake additional verification of the water measuring system accuracy:
 - a. At the written request of the Waikato Regional Council;
 - b. At a frequency of no less than five yearly from the date of the first verification required by condition 20;
 - c. To the satisfaction of the Waikato Regional Council.

Evidence documenting each additional verification must be forwarded to the WRC within one month of the calibration being completed.

24. The results of the monitoring required by conditions 18 and 21 of this consent must be provided to the Waikato Regional Council by 30 January, 30 April, 30 July and 30 October each year.
25. The consent holder must provide to the Waikato Regional Council a written report by 30 October each year, addressing the following:
 - a. Summary of all monitoring results required by conditions of this resource consent for the year ending 30 June;
 - b. Critical analysis of the monitoring data collected and comments on any emerging trends;
 - c. Comment on compliance with the conditions of this resource consent;
 - d. Comment on the performance and adequacy of the disposal system, and matters of compliance;
 - e. Comment on the environmental effects of the discharge including effects to soil and groundwater;
 - f. Report and discuss any operational improvements undertaken at the site;
 - g. Reasons for non-compliance or difficulties in achieving compliance with the conditions of this resource consent and a description of and a summary of the efficacy of any remedial works undertaken; and
 - h. Make recommendations on alterations/additions to the monitoring programmes;
 - i. Report and discuss any complaints received regarding the waste disposal operation;
 - j. The total volume of wastewater discharged per day.
 - k. Other issue considered relevant to the consent holder.
26. The consent holder must notify the Waikato Regional Council within 24 hours (where practicable) of the consent holder becoming aware of any accidental discharge, plant breakdown or other circumstance which is likely to result in the limits of this consent being exceeded. The consent holder must, within seven working days of the incident occurring, provide a written report to the Waikato Regional Council, identifying the non-compliance, possible causes and steps to ensure future compliance, which may include but not be limited to an investigation of the treatment plant operation and capabilities, and the implementation of remedial action to prevent recurring noncompliance.

Stormwater

27. Surface stormwater and stormwater runoff must be directed away from the wastewater disposal field. If necessary, the consent holder must provide suitable drainage to ensure there is a clear flow path for surface water to be directed around the discharge area.
28. The wastewater treatment system must be maintained in as watertight a condition as practicable to prevent the ingress of stormwater or groundwater into the system.

Separation Distances

29. The consent holder must ensure that there is a minimum separation distance of at least 600 millimetres of unsaturated soil between the base of the disposal system and the groundwater table at all times.

Complaints Register

30. The consent holder must maintain a Complaints Register for any complaints received by the consent holder about the treatment and discharge operations. The Register must record:
- a. The date, time and duration of the alleged event/incident that has resulted in the complaint;
 - b. The location of the complainant when the complaint was detected by the complainant;
 - c. The possible cause of the complaint including any relevant event/incident and its duration;
 - d. In relation to odour, the weather conditions and wind direction at the site when the odour was detected by the complainant; and
 - e. Any remedial action undertaken by the consent holder in response to the complaint.

The Complaints Register must be made available to Waikato Regional Council at all reasonable times and must be provided upon request. Complaints which may indicate non-compliance with the conditions of this permit must be forwarded to WRC within five (5) working days of the complaint being received.

Odour

30. The consent holder must ensure that the treatment and disposal of wastewater does not cause an odour that is objectionable to the extent that it causes an adverse effect at or beyond the boundary of the subject property.

Advice note: Any odour will be determined as objectionable, or otherwise, using the relevant criteria set out in the Waikato Regional Plan for assessment of odour complaints.

31. If an emission of odour occurs that has an objectionable or offensive effect, the consent holder must provide a written report to the Waikato Regional Council within five days of being notified of such by the Waikato Regional Council. The report must specify:
- the cause or likely cause of the event and any factors that influenced its severity
 - the nature and timing of any measures implemented by the consent holder to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects; and
 - the steps to be taken in future to prevent recurrence of similar events

Advice note: For the purpose of conditions 30 and 31 of this resource consent, the Waikato Regional Council will consider an odour effect that is objectionable or offensive to have occurred if any appropriately experienced officer of the Waikato Regional Council deems it so after having regard to:

- (i) the frequency, intensity, duration, offensiveness and location of the odour; and/or
 - (ii) receipt of complaints from neighbours or the public; or
 - (iii) relevant written advice or a report from an Environmental Health Officer of a territorial authority or health authority.
32. The consent holder must notify Waikato Regional Council as soon as reasonably practicable but in no event longer than 24 hours after the receipt of any complaint which may indicate noncompliance with the conditions of this consent.

The consent holder must, within 10 working days of the incident occurring, provide a written report to Waikato Regional Council identifying the breach, possible causes and steps to ensure future compliance.

Review

33. The Waikato Regional Council may at any time in 2030 and every five years thereafter, serve notice on the consent holder under section 128(1) of the Resource Management Amendment Act (1991), of its intention to review the conditions of this resource consent for the following purposes:
- i) To review the effectiveness of the conditions of this consent in avoiding or mitigating any adverse effects on the environment from the exercise of this consent and if necessary, to avoid, remedy, or mitigate such effects by way of further or amended consent conditions;
 - ii) To review the adequacy of and the necessity for monitoring undertaken by the consent holder and, if necessary, to address any inadequacy by way of further or amended conditions;
 - iii) to review the consistency of the conditions of this consent with future changes to the Vision and Strategy set out in Schedule 1 of the Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act 2010 and Schedule 1 of the Nga Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012, and any subsequent changes thereof and if necessary, to address any inconsistency of the conditions of this consent with the Vision and Strategy by way of further or amended conditions;

Administration

34. The consent holder must pay to the WRC any administrative charge fixed in accordance with section 36 of the Resource Management Act 1991, or any charge prescribed in accordance with regulations made under section 360 of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Advice Notes - General

1. In accordance with section 125 RMA, this consent shall lapse five (5) years after the date on which it was granted unless it has been given effect to before the end of that period.
2. This resource consent does not give any right of access over private or public property. Arrangements for access must be made between the consent holder and the property owner.
3. This resource consent is transferable to another owner or occupier of the land concerned, upon application, on the same conditions and for the same use as originally granted (s.134-137 RMA). The transfer of water, including changes of location, may occur as provided for in Chapter 3.4 of the Waikato Regional Plan, subject to the requirements of those rules.
4. The consent holder may apply to change the conditions of the resource consent under s.127 RMA.
5. The reasonable costs incurred by WRC arising from supervision and monitoring of this/these consents will be charged to the consent holder. This may include but not be limited to routine inspection of the site by WRC officers or agents, liaison with the consent holder, responding to complaints or enquiries relating to the site, and review and assessment of compliance with the conditions of consents.
6. Note that pursuant to s332 of the RMA 1991, enforcement officers may at all reasonable times go onto the property that is the subject of this consent, for the purpose of carrying out inspections, surveys, investigations, tests, measurements or taking samples.
7. If you intend to replace this consent upon its expiry, please note that an application for a new consent made at least 6 months prior to this consent's expiry gives you the right to continue exercising this consent after it expires in the event that your application is not processed prior to this consent's expiry.
8. If at any time during the resource consent period, you no longer require your consent, it may be surrendered, in whole or part, by giving written notice of such to the consent authority. Alternatively, please contact Resource Use staff on 0800 800 402 and we can provide you with a surrender form. Note that the surrender takes formal effect when you receive a notice of acceptance of the surrender from the Council.