

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS ON BEHALF OF THE
GISBORNE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER OF an application for resource consent to construct and operate stopbanks and various ancillary activities, to construct and operate a culvert with flap gate, disturbance of HAIL land and construct specified infrastructure within 100m of a potential wetland, at Te Karaka (LR-2026-113441-00, LV-2026-113442-00, LL-2026-113443-00, WS-2026-113444-00, DW-2026-113686-00, DL-2026-113687-00)

EVIDENCE OF JACQUALINE & DAVID MANUEL

EVIDENCE OF JACQUALINE & DAVID MANUEL

Introduction

- 1 Our names are Jackie and David Manuel, and we operate the Pine Hollow Riding School and Riverview Horse Treks out of our property at 2424 Matawai Road.
- 2 We made a submission on the proposed stopbank works.
- 3 We're making this statement to assist the Commissioners to understand the effects the constructions works and new stopbank will have on our property and on our business, and the service it provides to the community.

Our property

- 4 2424 Matawai Road, Te Karaka, has been in our family since 2006. We have operated the riding school and horse trekking activities from there since 2014.
- 5 The Property is very good for our riding school and horse trekking facilities. We are only a 25 minute drive from Gisborne which makes us easily accessible for many in the district, including many schools.
- 6 Our property borders the river, providing access for trekking and also modest amounts of shingle that we use for our farm tracks, parking areas and arena.
- 7 We have a roughly 40m x 60m arena that we installed in 2014. It is quite sheltered from the prevailing winds, as it is east of the shelter belt that is on the neighbour's property.
- 8 On higher ground we have our house and a cottage. We also have a shed with a concrete floor. Further to this and raised to similar height we have a tackroom and single accommodation, this is attached to our four bay stables. Attached to the arena is a pavilion which is used for helmets, tack etc and meeting point for clients.
- 9 The property is subdivided into paddocks serviced by a central laneway. These paddocks are strip-grazed with our 42 horses and ponies in mobs of around 5. This is so we can manage their individual feed needs and their weight, as if they eat too much fresh grass they can get colic or they can founder, both of which can kill them and quickly. As well as managing their social groups. At present we have 7 mobs which are shifted every two to three days. Their breaks are supplemented with baleage, most of which is made by us on the property.

- 10 A mob of sheep and cattle are moved around the property to clean up after the horses. There is a set of sheep and cattle yards that are used for all stock on the property.
- 11 Outside the stop bank is grazed in a similar fashion. It has been re-grassed in horse mix grass this summer as part of our usual pasture rotation, at \$780/ha in price for the seed, which doesn't include costs of prepping and working it into the soil. The last two seasons it has had crop of chicory with lambs fattened on it and it now needs a year in grass.
- 12 As we said in our Submission, our water supply for the Property is sourced from our well over by the river. This supplies our dwelling, our taps in the yards/stables, and our stockwater troughs.

Pine Hollow Riding School and River View Horse Treks

- 13 A typical week for us depends on whether it's during the school term or the school holidays.
- 14 During the school term Monday to Thursday during the day we do Equine Therapy. Equine therapy is for school groups, of mostly neurodiverse tamariki and rangatahi, and also the disability trust. We also have other organisations come in, which bring a mixture of tamariki and rangatahi out including troubled youth (for example, Oranga Tamariki, HCN, Wrap Around, and lots of other agencies). Sometimes we have treks during this time. During the week we also have after school lessons as well. Sundays are a big whanau day with lessons, pony rides and treks. Many families stay for a few hours talking with other families and eating Kai and enjoying the ponies.
- 15 During the School holidays we run a holiday program from Monday-Friday which is very popular over this time. We also do treks, pony rides and some lessons. On a Sunday we do lessons, some treks and some pony rides on during the school holidays.
- 16 Saturdays are set aside for birthday parties and other group bookings and treks – Saturdays are more 'by appointment only' days and we try and take a bit of a break ourselves where we can.

Noise impacts on our horses and ponies

- 17 Our ponies and horses are great riding school and trekking ponies as they are pretty steady and safe. They are fine with ordinary traffic noise down the state highway

when they are in the arena because they are used to it and are 'at work' and expecting a bit of stuff going on. But they can still be startled by unexpected noises and things happening. The ponies particularly don't like it when trucks or trailers drive past with flapping or noisy parts – like trucks using their horns, or trailers with tarpaulins or unsecure loads banging about. Another thing that can happen is objects falling off trailers which can be a regular occurrence when townies come out to the Te Karaka dump and can startle the ponies. We know the actions of the general public are not something that the Council can control while the stop bank construction is happening, but we give these examples to show that while our ponies and horses are great and can handle a lot, it's the one-off and loud or unexpected incidents that can still cause distress.

- 18 Another thing the Council and its experts need to understand is that just because most of our ponies and horses don't react to something, doesn't mean it's not potentially a big issue. Horses are herd animals and if one of them has an adverse reaction, their reaction can set off the flight response in the others even if the others didn't initially react to the first 'thing'. Again, our ponies and horses are generally very calm and great at dealing with all sorts of things and that's what makes them great riding school and trekking ponies, but at the end of the day they are animals and their reactions are not always predictable.
- 19 We want to make sure that the Council's stopbank project won't be increasing any risks to our clients, to our staff, and to our horses and ponies and that's why we are very concerned about noise. In that sense, it's not so much about maximum limits and things, it is more about how unexpected events are best prevented, and then if they do occur and the ponies have a reaction, that it is managed. So it is really crucial to our operations that the Council and its contractors get this right from the outset.
- 20 We saw that the Council's acoustic expert has recommended there be no slamming of tailgates when horses are nearby. That is a good condition to have in the management plan.
- 21 We would also request the Council implement an 'instant pause' if any of the horses or ponies start galloping while in their paddocks. This could happen with loud empty dump trucks driving to and from the site, or from excavator work (etc). The instant pause would mean the contractors have to stop movement and wait for the ponies to settle down again, before the works can restart. This wouldn't require a site shutdown or engines to be turned off – when a 'group gallop' has happened before, say from a gunshot or fireworks going off, it usually settles down within 5 - 15 minutes of the 'thing' stopping. It would cause very minimal disruption to the construction works but can make all the difference to our animals.

- 22 If a horse or pony has an adverse reaction to something and isn't able to process it and turn it into a less negative or neutral experience, then they can have another heightened response the next time something happens or as soon as they see the thing (eg. truck or loader) that set them off last time. If it turns into a neutral experience - as in the horse can settle down and process it - then they are more likely to have a neutral response the next time. And then you can help build their tolerance from there.
- 23 We would expect this 'instant pause' to only be needed or used at the beginning of the works on or near our property, but would like it to apply to the entire construction period (just in case).
- 24 This 'instant pause' would also lessen the risk of the ponies or horses injuring themselves whilst startled, for example overreaching on themselves or running into or through a fence, because the incident that set them off would stop rather than continuing and exacerbating their flight reaction.

Access to our property

- 25 Our main driveway is used by our private customer vehicles and horse floats and trucks accessing stables. The driveway is used from around 7am to approx 6pm by clients and staff. Ourselves and our family also use this driveway at all hours.
- 26 When accessing property from the East (ie from Gisborne, turning right into our driveway), people use the flat and part-grass camber on the left side of the road to pass. This is especially so when in a truck or towing a horse float and slowing down to use one of our two driveways. There have been near misses when people have slowed down and indicated to the right and vehicles come up behind them, or someone at the back of the queue decides to overtake and risks t-boning the car or float turning right.
- 27 A lot of our clients coming from Gisborne will pull off to the left onto the grass camber to wait for a gap to turn right over both lanes and into our driveway. Otherwise they are sat stationary in the middle of a 100 km/h State Highway waiting for traffic to slow down or have a gap. Below is a photo showing tyre wear on the left side from our clients, but also sometimes from impatient drivers overtaking them if they are in the lane and turning right.



Photo facing east (heading towards Gisborne). The shed in the top-left corner is our shed, and Mr Burgess' driveway just behind it. This area of camber is just opposite our main driveway.



Photo facing east (heading towards Te Karaka). Tyre marks showing where cars and trucks pull left, before turning right into our second driveway / trade entrance. This side is much flatter on the camber. This is what we will lose once the roadworks are done. Note the dashed yellow no overtaking line which starts here and goes to the Te Karaka turn off.

- 28 The second driveway is also used for horse float, truck access to property, though is used a bit less often than our main driveway. WSP has not modelled truck and float exit and entry movements into this driveway, but they need to in order to understand the negative impact the road heightening will have on the use of our property.
- 29 Pre Gabrielle when the marae was operating there was talk of dropping the speed limit to 70 km from the Marae to the Te Karaka turn off. Meetings were held with NZTA but nothing came of it. Having lived at this property a long time and operated here quite a while, our experience of seeing and sometimes being in a near-miss, is that this section of road needs to be slower. And once the stopbank raises a section of the road, extending the existing no-passing dashed line up and just past both of our driveways would be even better.
- 30 The models can say one thing, but how people actually use the road is sometimes a whole other story. It's really surprising to us that the Council's traffic expert has not visited the site and or driven it themselves. We don't want to see an accident happen first, before better safety measures are put in place.
- 31 The second driveway is also the starting point for our hill treks and access point for bringing ponies across the road from our lease block. The trek leader and helpers have high vis on. They all get together beside the road and wait for a break in traffic. The speed of the traffic can make it difficult at times to cross the road, or we have to wait a long time for a break in traffic. A slower speed limit would be more helpful.

The current stopbank

- 32 The layout of our riding school and use of the property works in alignment with the stopbank.
- 33 At present we use the stopbank to access our back block for grazing stock and firewood, and the river for horse treks and shingle. Motorbike access to get to the far end of the property by the oxidation pond and bringing ponies back from the far end of the property. It is really important that once the construction works are done that we can still access over the stopbank and into our paddocks on the river-side for our ongoing use.

Our water supply

- 34 Council's planner says in his evidence that our well is not on the Gisborne Council GIS map and that it needs to be confirmed that the supply was lawfully established.

- 35 As far as we are aware, the well has been there a very long time and didn't need a consent when it was installed. David grew up in the Te Karaka area and remembers the previous farming operations that were here, and they had long drawn water from the river, but then after the Bola storm, many moved to wells so they were less likely to suffer damage in future floods. We continue to use it for our house supply and for our stock water troughs, under the permitted activity rules of the plan.

Flooding at the Property

- 36 The borrow pits are going to lower our back paddocks. As we said in our submission at paragraphs 15.24-15.26, there is already a low spot in our back paddocks, which cannot sustain pasture cover because it stays so wet. If the borrow pits go to as low, or lower, than that spot already is, then our back paddocks will be worthless.



- 37 In previous severe rain events, the culverts in the existing stopbank do not drain water fast enough, which has exacerbated flooding/ponding at the property. Essentially, the culverts are too small to drain adequately, once water backs up on our side of the stopbank. This bottleneck flooding probably happens two to three times per year. A general nuisance as we lose access over one of our crossings and more water on the property due to this backing up.
- 38 The flooding and ponding gets much worse if there are also shelterbelt prunings, bottles etc that float down the drain, blocking the culverts and around the property. The Council is supposed to keep the culvert clear, but they do not always keep on top of it. Below is a photo of when the culvert got clogged 2-3 months ago, by lots of debris from upstream properties. The ponding came up higher than this, but had subsided a little by the time we could take the photo. This is a fairly typical example, but it does get much worse than this.



David and Jacquie Manual

22 September 2026