

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS
FOR GISBORNE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER: of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER: of applications by Gisborne District
Council for resource consents associated
with wastewater overflows

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF DAVID RAYMOND KENT WILSON
– OVERVIEW AND GOVERNANCE**

13 July 2021

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INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is David Raymond Kent Wilson. I am employed by the Gisborne District Council (**GDC** or **Council**) as Director – Community Lifelines. I have the qualifications and experience as outlined in my Evidence in Chief (**EIC**).

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

2. Gisborne City is located within the wider East Coast region, with an estimated population of approximately 36,100 in 2016.
3. Gisborne has the highest proportion of Māori of all regions, with 53% identifying as Māori in the 2018 census (compared with 16% nationally). The district scores highly on the social deprivation index¹. Income levels are below national medians, and rates affordability is a particular concern and focus for Council.
4. The Gisborne City Wastewater Scheme receives wastewater from the entire city. The current population served by the wastewater network is 32,579. The current population is expected to grow to about 56,000 by 2051 and accordingly network capacity and associated infrastructure needs to provide for future population growth over the lifetime of the asset. The operation of the network is set out in detail in the evidence of Mr West.
5. The provision of effective and efficient wastewater services to the community is a critical function of Council and GDC has obligations and responsibilities under the Health Act 1956 to provide sanitary works. The wastewater network is recognised as critical infrastructure and defined as a lifeline utility under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.
6. In addition, Council's infrastructure is a valuable community asset. The value of Council's wastewater infrastructure, including all network infrastructure has an estimated replacement cost of \$128 million. That does not include Council's municipal wastewater treatment plant (**WWTP**), which has an estimated depreciated replacement cost of \$29.6 million², or the ocean outfall pipe.
7. GDC's vision for the region is set out in Council's Spatial Plan. I have briefly set out several of the outcomes and aspirations from the Spatial Plan in my EIC, and those

¹ NZDep 2013 index,

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/wellington/departments/publichealth/research/hirp/otago020194.html>

² LTP at 3-6; noting also that approximately \$34 million is scheduled to upgrade the WWTP

aspirations have been taken into account in the development and progression of the Project.

8. Council's management structure is set out in my EIC. **[Refer Figure 13 of Application]** Responsibility for the operation and management of the wastewater network is managed by Council's Community Lifelines Department. Waste management, and other operational functions of Council, are reported to Council's Operations Committee.
9. GDC currently has a dedicated Wastewater Management Committee (**WMC**) as a standing committee of Council. It comprises of four elected members and four iwi members.
10. The WMC was established as a requirement of the conditions on the resource consents for the upgrade of, and discharge from the WWTP. The Committee's primary role is to ensure the implementation, commissioning and monitoring of the WWTP is carried out in accordance with the consent conditions (which includes a number of periodic technical reviews).
11. The WMC has a number of functions but it is also responsible for ensuring the development of appropriate educational information to encourage reductions in domestic and industrial wastewater, and administering the Tūranganui-a-Kiwa Water Quality Enhancement Project. Council is responsible for this project, with it being defined and developed by the WMC as a vehicle for integrated research, monitoring, planning and specific projects that will aim to improve the mauri and water quality of Tūranganui-a-Kiwa as related to wastewater matters. The WMC established the KIWA Group to assist in this work. The evidence of Mr Kanz outlines in more detail how the KIWA Group was engaged to assist with tangata whenua input into this Application, the recommendations provided by the KIWA Group and the workstreams that are currently underway to address these.
12. Given the current role of the WMC, its inherent understanding of wastewater matters and its wider role in developing and administering the Tūranganui-a-Kiwa Water Quality Enhancement Project, Council's view is that this standing committee is also the appropriate entity to undertake oversight in relation to any consents (if granted) for this Application. As described further in the evidence of Mr Mayhew, the Applicant's draft conditions provide for annual reporting to the WMC, provision of the 5 Year Report to WMC, and for the WMC (and Tangata Whenua Reference Group) to provide input into the 10 Year Review and resetting of targets.

13. Consent is being sought on the basis of a substantial programme of improvement, known as the DrainWise programme, along with improved overflow management, appropriate overflow response and monitoring, proactive network maintenance; and operational and other network management improvements. This programme of improvements continues the substantial work already undertaken by Council, in which it has invested significant resources and expenditure. DrainWise is explained in detail in the evidence of Mr Kanz.
14. The DrainWise programme remains a key part of Council's Three Waters work, as demonstrated through both the 2018-2028 LTP and the 2021-2031 LTP. I have set out these matters in detail in my EIC. It should be noted that alongside funding identified for DrainWise and related work, Council has also identified issues regarding infrastructure renewals in the LTP. The ability to develop and improve drainage infrastructure needs to be considered alongside other priorities and the need for GDC to manage affordability in the context of infrastructure challenges and Council's comparatively low income levels and high social deprivation scores³.
15. Council maintains its strong commitment to consulting and working with tangata whenua in making decisions (which is also a key direction in the Spatial Plan); as demonstrated through this process which it understands is challenging and difficult for tangata whenua. It is committed to a programme that will ensure that over time those discharges will be reduced. The Applicant is committed to working with tangata whenua to mitigate effects and better understand priorities while the progressive reduction is implemented. Again, this is reflected in the draft conditions put forward by the Applicant, which is discussed in more detail by Mr Mayhew.
16. Finally, I note the issue of consent term, which is addressed further by Mr Mayhew. The Applicant's position on consent term was set out in the January s92 response, as outlined in paragraph 9.12 of the Section 42A Report. The Applicant's view is that the Gisborne wastewater network is fundamental public infrastructure and a lifeline utility. It considers that better environmental outcomes will be achieved through a longer consent term and targets which are required to be met at key points. This will facilitate better long-term infrastructure planning for this critical community asset and a dedicated pathway to continual improvement from an environmental and cultural perspective, rather than relying on the blunt instrument of a reduced consent term. It would not be 'business as usual' as asserted by some of the submitters. Rather, Council will be

³ LTP at 3-17

bound by the terms and conditions of the resource consent (if granted), which provide for a high level of reporting and transparency regarding its overflows. Again, the details of the consent conditions proposed by the Applicant will be addressed in the evidence of Mr Mayhew.

David Raymond Kent Wilson

13 July 2021