

**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)

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**EVIDENCE OF TRACY WILSON**

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## EVIDENCE OF TRACY WILSON

### Introduction

- 1 Kia ora. My name is Tracy Wilson and I live at 103 Kanakanaia Road, Te Karaka.
- 2 I made a submission on the proposed stopbank works. I wasn't sure how the submission process worked – I have never done or been involved in anything like this before – and wasn't aware of the deadline until someone told me that I better put a submission in. So I quickly sent in my submission.
- 3 I wanted to submit this statement to give some more context to the topics in my submission and ask more questions of the Council and Commissioners about the proposed stopbank layout and construction works.

### My submission and my evidence document

- 4 In my submission I said:
- (a) I opposed the proposed moving of the stop bank layout;
  - (b) I am concerned about the volume of water that would flow over our land and how this would affect our property value and ability to get insurance; and
  - (c) That I wanted clear advice on the compensation to the affected properties, not just the Council saying "well we could do this, or maybe that".
- 5 I understand the Commissioners have clarified that compensation and the Public Works Act aspects of the stopbank are not for them to manage or decide in this process.
- 6 In my evidence document I wanted to talk more about our property and how the changes to the flood models will affect us, because of how the stopbank is proposed to be moved.

### Our property

- 7 I live at 103 Kanakanaia Road, Te Karaka and have done so since 2008, although we purchased the land in 2004 before we moved in.





- 8 The river flats to the north are used for grazing and making hay. The higher land in the southern area of our property is used for grazing, hay and cropping (at times). We also have sheds, such as our woolshed, a shed we use for calf rearing, and sheep yards and cattle yards. We also have dog motels for our two teams of working dogs.
- 9 There is currently a drain that runs through our land which carries water from the Te Karaka township. When significant rainfall happens it adds to the surface flooding. We have over the years tried to reduce the extra water within the drain and culvert to go direct to the river. Without the river breeching its banks the drain still floods our paddock and puts it out of production till water dries out. So I'm happy to see that the drain is being moved and will head north out to the river and not over our land.
- 10 Since I've lived here, we've had a few big flood events:
  - (a) Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023. Gabrielle in 2023 water level impacted our property, Fencing and pasture flatten and covered in silt. The water reached up through the dog motels, submerged the pump shed power box and bore well. The amount of sediment that was left behind for this 2023 event has left a part of the land unusable – the land was so smothered. It looked like a beach or Sahara Desert, so we moved our fence in closer and re-grassed what's inside of the new fence.
  - (b) There have been other years where the river has flooded our property:

- i. in 2005 the river reached 10.851m and Te Karaka township didn't flood then (I understand Cyclone Bola got to 11.030m, which flooded Te Karaka).
  - ii. In 2018 it got to 10.578m.
  - iii. In 2022 it got to 8.328m during Cyclone Hale.
  - iv. And during Gabrielle in 2023 it got to 12.270m.
- (c) There has been others around 7.79 - 8 m. I also understand it reached 7.36m and 7.79m earlier this year. These are the usual 'highs' we would get and the river gets high and sometimes bank-to-bank, and our back area (the river flats) will get wet or have ponding, but won't be breeched or submerged.

11 This is the historic river level data I received from the Council that I have drawn my numbers from:

| <b>Date</b>                   | <b>Water Level<br/>Max (m)</b> | <b>Flow Max<br/>(cumecs)</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 14-May-1948                   | 9.649                          | 3,915.7                      |
| 19-Nov-1960                   | 8.138                          | 2,841.3                      |
| 27-Dec-1980                   | 8.970                          | 2,762.0                      |
| 10-Apr-1982                   | 8.396                          | 2,416.3                      |
| 07-Mar-1988                   | 10.774                         | 4,943.0                      |
| 08-Mar-<br>1988 BOLA          | 11.030                         | 5,272.7                      |
| 09-Mar-1988                   | 10.690                         | 4,849.2                      |
| 01-Sep-1988                   | 9.529                          | 3,412.2                      |
| 31-Mar-1996                   | 8.251                          | 2,035.7                      |
| 21-Oct-2005<br>OWNING<br>LAND | 10.681                         | 4,161.1                      |
| 22-Oct-2005                   | 10.851                         | 4,307.9                      |
| 28-Nov-2005                   | 8.308                          | 2,441.9                      |
| 29-Nov-2005                   | 8.301                          | 2,437.8                      |
| 31-Jan-2010                   | 8.277                          | 2,382.2                      |
| 14-Oct-2010                   | 8.060                          | 2,099.2                      |
| 21-Sep-2015                   | 8.697                          | 3,109.4                      |
| 12-Jun-2018                   | 10.578                         | 4,707.1                      |
| 24-Mar-2022                   | 8.328                          | 1,650.8                      |
| 13-Feb-2023                   | 9.157                          | 2,024.2                      |
| 14-Feb-2023<br>GABRIEL        | 12.270                         | 3,977.9                      |
| 22-Jun-2023                   | 8.575                          | 1,757.3                      |

12 All those events have affected us. The Waihora river enters into the Waipaoa river just north of our back paddocks, which add more pressure onto our land.



*Picture above showing our land in yellow, and the Waihora River confluence with the Waipaoa shown by the orange arrow*

- 13 Living next to a river, and a river like the Waipaoa, you cannot rule out that some flooding will happen from time to time, like in large events like Gabrielle. What I am concerned about is that this new stopbank layout that the Council has chosen is going to make things a lot worse for some landowners, like me, when the existing stopbank layout would work just fine with some upgrades (making it higher).

#### **Increased flood risk**

- 14 Moving the stop bank is going to increase the likely flood levels at my property because of the proposed stop bank not extending as far north as the current one does. Instead of sweeping past the corner to the north-east, the higher water levels will instead track south-east and across my back paddocks and down towards my house, sheds and dog motels.
- 15 Below is a snip from the Tonkin+Taylor report showing the increase in peak flood velocity expected at my property. My property is shown by the white dashed lines (indicative boundary, not exact):

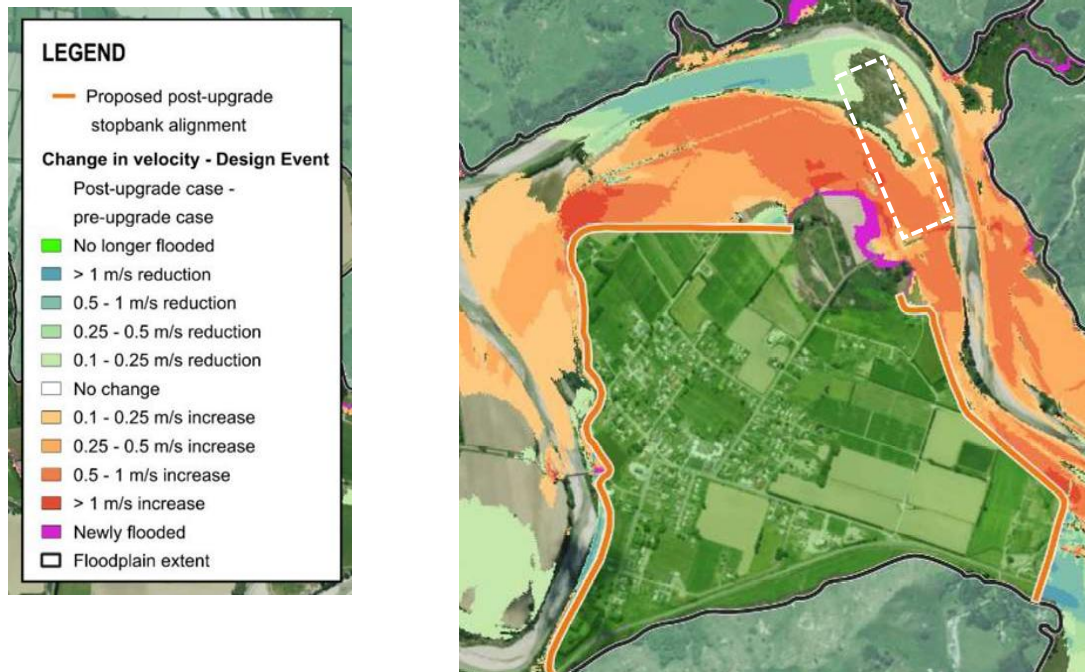


Figure 3.2: Change in peak flood velocity in the design event, between the pre-upgrade case and the post-upgrade case.

- 16 The effects on our business and home through the proposed work on the stop bank are a huge concern. Because the current stopbank layout does protect our lower paddocks, removing it means there will be more water inundating our land than there was before. The increased water levels are a concern for us and how we farm our land. Obviously we have to destock as the risk becomes greater and/or more frequent, to prevent stock losses in any floods. And since the new stopbank layout means the water comes even higher than before, there is even less 'high ground' on our property to keep stock during a flood event.
- 17 The Tonkin+Taylor report also maps the 'before' hazards, putting my property at a H5 and H6 (out of highest possible H6), and then in the 'after' maps they only show the degree of 'change' between the prior hazard and the new hazard. My property is shown as 'no change' and 'increase in hazard (1)', which likely means my property becomes completely H6. I have snipped parts of that report on the next page:



Figure 3.3: Pre-upgrade case, design event peak flood hazard (Smith, et al., 2014 classes).

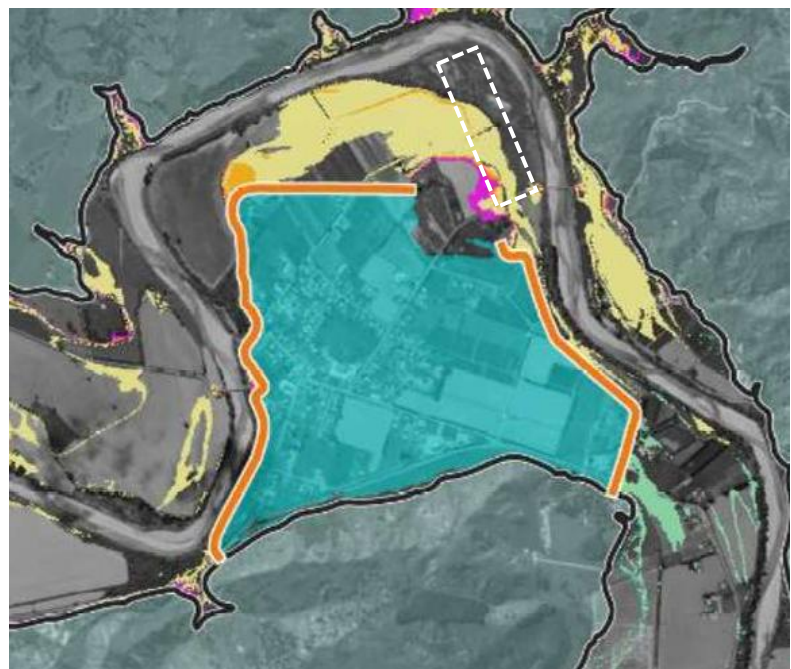
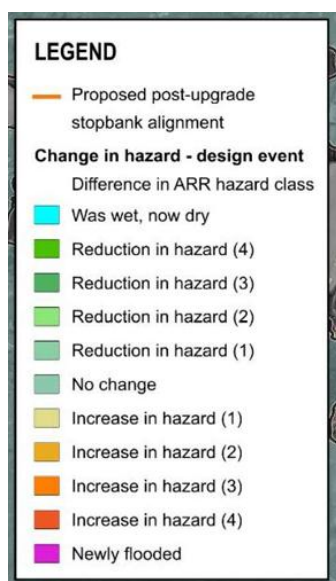


Figure 3.4: Change in peak hazard in the design event – pre-upgrade case to post-upgrade case.

- 18 This essentially just transfers the current flood risk from some properties and increases it on mine (and others) while the majority benefit from the stopbank works. The proposed stopbank upgrade will not eliminate flood risk from larger events<sup>1</sup>, so why is the Council bending to some people's wishes but not others?

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Joss Ruifrok's evidence - *Project Delivery Community Engagement* – Residual Risk and Future Development 7.14 - 7.18. River Aggradation, Sustainability and Long Term planning. 8.4 - 8.5

- 19 There are a lot of structures and other things that will need to be moved, and their new locations cannot be chosen without clear identification of the new water line. Moving permanent or semi permanent structures is expensive and time consuming, and we only want to be moving them once in response to this. Things that need to be moved include:
- (a) Buildings – such as my dog motels.
  - (b) Fences
  - (c) Electrical and power meter boxes that will be put under more pressure through water height.
- 20 The new stopbank layout and how flood flows will move as a consequence will also have a massive impact on erosion. Land that will have significant flood water deposited over it under the proposed scheme will accelerate severe erosion. This will cause more sediment build up downstream in the catchment, but also remove precious top soil from the affected land and prevent any sort of living from being able to be made from it.
- 21 We know where the level came up to in Gabrielle, so we would like a marker of where it is estimated to come now with the different stopbank.
- 22 We need assurance that the proposal will be effective in the long term accounting for the future river changes and sedimentation in the catchment.

### **My further questions**

- 23 Why can't the stop bank that is in place be upgraded? That would be our preferred option as the stopbank itself worked well on our side of Te Karaka.
- 24 Why can't the river have gravel extracted? And/or, what plans are in place to address the river bed?
- 25 Has anyone calculated the volume of water to flow on to the Kanakanaia bridge? It is a lifeline to other residents and farming land which employs us.
- 26 Has any of those Development and Long term plans been in place for Te Karaka before the 2023 weather event? As no matter what is decided you are not able to stop the silt and debris that comes down with flood waters. I feel that this is the bigger risk.