

**Before the Whangarei District Council Hearings Committee**

**In the Matter** of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

**And**

**In the Matter** of Proposed Plan Changes 88, 109, 115, 136, 144 and 148 (Whangarei District Plan).

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**Supplementary answers to questions raised at hearing by Joseph Henehan on behalf of the Ruakaka Economic Development Group and C and K Pyle**

**Dated 10 December 2019**

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1. At the hearing on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2019, Commissioner Dimery raised questions in relation to the costs of establishing communal wastewater disposal systems and also any ongoing costs associated with maintenance/upkeep of said systems. This document has been prepared in response to those questions.
2. Following the hearing, Brent Hawthorn (Technical Manager of Innoflow Wastewater Specialists) was contacted regarding the potential costs associated with establishing an Innoflow communal wastewater disposal system. Mr Hawthorn stated that the approximate cost of establishing such a system is \$25,000 + GST per lot.
3. A more cost-effective option would be for each allotment to be provided with individual septic systems which would then discharge treated wastewater to communal effluent disposal fields. The costs of establishing such a system would be approximately \$10,000.00 + GST per lot (these costs would fall on the owners of the lots at building consent stage). It is noted in this regard that the costs associated with the construction of a communal disposal field at development stage would also need to be considered, although these costs are likely to be comparatively low.
4. In addition to the above, ongoing maintenance costs are expected to cover annual servicing and also any necessary repair work/maintenance. These costs are expected to be relatively low, particularly due to the fact that they will be spread between the owners of the subject allotments. This would be managed via a body corporate arrangement.
5. Please note that the costs estimated in paragraphs 1-4 above have been provided based on the hypothetical subdivision designs previously provided as part of my evidence (see the Development Capacity Design Plans 1 and 2 in Exhibits 4 and 5 of my circulated evidence).
6. At this stage, it is difficult to compare the above costs with those that would otherwise be associated with extending Council's reticulated sewer system to the subject land (further investigations would need to be undertaken in order to provide an accurate estimate). While this is the case, it is known that the

existing public sewer treatment system for the Ruakaka and One Tree Point area is currently at capacity, hence restricting the ability to add further large scale developments to it. There are also issues relating to the existing ocean outfall arrangement (which has specifically been identified by the local iwi as a primary area of concern). Whangarei District Council's Waste and Drainage Engineer Casper Kandori has been contacted regarding these existing capacity issues. Mr Kandori has advised that there are currently plans to upgrade the services in the area to provide a short term fix to these capacity issues, however, there are still long term issues that will need to eventually be addressed (the timeframe for this is at this stage unknown).

7. Based on the above, it is my opinion that the proposed on-site/communal service arrangement will therefore provide the ability for these sites to be developed as soon as practicable, rather than being delayed until the existing capacity issues associated with the public reticulated system have been rectified.
8. In addition to the above, it is considered important to reiterate that allowing smaller allotment sizes is critical in being able to provide affordable housing to the workforce in the area. This is due to the fact that it enables allotments to be sold to purchasers at lower rates and restricts landowners from being able to construct dwellings with larger footprints. The proposal put forward by the submitters is considered to be appropriate given the existing capacity issues in the Marsden Point/One Tree Point area.



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Joseph Henehan (Planner)

This 10<sup>th</sup> day of December 2019