



caring about you & your environment

Report 02.108

27 February 2002

File: Y/12/2/0

Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
from Steve Blakemore, Manager, Planning and Resources

Masterton Community Sewage Discharge

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on progress in achieving consent for the Masterton District Council treated sewage discharge.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting of 4 December meeting the Committee considered a report on the status of Wairarapa community sewage discharges.
- 2.2 The meeting noted that the Masterton District Council Consent had expired on 30 September 1996 and expressed concerns at the apparent lack of progress since that time in pursuing options for improved treatment.
- 2.3 Councillors Long, Buchanan and the Divisional Manager, Wairarapa were delegated to initiate discussions with Masterton District Council on the matter.

3. Subsequent Activity

Meeting with District Council

- 3.1 Councillor Buchanan and the Divisional Manager met with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer on 20 December 2001. Councillor Long was not able to attend due to a bereavement.
- 3.2 Agreement was reached at the meeting that the District Council would apply before June 2002 for consent to cover the interim period before the plant is upgraded.

The application is to cover the discharge as it presently exists, but must include a timetable of milestones to be achieved for progressive improvements to the discharge.

The timetable and the length for the short term, interim consent are to be proposed by Masterton District as part of their consent application.

- 3.3 This consent application will be notified so that all interested parties will have the opportunity to make submissions and speak at a hearing.
- 3.4 This approach was seen as the best way forward in terms of progressing to a good long term solution, whilst recognising some of the hold ups the District Council is experiencing with land access.
- 3.5 This agreement was confirmed in writing to the District Council.

Correspondence – Russell McVeigh

- 3.6 A letter was received on 14 February 2002 from Russell McVeigh, solicitors acting for Mr Roger Steeby, an immediate neighbour to the discharge. The letter was widely circulated.
- 3.7 Russell McVeigh give their opinion that the discharge is unlawful and not able to operate under the terms of the previous consent as Masterton District Council did not apply for the new resource consent within the necessary time period, making the application only two months before expiry of the consent.
- 3.8 Russell McVeigh also hold that the discharge would still be unlawful as they understand it the current discharges far exceed the levels permitted by the expired consent.
- 3.9 They ask the Regional Council to address the issue as a matter of urgency and consider that it should be taking enforcement action or alternative steps to require the District Council to expedite matters.
- 3.10 Regional Council advice as to the action is being taken to comply with RMA requirements has been requested within 30 days.

Media

- 3.11 Since the release of the Russell McVeigh letter there has been significant media attention given to the issue by the Wairarapa Times Age and in letters to the editor.
- 3.12 Details of the agreement with Masterton District and the June deadline for a consent application received publicity on 18 February.

Proposed Kiln Condensate Discharge – Renalls Ltd

- 3.13 Masterton District Council have had a request to receive condensate from a new timber drying kiln at Renalls Ltd – Waingawa. The Masterton District Council’s consultants have advised that the impact of this discharge will be equivalent to an additional 1000 people living in Masterton.
- 3.14 The Wellington Regional Council has recommended that Masterton District Council do not agree to this request at this time. It is likely that the proposal be incorporated in the forthcoming application for an interim resource consent for their treated sewage discharge.

4. Future Actions

- 4.1 A reply will be sent to Russell McVeigh, formally advising them of the agreement reached with Masterton District Council, requiring an interim consent application before June 2002. Discussions have also been arranged with Mr Steeby.
- 4.2 The consent application will be awaited with staff providing assistance to the District Council and its consultants as appropriate.

5. Communications

No particular publicity is proposed, as this is a status report for the information of the Committee.

6. Recommendation

That the Committee receive this report and note its contents.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:



S D Blakemore
Manager, Planning and Resources

Colin Wright
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa