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Report to the Utility Services Committee
from Murray Kennedy, Strategy and Asset Manager

Wainuiomata Tunnel Easement to Hutt City Council and Hutt City Council Easement to Wellington Regional Council

1. Purpose

To obtain the Committee's approval to:

- Grant an easement to Hutt City Council (HCC) through the Wainuiomata tunnel and across Wellington Regional Council (WRC) land at both ends of the tunnel.
- To accept HCC's offer of an easement to allow access to WRC pipeline land in Wainuiomata.

2. Background

There are two pipeline tunnels through the Wainuiomata Hill. The Waiwhetu tunnel was constructed in the 1880s and is no longer in use. A second tunnel was constructed in the 1980s and incorporates part of a road tunnel built in the 1930s. This second tunnel is known as the Wainuiomata tunnel and is used to convey a water pipeline. The Wainuiomata end is at a lower elevation than the Waiwhetu tunnel.

In late 1999 an agreement was reached with HCC to allow them to use the Waiwhetu (1880s) tunnel for a sewer pipeline. Report 99.765 was considered by the Council's Emergency Committee at the end of 1999. HCC was granted an easement option for a fee of \$5,000, which has been paid.

Securing the pipeline route through the tunnel allowed HCC to accept a tender for construction of the Seaview Wastewater Treatment Plant and associated pipelines. Included in their contract is a pipeline from the existing Wainuiomata Wastewater Treatment Plant to Seaview.

At the time HCC expressed a preference for using the Wainuiomata tunnel. However, deadlines HCC had imposed on themselves precluded a full evaluation of using the Wainuiomata tunnel.

3. **Wainuiomata Tunnel**

Of the total tunnel length approximately two thirds comprises the smaller cross section constructed in the 1980s. A water pipe of 1.1m in diameter is laid in the tunnel and offset from the centreline. This leaves sufficient room for foot access through the tunnel. There are no space constraints in the 1930s section of the tunnel for pipework.

Hutt City prefers this tunnel as it is fully concrete lined and in good condition. In contrast, the Waiwhetu tunnel is only partly lined and requires refurbishment. HCC had allowed \$150,000 for this.

The difficulty for The Water Group in allowing HCC to use the Wainuiomata tunnel was to locate a sewer pipe in the tunnel without compromising our standards to an unacceptable degree.

An analysis of the location options for a sewer pipe and the risks involved with each has taken place over the past year in conjunction with HCC.

By HCC agreeing to a slightly smaller diameter pipe than they would have preferred, it is possible to locate a sewer pipe in the corner of the tunnel at the invert (floor) wall junction. This reduces the width available for foot access. It will make maintenance access more difficult than the situation without the pipe. This has been balanced against the community benefit from only having to maintain one tunnel (Wainuiomata). Where as the earlier proposal would have seen HCC having to maintain the inferior Waiwhetu tunnel while the WRC continued to maintain the Wainuiomata tunnel.

4. **Easements**

HCC's proposed interest in the tunnel and the land that leads to the tunnel at both ends will be recorded by way of an easement. HCC have also offered the WRC a minor easement off Waiu Street, Wainuiomata, this will provide additional access to our pipeline corridor.

5. **Agreement**

An agreement has been concluded with HCC for use of the tunnel and the easements. The agreement covers issues such as construction of the sewer pipeline and ongoing maintenance. The agreement also gives HCC first right of refusal to purchase the tunnel should it no longer be required for water supply purposes.

6. Financial

The pipeline easement fee is to be determined by negotiation between HCC and WRC. These negotiations have not yet started. If the parties cannot agree then the independent resolution procedures set out in the agreement will apply. The value of the easement is in the ability to use the tunnel. The value of the portion of the easement outside of the tunnel is minimal.

7. Recommendations

It is recommended that the agreement be approved and the seal of the Wellington Regional Council affixed.

Report prepared by

Approved for submission

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