

Minute of the Hearings Panel #14
Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant
GWRC WAR170229

Introduction

1. On 4 November 2019, the Panel requested that the applicant and the GWRC respond to the Panel by no later than 5pm Friday 13 December 2019 to provide an update on its current approach, which was to include:
 - i. Progress to date;
 - ii. An update on consultation undertaken to date;
 - iii. An updated timetable;
 - iv. The revised timeframe for a hearing; and
 - v. A summary of relevant changes to the Proposed Natural Resources Plan, as updated by any appeals.

Response to Minute 13 from the applicant and the GWRC

2. The applicant and the GWRC provided a response to the Panel on the 13 December 2019. This included:
 - a. An update on progress to date, identifying further work is still progressing on groundwater monitoring, quantitative microbial risk assessment, technical feasibility assessments and soil survey interpretations, expert workshops and a scope analysis;
 - b. An update on consultation undertaken to date;
 - c. An updated timetable showing matters in progress to deal with outstanding issues;
 - d. A discussion on the extension of time and a revised timeframe for the hearing;
 - e. An update on appeals to the Proposed Natural Resources Plan; and
 - f. Suggested timing for a further update.
3. In respect to the revised timeframe for the hearing, the applicant and GWRC advised that a revised date for a hearing cannot yet be identified, in particular as the outstanding matter of scope is yet to be addressed and resolved.
4. The applicant and GWRC offered to provide a further update by 14 February 2020.

Panel Response

5. The Panel continues to consider the approach being taken by the applicant and GWRC is appropriate for the intention of working to resolve outstanding issues and to address the submitters' concerns.
6. However, the Panel is also very mindful that it is now 18 months since the application was publicly notified and a hearing is yet to occur. This is a lengthy period of time for all parties involved; in particular for submitters, and it is likely that affected properties have changed hands over that period of time. To that end, the applicant and GWRC are also requested to report back in February 2020 on the implications of the length of time since the application was publicly notified, as well as on the matter of scope, and whether re-notification is required.

Updated Directions:

7. Pursuant to sections 41 and 41C of the RMA, the Hearings Panel requests that the applicant and the GWRC respond to the Panel by no later than **5pm Friday 14 February 2020** to provide an update on its current approach, which shall include:
 - i. Progress to date;
 - ii. An update on consultation undertaken to date;
 - iii. An updated timetable;
 - iv. The implications of the length of time since public notification and the matter of scope;

- v. The revised timeframe for a hearing, considering iv. above; and
 - vi. A summary of relevant changes to the Proposed Natural Resources Plan, as updated by any appeals.
8. In terms of the above request, any response shall be provided to GWRC electronically by email or be made available for downloading from the GWRC website <http://www.gw.govt.nz/Featherston-WWTP/>.

Correspondence

9. Any correspondence to the Hearings Panel should be directed through notifications@gw.govt.nz.



Gina Sweetman
Independent Commissioner – Chair
For and behalf of the Hearings Panel