

BEFORE NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

UNDER

the Resource Management Act 1991

A N D

IN THE MATTER

of applications to renew the resource consents associated with the operation of the wastewater treatment plants at Opononi and Kohukohu

BETWEEN

FAR NORTH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Applicant

NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

Consent Authority

SUBMISSION OF DARLEEN TANA

19 MAY 2023

INTRODUCTION

Ko Pouerua te Maunga
Ko Waitangi te Awa
Ko Te Tiriti te whare tapu, te whare paremata māori o Nu Tireni
Ko Ngāti Kawa, Ko Ngāti Rāhiri nga hapu
Ko Ngāpuhi nui tonu te Iwi
Ko Darleen Tana te ingoa

Ka tika te korero

Ka mimiti te puna i Taumārere
Ka toto te puna i Hokianga
Ka toto te puna i Taumārere
Ka mimiti te puna i Hokianga

When the fountain of Taumārere is empty
The fountain of Hokianga is full
When the fountain of Taumārere is full
The fountain of Hokianga is empty

Rāhiri had drawn upon the imagery of two rivers; Hokianga in the west and Taumārere in the east, to show his sons Uenuku me Kaharau that what happened to one affected the other. Their fortunes were intertwined, and so the whakatauki represents an alliance of destinies of Ngāpuhi on the Tai Tama Wahine (eastern) and Tai Tama Tāne (western) coasts.

I hold a Bachelor degree from Massey University in Chemical Technology and Masters in Business Administration with Hons from Solvay Business School in Brussels, Belgium.

I worked as an Environmental Scientist during the period 1992 - 1998 for Horizons Regional Council as their technical expert to review consent applications for industrial discharges to land, water, and air. I work now as Kaimahi Taiao supporting whānau, hapū, and community to restore life-supporting capacity of our natural world and to cut ongoing pollution and exploitative practices. I weave my own life's learnings as tangata māori, scientist, business person, activist, environmental campaigner to support move us forward and hopefully create healthier, resilient communities.

I first became aware of the sewage discharges in 2020. As then Green Party candidate for Northland general seat, I supported the delegation of Ngā hapū o Hokianga, tamariki mokopuna, pakeke, kaumātua to the Councillors of Northland Regional Council to notify the consent applications publically and met with Andre... to learn of the innovation in EC.

I return now, as Green Party candidate for Tāmaki Makaurau and as Kaiwhakahaere Māori within the Green Party of Aotearoa to bring our full political support behind ngā hapū o Hokianga in their bid to hold the Kāwana accountable for the desecration of the mauri, mana, and tapu of awaawa, wahapū o Te Hokianga nui a Kupe and further out into Te Tai ō Rēhua.

We understand that:

- FNDC consents lapsed in 2016 and minimal work has been done to upgrade or maintain the existing ponds
- The applications before the commission relate to

We have heard evidence:

- Ngāpuhi never ceded sovereignty upon signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Kawana continues to breach Te Tiriti o Waitangi in terms of decision-making, and that its agents are effectively unable to resolve inadequate public health and safety for any of our communities - let alone tangata whenua
- Cultural abhorrence of discharging human waste into water
- Bio-mechanical waste treatment processes in and by themselves are not enough to treat the sewage to 'innocuous' contaminating levels
- Challenges - and I am being generous, for FNDC to maintain let alone operate the system
- Viable treatment alternatives such as Electric Coagulation exist and are in operation at scale in Taipa, Mangonui, and also in smaller housing clusters in Kerikeri.
- I was particularly moved by the submission of Jessie McVeagh in this respect

Regardless, the applications insists:

- To continue discharging ask for a term of 35 years
- The cost of discharging treated waste to land is too expensive
- On a monitoring programme that is inadequate in terms of western science: (restricted to indicator subset of water chemistry, ignoring the understanding that the chemistry has changed over time - micro plastics, viruses, bacteria, phosphorous). There is nothing of understanding impacts on shellfish, fish, sea grass) and I would challenge the desk top modelling of coastal sea flow particularly in light of changing water temperatures and current flow. We have heard from mana i te whenua who, through sharing generously their pūkōrero, waiata, mōteatea, tiroiro maramataka, Matauranga Māori ki te katoa, a fuller and wholesome assessment of the environmental effects of these discharges than any of the applicant's technical experts. And I mihi to all the kōrero we have heard

I would like for us to consider opportunities for drawing a line in the sand and declining the application could bring for whānau, hapū throughout the rohe.

Declining would put onus back onto Enforcement responsibilities of NRC. And one might suggest that Enforcement Action with conditions might be a weaker mechanism than a short-term consent with conditions.

However, It would send a CLEAR message politically that:

- the application of FNDC is INADEQUATE and it needs to go back to the drawing board.

- that the situation MUST be sorted, ie., budget MUST be found (acknowledging the reality that TLA are set up financially to fail), and NOW and
- most importantly that FNDC must listen and acknowledge the indigenous wisdom as well as Tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhaketanga in their deliberations to re-design future treatment of sewage as a resource.

My submission is therefore to stop mucking around in processes for process sake. Decline