
Ngatiwai Trust Board



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT

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Applicant: Whangarei District Council
c/o **Curt Martin** CMEngNZ

Cultural Impact Assessment for
Renewal of Resource Consent Oakura Wastewater Treatment Plant
28 Wharua Road, Oakura

Te Iwi O Ngātiwai Cultral Impact Assessment

Te Iwi O Ngātiwai descend from Manaia (the Rangatira of Māhuhu-ki-te-rangi or Ruakarama waka) and his uri Manaia II, and his sons Te Rau o Te Huia (Ngāti Manaia) and Tāhuhuniorangi (Ngāti Tū). Ngātiwai iwi possess one of the oldest whakapapa lineages of tribes in Te Tai-Toke-rau, Tāmaki Makaurau, and Te Moana ki Tīkapa

The history of Ngātiwai is intimately connected with the coastal waters and the tradition of Manawāhuna, a cave beneath the island of Motu Kōkako and other tapu places inland and on the coast by the sea. Well known as coastal raiders and traders, Ngātiwai customary takiwā, both land and sea, spans from Rakaumangamanga (Cape Brett) in the north to Takatū Point in the south and eastward to the islands of Hauturu and Aotea (Piki Pāria) back north to Marotiri and Tāraua to and including other offshore islands, onwards to Aorangi and Tāwhiti Rahi (Poor Knights) returning to Motu Kōkako and Rakaumangamanga.

Introduction

The Oakura Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is a critical infrastructure project aimed at managing and treating wastewater for the Oakura community. This Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) report has been prepared to evaluate the potential impacts of the Oakura WWTP on the environment and cultural values of Oakura Marae, Te Uri O Hikihiki (TUOH), Ngatiwai,

. The Ngatiwai Environment Management Plan outlines the iwi's commitment to sustainable management, protection of cultural values, and active participation in environmental decision-making processes.

This report aligns with the principles and objectives of the Ngatiwai Environment Management Plan, ensuring that the Oakura WWTP operates in a manner that respects and upholds the environmental and cultural values of Oakura Marae Committee, Te Uri O Hīkahi (TUOH) and Ngatiwai. The purpose of this CIA is to:

1. Provide an overview of the Oakura WWTP project and its objectives.
2. Highlight the environmental and cultural values of the Marae, that may be affected by the project.
3. Assess the potential impacts of the project on the Marae, TUOH and Ngatiwai's environment and cultural heritage.
4. Offer recommendations to mitigate any adverse effects and enhance positive outcomes for Ngatiwai.

By integrating Ngatiwai's perspectives and values into the planning and operation of the Oakura WWTP, this report aims to foster a collaborative approach that benefits both the Tangata Whenua, Community and the Environment.

Assessment of Environmental and Cultural Impacts

The potential impacts of the Oakura WWTP on Oakura Marae, TUOH, and Ngatiwai environment and cultural values include:

Water Quality: The discharge of treated wastewater must be carefully managed to ensure it does not adversely affect the water quality of nearby wetlands and watercourses. Ngatiwai's value of kaitiakitanga emphasizes the need to protect water quality and maintain the mauri of water bodies.

Habitat Protection: The protection of indigenous flora and fauna is crucial. The ecological assessment indicates that the current operations of the WWTP have not significantly impacted the health of the forest or wetlands. Continued monitoring and adaptive management are essential to uphold Ngatiwai's environmental values.

Cultural Sites: Any potential impacts on wāhi tapu and other culturally significant sites must be avoided. The engagement and consultation process with Oakura Marae, Ngatiwai will help identify and protect these sites.

Community Involvement: Ongoing engagement with Oakura Marae, and Ngatiwai is vital to ensure their perspectives and values are incorporated into the management of the WWTP. This includes regular consultation, resourcing participatory monitoring, and collaborative decision-making.

Recommendations

To mitigate any adverse impacts and enhance positive outcomes for Oakura Marae and TUOH, the following recommendations are proposed:

Oakura Marae, TUOH Ngatiwai Adaptive Management: Develop adaptive management strategies to address any unforeseen impacts on the environment. This includes regular reviews of consent conditions and operational practices.

Adaptive management for Oakura Marae, and Te Uri O Hīkahi involves a structured, iterative process that allows for continuous learning and adjustment of management strategies to address unforeseen environmental impacts. Here's what this might look like in practice:

Adaptive Management Strategies for Oakura Marae, Te Uri O Hīkahi, Ngatiwai

Iterative Decision-Making

Regular Reviews: Conduct regular reviews of consent conditions and operational practices to ensure they remain effective and relevant. This includes assessing the outcomes of current practices and making necessary adjustments based on new information and changing conditions (Impacts from climate change)

Feedback Loops: Establish feedback mechanisms where monitoring results inform decision-making. This ensures that management actions are continuously refined based on observed outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Comprehensive Monitoring: Implement a robust monitoring program to track environmental indicators such as water quality, biodiversity, and soil health. This data is crucial for understanding the impacts of the wastewater treatment plant and identifying any emerging issues.

Iwi/ Hapu and Marae Involvement: Engage Oakura Marae, TUOH/ Ngatiwai in monitoring activities. This not only empowers the community but also ensures that traditional knowledge and observations are integrated into the monitoring process.

Responsive Management

Adaptive Responses: Develop protocols for adaptive responses to environmental changes. For example, if monitoring data indicates a decline in water quality, immediate actions such as adjusting treatment processes or implementing additional mitigation measures can be taken.

Scenario Planning: Use scenario planning to anticipate potential future changes and develop flexible strategies that can be adjusted as conditions evolve.

Collaborative Governance

Co-Governance Models: Establish co-governance arrangements where Oakura Marae along with Ngatiwai representatives actively participate in decision-making processes. This ensures that management strategies align with the Marae and Ngatiwai values and priorities.

Stakeholder Engagement: Maintain open communication channels with all stakeholders, including local councils, government agencies, and community groups. This fosters collaboration and ensures that diverse perspectives are considered.

Capacity Building

Training and Education: Provide training and educational opportunities for Ngatiwai members to build capacity in environmental management and monitoring of the plant. This enhances the community's ability to engage in adaptive management practices effectively.

Knowledge Sharing: Facilitate knowledge sharing between Oakura Marae, Ngatiwai and scientific experts. This can include workshops, seminars, and collaborative research projects.

Documentation and Reporting

Transparent Reporting: Ensure transparent reporting of monitoring results/Data and management actions. Regularly publish reports that detail the outcomes of adaptive management efforts and any changes made to operational practices.

Continuous Improvement: Use the insights gained from monitoring and evaluation to continuously improve management strategies. Document lessons learned and best practices to inform future actions.

By adopting adaptive management strategies, Oakura Marae, TUOH can effectively address unforeseen environmental impacts, ensuring the sustainable management of their natural resources while upholding their cultural values and responsibilities as kaitiaki (guardians).

Cultural Protocols: Establish cultural protocols for the protection of wāhi tapu and other significant sites. Ensure that Ngatiwai's cultural practices and values are respected and integrated into the management of the WWTP.

Education and Awareness: Support educational initiatives to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable wastewater management and the protection of Ngatiwai's environment and cultural heritage.

By integrating Ngatiwai's perspectives and values into the planning and operation of the Oakura WWTP, this report aims to foster a collaborative approach that benefits both the community and the environment.

Recommendation

Enhanced Monitoring

Regular Monitoring: Implement a comprehensive monitoring program to track the quality and quantity of wastewater discharge. This should include regular sampling and analysis of water quality parameters such as nitrogen levels, E. coli, and other contaminants.

Ngatiwai Involvement: Engage Ngatiwai members in the monitoring process to ensure transparency and incorporate traditional knowledge.

Adaptive Management

Iterative Reviews: Conduct regular reviews of consent conditions and operational practices to ensure they remain effective and relevant. Adjust management strategies based on monitoring results and new information.

Scenario Planning: Develop flexible strategies to anticipate and respond to potential future changes, such as increased wastewater volumes due to population growth.

Cultural Protocols

Protection of Wāhi Tapu: Establish protocols to protect wāhi tapu (sacred sites) and other culturally significant areas (Maori land owners directly down stream of the waste treatment plant discharge area). Ensure that any development or operational activities respect these sites.

Community Engagement

Regular Consultation: Maintain ongoing engagement with Ngatiwai and the Oakura Marae through regular hui (meetings) and wānanga (workshops). Provide opportunities for Ngatiwai to participate in decision-making and environmental management activities.

Education and Awareness: Support educational initiatives to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable wastewater management and the protection of Ngatiwai's environment and cultural heritage.

Environmental Protection

Water Quality Management: Ensure that the discharge of treated wastewater does not adversely affect the water quality of nearby wetlands and watercourses. Implement additional treatment measures if necessary to meet consent limits.

Habitat Protection: Protect indigenous flora and fauna by maintaining the health of the forest and wetlands. Monitor the ecological conditions and implement mitigation measures to address any adverse impacts.

Sustainable Practices

Nutrient Management: Manage nutrient levels in the wastewater discharge to prevent eutrophication of wetlands. Utilize natural filtration processes and vegetation uptake to reduce nutrient concentrations.

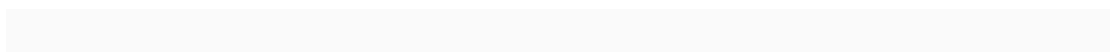
Climate Adaptation: Consider the impacts of climate change, such as increased drought risks, increased flooding risks in the management of the WWTP. Ensure that the system is resilient and can adapt to changing environmental conditions.

By integrating these recommendations, the Oakura WWTP can operate in a manner that respects and upholds the environmental and cultural values of Ngatiwai, ensuring sustainable management of natural resources and fostering a collaborative approach with the community.

Subject to these conditions being accepted, the Ngatiwai Trust Board RMU supports this application. I hope that this is sufficient for the continuation of the resource consent process and request that a copy of the consent report and decision is sent to us when it becomes available

Clive Stone

Ngatiwai Trust Board Resource Manager



Community Engagement: The Ngatiwai Trust Board Resource Management Unit (RMU) was notified by Whangarei District Council (WDC) Curt Martin about an application for the Renewal of Resource Consent for Oakura Wastewater Treatment Plant at Wharua Road, Oakura

The involvement of the NTB RMU fosters community engagement and support for the project, ensuring that the interests and values of the local Hapu, Te Uri O Hikihiki, and the Oakura Marae, and the local community are considered in the development process.

12th December 24, a meeting was held with local Hapu members Wally Pita, Hepi Haika, and Clive Stone, along with the WDC at Ngatiwai Trust Board to discuss the proposal. This meeting was reconvened at the Oakura sports complex to further discuss the wetlands and sports field proposal.

To proceed with the project, it was agreed that NTB would develop a Cultural Impact Assessment report to evaluate the recommendations made by Morphum Environmental for the development of the rugby fields and restoration of wetlands, ensuring cultural and ecological considerations are addressed.

On behalf of [your organization/community/Marae], I am writing to submit our response to the application for the renewal of the resource consent for the Oakura Wastewater Treatment Plant in Whangaruru. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process and provide feedback on a matter that significantly impacts the environmental and cultural health within our rohe.

Concerns and Impacts

Concern: The discharge of treated wastewater risks polluting local waterways, affecting both water quality and aquatic life.

Evidence: High E. coli levels have been recorded in nearby rivers and coastal areas, which may correlate with the treatment plant's discharge. Elevated bacteria levels harm ecosystems and pose risks to human health, particularly in swimming and fishing areas. According to [\[relevant data or reports\]](#), New Zealand's National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management requires stringent water quality standards to protect ecological integrity.

Impact: This degradation threatens the mauri (life force) of the waterways and undermines the safety and viability of mahinga kai (traditional food sources). Loss of ecological health impacts biodiversity and diminishes cultural and recreational opportunities.

Recommendation: Upgrade the treatment plant to advanced technologies that significantly reduce pathogens and contaminants in wastewater discharge. Additionally, introduce real-time monitoring and public reporting of water quality to ensure transparency and compliance.

Water Quality and Ecosystem Health: Example 2: Cultural Values and Significance

Section 6(e) of the Resource Management Act requires the recognition and protection of relationships between iwi and their ancestral lands, waters, and sites of significance.

Impact: Discharges affect mahinga kai and wāhi tapu, diminishing the mana of Ngātiwai and compromising the ability to exercise kaitiakitanga (guardianship). This perpetuates environmental degradation while failing to honor the cultural rights of Māori as tangata whenua.

Recommendation: Establish a co-governance framework that includes Ngātiwai iwi in decision-making processes. This should involve genuine consultation and collaboration on environmental management strategies, reflecting the principles of partnership under Te Tiriti.

Example 3: Need for Alternative Solutions

Concern: The current discharge method is environmentally unsustainable and fails to adopt best-practice wastewater management solutions.

Evidence: Several regions in New Zealand, such as Rotorua, have successfully implemented land-based discharge systems, reducing direct harm to waterways.

Advanced treatment technologies, including membrane bioreactors, have proven effective in removing contaminants and minimizing ecological impacts.

Impact: Continuing with the status quo risks long-term harm to Whangaruru's marine and freshwater ecosystems, reducing resilience to climate change and ecological pressures.

Recommendation: Explore and invest in land-based discharge solutions or other advanced treatment technologies. Develop a long-term wastewater strategy that transitions away from reliance on direct discharge into sensitive environments.

These structured arguments provide clarity, evidence, and actionable recommendations, making your submission both persuasive and well-supported. Let me know if you'd like me to assist further or adapt these examples!

The discharge of treated wastewater into local waterways continues to pose a threat to the ecological balance of our environment. The high E. coli levels previously recorded in nearby rivers and coastal areas raise concerns about the adequacy of current treatment processes. We strongly recommend that any renewed consent includes upgraded treatment standards to ensure the discharge meets or exceeds national water quality guidelines.

Cultural Values and Significance: The waterways and coastal areas of Whangaruru hold immense cultural, spiritual, and historical significance to Ngātiwai. The ongoing discharge has the potential to affect mahinga kai (traditional food sources) and wāhi tapu (sacred sites), undermining the mana of our iwi. We request that the applicant engages in genuine consultation with the local Marae and iwi to ensure these values are respected and preserved.

Propose that the council require continuous real-time monitoring of water discharge, with publicly accessible data to ensure accountability. Highlight that this not only protects the environment but also increases public trust. **Monitoring and Accountability:** We advocate for the implementation of robust and transparent monitoring systems, with regular reporting to affected communities. This should include independent audits to ensure compliance with consent conditions and allow for timely intervention if standards are not being met.

Alternative Solutions: We encourage exploration of alternative wastewater management solutions, such as land-based discharge or advanced treatment technologies, to minimize environmental and cultural impacts. A long-term strategy should be developed to phase out direct discharge into sensitive ecosystems.

Recommendations In light of the above, we recommend that the resource consent renewal be granted only if the following conditions are met:

Upgrades to treatment processes ensuring compliance with strict water quality standards.

Comprehensive engagement with Ngātiwai iwi and affected communities in decision-making processes.

Implementation of enhanced monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms.

Development of a long-term plan to transition to environmentally sustainable wastewater management practices.

We thank you for considering our submission and welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns further. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [your contact information] for clarification or to arrange a hui.

Recommended Standard Consent Conditions:

- Any management changes to the procedure of works must be developed and decided upon with NTB RMU and the Oakura Marae committee.

Subject to these conditions being accepted, NTB supports the Whangarei District Council resource consent application for the [Whangaruru/Oakura Sports Facility and Wetland Development](#).

I hope this is sufficient for the continuation of the resource consent process and request that a copy of the consent report and decision be sent to the Ngātiwai Trust Board RMU, c/o Clive Stone, when it becomes available.

Kia ora.

Clive Stone
Manager Ngatiwai Trust Board Resource Management Unit

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