

Beachlands South and Wastewater Treatment Plant – Workshop Summary and Minutes

Date: 12 November 2025

Time: :1-2pm

Facilitator: Anna Jennings.

Attendees: Watercare - Anna Jennings, Andrew Deutschle, Clemence Carlinet, Hamed Mohajerkouhestani, Helen Shaw, Shabneez Hussain, Tanvir Bhamji.

Russell Group- Brett Russell, Graeme Harvey, John Dobrowolski, Khai Azizi, Rob Bassett.

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the wastewater servicing strategy for the Beachlands South Development, focusing on the staging requirements, development timelines, and the proposed connection to the Beachlands Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and associated upgrades.

The meeting was opened by Anna, who also facilitated the introductions

Key Discussion Points

1. Consent Process

Helen explained that the discharge consent process for the Beachlands Wastewater Treatment Plant has been ongoing for some time and was initially prepared for hearing. The original application proposed a treatment plant upgrade in 12 years; however, Council required earlier interventions, and an interim upgrade is proposed. The hearing has since been paused as Council indicated the discharge consent would not be approved if the hearing proceeded. The team is awaiting release of the new National Wastewater Environmental Performance Standards (NWEPS) developed by Taumata Arowai to set nationally consistent performance requirements for public wastewater networks and discharges to provide greater clarity. We are also undertaking the following to address Councils requirements:

- Ongoing discussions with Ngāi Tai and Council to gain a better understanding of cultural and environmental values.

- Clemence and the team are investigating potential interim upgrades to improve wastewater quality.
- Engagement with Beachlands South and other developers in the area to better understand project timelines and staging, with the objective of increasing network capacity, supporting development, and progressing the discharge consent to enable growth within the catchment.
- Continued discussions with Council officers to gain a clearer understanding of their requirements.

This process is expected to take several months to complete, after which the team will re-engage with Council with the objective of securing Council's support and ensuring a shared level of comfort to achieve a better outcome at the hearing.

2. Plant Capacity and Limitations

John asked whether the required upgrades to meet Council's requirements were achievable; Helen and Clemence confirmed that they were feasible through targeted technical interventions.

John and Brett noted that the Beachlands community is looking forward to the school and housing developments to proceed. The ground-breaking ceremony is scheduled for the following day, with the Mayor, Prime Minister, and iwi blessing in attendance. Brett acknowledged that the project has been a five- to six-year process through the Private Plan Change (PPC).

John raised concerns about WWTP capacity, noting their initial concerns that connections may not be available until approximately 2032. He mentioned that the first stage of development includes a school and 500 homes. He queried whether this constraint was primarily funding-related.

Helen confirmed that funding for the WWTP upgrade is not currently secured. We are exploring potential interim solutions and staging options for the upgrade, as well as avenues to secure funding while the hearing remains on hold.

3. Interim Upgrade and Staging Options

John proposed that technical issues be resolved prior to addressing commercial aspects and requested clearer guidance to better understand Council's requirements.

Helen recommended considering multiple interim options, such as operational modifications to the existing WWTP or installation of a temporary package plant either at the WWTP or at the Beachlands South development site.

Rob queried whether the existing WWTP has any available capacity during normal (dry weather) conditions.

Clemence advised that the WWTP experiences hydraulic limitations, primarily during winter, and can manage approximately two days of wet-weather flow before capacity becomes critical.

Helen noted that the current consent restricts treatment capacity to 10,000 population equivalent (PE) and is due to expire in December.

Tanvir confirmed that the 10,000 PE cap is defined in the consent conditions, though it will be reviewed during the renewal process. He also noted that the connected population is approaching the 10,000 PE limit.

5. Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) and Storage Considerations

Rob suggested that if holding capacity could be increased—such as through storage and off-peak discharge—it might help manage flows during wet weather. He asked whether this option could be incorporated into their detailed design.

Andrew confirmed that Watercare has undertaken inflow and infiltration (I&I) reduction works in Beachlands and is currently carrying out renewal works, with 4 km of relining completed this year and a further 4 km scheduled for the following year. Extensive flow gauging is being conducted to isolate wet-weather impacts. Rob noted that if I&I is effectively controlled and the connected population remains below 10,000 PE, the plant should be able to operate within its current limits.

Hamed briefly discussed upgrade works currently underway at the Pump Stations (PS). There are currently two main Pump Stations that are sharing one raising main. Interlocks between Tipu PS and other PS causes inefficiencies at the PS.

Rob confirmed that a new Rising main is proposed from development area to the WWTP.

6. Consent amendments and Funding Pathways

The group discussed key factors for evaluating interim and long-term solutions. The following options are to be considered:

1. **Remove 10,000 Cap** – Switch consent to flow-based and manage flows via storage. Approximately **one week's worth of wet weather storage** will be required.

2. **Double-Check Population Connected** – (<10,000?) - considers school pupil movement (back calculate flows to P.E.) **(Action: Clemence)**
3. **Interim Plant Upgrade** – Implement operational changes, such as adjusted dosing or other measures to improve performance.
4. **Extra Package Plant** – Consider installing an additional package plant at the WWTP or the development site and identify a suitable discharge location (either pumped to WWTP or new discharge point or existing Formosa discharge point).
5. **Accelerate Plant Upgrade & Funding** – Explore options to upgrade the plant faster and assess funding sources, such as NIF or NZ Super Fund. Consider local network effects, discharge quality, costs, funding, time to implement, interim vs permanent.
6. **Investigate Flow** – Conduct a detailed study to understand flows, including peak and wet weather conditions, to inform storage and upgrade requirements.

Rob suggested implementing a temporary Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) unit on the development site to improve treatment quality before conveying flow to the WWTP. Tanvir confirmed that the discharge location would remain the same under such an arrangement.

Brett noted that improving discharge quality through advanced treatment technology could increase the likelihood of Council support for earlier implementation. Tanvir added that an interim upgrade could enable service to approximately 1,000 additional population equivalent, covering both the proposed school and residential area.

Helen advised that any interim solution should have a defined timeframe (approximately three years) and should be designed to meaningfully improve discharge quality. She also raised the need to quantify the potential benefits of such an interim approach.

8. Discharge Quality and New Standards

Helen observed that the discharge consent for the WWTP to the Te Puru Stream currently lacks defined concentration limits for specific contaminants. Rob commented that increasing discharge quality to a higher standard could address several of the existing compliance challenges. Helen noted that the anticipated new standards should provide clearer and more consistent guidance, acknowledging they will be challenging to achieve but helpful for defining targets.

Rob suggested that a package plant producing higher-quality effluent than the current WWTP could serve as an effective interim measure. He also noted that Formosa's existing discharge consent for its hotel operation and queried whether discharging at the developer's own site might be considered as an alternative option. Rob asked about the accuracy of flow rate measurements at the WWTP. Clemence confirmed that the plant uses an annually calibrated magnetic flow meter.

9. Next Steps

Action	Owner	Timeframe
Circulate meeting minutes	Shabneez	Within 1-2 days
Identify and progress actionable items where possible	All	As soon as practicable
Monitor release of new national discharge standards	Helen / Tanvir	Pending
Placeholder for next meeting to review technical options	Shabneez	In approximately two weeks
Continue developing potential interim and permanent solutions	Andrew/Clemence/ Tanvir/Helen	Ongoing