



Report 07.364
Date 28 May 2007
File WGN070162

Committee Environment
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Environmental Regulation

Pauatahanui School: objection to consent conditions

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of a negotiated outcome to an objection lodged under Section 357 of the Resource Management Act 1991 and to request that the Committee under delegated authority substitute the relevant negotiated conditions with those in the original resource consent decision.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

Montgomery Watson Harza New Zealand Ltd (MWH), on behalf of Pauatahanui School Board of Trustees and the Ministry of Education applied for a resource consent to discharge treated sewage from the Pauatahanui School to land. The resource consent was duly processed as a non-notified resource consent application and a resource consent WGN 070162 (**Attachment 1**) granted on 28 February 2007.

On receipt of the decision, the Pauatahanui School Board of Trustees instructed MWH to formally object to a number of the resource consent conditions, which they did in a letter dated 20 March 2007. See **Attachment 2**.

In response to the objection to consent conditions received in the letter dated 20 March 2007, discussions were held between Kirsten Norquay, Environmental Engineer, MHW on behalf of the Pauatahanui School and Paula Pickford, Senior Resource Advisor, Greater Wellington. As a result of those discussions, a negotiated outcome has been achieved.

4. **Negotiated outcome**

Below are the conditions that are the subject of the objection, along with the outcome of those discussions.

Condition 2

2. *The discharge shall be only wastewater of domestic origin as described in the consent application and the maximum discharge of wastewater to the disposal area shall not exceed 5,100 litres of treated wastewater per day.*

Concerns with referring to the daily fluctuations of wastewater flows can be alleviated by using a weekly average. By using this average, instead of allowing up to double of the daily wastewater flow, both parties' concerns on system capability and function can be met. The new condition 2 should now read (with changes in bold):

The discharge shall be only wastewater of domestic origin as described in the consent application and the maximum discharge of wastewater to the disposal area shall not exceed 5,100 litres of treated wastewater per day (calculated on a weekly average).

Condition 3

3. *The rate at which treated effluent may be applied to land is up to a maximum of 4mm/day.*

Condition 3 was requested to be deleted. Discussions have clarified that this daily loading of the disposal field is based on the industry standard for designing on-site wastewater systems, which takes into account the issues raised by MWH. When read in conjunction with the rest of the conditions, condition 3 sets the standard disposal rate based on system design and capacity. Greater Wellington does not believe that too much flexibility should be given in system flows and disposal as larger flows and higher disposal rates could lead to surface runoff and treatment system failure. With the flexibility given in the revised condition 2, it was agreed that this condition can remain unchanged.

Condition 12

12. *People (except persons involved with maintaining/managing the system) are prevented from entering the disposal area for a period of at least 48 hours prior to the last application of effluent.*

Greater Wellington understands MWH concerns in relation to people being able to enter the disposal field area to maintain the existing vegetation and surrounds. Greater Wellington considers that any maintenance required on the disposal field environment is all part and parcel of the 'system' under condition 12. Therefore MWH concerns are alleviated and no change is required to condition 12.

Condition 13

13. *The disposal field area is to be fenced off and signage erected to warn of the public health risk from sewage disposal in the area. Signs are to be placed at the most likely points of entry.*

After discussions with MWH and Regional Public Health, all parties have agreed to condition 13 remaining unchanged. All parties fully understand the importance of minimising the risk of people coming into contact with the discharge as the discharge is above the soil surface. As the school does not have full 24 hour control over entry into the school grounds, they have agreed to this condition, therefore no change is required to condition 13.

Condition 19

19. *The consent holder shall sample the secondary treated effluent at least once in December, March, June and September of each year for the duration of this consent. Each sample shall be tested for a:*

- *Biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) (g/m³)*
- *Total Suspended Solids (TSS) (g/m³)*
- *Faecal coliforms (per 100ml)*

The consent holder shall record the results quarterly and forward the results annually by 31st March each year for the term of this consent, to the Manager Environmental Regulation, Wellington Regional Council.

Any sample taken under this condition shall be after at least one week of full occupancy at the school.

MWH's concerns with this condition relate to the treatment system being a biological system which requires time after each school holiday period to reach its full treatment capacity. They had requested a change to the requirement to sample after one week of full occupancy to take account of the nature of the treatment system. After discussions, it was agreed that condition 19 can remain unchanged, as the sample is to be taken 'after at least one week of full occupancy' which allows flexibility i.e. the sample can be taken at any time within the months of December, March, June and September so long as school has been 'in' for *at least* a week. Should they wish to sample after two weeks of a holiday break, the current condition gives that flexibility. Therefore it has been agreed that no change is required to condition 19.

Condition 20

20. *The consent holder shall ensure that the quality of the effluent discharge does not exceed the following parameters:*

- a) *BOD₅ – 15 mg/l*
- b) *Faecal Coliforms – 10,000 cfu/100ml*
- c) *Total Suspended solids – 15 mg/l*

MWH have concerns with the levels set in condition 20; these levels are the system specifications given by the manufacturer of the treatment system, but do not allow for any fluctuations. As the treatment system is a biological system, and there will be fluctuations due to differing loading rates, especially during term breaks and then the return to school, MWH have requested that the maximum parameters be changed to reflect the natural variations that can be expected within the treatment system. Greater Wellington agrees that there can be more flexibility allowed in this condition as the disposal field will provide further treatment before the wastewater reaches either ground or surface water as imperceptible seepage, and the installed treatment system has proven performance. Therefore it has been agreed that condition 20 be changed to read:

The consent holder shall ensure that the quality of the effluent discharge does not exceed the following parameters:

- a) *BOD₅ – 45 mg/l*
- b) *Faecal Coliforms – 100,000 cfu/100ml*
- c) *Total Suspended solids – 45 mg/l*

MWH have viewed and agreed with the negotiated outcome as expressed in this report and have been advised of the hearing of the objection at this Committee meeting.

5. Communication

The decision of this Committee will be formally communicated to MWH and a new resource consent certificate issued to the Pauatahanui School Board of Trustees which incorporates the changes to consent conditions as per the decision of this Committee.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receives the report;*
2. *Notes the contents; and*
3. *Substitutes the following conditions in resource consent WGN 070162 with the negotiated changes.*

Old condition

New condition after negotiation

2. *The discharge shall be only wastewater of domestic origin as described in the consent application and the maximum discharge of wastewater to the disposal area shall not exceed 5,100 litres of treated wastewater per day.*

2. *The discharge shall be only wastewater of domestic origin as described in the consent application and the maximum discharge of wastewater to the disposal area shall not exceed 5,100 litres of treated wastewater per day (calculated on a weekly average).*

20. *The consent holder shall ensure that the quality of the effluent discharge does not exceed the following parameters:*

20. *The consent holder shall ensure that the quality of the effluent discharge does not exceed the following parameters:*

- a) *BOD5 – 15 mg/l*
- b) *Faecal Coliforms – 10,000 cfu/100ml*
- c) *Total Suspended solids – 15 mg/l*

- a) *BOD5 – 45 mg/l*
- b) *Faecal Coliforms – 100,000 cfu/100ml*
- c) *Total Suspended solids – 45 mg/l*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Resource Consent WGN 070162

Attachment 2: Objection Letter dated 20 March 2007