



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

New Plymouth District Council



Engagement Plan Urenui and Onaero Wastewater Project

WORKING DOCUMENT

Initiated May 2022

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Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Background	5
2	Scope	6
2.1	Negotiables and Non-negotiables.....	6
2.2	Scoping statement	7
3	Step 3 Understanding people	8
3.1	Partnership with Ngāti Mutunga	8
3.2	Stakeholder, Community and the IAP2 Spectrum:	8
3.3	External Stakeholders	10
3.4	Internal Stakeholders.....	12
4	Engagement Methods.....	13
4.1	Documents	16
	Appendix 1: Communications Plan and FAQ	17
	Appendix 2: Immediate neighbours of 944 Main North Road.....	18

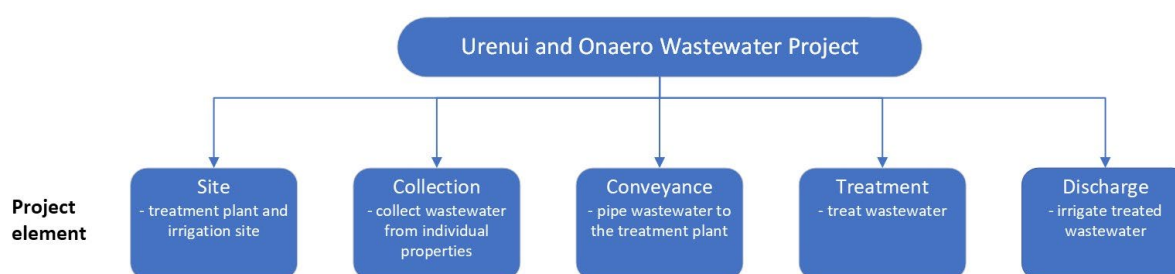
1 Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to outline the engagement approach for the Urenui Onaero Wastewater Project. New Plymouth District Council and Ngāti Mutunga have partnered in this project.

This project is to collect and pipe wastewater from the Urenui and Onaero towns and domains to a new local treatment plant and then irrigate the treated water to land.



There are five key elements to the project which are identified in the diagram below. Those are site, Collection, Conveyance, Treatment and Discharge.





1.1 Background

Water quality testing of the Urenui River has shown there are issues with the performance of some private septic tanks, which are contaminating the surrounding environment and stormwater systems.

In addition to the water quality concerns, the wastewater flows from the domains are currently greater than our resource consent allows, the Onaero wastewater irrigation site is at risk of coastal erosion, and the Urenui wastewater site is on culturally important land.

Due to health concerns, Te Whatu Ora (Health New Zealand) has advised recreational users of Urenui River to stay off the mud flats, avoid collecting kai mātaītai/shellfish from the river and avoid swimming in the river for 72 hours after heavy rain. Ngāti Mutunga has also placed a rāhui on Urenui River which aligns with this advice.

Since 2019, NPDC has been working with Taranaki Regional Council, Ngāti Mutunga and Te Whatu Ora to help residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and managing wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds. Unfortunately, this work is unlikely to resolve the contamination issues as the towns' septic tanks are too close together (due to property size) and the soil isn't suitable for septic tanks.

During NPDC's community consultation on the 2021-31 Ten-Year Plan, Ngāti Mutunga and locals made it clear that they wanted a long-term solution to the contamination of the Urenui River, which has led to NPDC approving the construction of a new wastewater treatment system.

LTP scan 21/31 Long Term Plan

River water quality testing in Urenui has shown there are issues with the performance of private septic tanks contaminating the surrounding environment and stormwater systems. In addition, the communal septic tanks servicing the Urenui Domain and Onaero campground baches are underperforming and the disposal fields are also at risk of coastal erosion. We propose to reticulate the Urenui and Onaero settlements with a small satellite land based wastewater treatment plant. The estimated completion of construction for the land based wastewater treatment plant is year 5 with reticulation being completed in year 10. At this stage, there is only one option available to address this issue:

1. Spend up to \$29.2m to reticulate the Urenui and Onaero settlements with a small satellite land based wastewater treatment plant.

Only one option available - spend up to \$29.2m to reticulate the Urenui and Onaero settlements with a small satellite land-based wastewater treatment plant.



2 Scope

2.1 Negotiables and Non-negotiables

Non-negotiables

Key Project Stage	Non-negotiable
General	Need to provide a new solution for wastewater treatment and discharge.
	Partnership with Ngāti Mutunga.
	Timeframe, project to progress as quickly as possible.
	Must adhere to NPDC Significance and Engagement Policy (2017)
	Local Government Act 2002
	Resource Management Act 1991
	New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010
	Coastal Plan for Taranaki 2023
	Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki 2001
Site	Local treatment and discharge
Treatment	Disposal of screenings to landfill
	Disinfection with UV, to be suitable for irrigation
Discharge	Discharge of treated wastewater to land

Negotiables

Project element	Negotiable
General	Type of wastewater management system – one local treatment plant, multiple local treatment plants.
	Allowance for growth - does the community want to see growth in the area?
Site	Site Selection
Collection	Type of collection system
	Area where collection system is provided
	Connection, compulsory or non-compulsory Under current bylaw connection can only be enforced where there is environmental or public health risk. Rules around connection.
	Payment for connection.
	Infrastructure ownership and maintenance model
Conveyance	Pump station locations
	Route of conveyance network
	Location of river crossings
Treatment	Disposal of biosolids
	Biotransformation – the conversion of treated wastewater from tapu to noa Is this something that Ngāti Mutunga are interested in considering
	Level of treatment required – links with discharge method
	Location of treatment plant on site.
Discharge	Crop



Project element	Negotiable
	Discharge method
	Location of discharge field on site
	Use of the buffer zone. Planting, grazing, other options

2.2 Scoping statement

NPDC and Ngāti Mutunga will work together in the spirit of partnership to design, plan and construct infrastructure for the collection, conveyance, treatment and discharge of treated wastewater from the Urenui and Onaero townships and domains.

NPDC will continue to communicate with stakeholders to keep them informed of project progress, key project milestones and consider concerns and feedback throughout the duration of the project.

3 Step 3 Understanding people

3.1 Partnership with Ngāti Mutunga

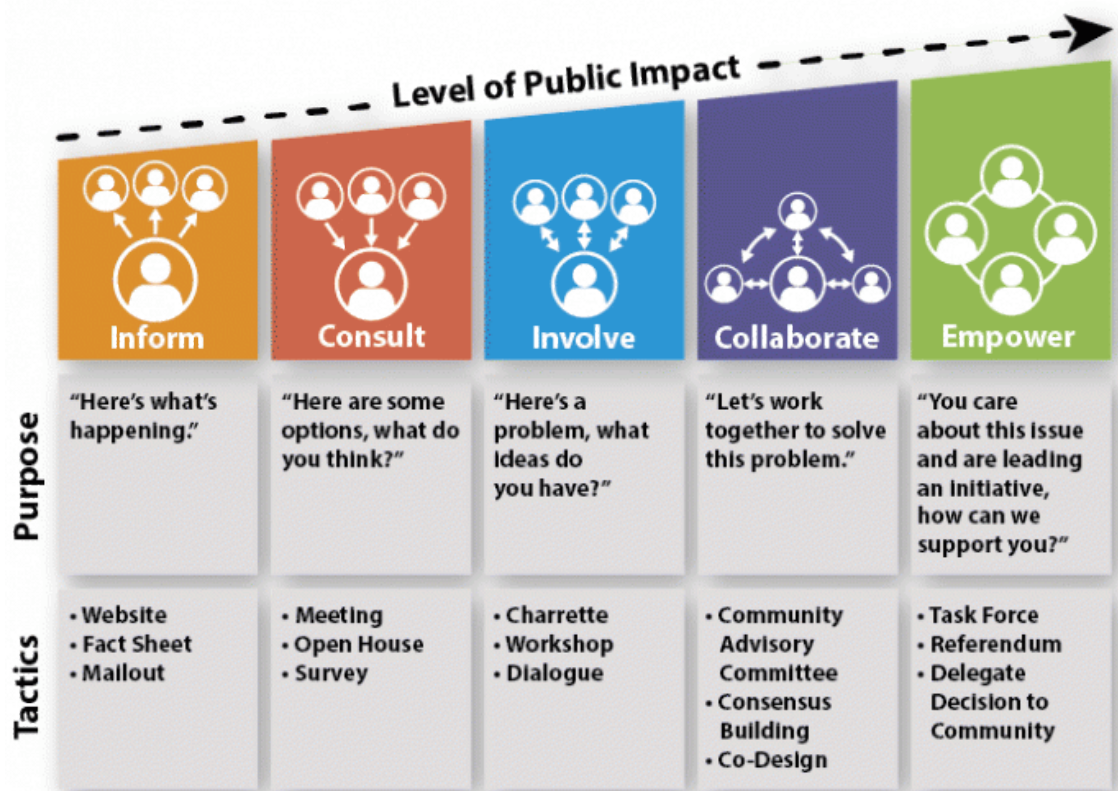
NPDC is working with Te Runanga O Ngāti Mutunga (Ngāti Mutunga) on this project in the spirit of partnership and collaboration, under a Terms of Reference (TOR). This agreement ensures that issues and opportunities that are of interest to Ngāti Mutunga are appropriately incorporated into the project. It allows cultural issues arising in the context of the proposed development to incorporate cultural components and protections into the proposed design and resource consent process.

Council and Ngāti Mutunga collaborate at both the Working Group and Steering Group levels of the project with representation on these groups from both organisations. The working group considers technical advice on the options for the various parts of the project with the aim of reaching agreement on which options are preferred and the best way forward.

The working group is in regular communication via meetings and workshops with NPDC also providing written reports on project progress. Working Group decisions are taken to the Steering Group for approval and recommendations are made to Council.

3.2 Stakeholder, Community and the IAP2 Spectrum:

The IAP2 spectrum of public participation will be used to guide the engagement approach with each stakeholder group. At a general level, this project seeks to 'inform', 'consult' and 'involve' levels of the participation spectrum with the neighbours.





3.3 External Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Role/connection	Benefit of involvement	Level of interest (reason for the assessment in brackets)	Likely impact (reason for the assessment in brackets)	Level of engagement
Ngāti Mutunga/Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Mutunga	Partner in the project	Provide a cultural lens to the project, own the Urenui and Onaero Domain (administered by NPDC)	High (mana whenua for the rohe)	High	Collaborate
Boundary neighbours of 944 Main North Road (as identified in Appendix 2)	NPDC identified Boundary neighbours	NPDC understanding issues concerns and being able to incorporate those into the design. Being able to answer questions and provide information.	High (located closest to treatment plant and irrigation)	Low (no adverse effects allowed across the boundary)	Inform, consult,
Residential property owners Urenui and Onaero, Onaero Bach Owners	Decommissioning of septic tanks, connection to new wastewater system	Seek feedback around how costs will be covered, communications and information required during collection phase of the project	High (Each property will need to be communicated with regarding connection)	Med- high (during the connection and collection stage at each property)	Inform, consult
Urenui Domain Bach Owners & Bach Holders association	Will be connected to wastewater system (not necessarily changes for individual properties)	Aware of the project, Input into collection changes if there are any	High (Dependant on collection changes in the domain)	High (Dependant on collection changes in the domain)	Consult, inform
Urenui and Onaero businesses located within the townships, fire station, Health Group, Plunket, Urenui School / Ministry of Education	Low pressure sewer connection	Consulting on connection cost and project funding	High (tank and pump installed on their property and potential associated cost being passed on)	High	Consult, inform
Taranaki Regional Council	Consenting authority, Freshwater & Coastal Team Leader	Regulator, increased awareness prior to processing consents, Support community events regarding education about septic tanks and river quality	High (Consenting authority, Urenui river water quality monitoring)	High	Inform
NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi)	Manage State Highway 3	Pipe route and pumpstation location potentially on their road	High (pipes installed on State Highway 3)	High	Consult, inform
Urenui and Onaero Domain Campground manager / lessee	Campground will be connected to the wastewater system	Informed about project and progress	Med (Dependant on any collection changes in the domain)	Low	Inform
Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora)	Public Health Interest	Awareness of the project which should lead to improved water quality in Urenui River	Med (health warnings associated with Urenui River)	Low (revise health warnings in the future)	Inform
Fish and Game, Department of Conservation and Forest and Bird	Interested in environmental impacts	Awareness of the project and potential supporters	Med -low (dependant on infrastructure near conservation land, health of the Urenui river)	Low	Inform
Developers	Interest to develop sections	Awareness that the area is being reticulated for wastewater	Low	Low	Inform
Fonterra	Collecting Milk from neighbouring properties	Awareness of the project	Low (initial contact indicated not concerned)	Low	Inform

Zespri	Potential neighbour growing kiwifruit in the area	Awareness of the project	Low (initial contact indicated not concerned)	Low	Inform

3.4 Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Role/connection	Benefit of involvement	Level of interest	Level of impact	Level of engagement
Elected Members Mayor, Councillors,	Budget approvers and decision makers. To be kept informed of the overall progress of this project	To assist with community connections, support for the project.	High (decision making-funding,)	High	Consult, inform
Clifton Community Board	To be kept informed of the overall progress of this project	To assist with community connections, support for the project.	High (represent the Urenui and Onaero community and feed back to councillors)	Med	Consult, inform
Consenting team	Designation processing,	Regulatory authority, Awareness of the project prior to consent processing	High (assessing the notice of requirement for designation)	High	Consult, inform
Planning team	Discussion around population growth and section sizes following wastewater reticulation	Aware of the project and the changes being made, potential implications for growth	Med (implications for growth and property size in Urenui and Onaero)	Med	Consult, inform
Parks and property	manage campgrounds, lease, control allowable number of campsites	Aware of the project and the changes being made	Med (Med	Consult, inform
Building team	Low pressure sewer building consents	Aware of the project and the changes being made	Med (building consents in low pressure sewer)	High	Consult, inform
Trade waste	Monitoring wastewater discharges from business and consenting trade waste discharges	Aware of the project and the changes being made	Med (monitoring of trade discharges)	High	Consult, inform
Three waters operations team	Operating parts of the system pumpstation, reticulation network and treatment plant.	Feedback on the system,	Med (operating the system)	High	Consult, inform
Three waters instrumentation team	Will look after the SCADA system for the weather station and control of the treatment plant and irrigation	Feedback on the system	Low (BAU for the team)	High	Consult, Inform

4 Engagement Methods

The following table outlines engagement methods that could be implemented for neighbours and key stakeholders.

Project element	Engagement purpose	Engagement method	Target group	IAP2 level of participation	Reasons for method	Timeline/date	Outcome/Expected outcome	Appendix number
General	Inform community of Urenui river water quality and management of septic tanks	Community open day October 2021 Letters to home owners	Wider community	Inform	Face to face discussion. Make various parties available to the community, NPDC, TRC, Te Whatu Ora, Ngāti Mutunga Letters sent out to home owners from Property Team at NPDC	28 October 2021	Community aware of the issue and how to maintain their septic tanks	1
	Type of wastewater management system	workshops	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	Early 2022	Decided on a single local treatment plant as the wastewater management system.	
	To decide on the discharge of treated water	workshops	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	Early 2022	Decided on discharge of treated water to land	
	Identify wāhi tapu sites in the Ngāti Mutunga rohe	workshop	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Face to face conversation with Ngāti Mutunga about their rohe	29 April 2022	Confirmed location of wāhi tapu sites in Ngāti Mutunga rohe	
	Update community on Urenui River water quality and the Urenui and Onaero Wastewater Project	Community open day October 2022	Wider community	Inform	Face to face discussion. Make various parties available to the community, NPDC, TRC, Te Whatu Ora, Ngāti Mutunga	26 October 2022	Community aware of the issues and progress on the project	
	Update Clifton Community Board on the project	Present at meeting	Clifton Community Board	Inform	Official way to update the Community Board	23 June 2023	Community Board aware of the project progress	
	Inform the wider Urenui Onaero Community about the project, timeline, and promoting the Community open day.	Mail out information flyer and website address	Wider community	Inform	Guarantee members of the wider community receive the letter and information about the project pop up event and providing a link to further information on the website	29 September 2023	People are informed about the project and the timeline have the website information and are invited to the pop up event.	
	Update community on Urenui River water quality and the Urenui and Onaero Wastewater Project	Community event pop up	Wider community	Inform	Face to face discussion with the wider community able to answer questions and provide information	15 October and 19 November 2023	Community are informed and updated, opportunity to answer questions	2
	Strategic Projects Committee Meeting 'deep dive'	Deep dive presentation to the Strategic Projects Committee	Strategic Projects Committee and other Councillors that attend	Inform	Required method for engagement with Councillors	6 March 2024	Councillors informed about the project.	
Site	Working group to decide on the preferred site for the project	workshop	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	July 2022 to December 2022	Decide on preferred site for the project	
	Get approval from Council to purchase 944 Main North Road	Report to Council Attend meeting to answer questions.	Full Council	Consult	Standard method for decision from Council	20 Dec 2022	Approval from Council to purchase 944 Main North Road	

Project element	Engagement purpose	Engagement method	Target group	IAP2 level of participation	Reasons for method	Timeline/date	Outcome/Expected outcome	Appendix number
	Inform neighbours of the site purchased for the project - 944 Main North Road	Phone call	Immediate neighbours	Inform	A contact the neighbours to quickly advise of the land purchase before it became public.	16 February 2023	Informing that the property had been purchased for the project.	
		Individual meeting	Immediate Neighbours	Inform	Allow face to face discussion	March/ April/ May 2023	Sharing information on why the property was purchased, general information about the project and providing contact details. List of neighbours concerns.	
		Neighbours group meeting at NPDC, and later follow up email/ letters	Immediate Neighbours	Inform	Allow group discussion	10 July 2023	Allow neighbours to listen to feedback from other neighbours, Sharing information on why the property was purchased, general information about the project and providing contact details. List of neighbours concerns.	3a, 3b, 3c
	Inform neighbours of the progress of the project related to the site	Emailing and mailing out project updates quarterly – Quarterly Site Progress Updates	Immediate Neighbours	Inform	Providing the neighbours regular updates about the project and information such as reports as it becomes available.	Quarterly	Neighbours are informed and updated with progress and have opportunity to feedback with any concerns.	
	Working group to decide on preferred layout on site							
	Engage with site neighbours on layout of site and measures to mitigate effects on neighbours							
Collection	Working group to decide on preferred option for collection system in townships of Urenui and Onaero	workshop	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	18 August 2022	Decided on preferred method of collecting wastewater from Urenui and Onaero townships	
	Low pressure sewer site visit	Field Trip	Ngāti Mutunga, Councillors, Community Board Members	Knowledge building	Personal experience- to see hear smell a similar site	20 February 2024	Build knowledge around existing similar systems	Handouts
	Consult with Councillors on preferred collection option, ownership, maintenance, financing							
	Consult with Urenui Onaero community on preferred collection option, ownership, maintenance, financing							

Project element	Engagement purpose	Engagement method	Target group	IAP2 level of participation	Reasons for method	Timeline/date	Outcome/Expected outcome	Appendix number
Conveyance	Working group to decide on preferred option for conveyance							
	Consult with NZ Land Transport on pump station location and piping on state highway.							
	Engage with pump station neighbours on layout of site and measures to mitigate effects on neighbours							
Treatment	Working group to decide on preferred option for use of surplus micro-organisms from treatment process	workshop	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	29 March 2023	Decided on the preferred method for use of surplus micro-organisms from the treatment process	
	Field trip tour to Aia Bay Sequence Batch Reactor Treatment Plant.	Field Trip	Ngāti Mutunga, Councillors, Community Board Members	Knowledge Building	Personal experience- to see hear smell a similar site	8 February 2024	Build knowledge around existing similar systems	
	Working group to decide on preferred option for biological treatment at the treatment plant	workshop	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	27 April 2023	Narrowed down to two options, Stage 2 report to follow	
Discharge	Working group to decide on preferred crop and irrigation options	workshops	Ngāti Mutunga	Collaborate	Discussion the options, face to face	25 May 2023 – decide on decision making process and work through initial stages 6 July 2023 – review MCA assessment and identify options to move forward 4 September 2023 – provide further information on the short listed options	Decide on preferred crop and irrigation options	
	Rakaunui Road and View Road Taupo land discharge site visit	Site visit	Ngāti Mutunga, Councillors, Community Board Members	Knowledge		8 Feb		



4.1 Documents

The below table identifies where any documents are stored from the Engagement methods.

Engagement ID	Brief Description	ECM number
1	Event Plan Community open day 2023	9129374
3a	Event Plan, Urenui Onaero Wastewater Project Neighbours Meeting 10/07/2024	9194581
3b	Urenui Onaero Wastewater Project- Neighbours meeting follow-up email and presentation and concerns attached 31/07/2023	9193943
3c	Follow up letter to those that attended the neighbours meeting 26/07/2023	8807794

Relevant document

NPDC Significance of Engagement Policy



Appendix 1: Communications Plan and FAQ



MCD Plan For Urenui/Onaero WWTP *(Treasure Our Water)*

31 August 2022
Updated: May 2024

Working Document

Index - Hyperlinked

[Background Information](#)

[Lessons From Previous Campaigns](#)

[Marketing Objectives, Target Audience & Budget](#)

[Key Messages](#)

[Media Release & Fast Facts](#)

[Q & A](#)

[Marketing Schedule & Costs](#)

[Assets Required](#)

[Post Analysis](#)



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Background Information

Project lead: Mark Hall/Nicolette West/Lucy Rock

1 May 2024

NPDC has applied to the Government for this project to be included in its list for consideration under the Fast-track Approvals Act (currently a Bill), as a project of regional significance.

23 January 2024

An update on this project is going to the Strategic Projects meeting on 6 March, which will include information on potential low-pressure reticulation systems for the two north Taranaki towns.

The agenda release is 28 February, but some elected members will get it on 5 February.

It will be the first time in public we will be talking about investigating the potential of a low-pressure reticulation system for the towns.

While low-pressure systems exist for small pockets of houses in some parts of the district, and commonly used elsewhere in the country, this is the first time we would use it for an entire community.

It's important to note that we've not landed on a preferred option yet and the investigation will determine if such a system is feasible and preferable.

Benefits of a low-pressure system for resident:

- It's a lot cheaper than for our usual gravity reticulation.
- Includes a pump and tank on residents' property.
- Questions around ownership of infrastructure on private property, who pays for installation and maintenance, connection requirements, etc are still to be discussed.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Background Information

7 Elected members have been invited on tours to see systems in practice on 8 Feb (Taupo irrigation site) and 20 Feb (low-pressure sewer system in Highlands Park).

Tactics to inform community about report: Update the webpage with link to meeting agenda and presentation, produce poster for the community to encourage them to check the webpage for updates and to sign up to receive these electronically. Denise to update the Urenui and Onaero FB page. Letter to the property owners using ratepayers' address list via GIS.

February 2023

About to buy a different block of land – 944 Main North Road. At 84ha it is larger, flatter and closer to Onaero/Urenui than the first property on Waiau Road. Price being negotiated. Access off two sides (Main North Road and SH3), and is just west of Onaero township.

Go unconditional on the sale contract; then contact neighbours (including Ngati Rahiri), community board and councillors, Wairau Road neighbours; then go public.

Timeframe: could be as early as next week (week starting 13 Feb) or could take a few weeks more (depends on going unconditional on the purchase).

We'll retain the Waiau Road property until we get a resource consent for the Main North Road property, after which Waiau Road will likely be sold. (Waiau Road is our alternative site if we don't get resource consent.)

The consenting process for the Main North Road site would take a few years.

August 2020

The current septic tank systems for these settlements are aged and no longer meet the required standards. Also, expectations have increased around protection of the environment and human health since these towns were established. As a result, the current situation is unacceptable to many parties including iwi, NPDC, Taranaki Regional Council, the Ministry of Health, and beach and river users.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
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Background Information

In June 2021, NPDC approved exploring options for building a local land-based wastewater treatment plant to serve the Urenui and Onaero townships and domains.

An important part of this wastewater scheme is the location of a site for the treatment plant. We have undertaken a comprehensive review of all properties within the Urenui and Onaero area to identify all potentially suitable sites.

A number of criteria have been used to identify potential sites including the size of the property, the distance from the Urenui and Onaero townships, the soil type, the amount of flat land, whether there are sites of significance to Māori present, and the number and location of watercourses on-site.

Part-way through this process, 319 Waiau Road came on the market and NPDC purchased it. However, the assessment of other potentially suitable sites continues so that we can be sure the best location is ultimately chosen, to achieve the best outcomes for the project and the community.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Lessons From Previous Campaigns



- Any project to do with wastewater needs to keep potentially affected residents informed so that there are no surprises or room for worries.
- The Urenui and Onaero communities are worried about the effect of septic tanks on their rivers.
- Neighbours need to know about the purchase before this goes public. (Natalie Wiseman is organising the comms with neighbours, iwi and community board members.)



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



MAY 2024 COMMS

Key messages, news story, Q&A

FAQs – MAY 2024

Why has NPDC lodged an application for this project to be considered as part of the Government's fast-track process?

The Urenui and Onaero communities, as well as NPDC, want a solution to their wastewater troubles as soon as possible, and this fast-track process would help meet that goal. Also, the consenting costs would probably be lower than our current budget of about \$2m.

Is NPDC trying to avoid public consultation on this project?

Absolutely not. We've undergone extensive public consultation to date and more would still be required, even under a fast-track process. Public input has been a critical part of the planning for this project.

What happens if the application isn't approved?

Then we will continue with the current resource consent process.

Why do Urenui and Onaero need a treatment plant?

During the public roadshow on the previous 10-Year budget (2021-31), mana whenua and locals made it clear that they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater from old and private septic tanks seeping into the Urenui River.

There is persistent human contamination of Urenui River which is likely coming from under-performing septic tanks. The septic tank systems at both localities are old, and our expectations around environmental and human health have changed over the years. The most effective way to fix the problem is to shift to a land-based treatment plant.

How long will it take to get a resource consent for building the treatment plant?

That depends on whether or not our application for fast-tracking is approved. If it isn't, the process is likely to take a few years. Given the variability in how resource consent processes play out, we can't be more specific than that.

How long will it be until the wastewater treatment plant is operational?

That depends on how soon a resource consent is granted.

What is the budget for building the treatment plant?

*The Urenui/Onaero wastewater project has \$31m set aside for this project in NPDC's **current 10-Year Plan**. The final cost will be known after detailed design of the facility is completed.*



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
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JANUARY 2024 COMMS

Key messages, news story, Q&A

Key Messages – January 2024

- NPDC is making good progress on planning a reticulated sewerage system and treatment plant for the towns of Urenui and Onaero.
- We're investigating a low-pressure system than uses a pump on each property.
- This system is cheaper to install than our usual gravity reticulation.
- It's still early days in this project. While we're investigating the feasibility of this system, we haven't yet selected a preferred reticulation system for the towns.
- NPDC has spent more than three years *(as at January 2024)* helping residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and working on wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds.
- A rāhui on swimming and gathering fish and shellfish has been in place on the lower reaches of the Urenui River since November 2020.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Letter to ratepayers – January 2024

RE: UPDATE ON URENUI/ONAERO WASTEWATER PROJECT

Dear Sir/Madam

As a resident of Urenui or Onaero, you may be aware that NPDC has been working on a wastewater treatment project to resolve the issue of human sewage flowing into and contaminating Urenui and Onaero rivers. A key part of the project is the type of reticulation, e.g. pipes and pumps stations, we will install to connect private properties to the new wastewater treatment plant.

We are presenting an update to elected members at NPDC's Strategic Projects Committee meeting on 6 March 2024. The update will include reference low-pressure reticulation systems, which we are investigating to see if it is feasible for Urenui and Onaero.

This letter is to give you a heads up about the upcoming meeting and that you are likely to hear more about this low-pressure system in the coming days. However, it's important to understand that we're still in the early days of information-gathering and there are a lot of matters still to explore, including connection requirements, pricing, and ownership of infrastructure on private property. We haven't made any decisions on whether this system will be our preferred option.

Please note that budget information in the update to elected members is indicative only and is subject change.

The committee meeting is open to the public, so you are welcome to attend. It will also be livestreamed, and a recording loaded to the NPDC website a few days later. The agenda for the meeting will be available around a week before, along with a link for the livestream on our website npdc.govt.nz/council/council-meetings. The meeting starts at 9am on Wednesday 6 March 2024.

If you would like to be kept up to date on this project, please email enquiries@npdc.govt.nz and ask for your email address to be added to our newsletter list. You can also view the latest information, including the update that is going to elected members, on our webpage at npdc.govt.nz/UrenuiOnaeroWTP.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Hall
NPDC THREE WATERS MANAGER



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District Council

Poster – January 2024

What's up with the Urenui/Onaero Wastewater Project?

Get the latest info at npdc.govt.nz/UrenuiOnaeroWTP

[NPDC logo] [QR code]



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Facebook post (Urenui community page) – January 2024

NPDC is updating elected members on 6 March about the Urenui/Onaero wastewater project. Find out more in the project updates section of our website, including links to the meeting agenda and supporting information – and sign up to get updates straight to your inbox!

www.npdc.govt.nz/UrenuiOnaeroWTP



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FAQs – January 2024

Why do Urenui and Onaero need a treatment plant?

During the public roadshow on the 10-Year budget, mana whenua and locals made it clear that they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater from old and private septic tanks seeping into the Urenui River.

There is persistent human contamination of Urenui River which is likely coming from under-performing septic tanks. The septic tank systems at both localities are old, and our expectations around environmental and human health have changed over the years. The most effective way to fix the problem is to shift to a land-based treatment plant.

When will NPDC make a decision on which reticulation system it will choose?

We're in the early days of this research so have not made a decision on a preferred option. The final decision will be made by our Mayor and Councillors.

How much would a property owner have to pay for installing and maintaining a low-pressure system?

We won't have that information until we complete the investigation.

How much would a low-pressure reticulation system cost?

We have an indicative cost of just over \$9m for a low-pressure system compared to \$17m for gravity reticulation; however, these costs are subject to change.

How long will it take to get a resource consent for building the treatment plant?

It is likely to take a few years. Given the variability in how resource consent processes play out, we can't be more specific than that.

How long will it be until the wastewater treatment plant is operational?

That depends on how soon a resource consent is granted.

What is the budget for building the treatment plant?

The Urenui/Onaero wastewater project has \$36m set aside for this project in NPDC's current Long-Term Plan. The final cost will be known after detailed design of the facility is completed.

What effect will the new Government have on the planning for this project?

The Government has yet to announce its plans for three waters' management. In the meantime, we will continue to keep working on improving our water networks as we are responsible for looking after the health of our residents and the environment.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



FEBRUARY 2023 COMMS

Key messages, news story, Q&A

FORMER Key Messages – February 2023

- The septic tank systems at Urenui and Onaero are no longer fit for purpose.
- There are higher expectations around the impacts on environmental and human health than when these towns were established.
- NPDC has bought an 84ha block of land just west of Onaero township on Main North Road for a wastewater treatment plant to service both towns.
- We also purchased a site in Waiau Rd when it came on to the market in 2022 but the Main North Road land is larger, flatter and closer to the towns.
- NPDC has advised adjacent landowners, iwi and hapū.
- We'll hold onto the Waiau Road property while a resource consent is sought for the Main North Road property.
- NPDC has spent more than two years *(as at February 2023)* helping residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and working on wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds.
- A rāhui on swimming and gathering fish and shellfish has been in place on the Urenui River, from Okoki Pa to the river mouth, since November 2020.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



Land purchase for North Taranaki wastewater treatment plant

NPDC has bought an 84ha block of land near Onaero for the Urenui/Onaero wastewater project.

The \$5.6 million property off Main North Road is closer to Onaero and Urenui than the 41ha site on Waiau Road that was bought last year. This proximity as well as its larger size will simplify and reduce the cost of construction and operation, and also allow for possible future population growth.

The purchase follows an extensive investigation of properties in the area by projects partners NPDC and Ngāti Mutunga.

“Our next step is to begin preparing a resource consent application to use the land, which will include working closely with neighbours during the process,” says NPDC Three Waters Manager Mark Hall.

“It may take a few years to process the resource consents before the new wastewater treatment plant construction will begin. In the meantime, we’ll be reminding homeowners in Urenui and Onaero to continue maintaining their private septic tanks.”

Connecting Urenui and Onaero properties to a sewer pipe system and building a wastewater treatment plant will fix the ongoing problem of wastewater from ageing septic tanks seeping into waterways around the North Taranaki towns.

Says Ngāti Mutunga Trustee Brent Matuku, “We’re pleased with the progress of this important project for Urenui and Onaero. Our involvement in the investigation of properties identified that part of the new site is in the proximity of a wāhi tapu; however, the site is large enough to avoid the wāhi tapu and any impact on waterways.”

NPDC bought the Waiau Road site last year when it came on the market unexpectedly, to ensure it would be available for use for the wastewater project if required. “It’s still a suitable alternative site for the project so we’ll hold on to it for now while we apply for resource consent for the new site,” says Mark.

The Urenui/Onaero wastewater project has \$31m set aside for this project in NPDC’s Long-Term Plan. The final cost will be known after detailed design of the facility is completed.

Continued...



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Media Release – February 2023 2/2



During the public roadshow on the 10-Year Plan (2021-2031), Ngāti Mutunga and locals made it clear they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater seeping into the Urenui River. A rāhui on swimming and gathering fish and shellfish has been in place on the Urenui River, from Okoki Pa to the river mouth, since November 2020.

Fast Facts

- NPDC has spent the last two years helping residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and working on wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds.
- NPDC cleans an average of 25 million litres of wastewater each day and looks after more than 25,850 properties in the district, including 34 pump stations and 631km sewer network.



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Q & A February 2023 1/3

Where is the property?

It's south-west of Onaero township at 944 Main North Road, with access off the state highway and Waiau Road.

Why did you buy the Main North Road property?

It's important that we get the right type of land for what is a critical public facility for residents and visitors at Onaero and Urenui. We evaluated all sites within the area and this property was found to be the most suitable site for the project.

Did proposed legal action from some Waiau Road neighbours play into your decision to look for an alternative site?

No. When we bought the Waiau Road property we were at the beginning of investigating potentially suitable sites and stated that this work would continue, to make sure we selected the most suitable site for this project.

Why did you buy 319 Waiau Road last year?

The property unexpectedly came on the market when we had only just started evaluating potentially suitable sites for the project. There aren't many suitable blocks of land for this type of facility near Urenui and Onaero so we acted quickly to secure it so that we could keep our options open.

Why are you holding onto it?

Waiau Road is still a suitable site for this facility. We will retain ownership of the Waiau Road site as a back-up location for the project, until resource consents are granted.

What will you do with it in the interim?

The Waiau Road site is currently leased for grazing.

Has NPDC wasted ratepayers' money by buying two blocks of land?

No. The Waiau Road property came onto the market unexpectedly and by securing it, we haven't missed out on a potential opportunity for a critical public facility. As it turns out, the Main North Road property is even better, as it's larger and nearer to Onaero and Urenui. The Waiau Road property will be retained as a back-up location until resource consents are granted for the Main North Road site.

Why is the Main Road North property better than the Waiau Road property?

It's larger and closer to Onaero and Urenui than the Waiau Road property. This simplifies and likely to reduce the cost of construction and operations as well as making it easier to avoid having any effect on neighbours.



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Q & A February 2023 2/3

How long will it take to get a resource consent?

It is likely to take a few years. Given the variability in how resource consent processes play out, we can't be more specific than that.

How long will it be until the wastewater treatment plan is operational?

That depends on how soon a resource consent is granted.

Why do Urenui and Onaero need a treatment plant?

During the public roadshow on the 10-Year budget, mana whenua and locals made it clear that they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater from old and private septic tanks seeping into the Urenui River.

There is persistent human contamination of Urenui River which is likely coming from under-performing septic tanks. The septic tank systems at both localities are old, and our expectations around environmental and human health have changed over the years. The most effective way to fix the problem is to shift to a land-based treatment plant.

What happens to 319 Waiau Road if you get a resource consent for Main North Road?

We'll probably sell the property.

How much did you buy 319 Waiau Road for?

\$3.3 million.

How much did you buy 944 Main North Road for?

\$5.6 million.

What is the budget for building the WWTP?

The Urenui/Onaero wastewater project has \$31m set aside for this project in NPDC's Long-Term Plan. The final cost will be known after detailed design of the facility is completed.

How would a land-based treatment plant affect neighbours?

One of the requirements of a suitable property is that we could operate it without affecting any neighbouring properties. That comes down to using modern technology and design, and selecting the right block of land.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Q & A February 2023 3/3

Will there be human waste disposed of on-site?

No, there will not.

Do we just have to accept that Urenui River will be contaminated until the new treatment plant opens?

We will continue to remind residents to maintain their private septic systems.

What effect will the additional nutrients (from the cleaned water dispersal) have on the land?

We'll be capturing the additional nutrients in the plants grown on-site.

How big will the plant be?

The treatment plant's design isn't confirmed yet but the buildings and tanks are likely to take up less than a hectare.

What about the Three Waters changes that are coming?

The Three Waters Reforms are still more than a year away. We will continue to keep working on improving our water networks as we are responsible for looking after the health of our residents and the environment.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



AUGUST 2022 COMMS

Key messages, news story, Q&A

FORMER Key Messages – August 2022

- The septic tank systems at Urenui and Onaero are no longer fit for purpose.
- There are higher expectations around environmental and human health than when these towns were established.
- NPDC is currently evaluating a shortlist of potential locations for a wastewater treatment plant to service the two localities.
- NPDC has bought one property that came on the market, to ensure it's available as a potential location.
- NPDC will continue to talk with landowners and nearby residents, as well as iwi and hapū, as we continue this process.
- NPDC has spent the last two years *(as at August 2022)* helping residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and working on wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds.
- A rāhui on swimming and gathering fish and shellfish has been in place on the Urenui River, from Okoki Pa to the river mouth, since November 2020.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Media Release & Fast Facts – 19 May 2022



Land purchase for new wastewater treatment plant to fix North Taranaki's water woes

Ageing and private septic tanks seeping into waterways around Urenui and Onaero could be fixed sooner than expected after NPDC agreed to buy 41 hectares of land in the area to build a wastewater treatment plant.

During the public roadshow on the 10-Year Plan (2021-2031), mana whenua and locals made it clear they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater seeping into the Urenui River.

At an extraordinary meeting on Tuesday, Councillors approved purchase of the two parcels inland from Onaero on Inland Road, at a cost of \$3.3m for a treatment plant and land-based disposal of cleaned water from these communities.

"This land came unexpectedly onto the market and it is rare to have something of this size available in the right location so we acted quickly," says NPDC 3 Waters Manager Mark Hall.

"The \$31m Urenui / Onaero wastewater project is in the budget and its pleasing after much hard work, we can begin this important piece of mahi to get rid of pollution in this important awa, a couple of years earlier than scheduled."

A rāhui on swimming and gathering fish and shellfish has been in place on the Urenui River, from Okoki Pa to the river mouth, since November 2020.

NPDC has spent the last two years helping residents fix and maintain their septic tanks and working on wastewater issues at both the Onaero and Urenui campgrounds.

Rungana o Ngati Mutunga CEO Mitchell Ritai says it's great that a site's been identified in an appropriate spot for this project.

"This allows the planning to get underway for reticulating Onaero and Urenui, which means we'll be able to manage the current issues we're experiencing with our awa," says Mitchell.

The next step is talking further with mana whenua, locals and direct neighbours as part of the consenting process though it's too early to say what the design features will include.

NPDC cleans an average of 25 million litres of wastewater each day and looks after more than 25,850 properties in the district, including 34 pump stations and 631km sewer network.



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Q & A - August 2022 1/2

Why do Urenui and Onaero need a treatment plant?

During the public roadshow on the 10-Year budget, mana whenua and locals made it clear that they wanted a long-term solution to the problem of wastewater from old and private septic tanks seeping into the Urenui River.

There is persistent human contamination of Urenui River which is likely coming from under-performing septic tanks. The septic tank systems at both localities are old, and our expectations around environmental and human health have changed over the years. The most effective way to fix the problem is to shift to a land-based treatment plant.

Why did you buy 319 Waiau Road?

The property unexpectedly came on the market while we were evaluating it as a potential location for the treatment plant. There aren't many suitable blocks of land for this type of facility near Urenui and Onaero so we took the opportunity to secure it.

Why are you continuing to look at other potential locations?

The purchase took place during our evaluation of several potential sites. We want to finish that process so that we can be sure we select the most suitable location for this crucial public facility.

What happens to 319 Waiau Road if you choose a different location for the wastewater treatment plant?

We'll sell the property on the open market.

How much did you buy 319 Waiau Road for?

\$3.3 million.

What is the budget for building the WWTP?

The total budget, which includes connecting all urban properties to the new system, is \$31m. This budget is already in NPDC's 10-Year Plan.

When do you expect the treatment plant to open?

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Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Q & A - August 2022 2/2

How would a land-based treatment plant affect neighbours?

One of the requirements of a suitable property is that we could operate it without affecting any neighbouring properties. That comes down to using modern technology and design, and selecting the right block of land.

Will there be human waste disposed of on-site?

The only disposal on-site would be cleaned water, through a dispersal field. Any solids – such as wet-wipes and other rubbish that is flushed down the toilet – would be trucked away to a landfill. Excess sludge – which is essentially dead bugs which eat the waste – will be either taken to the New Plymouth plant to be dried into the fertiliser Bioboost or landfilled. This has yet to be decided.

Do we just have to accept that Urenui River will be contaminated until the new treatment plant opens?

NPDC continues to work with property owners in Urenui and Onaero on identifying any issues that need fixing, and how to operate and maintain their septic systems well. We also work with Ngati Mutunga and Taranaki Regional Council to keep track of any contamination in the river and how we can reduce the effect on public health.

What effect will the additional nitrogen (from the cleaned water dispersal) have on the land?

We'll be trapping the additional nitrogen in green growth – either grass, trees or another crop. This will be confirmed as work continues on the project.

How big will the plant be?

The treatment plant's design isn't confirmed yet but the buildings and tanks are likely to take up less than a hectare.

When will construction start?

It's too early to say but it's still a couple of years away.

What about the Three Waters changes that are coming?

We need to keep working on our water networks as any 3 Waters change is still a few years away.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

FORMER Open day – Thursday 27 October 2022

Purpose:

- Provide a link between the septic tank issues and the proposed new wastewater treatment plant – why we're doing it.
- We're at the very start of the project but this is what it might look like.
- Show progress to date (septic tank repairs) and reinforce that it's important to keep maintaining tanks in the meantime.
(Provide rough timeline for the WWTP project.)
- Have an online open day element.

Hold it during the week of Thursday 27 October, 1pm-7pm, Urenui Community Centre.

Poster, flyers, school newsletter, Facebook (Urenui community, Ngati Mutunga), Onearo Residents Association, Bach Owners Association.

New treatment plant, looking after your septic tank, timeline, recruiting for the focus group.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Marketing Schedule & Costs

[illegible]

Assets Required

CHANNEL	EXECUTIONS							DESCRIPTION / SIZE
Social Media Post	Hello NP FB & Insta.	NPDC - FB	Puke Ariki - FB	GBAG - Instagram	Other?			
Social media Advertising	Facebook Ad	Facebook Ad	TVNZ On Demand	Spotify	Youtube	Stuff	Other?	
Website Update	NPDC	Puke Ariki	GBAG	I-site	NPEV	Ticketek	Other?	
POS	Posters	Leaflets	Stickers	Corflute Signs	Window Graphics	Other?		
Digi Screens	Puke Ariki	I-site	Gym Screens	TSB Stadium	Other?			
Print Advertising	TDN	Midweek	Live	Mood	Rates Flyer	Moa Mail/ Oakura Post	Other?	
Radio Advertising	NZME	Mediaworks	Other?					
Billboards	Mad media	BSeen	Other?					
EDM	Other?							
Other								



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



Appendix 2: Immediate neighbours of 944 Main North Road

