

# Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant Consent

## Quarterly Report

31 March 2024



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**Approved by:** Featherston WWTP Consent Project Governance Group



## Te Horopaki Background

The Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has been operating under a historic resource consent since 2012, when the existing consent expired. Subsequently South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) lodged a new consent application to continue to discharge treated wastewater into Donald’s Creek. Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) had concerns about the discharge, and that application is currently on hold.

In 2017, SWDC lodged a new consent application to transition to a land-based discharge. This application was subsequently withdrawn in 2019 and SWDC moved to work with Wellington Water.

In 2020, SWDC commissioned Wellington Water to work towards achieving a new resource consent for the WWTP. Since then, we have been working through a process with key stakeholders, mana whenua and the South Wairarapa community in 2020 to source ideas, define objectives and criteria and develop options.

## Ngā hoaketanga Project Objectives

1. To obtain consent approval for upgrading the Featherston wastewater treatment plant to improve effects on the existing receiving environment, and
2. To determine the suitability of a transition to a land-based wastewater disposal system in the future.

## He Whakarāpopoto Project Summary



### Reporting period 1 December to 31 March 2024

Since the last report in December:

- Additional environmental monitoring has been undertaken.
- The concept design completed the Wellington Water concept design gateway process.
- A trial of a DAF pilot plant was completed.
- Work towards the final s.92 response progressed, due 31 May 2024.

## Hauora o te Taiao Health, safety, environment & quality



### General Health & Safety Status

No incidents to report.

### General Environmental Status

The treatment plant is continuing to discharge as permitted.

### General Quality

The concept design is complete.

## Ngā Kaupapa mahi o Hakihea – Poutūterangi

### December – March project activity



#### Communications

Community updates were published on the project website, facebook and the [Wairarapa Times Age](#).

The [project website](#) was reviewed and changes made to make navigation and access to information easier – this included the addition of a “documents” tab.

A hui was held with both Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Kahungunu ki Wairarapa in January with positive engagement and an interest in continuing to meet regularly.

#### Consent

GWRC provided a formal response to part one and part two of the section 92 responses so far, this has clarified which parts of the information request have been fully resolved and where further work is required.

There has been on-going engagement with GWRC and their technical advisors to ensure that the water quality modelling work that is being undertaken will address their concerns. This engagement reduces the risk that there may be further requests for information once the final response is provided in May.

The final section 92 response is on track to be issued to GWRC by the 31 May deadline.

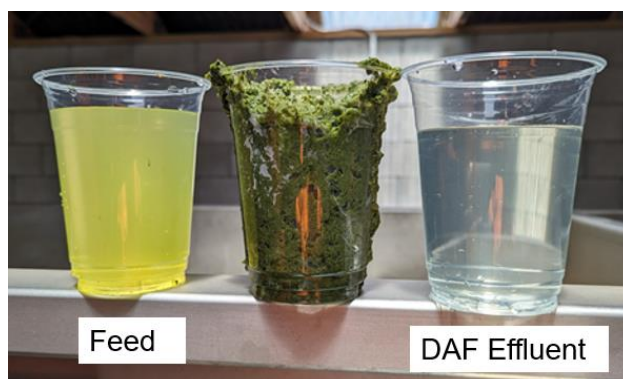
#### Design

The concept design is complete and has been peer reviewed as part of the standard Wellington Water process – this significant milestone was achieved on programme.

The additional time required to respond to the section 92 response allowed an opportunity for the team to trial a Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) pilot plant at the Featherston WWTP. The trial started in January and was completed in late March.

The trial provided valuable insights into the effluent quality and composition during low flow conditions and demonstrated the DAF process’s ability to improve water clarity significantly – validating the assumptions and expectations in the projects basis of design and concept design reports.

The photo below demonstrates the three stages of the DAF process, “Feed” being the water quality in our ponds, the middle cup shows the sludge generated by the process and the “DAF Effluent” is the out-put of the process.



### Environmental

Monthly monitoring and sampling of Donald's Creek has continued through Summer allowing the team to capture low flow conditions data (this was not possible over the last two summers due to weather conditions).

The monitoring results will form part of the Water Quality Modelling required to inform the final section 92 response.

## Hei tērā marama

### Next month

#### Communications

- Continue to progress engagement with mana whenua, including a site visit to the QEII land near the WWTP to understand the plant species that are naturally occurring in the area.
- Community update on the project (including the DAF trial) to be prepared and published.

#### Consent

- Complete the final Section 92 response and submit to GWRC by 31 May.
- Following the completion of the section 92 process we expect to get more clarity regarding next steps with the consent, including the timing for public notification.

#### Design

- Complete the DAF trial report and assist with final section 92 response.

#### Environmental

- Complete the environmental monitoring in April and undertake the final water quality modelling to inform the final section 92 response.

## Raupapa Kaiwhaipānga

### Stakeholder Management



Stakeholder	Relationship	Issues
GWRC Environmental Regulation	Ongoing meetings to collaborate on the preferred options. This report: Continued engagement for the additional modelling work required for final section 92 response.	
Māori Standing Committee	This month: no update this month	
Tangata Whenua	Open working relationship continues with ngā iwi This report: hui with ngā iwi in January with a plan to meet together regularly going forward.	
SWDC Councillors	No update this month	
SWDC officers	Governance Group meetings and Project Steering Group meetings as required.	
Featherston Community Board	No update this month	
Te Whatu Ora	No update this month	
Fish and Game	No update this month	
Department of Conservation	No update this month	
Adjacent landowners	Meeting with property owner on Murphy's Line regarding their bore, some ad-hoc engagement with other property owners while environmental monitoring undertaken.	
Featherston Community	Community updates published in December and project website updated in January	

## Te Hōtaka Wā

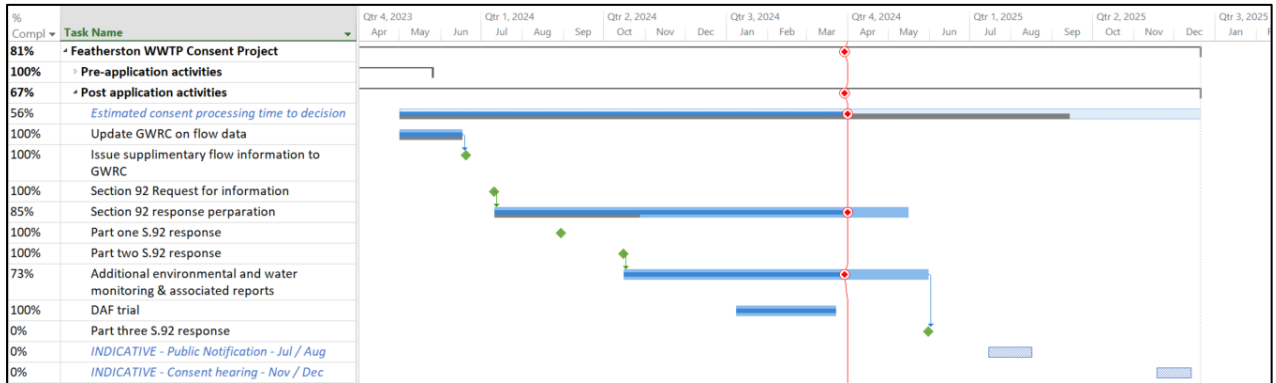
### Programme timeline



We are now working through the Resource Management Act (RMA) consenting process. The process for this is driven by the RMA and GWRC as the regulator.

Following lodgement and providing the additional information regarding the increased flows at the WWTP the next steps include:

- ✓ Section 92 request for information from GWRC.
- ✓ Part one response of S.92 request
- ✓ Part two response of S.92 request
- ✓ DAF trial completion (New)
  - Part three response of S.92 request
  - Public notification of the application – timing TBC, indicative timelines provided
  - Hearing to allow submissions to be heard – timing TBC, indicative timelines provided
  - Decision on the application – timing TBC



## Ngā Mahi Matua Key activities

Key Activity Status	Due Date	Progress	Expected/Actual Completion
Lodge short term consent	23/01/2023	100%	1/05/2023
Update GWRC on flow data	19/06/2023	100%	19/06/2023
GWRC further information request (Section92)	11/07/2023	100%	11/07/2023
Part one response for section 92 request	30/08/2023	100%	30/08/2023
Part 2 response for section 92 request	30/10/2023	100%	16/10/2023
Part 3 response for section 92 request	15/05/2024	73%	31/05/2024
<b>Indicative - Public Notification **</b>	<i>TBC</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>July / August 2024</i>
<b>Indicative – Submission deadline**</b>	<i>TBC</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20 working days after public notification starts</i>
<b>Indicative - Hearing commencement **</b>	<i>TBC</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>November / December 2024</i>
<b>Indicative -Consent application indicative decision**</b>	<i>TBC</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>15 working days after the hearing closes</i>

\*\* These dates are indicative only and are subject to change as the resource consent process continues.

More information about the resource consent process can be found [here](#).

## Whakapaunga utu Project Expenditure

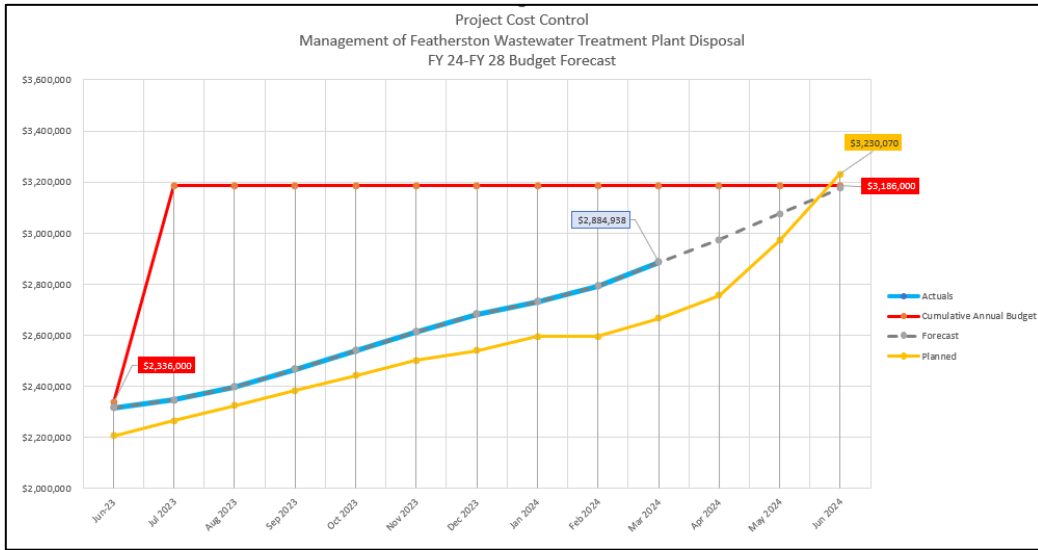


The 2023/24 Financial Year budget is \$850k.

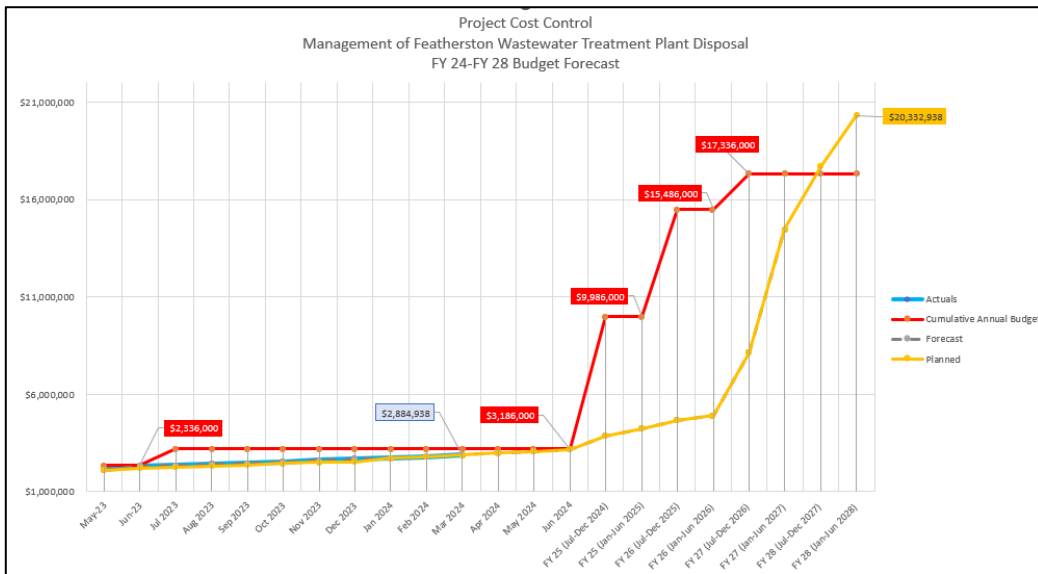
The project is currently forecasting an overspend this financial year, however this has reduced by approximately \$100k since our last report. There is still some contingency built into our forecast that may not be required.

As this is a forecast no formal change process has been undertaken at this point and we will continue to monitor progress against the budget.

**Forecast for 2023/24 FY:**



**Full project forecast:**



Note, budgets are based on the 2021-31 Long Term Plan

**Pūtea āpiti  
Contingency**

As outlined in the section above, the current financial year funding does not allow for budgeted contingency.



## He Panonitanga

### Scope change



There is no scope change to report this month.

The project management plan has been reviewed and is working through the delegated approval process.

## He Whakahaere Raru

### Risk Management



Current top 5 risks

Risk Description & Consequence	Initial Rating	Mitigation	Rating
There is a risk that the budget limitations / affordability are not sufficient to deliver a consentable solution (high inflow & infiltration (I&I) adds to this risk).	High	The cost estimate for this project has been revised as part of the concept design gateway process, the revised value has been put forward to SWDC to inform the enhanced annual plan and long term plan processes– risk of additional costs remains	High
There is a risk that if partners or stakeholders have a significant objection to the project or specific detail of the project, then additional work may be required to understand and resolve these issues or risk a shorter consent duration.	High	Regular meetings with key stakeholders via the Project Governance. Community engagement on-going Cultural impact assessment received from both iwi groups and collaboration workshops being held	Medium
Regulatory / RMA changes	High	The incoming government have suggested the new legislation will be repealed – although our consent is already in the system we are maintaining visibility to assess any impact this may have.	Medium
There is a risk that if engagement and collaboration with mana whenua is not progressed before the consent is lodged, there may be unresolved concerns or objections to the proposed upgrades	High	Cultural impact assessment received from both iwi groups and collaboration workshops being held. Hui and an agreement to increase engagement with ngā iwi progressed since the last report	Medium
There is a risk that the conditions imposed on the consent when its granted are not able to be met	Med	Regular conditions assessment workshops undertaken with internal stakeholders and legal to highlight any concerns.	Medium

## Ngā Take

### Issues



Escalation Issue	Action	Action party	Date Required	Ranking (Low, Med, High)	Status
On-going Iwi engagement in progressing the design of the treatment plant improvements	Continue to seek engagement on collaborative design with ngā iwi	WWL, SWDC to support	On-going	Med	Open - Reduced ranking following positive engagement
I&I impact to design feasibility, the increase of inflow to the WWTP means that we need to increase the capacity of the clarification process to treat the increased flows	Project governance group have approved a decision in principal to increase the size of the DAF, the details of this will be confirmed at the detailed design stage	WWL	Detailed design phase	Low	On-hold Details about the impact of this risk will be understood once the detailed design confirms the DAF size requirements

## Ngā Whakatūpato

### Early Warnings

- Materials and Labour shortages and costs
  - There is a national shortage of people and materials estimated to be up to 30% in the construction sector. As we move into construction phase we are expecting the costs estimates to increase.