

IN THE MATTER OF                    the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF                    of an application pursuant to s 88 of the Resource  
Management Act 1991

APPLICATION BY                    Gisborne District Council, (Land Rivers and Coastal Section)

FOR    An upgrade to the Waipaoa Flood Control Scheme

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STATEMENT OF SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE BY

JANIC KARL SLUPSKI

Date: 03 September 2018

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## Qualifications and Experience

1. My name is Janic Karl Slupski. My qualifications and experience are set out in my earlier Statement of Evidence dated 27 July 2018 that I prepared in relation to this matter, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the Applicant's Report. That followed on from an earlier landscape assessment that I prepared on behalf of the Applicant addressing the landscape and visual effects associated with the proposal. My evidence dated 27 July 2018 updated that earlier landscape assessment in light of the amendments to the modelling undertaken for the scheme, and consequential amendments to stopbank heights.
2. I confirm again that I have read the Expert Witness Code of Conduct contained in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014 and I agree to comply with it. In particular, unless I state otherwise, this evidence is within my sphere of expertise and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

## Response to Issues Raised in the s42A Supplementary Report

3. I understand that the Commissioner will consider, and as part of his determinations, make a determination on the issue of scope in relation to the increased stopbank heights, which will involve some consideration of the effects on landscape values.
4. I note that the s42A Supplementary Report states that there will be some sections of the stopbank which are more sensitive to changes in scale and intensity than others, including sections within the more significant ecological and landscape areas and sections which are located closer to house sites (paragraph 31). I wish to comment briefly on those aspects.

### **Effects on the Poverty Bay Coastal Margin**

5. It remains my opinion that the proposed increase in stopbank levels will not adversely affect the ecological and landscape values associated with the coastal environment. As discussed in my earlier report and Statement of Evidence, the stopbanks are located away from Centennial Marine Parade road end, beach front and river mouth. Because of this, they will continue to have no adverse impact on the visual drama of Te Kuri a Paoa, the natural values of Wherowhero and Waipaoa River mouth lagoons or natural character of the coastal edge.
6. Views of Te Kuri a Paoa / Young Nick's Head and the visual drama of the coastal margin are typically directed away from the stopbanks. The average increase of 0.8m in crest heights proposed for the first 5km of the stopbank will not change the quality or nature of this experience. Nor will the proposal affect any other views gained of Te Kuri a Paoa from along the margins of Poverty Bay.
7. I repeat my conclusion therefore (at paragraph 18 of my earlier evidence) that the lower reaches of the Waipaoa River and the adjacent stopbanks provide a useful transition and buffer zone between one landscape unit and another. While showing greater evidence of landscape modification this area retains a degree of naturalness in both the scale and patterns of land use. The expansive setting, together with the

continuity of exotic grass cover, enables the existing stopbanks to fit comfortably within the ONL without adversely affecting its key attributes.

### **Effects on Poverty Bay (inland)**

8. In my Statement of Evidence, I noted that the scale of the settled landscape, the prominence of the planted landscape, the moderating effect of trees and shelterbelts, and the use of the stopbanks for pasture all work to integrate the stopbanks with their productive surrounds.
9. Generally, I believe that it is unlikely that the stopbanks, once constructed, will be perceived any differently to how they are now.
10. While I agree with the Supplementary s42A Report (paragraph 31) that there are sections of the WFCS which are located closer to house sites which may be more sensitive to the proposed changes, that must be considered in the context of the existing stopbanks, which are already part of the existing landscape environment.
11. Similarly, residential amenity values may also be more sensitive to the construction and subsequent use of a proposed cycle trail. The construction of the cycle trail itself will introduce temporary adverse effects in terms of noise and dust. If constructed on the stopbank crest, the cycle trail could affect residential amenity in terms of visual impacts of passing cyclists and the noise generated from this activity.
12. However, I agree with the Reporting Officer (at paragraph 31) that these effects could be adequately mitigated through consent conditions, including amenity planting to help offset the scale of the upgrade. Dropping the cycleway down one side of the stopbank away from private property would also be an appropriate mitigation measure, and I understand from the evidence of Mrs Morgan that the Applicant has proposed such measures.

### **Regarding Ormond Bypass**

13. The S.42a report suggests that it may be preferable for this section to be subject to a S.127 or new application process in order for specific assessment of effects and conditions for this section to be considered (paragraph 33).
14. Having visited and considered the proposal in relation to the site, it is my view that the proposed stopbank extension is unlikely to have any adverse effects on visual amenity or any other landscape values found nearby. This is addressed in my earlier statement of evidence.
15. The extension will be grassed and will merge with the adjacent stopbanks and the wider pastoral surrounds. Visibility of the extension will also be limited to vantage points from the crest of the stopbanks. Because of the curve in this section of the flood control scheme, it is likely that views from the stopbanks will also be limited. Concrete pipes to the base of the extension will provide for the unrestricted passage of native fish along the waterway. New 'fish friendly' floodgates will be installed as

part of the work. The removal of the existing 'non fish friendly' floodgates on the State Highway Matawai Road culverts located upstream will further enhance this value.

16. The existing waterway, stopbank system and nearby residential properties are reflections of a highly modified settled and productive landscape. In my opinion, the proposed upgrade will be consistent with this landscape narrative.

## Landscape and Natural Character Effects

17. I note with the Reporting Officer's conclusion (at paragraph 47) that the additional information and design changes to the WFCS do not introduce any new or substantive changes to the landscape and natural character effects. I agree with that conclusion as it is consistent with the conclusions stated in my earlier reports and evidence that overall the proposal will continue to have a low effect on the character and values found across the Poverty Bay Flats and within the coastal environment (refer paragraph 37 of my previous brief of evidence).
18. There is only one outstanding matter, which is the statement by the Reporting Officer at paragraph 49 that the receiving area 'is a sensitive landscape area'. That appears to be a typographical error, as in my view given the nature and land use of the existing environment that the Reporting Officer is describing in that paragraph comprises an already modified landscape with the existing stopbank formation, it is **not** a sensitive landscape area. In relation to the area at the river mouth which is classified Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) I have addressed those matters in paragraphs 12-19 of my earlier brief of evidence and concluded that the existing stopbanks can fit comfortably within the ONL without adversely affecting its key attributes.

Janic Karl Slupski

3 September 2018