

## East Rotoiti Rotoma Sewerage Scheme Preferred Option: Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Preferred Option?

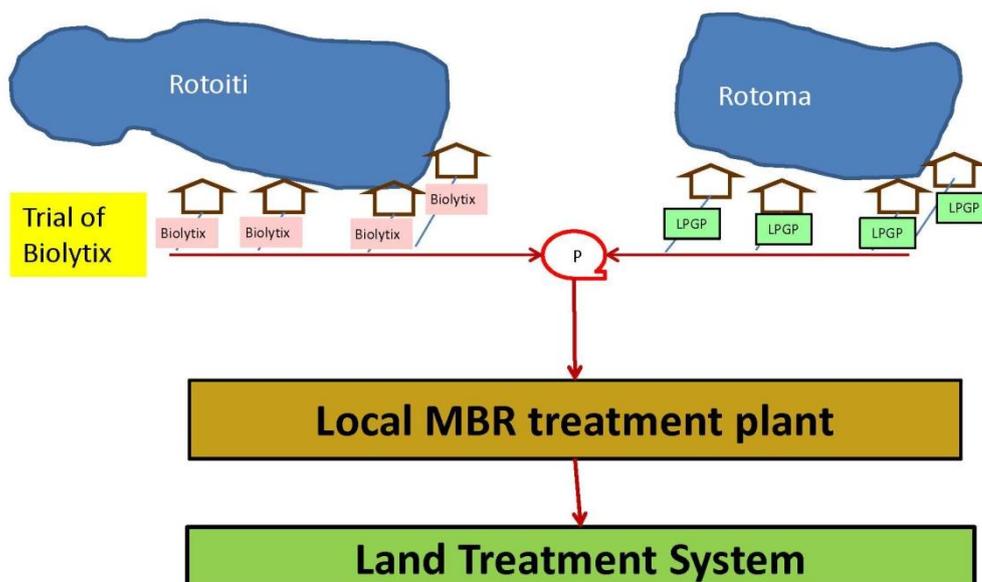
The Preferred Option would have both communities connected by sewer pipes to a single local MBR Treatment System and Land Disposal System.

Rotoma properties would be connected through grinder pumps (Low Pressure Grinder Pumps or LPGP) to the sewer pipe system. Properties at east Rotoiti would be connected through Biolytix (or similar) wastewater pre-treatment units.

The use of Biolytix units would be dependent on the outcome of a trial of this system.

If the trial were unsuccessful, Rotoiti properties would also be connected by grinder pumps.

### RRSSC Preferred Option



## **What happens if the Biolytix trial at Rotoiti does not work?**

If the trial of Biolytix units does not show that they can satisfactorily be used as part of the system, then houses at Rotoiti will be connected by grinder pumps. Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) will have responsibility for any changes required as a result of the trial.

## **What happens if no suitable local site is available?**

Geotechnical testing of a potential site in the scheme area is now taking place. If this shows that the site is unsuitable or uneconomic, or if agreement with the owners is not reached, then the preferred option defaults to Option 1: piping wastewater back to Rotorua.

## **How did the steering committee (RRSSC) get to the Preferred Option?**

The Preferred Option was developed over several months with technical, social and cultural input. It is a hybrid of some earlier options which were put to the public for earlier consultation, and some which were developed in consultation with iwi.

Factors influencing the RRSSC in choosing the Preferred Option were cultural preference, greater resilience in the event of earthquakes and minor technical advantages (very long pipeline to Rotorua avoided).

Iwi stated that a major cultural concern was to protect the lakes from contamination by untreated sewage. Piping back to Rotorua involved going past some sensitive areas and some treatment of sewage being piped past those places was important to its owners. To obtain agreement of all concerned and to ensure a scheme went ahead, a Biolytix system (or similar) was proposed for Rotoiti – subject to the outcome of a trial.

The Preferred Option was chosen after much work by the stakeholder group. It was unanimously supported as a recommendation for adoption by Council.

During development of projects such as this it is not unusual for options to change and develop as more analysis is done, as was the case with this scheme.

What is unusual in this case is that this development of options took place in public with community representatives playing a major role.

The Preferred Option does **not** involve urine separation or land disposal at individual house sites or in clusters.

While members of the RRSSC had initially favoured different options, they unanimously agreed on the Preferred Option since it meets the key objectives as earlier agreed - it should enable a scheme to go ahead with widespread support.

## **Where will the trial be and who will pay for it?**

A consultant is scoping and designing a trial, including its location. The people in any proposed location will be consulted. The cost of the trial will be part of the cost of the scheme. The trial will be managed by RLC with the assistance of Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) and liaison with the original promoters of a trial.

## **What about Rotoehu?**

As a result of a request by a meeting of Rotoehu ratepayers and residents, RLC is scoping possible sewerage schemes for Kennedy Bay and Otautu Bay.

While some of these options might involve connection to the proposed East Rotoiti Rotoma scheme, they would not significantly affect or hold up design of this scheme.

Financing of any Rotoehu options would be separate from funding and charging for the east Rotoiti and Rotoma scheme, as would any subsidies for Rotoehu (if they were available.)

## **Who was on the RRSSC?**

It was made up of community representatives, including representatives of iwi and ratepayer groups, RLC and BOPRC and the Ministry of Health.

## **Who is on the RRSSC sub-committee?**

Ian McLean, Davey Gardiner, Phill Thomass, Glen Snelgrove, Frances Curtis, Willie Emery.

The RRSSC appointed the sub-committee from its own members to assist with ongoing communication and consultation with the community

## **How do I have my say?**

The RRSSC sub-committee will facilitate two information meetings/hui at which they and Council representatives will provide an overview of the preferred option and how it came about. This is an opportunity to find out more about what's proposed.

The Preferred Option is included in RLC's draft Long-term Plan (LTP).

## **When and where are the meetings/hui?**

Sunday 12 April, 10am at Rotoiti Sports Club

Sunday 26 April, 10am at Rotoma Rotoehu Community Hall (behind the fire station)

## **What's the process and timeline for the Council's Long-term Plan (LTP) consultation?**

Dates for consultation on the LTP have yet to be confirmed but will be during April and May, with hearings for those who wish to speak to their submissions mid to late May.

Council deliberations on the submissions will be held in early June and the Long-term Plan will be adopted in late June.

A Long-term Plan discussion document, which will include reference to the East Rotoiti/Rotoma sewerage scheme, will be available in April and you'll then be able to make submissions.

## **What about resource consent?**

Resource Consent will be required under the Resource Management Act and at that stage the public will once again have the opportunity to provide feedback and have a say.

## **About Biolytix**

Biolytix (or similar) units are on-site pre-treatment devices for individual properties. They incorporate filtration and vermiculture in tanks very similar to, but slightly larger than, grinder pumps.

The Biolytix units are very similar in appearance to grinder pumps (LPGP units) and consist of an underground circular plastic tank with an exposed cover at ground level. The visible lid is slightly larger than grinder pumps at 1.8metres diameter.

As with grinder pumps, the Biolytix tanks will be located close to the existing septic tank on the property and will contain a very small aeration pump and a final discharge pump that are connected to the household electrical system. Households will pay for the electricity.

The units will be owned and maintained by Council as part of the wastewater system

Biolytix units would act as the link between houses and the community piping system in the same way as grinder (LPGP) pumps do. However, they do in addition provide some treatment of wastewater:

- Each property would have a Biolytix tank
- Each Biolytix tank connects to the community pipe network

The Biolytix units would be operated and maintained by Council.

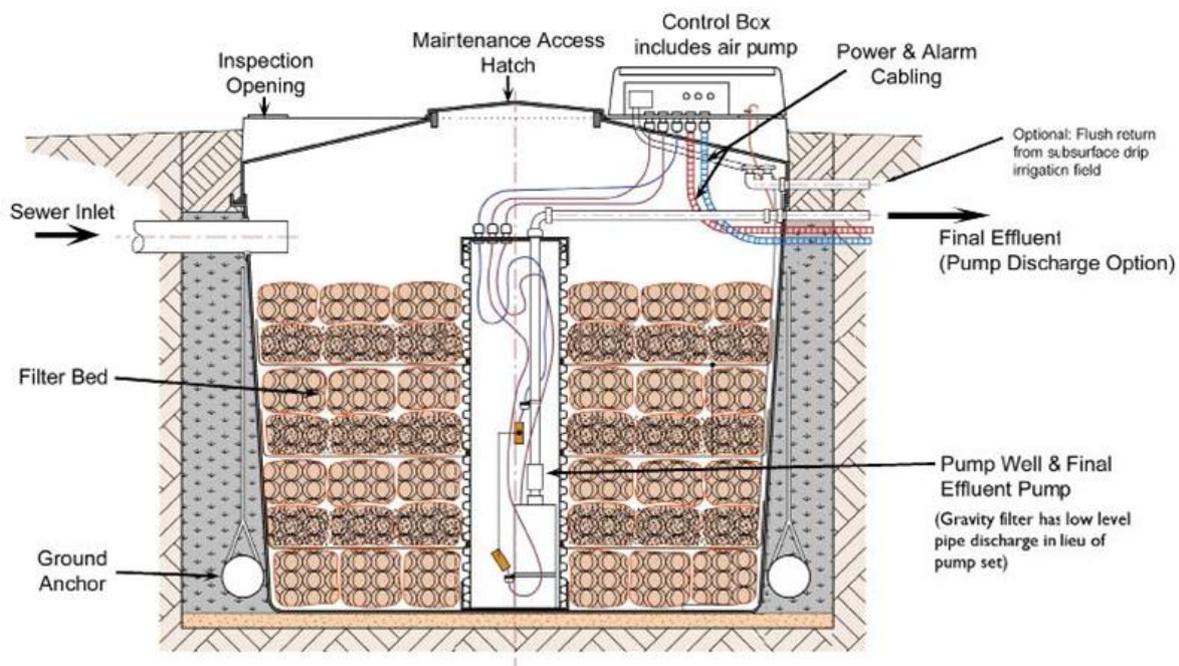
Note that there is no separation of urine or greywater in this proposal – all wastewater from households goes into the Biolytix units (as with grinder pumps).

The Preferred Option uses Biolytix or similar units as discussed above for Rotoiti. Several different proprietary bands of pre-treatment units are available and the one judged to be best suited for the scheme will be used.

## Details of Biolytix units

Biolytix units were the type investigated by the RRSSC.

The Biolytix treatment filtration process is a patented self-sustaining, aerobic treatment process. Naturally occurring oxygen-breathing bacteria and other larger organisms, including tiger worms, decompose sewage and organic waste. The bacteria and larger organisms are spread throughout the Biolytix filtration media that is a rapidly draining media (Figure 8). The Biolytix units have a low power consumption. The discharge from Biolytix units is clearer than that from grinder pumps and the remaining solids are not obvious. It still contains bacteria and some of the nutrients.



See document 'More About Biolytix' on the Council website

**Contacts for further information about the proposed East Rotoiti Rotoma Sewerage Scheme**

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