



PETITION TO ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL for Tarawera Sewerage Reticulation Scheme

Authorised and led by Tarawera Property Owners
Gordon Lewis and Duncan Evans 159 & 196 Spencer Road
12 December 2023

PETITION TO ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL

For

Tarawera Sewerage Reticulation Scheme. (The Scheme)

286 +21 = 307 supporters

Petition Request

Stage 2 of The Scheme is put on immediate hold pending a FINAL & FIXED targeted rating for the whole scheme (Stage 1 and 2), being agreed with Tarawera property owners.

Petition Reason

We broadly agree to The Scheme, BUT NOT ON ANY TERMS, OR AT ANY COST; nor at a targeted rate that is to be determined at some future time.

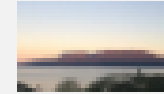
The Rotorua Lakes Council letter of 25 September 2023 lacks commercial credibility, genuine openness, accuracy, or detail. We cannot be expected to fund something with an open cheque book.

Petition Expectation

Authentic consultation to reach consensus on a fair, reasonable, and certain outcome before Stage 2 proceeds.

  **Petition Closed**

This petition had 286 supporters



FIXED PRICE Tarawera Sewerage
Reticulation Scheme

TARAWERA PERSPECTIVE

- **Significant Tarawera rates revenue has contributed to other schemes and public infrastructure**
 - *We don't appear to be getting our fair share back?*
- **If "User pays" -- Property effluent volumes are exaggerated ...**
 - *Often visitors exceed residents & only 20% of properties are permanent*
- **There is genuine anxiety and ill feelingsome may have to sell their family home**
- **Council undertook to seek more funding – Nothing materialised.**
 - *Needs additional \$6.5m (to be equitable & acceptable)*
- **On current cost, the targeted rate bill will be \$50,091 or \$7,000 pa for 10 years**
- **Ratepayer bearing all the risk on time and cost – BUT with no certainty or control.**
 - *RLC contribute 2.8% v local Community @ 83%*

...is that fair ?

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Transparency and fairness is lacking around assumptions and outcomes

Example

- **We have no clarity in what is included or excluded in stage1 ...nor the cost allocation.**
 - *What is the exact line capacity? (1000 or 600)*
 - *How are the two branch lines been treated and paid for? (To landing toilets and bike hub?)*
 - *\$2.7m development levy appears no longer applicable?*
 - *Will both local bodies inflation adjust their subsidies?*

- **Charging an 'averaged cost' for stage 2 is neither fair, reasonable, or appropriate**
 - *Sites are varied, unique, short or long, simple or complex, or challenging*
 - *Averages distort reality, hiding important variations, leading to ineffective strategies*

- **The promised cost relativity to OSET-AWTS has evaporated.**
 - *Reticulation was promoted on being equivalent to OSET: Today costing c\$28,000*
 - *Current expected reticulation cost = \$43,557 + AN OPEN CHEQUE*

These issues need resolution

WE SUPPORT THE SCHEME – But not at any cost

- **We all treasure this special environment as much as anyone**
 - *We want to be constructive and find a solution all can agree to*
- **We know Council is receiving mixed messages**
 - *Some are comfortable with council's proposal - Others are clearly not!*
 - *Don't underestimate the weight of ill feeling*
- **The capital recovery principle applied here is both **INEQUITABLE** and **INAPPROPRIATE****
 - *Inequitable where 83% of a public infrastructure network is charged to small target group of ratepayers.*
 - *Inappropriate where government and local body contributions don't match other similar schemes.*
- **Continuing to commit more \$'s when there are outstanding issues would be **IRRESPONSIBLE****

**There's far too much heat at the moment and it's only going to rise ...
unless we all sit down and talk.**

RECOMENDATION

We believe there is a **PATHWAY FORWARD**

Firstly, Please pause any commitment to stage 2, *while*

With urgency we collectively review the funding model

- *Verify the facts, assumptions and T's and C's, of this project*
- *Identify alternative financial solutions – and there are some*
- *Develop a revised financial model for all stakeholders to consider*
- *Get community agreement*

This is a proposal to avoid the imposition of a judicial review which we understand is in the process of being filed

SIGNATORIES COMMENTS (1)

- “No one in their right mind would agree to an open-ended cost to this system.” – **Sarah Gordon**
- “Council needs a strong message that they cannot misrepresent.
We need certainty on what this scheme will cost us.” -- **Alison Slade**
- “Every step of this project has been mis-managed, even from the scientific justification of the need, through to the management of cost, tendering process, and consultation with property owners”. -- **Dave Butler**
- “The final cost for each property needs to be fair and reasonable .
Until a final figure is agreed the project should be put on hold.” -- **Stuart Baker**
- “We need cost certainty around the scheme if we are required to fund it.
RLC has been remiss in its duties to us as ratepayers.” -- **Jennifer Couldrey**
- "The policy is half baked and unfair." -- **Reynold Macpherson**
- “We support this petition - Because we have not been given any firm pricing on this job.” --
Norman Donald

SIGNATORIES COMMENTS (2)

- “Still a lot of uncertainty about the cost of this project. No capped pricing on stages 1 and 2.” -- **Peter Johnston**
- “Rate payers are being asked to pay a significantly greater portion of the cost than other comparable lake reticulation schemes.” -- **Bruce Mellsop**
- “Not knowing what I’m going to have to pay in the end is very stressful. I need a Final and Fixed target before this scheme continues.” -- **Sarah Haitoua**
- “We need cost certainty around the scheme if we are required to fund it.
RLC has been remiss in its duties to us as ratepayers.” – **Jennifer Couldrey**
- “I cannot agree to participate in a scheme that does not specify what my financial obligation would be.
That would be foolhardy.” -- **Jamie McKeown**
- “The council’s estimate is way beyond my means.
Tarawera has been my families go to place for 60 years.
I would be deeply sorry to see that taken away.” -- **Sue Smith.**