

**26. CHRISTCHURCH WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
DISCHARGE CONSENT**

RR 9506

In October 1998 a sub-committee of the City Services Committee let a contract to Woodward-Clyde (NZ) Ltd to do an assessment of environmental effects (AEE) of two discharge options, at an estimated cost of \$281,350. It is now considered desirable to extend the scope of the contract by adding four new items of work and modifying some existing items, and this requires the approval of the City Services Committee.

This AEE contract is a core step in the process of deciding what solution to choose for a discharge from the Christchurch Wastewater Treatment Plant. It is addressing a number of matters that were not understood in detail at the time the Council resolved in August 1998 to “favourably consider” the ocean outfall.

An early step in the contract was to hold a scoping meeting, involving a number of New Zealand’s leading wastewater practitioners and environmental scientists experienced in resource consent issues. As an outcome of that meeting it is clear that the decision-making and consent processes will be much more robust if the following items of work are added and alterations are made to existing items as follows (prices have been negotiated with suitable subcontractors):

New item 1: Assess impact of potential solutions on surf clams in Pegasus Bay, as an indicator for ocean shellfish	\$3,600
New item 2: Advise on appropriateness of different international standards that that could be adopted for water quality guidelines	\$3,000
New item 3: Assess impact of pond and wetland development on wildlife, and impact of wildlife on final effluent quality	\$5,000
New item 4: Investigate seabed dwelling creatures around the possible pipeline, to predict effects on a range of sea life and to establish a benchmark for future monitoring	\$20,500
Alteration to existing item 1: Investigate more thoroughly the nature of the bed material in Pegasus Bay to lead to a better construction cost estimate if that option is finally selected; extra cost	\$39,450
Miscellaneous extensions and deletions to existing items; net extra cost	\$9,990
Total net increase in cost	\$81,540

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The total plant upgrade budget of \$33.2M allows \$1.7M for the scientific studies and administrative and legal steps involved with obtaining a consent. Within that \$1.7M there is an allowance of \$400,000 for the AEE studies. The AEE contract, including the addition of the four new items proposed above, and modifications to existing items, is now estimated to cost \$365,000, which is still \$35,000 under the budget for this item.

This \$35,000 should be regarded as a contingency fund for this project as it may be needed to fund additional public consultation work which cannot be precisely defined yet.

SUMMARY

The \$33.2m budgeted for extensions to the Christchurch Wastewater Treatment Plant includes an allowance of \$0.4m for the necessary AEE study on the future effluent discharge options (ie whether to discharge to the Estuary or the open sea). Approval is sought to extend the contract let to Woodward Clyde from \$281,350 to \$365,000 to fund the extra essential work outlined above together with an additional contingency of \$35,000 to be spent only with the Waste Managers approval.

It was **resolved**:

1. That a funding increase in Woodward Clydes contract up to \$365,000 with an additional contingency of \$35,000 to be spent only with the Waste Manager's approval.
2. That the Waste Manager be requested to investigate ways of reducing the contract including reducing the cost of the intermediate stage of the public consultation.
3. That during the public consultation process it be clearly stated that the intention of this process is not to persuade the Council to adopt an option but to present information which will assist the Council in coming to its decision.