

# South-West options FAQs



April 2025

## South-West discharge consent

### 1 Why is the discharge at Clarks Beach and not to the Tasman?

Watercare was granted resource consent by the Environment Court in 2018 to discharge treated wastewater into the Waiuku Channel at a location adjacent to the Clark's Beach Golf Course for a 35-year period. It also allows us to construct a pipeline and outfall in that location.

In 2016, an Assessment of Alternatives Report for the discharge consent identified a long list of approximately 137 options with different discharge locations, treatment technology and treatment plant locations. Seven of the 34 short list options were taken to the detailed analysis stage. Two of these options involved a discharge to the Tasman Sea.

Neither of the Tasman Sea options were identified as our preferred option due to:

- The difficult and complex nature of constructing an outfall in a highly dynamic coastal environment.
- Discharging to the Tasman Sea option would prevent beneficial reuse options of the treated effluent in the future.
- While the Tasman Sea option provided high dilution for the treated effluent, some community feedback and the majority of iwi wanted the restoration of the Manukau Harbour through a higher quality treatment. A Tasman Sea discharge option was seen by some as shifting contaminant loads to another location.

The outfall for the discharge is currently under construction. The scope of this project is limited to assessing alternative sites for a new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) that will treat wastewater from the south-west, before it is discharged into the Waiuku Channel.

### 2 Why is Watercare not considering keeping the discharge at Waiuku?

Watercare was granted the consent by the Environment Court is to discharge treated wastewater for up to 30,000 PE (population equivalent) into the Waiuku Channel adjacent to the Clark's Beach Golf Course. It requires wastewater to be treated to a higher standard than Watercare's existing discharge consents at Waiuku, Clarks Beach.

The discharge point at the Clarks Beach WWTP was consented due to high dilution and mixing. Watercare is committed to improving the quality of the Manukau Harbour under the more stringent conditions of consent granted by the Environment Court. The outfall at Waiuku will be decommissioned.



## Construction

### 3 If you must install pipes between Waiuku and Clarks Beach, does this pipeline have to go down Glenbrook Beach Road?

Yes. Watercare is looking at the pipelines as part of the multi-criteria analysis (MCA) scoring process. The analysis takes into consideration that:

- Installing multiple pipes takes longer than installing a single pipe.
- Installing deeper pipes takes longer than shallower pipework.
- Installing pipework in fields is quicker.

We have been working closely with NZ Steel to make use of their land as much as possible. This minimises disruption to residents and the impact on the environment. This route has been consented.

The pipeline between Kahawai Point and Waiuku WWTP has been consented and is located within NZ Steel land and Glenbrook Beach Road.

### 4 Do the pipelines have to be in the road corridor?

A large portion of the pipeline will be within the road corridor and constructed in sections. Locating infrastructure in public road reserve is common practice, and where possible, avoids the need for this infrastructure to be located on private land.

We employ experienced contractors to minimise disruption to residents during construction and will ensure resident access is always maintained.

### 5 Are you renewing the existing pumping stations?

All options that are being considered for a new WWTP for the south-west involve new pipelines from the Glenbrook Pumping Station. An assessment of the need to renew our existing pumping stations at Glenbrook Beach Road and at Goble Road (Keven Road) will be undertaken as part of the south-west scheme.

### 6 How will you build new plants on existing sites and keep them operating?

Some of the options being considered include constructing the new WWTP on existing Watercare sites with operational WWTP facilities. Constructability of the proposed WWTP is being considered as part of the evaluation of each option.

Mitigations will be specific to each option but will consider construction staging and may require temporary installations. Where a proposed option involves constructing the new WWTP on an existing Watercare site with operational WWTP facilities, we will ensure that treatment can continue uninterrupted.

### 7 How long will construction last?

The duration of construction will be determined once we finalise the preferred scheme. Each option involves multiple variables, and currently, only a limited amount of design work has been completed. Once we have more detailed designs, we will be able to provide a clearer timeframe for construction and construction related impacts.

### 8 How will visual impacts be managed?

Depending on the preferred location, early planting or earth bunds will be undertaken around the site to reduce visual impact on neighbouring sites.



## 372 Glenbrook Beach Road site

### 9 Why is 372 Glenbrook Beach Road still on the option list?

Watercare withdrew its Notice of Requirement (NOR) in May 2024, following the recommendation from the Independent Hearing Commissioners. The previous recommendation does not act as a bar to Watercare lodging a new NOR to designate the site.

It is appropriate to undertake a fresh options assessment process that includes looking at 372 Glenbrook Beach Road, as it has several favourable attributes. The assessment will take into account comments made by the Commissioners regarding the options assessment process and relevant criteria.

### 10 Did Watercare agree not to use 372 Glenbrook Beach Road?

No, and 372 Glenbrook Beach Road remains a viable option, alongside a new WWTP on other sites.

### 11 Why did you look at only five sites, why not new sites?

We have listened to the community and considered the recommendations contained in the Independent Hearing commissioners' report on Watercare's Notice of Requirement to designate the site at 372 Glenbrook Beach Road. In response, Watercare has evaluated its existing WWTP sites at Waiuku and Clarks Beach, two new sites on NZ Steel owned land at Waiuku, our previous preferred option at 372 Glenbrook Beach Road, as well as considering both decentralised and centralised options.

### 12 How can you justify the use of Highly Productive Land?

The Glenbrook Beach Road site is classified as Highly Productive Land. However, if this option was confirmed, the proposed WWTP would occupy only a small portion of the site. The remaining land is intended to continue being used for highly productive purposes, ensuring that the majority of the land remains dedicated to its original use. Other options being considered do not involve land classified as Highly Productive Land.

### 13 If you don't put a plant at 372 Glenbrook Beach Road, then what happens to the land?

Watercare are currently restoring the natural flow path on this site by removing a dam (pond located adjacent to Glenbrook Beach Road). If the WWTP is not constructed at this location, we may use the site as a temporary laydown area, continue using it for agricultural purposes, or potentially sell the land in the future.

## Population growth

### 14 What population densities are you expecting as part of this scheme?

We are planning to build treatment assets that can accommodate the expected population growth enabled under the Auckland Unitary Plan. We are also future-proofing for the space needed to accommodate population growth beyond 2025.

	2050	2097
Waiuku	16,000	27,000
Clarks Beach	6,000	13,000
Kingseat	5,000	12,000
Glenbrook	3,000	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>

**15 Have the design numbers increased from 30,000 PE to 60,000 PE?**

The south-west discharge consent permits flows for up to 30,000 people over a 35-year period. As part of our planning for a WWTP, we aim to future-proof the facility by ensuring there is space to expand capacity beyond the current 35-year consent term. We are not building a 60,000 PE WWTP, but we are ensuring there is space to expand the plant in the future as the population increases.

**16 Will the South-West WWTP scheme accommodate flows from Kingseat?**

The future WWTP will ensure there is sufficient treatment capacity for Kingseat. The proposed wastewater conveyance pipe from Kingseat currently serves very few Watercare customers. This means that the pipeline from Kingseat to Clarks Beach is primarily intended to support future growth. Watercare is in discussions with the developers at Kingseat regarding this asset.

## Cost

**17 Who is paying for this?**

Funding is largely derived from infrastructure growth charges, with some contribution from the volume-based tariff charges paid by all customers. The scheme will be owned, operated and maintained by Watercare. Watercare receives no funding from Auckland Council rates.

**18 Will Watercare provide the costing for each option?**

Watercare is currently developing high-level cost estimates for the short-listed options. A cost weighting will be provided for these options to help in the decision-making process.

## Other questions

**19 If the preferred option is a decentralised option at Clarks Beach WWTP and Waiuku WWTP or Glenbrook Beach Road site, are we at risk of losing the golf course?**

No, you will not lose the golf course. The proposed option for a new WWTP at Clarks Beach utilises the area within Watercare's existing fence line, which is already designated for wastewater treatment purposes.

However, a portion of the golf course land may be used temporarily for construction laydown if required, and this would necessitate an agreement with the golf club.

All options will require tidal storage at Clarks Beach WWTP as the location of the approved discharge point is into the Waiuku Channel, adjacent to the Golf course.

**20 Will the proposed scheme include tankering of wastewater?**

We anticipate the need for tankering wastewater from September 2025 to June 2026, prior to completion of the upgrade at Clarks Beach. However, once the upgrade is finished, it is unlikely that tankering will be necessary in the future. The new WWTP will service the new connections, eliminating the need for long-term tankering.