

Hearing Statement: Te Karaka Stopbank Upgrade Project (Waipaoa River)

To: The Independent Commissioner Panel

Regarding: Resource Consent Applications for the Te Karaka Stopbank Upgrade

Submitter: Owner of Property at 88 (including the 3-hectare Upper Terrace)

1. Introduction and Core Purpose

Good morning/afternoon, Commissioners.

My name is Daniel Moran. I am originally from Fairlie in South Canterbury—a proud South Islander who married a Gisborne girl some 20 years ago, which is how I ended up in this beautiful region. My background is in farming/shearing and building

Some commissioners may have already observed I'm not the best reader /writer or even perhaps a clear and direct oral communicator so I ask please bear with me in this process, I have my points to make, and go by the philosophy of it's better to ask a dumb question than make a silly mistake

Isn't AI a wonderful tool? I'm only just getting a handle on helping organise my thoughts, so bear with me, while I speak and try to read along or pre-read this statement, and have your questions ready. I will probably have trouble reading it aloud in a coherent or as-written way and could flit here and there as I go. likely time needed 15-20 minutes

I am standing before you today to represent the interests of the Te Karaka village and the wider farming community who rely heavily on local river bridges. Simultaneously, I am here out of straightforward self-interest to protect our own family land and property situated at **Number 88 Rangatira rd**.

My primary purpose in participating in this hearing is to shield our property from the very real threat of asset devaluation. This perceived risk stems directly from the likelihood of new flooding being redirected into previously entirely dry parts of our land—most notably, our **3-hectare upper terrace**. Furthermore, we are deeply concerned by the distinct possibility of potential future bridge losses due to altered river hydraulics. Imposing these changes on our present environment will seriously damage the long-term viability and resale value of our property.

2. Endorsement of Jenny's Evidence

I also wish to formally endorse the sentiments and concerns raised in Jenny's submission. I am willing to answer questions on her views to the best of my ability today. We sometimes beg to differ .

Regrettably, Jenny cannot speak to you directly at this hearing. She has just learned of a serious health problem that requires her absolute attention as a first priority moving forward.

To reiterate the focal point of her evidence: **What is the long-term health and safety environment that this stopbank upgrade is creating for our community?** While protecting the township is necessary, it cannot come at the cost of shifting unmitigated health, safety, and flooding risks onto the town again ! As this is the 3rd attempt to stop it being flooded again after 3 floodings in the last 70 odd years and increases the risks surrounding rural properties with one fatality very close by our place , upstream of us in Gabriel .RIP John Coates

3. Procedural Request: Informal Mediation

Given the limited number of requests to be heard and the significant time set aside for this length of hearing, we may find ourselves tracking toward an early finish.

If an early conclusion is anticipated, I strongly urge the Commissioners to organize an **informal mediation process** right here while all concerned parties and technical staff are present and available, should any of the speakers be dissatisfied with a given potential outcome .

For any submitters proposing to challenge the final decision in court, initiating early discussions now is a matter of common sense. In the interest of saving the Environment Court's time when it inevitably comes to court-assisted mediation as the first step of an appeal, adopting an informal process now is highly feasible and efficient.

Council will need to supply a relevant submitter list following the release of the decision. For any potential appeal as all relevant submitters are to be served as EC requests., if this can be ready please .

4. Council Communications and Engagement

Firstly I must state to this panel that my experience in this stopbank upgrade , the communication from the Gisborne District Council (GDC) has been deeply disappointing.

Whether through the steering committee establishment, the broader community engagement process, or direct contact with staff, GDC's communications in this matter have **not been to the high-calibre standard I have personally experienced from this council over the past 15-plus years**. Affected parties deserve transparent, expert-level engagement when their livelihoods and properties are on the line, and that benchmark has unfortunately not been met here.

5. Objecting is a Democratic Right

- **A Seat at the Table:** My objection is not born of selfishness; it is a necessity. Filing this formal objection secures our seat at the table so we can appeal any flawed final decision.
- **Standing up for the Community:** I am standing here to advocate for the wider farming community and neighbors who may not yet fully realize the long-term impact of increasing the damming effects of the Waipaoa to land and bridges .
- **The "Hydro Town" Reality:** If the Crown NIF and Council GDC keep building these walls higher and higher, they risk turning Te Karaka into a hydro town over the next few centuries— with rising upstream river aggradation levels combining with the partial establishment of the dam being the stop bank ,it's perhaps a small start on a long term renewable energy project ,may be there is method in the madness ? .

6. Historical Context & and theft by Stealth

- **Perhaps post 1948 a planners Vision:** original strategy was zoning the far side of the bridge as *Rural General* land. The intent was to move the town gradually to safer, higher ground.
- **The 1988 Mistake:** The 1988 stopbank improvements fundamentally locked in a flawed decision. It has already cost us two houses, a marae, and the capacity to safely expand the township west via *Papakainga* or private housing developments and now the long term establishment of treecrops going forward .
- **Acquisition by Stealth:** Protecting Te Karaka township exclusively at the cost of previously unfloodable upstream properties is a cunning strategy. It is exactly why we are now looking at a third stopbank extension. Making unfloodable land newly flooded and raising heights on marginally floodable land using the once flooded logic , of doesn't matter how much you flood by the next time it floods on that land its a more minor effect, nothing short of land use options by stealth.

7. Impact Assessment: Private, Māori, and Neighboring Land

- **The Cost Already Borne:** Neighbors close to the stopbank are marked down as "minorly affected." But let's remember: these landowners—whether on private or Māori land—have *already* repeatedly taken water to save the Te Karaka township. They have borne these past costs to their paddocks and onto their own pockets, and that sacrifice demands formal recognition.
- **Precedent of Severe Impact:** Aside from our property at 88, Tracy is one of the only other landowners facing this severe level of direct impact. I make an offer if she requires to extend any help I can offer ,but think the commissioners should help her as well
- **The Historical Baseline:** I invoke the spirit of the **1975 Land Marches** ("*Not one more acre of Māori land sold*"). For this hearing in 2026, our stance must be: **Not one more inch of Moran Flat land flooded, and no more " of the more/minor effects" forced onto our flat land. M/M effect heard quoted Joss original at community Hui**

8. Technical Discrepancies & Modeling Faults (CFRA)

While we agree with the broad modeling ,I can point out localised discrepancies and strongly dispute the data understating the severity:

- **The Aggradation Blank Spot:** The hydraulic modeling completely fails to factor in riverbed aggradation (silt/gravel buildup). Dean evidence

- **The Peer Review Question:** Has the data reported in the *Consequential Flood Risk Assessment* (CFRA) actually been robustly peer-reviewed by an independent third party?
- **No Upstream Modeling:** There is a total lack of upstream modeling. The river drops 20 meters of fall over just 10 kilometers as the crow flies—meaning there is limited fall for scour to move aggradation on down stream even if the volumes were less .
- **Tarndale and the Slash Trap:** Upstream realities like Tarndale mean that forestry slash and rapid aggradation will turn our bridges into a high-risk debris trap during flash floods.

9. Bureaucratic Ignorance vs. Local Knowledge

- **Flawed River Engineering Claims:** We see a massive gap between real-world experience and the Council engineers' interpretation of the CFRA. For example: GDC staff put forward the inaccurate claim that river water crested over the *Rangatira Bridge* deck during the gabriel event ,that's a height discrepancy of a meter to the existing stop bank ,made me question from the start the accuracy of GDC story for this process .
- **Ignoring Local Knowledge:** Genuine "optioneering" must combine engineering logic with long-standing local knowledge—not dismiss it or not request experienced upstream farmer for it .
- **Lifelines Jeopardized:** Relying on GDC Lifelines and NZTA (Waka Kotahi) who have shown a level of bureaucratic ignorance. If the bridge washes out due to a slash-and-aggradation along with a bank failure caused by a back wash ,who is going to put their hand up when a entire community lifeline is completely broken.

10. In closing

- **Figure 10.2 Proof:** Council's own CFRA clearly maps out the full, minor extent of new hazard flooding directed onto our property.but its still flooding
- **Agree to Disagree on because we were always flooded we just get a " More Minor effect ":** modeling discrepancies I see , we will never agree with the Council that this is a "more /minor effect."when flooding our 3 ha upper terrace and placing it in the bottom of waipoa valley is nothing to worry about .
- **The Bottom Line:** What we *can* agree on, based on the plan, is that the **3-hectare upper river terrace at 88 becomes predominantly newly floodable** by the new stopbank design ,to take water for the OD event
- This permanently degrades and devalues our environment, and it cannot be approved without comprehensive mitigation.

- Matt Adams, CFRA contributor confirms this in his email to Dean
 - Councils own words its a medium term solution, my word keep your medium term solution surcharge of our land.
-

Thank you for your time. I am happy to take any questions you may have regarding Mine and Jenny's evidence and statements .
