

RC14513 / COASTAL PROTECTION STRUCTURE AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ANDREW FRASER (GIPS)

This summary highlights the key matters addressed in my statement of evidence dated 25 July 2025.

1. My name is Andrew Fraser. I am here to give evidence on behalf of GIPS.
2. GIPS has proposed that a buried rock revetment seawall be constructed in the reserve land at Glen Isla Place, which would protect part of the remaining reserve and the waterfront properties.
3. When five out of the seven waterfront properties at Glen Isla Place were acquired by their current owners, including when my family bought 16 Glen Isla Place, there was an existing seawall in front of Glen Isla Place that had been constructed in 1983. The existing seawall was around 20 metres seaward of our private boundary. The existing seawall was removed in 2011, at the time that soft engineering in the form of dune enhancement was carried out at Glen Isla Place, which involved additional sand and planting. The dune enhancement failed almost immediately during a storm and since that time, without any protection, a substantial amount (12 to 15 metres) of the dune and reserve land has been lost to coastal erosion. During the Hale and Gabrielle storms in early 2023, several metres of reserve land was eroded and today only about 4 to 5 metres of reserve land remains at the southern end of Glen Isla Place between the front of the dune and the private boundaries.
4. Concerned about the risk of further erosion, particularly from storms, the waterfront property owners sought specialist advice on erosion risks and protection measures. The advice was that erosion is likely to continue, and storm cut at Glen Isla Place could be 18 metres or more. That amount of storm cut would cause significant damage to our properties and our homes.
5. Furthermore, we were advised that storm cut at Glen Isla Place could be further exacerbated by the proximity of Three Mile Creek, as, during large storm events the outflow of water can scour sand and lower the sea bottom near the creek mouth, allowing larger waves near the shore and greater erosive energy to impact on the dunes. This was apparent from the Gabrielle storm, when greater erosion occurred adjacent to the Creek than further away from the outlet. In addition, the groynes are only consented until 2032 with no certainty that the consent will be renewed, and without the groynes the erosion risk would be even worse.

6. Three Mile Creek is important to reduce flooding risk for the wider Waihi Beach community as it works as an outflow for flood water during large storm events, but it has an effect on our properties.
7. GIPS was advised that it would be appropriate to implement coastal protection for the properties at Glen Isla Place. GIPS' expert advisers assessed the options, and it was determined that a buried rock revetment seawall located on the reserve land would be the best option because it provides effective backstop protection, it is durable and proven, and the effects are negligible and can be managed through conditions. The proposal also includes enhancement of the dune and extensive native planting to significantly improve the ecological quality of the reserve land.
8. The location was chosen for reasons that include the following:
 - (a) it protects much of the remaining reserve land, which will have value in ecological terms, and for its own sake as an asset of the Council and hence the community;
 - (b) New Zealanders value the importance of the King's Chain, what used to be called the Queen's Chain, where public land is preserved between private land and the waterfront;
 - (c) to retain the option to provide future emergency and public access to and along the waterfront;
 - (d) to retain dune plants that can help naturally replenish the sand covering the wall after storm damage; and
 - (e) because it is appropriate for the wall to be on the reserve land given it mitigates the effects of Three Mile Creek.
9. GIPS would prefer the wall to be in the proposed location, which is 5 metres from the private boundaries at the southern end of the wall, and that outcome would maximise the public benefits of the proposal. If necessary, GIPS would accept the wall being closer to the private boundaries at the southern end if that is preferred by the Commissioners and acceptable to the Council as landowner, but GIPS believes it should be at least 1.5 metres from the private boundaries to preserve enough of the benefits just mentioned.
10. GIPS is appreciative of the support it has received from the Council as landowner. Council has agreed to allow the wall on the reserve land, subject to certain conditions, including the granting of this resource consent.

11. The Section 42A Officer's Report seems to recommend managed retreat for Glen Isla Place rather than coastal protection works, despite the finding that the effects of the seawall are less than minor and can be adequately managed through conditions. That seems a very harsh conclusion. In my statement of evidence, I have provided some information showing how damaging managed retreat is to the lives and wellbeing of those whose properties are affected, in addition to the economic cost of destroying perfectly good homes, and how it is not an appropriate situation where there is a viable engineering solution to the risk, and where the solution has negligible effects. I cannot believe that many people would recommend managed retreat for their own property when a viable engineering solution, with negligible effects (and with public benefits), exists.
12. In addition, as Mr Slyfield has addressed, it appears that the recommendation for managed retreat is based on an incorrect understanding of the existing resource consents on the properties owned by GIPS members, and managed retreat does not address the risk of storm cut.
13. The Coastal Engineering Review attached to the Section 42A Officer's Report recognises that the southern section of the wall is justified and the design is appropriate, but the report questions whether the northern section is needed, although acknowledging it will have negligible effects. GIPS believes that all of the wall should be built because:
 - (a) storm cut could also affect the properties behind the northern section of the wall;
 - (b) the northern section is the most exposed to the additional risks arising from proximity to Three Mile Creek,
 - (c) some amount of the northern section will be needed to manage end of wall effect during large storm events, and how much will depend on how big the storms are; there is no more logical end point for the wall at the northern end than the location that has been proposed,
 - (d) with sea level rise the risks are likely to further increase in the future and, given it has no effects, building it now, as part of this consent, is the most efficient and practical option, with the least disruption to the dune.
14. I know that there has been some opposition to our proposal from 28 submitters who, like us, value and care about Waihi Beach. We feel we have gone to great lengths to minimise any effects of the project and, based on the assessment of our experts, with which Council's planners agree, the effects will all be so low that they are negligible to minor and can be managed by appropriate conditions. The project has a number of

public benefits. We are paying all the costs including for maintenance. We face the risk of potential storm cut of 18 metres or more, which threatens our homes because the previous seawall was removed rather than being repaired or replaced. We ask for understanding as we seek to protect our homes, just as those who face other serious risks, like flooding, try to do what they can to protect their homes.