

# **Frequently Asked Questions About the St Marys Bay - Masefield Beach Improvement Project**

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This document summarises the project team's responses to questions and concerns raised by community and stakeholders about the St Marys Bay - Masefield Beach Improvement Project (the Project) to date through consultation and communication with residents and users of St Marys Bay.

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# 1. Background

The St Marys Bay and Masefield Beach improvement project (the 'Project') is a local project being undertaken to improve water quality at St Marys Bay and Masefield Beach. It will redirect overflows from the combined sewer away from these areas, returning as much wastewater to the sewer as is practicable.

As part of this project the old failed outfall at Masefield Beach will also be removed and replaced with a new outfall. This will enable stormwater (with any residual wastewater) to be discharged much further out in the harbour where the dispersion is more effective.

## 2. Important note about wider Waitemata harbour issues

A number of visitors to the June 2017 information sessions were interested in the context of this project in relation to resolving issues in other parts of the harbour. This was the most commonly raised concern.

This Project is a first step towards overall improved water quality for the Waitemata Harbour. It focusses on local improvements in the St Mary's Bay and Masefield Bay area and is being designed so that it can integrate with further improvements.

Fully addressing the extent of the combined sewer area and resolving the overflows for the wider area will be a complex and expensive exercise. This is being worked through by Healthy Waters and Watercare and is named Project CANOPy. Community consultation on proposed solutions is intended to commence later this year so that a decision can be made about a preferred way forward and additional projects arising from CANOPy can be implemented.

## 3. The consultation process

### How are you involving the community in the project?

We understand that there is a high degree of community interest in this project. The project team sought early community feedback on the proposed project so that design could commence with the preferences of residents and other stakeholders in mind, and further communications, along with two public information sessions, were held in June 2017.

Further information sessions will be held when the design is further progressed and ahead of the lodgement for resource consent.

### How can I stay up to date?

The best way is to email us and request to be added to the mailing list for the St Marys Bay - Masefield Beach Project : [HWDdevelopment@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:HWDdevelopment@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) -

Westhaven Marina has also maintained a page on its website which contains background and past communications to residents- [www.westhaven.co.nz/stmarysbay](http://www.westhaven.co.nz/stmarysbay)

If you or a group you belong to wishes to meet with us, please email: [HWDdevelopment@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:HWDdevelopment@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

**Will the consent be notified, and when do you expect to lodge?**

A number of resource consents are required to install and operate the new pipeline, pumpstation and discharge. Auckland Council are intending to lodge consents by the end of the year. The application will be publicly notified, enabling anybody to make a submission for or against the scheme.

## **4. Questions about the environment**

**How often will the new outfall discharge?**

We expect that the total number of overflows will be reduced from around 140 per annum, to around 30 – 40 per annum in heavy rainfall events via the harbour outfall.

However, there will be two important differences:

1. At present overflows can contain a high proportion of wastewater (sewage) when the pipes overflow, even in smaller rainfall events. On completion of this project, most of the wastewater will be able to be returned to the sewer for disposal at Mangere Wastewater Treatment Plant. Therefore any overflows that do occur in the harbour will consist of mostly stormwater, with minimal wastewater.
2. Overflows will occur further out into the harbour, for better dilution and dispersion.

These numbers are approximate and when the design process is completed we will be able to confirm expectations more specifically.

Overflows to St Marys Bay itself will be reduced from 70 per year, to around 2-4 per year. There will no longer be any overflows directly onto Masefield Beach. Again, this number is approximate and will be confirmed during the design process.

**Will there still be discharges to St Marys Bay?**

Yes, although this will be significantly reduced from around several times a week, to around 2- 4 per year in very heavy rainfall events. This number will be confirmed through the design process.

There will no longer be discharges to Masefield Beach, rather the proposed outfall will extend out into the Harbour.

Because wastewater will return to Branch 5 of the combined sewer network, overflows will be largely stormwater (with some wastewater).

**Isn't this the area where Skypath ends up? Will it affect any future development in the area?**

We are working with Auckland Council, Panuku Development Auckland and NZTA to ensure the location of the pumpstation and pipeline does not affect any future development of the area, including Skypath, marina operations, and the future development of Harbour Bridge Park.

**What will the pump station look like?**

Most of the pumpstation will be located below ground. A building will be above ground, which will provide access for maintenance and operation. The project team will work to design the new building to be suitable for its environment and align with the character of the area it is located in.

## **5. Questions about technical aspects of this project**

**What is the capacity of the Diversion and Storage Pipeline and common collection point which is proposed to hold back overflows?**

At this stage, we believe that an appropriate capacity for this system will be around 1 – 1.5 megalitres (ML). However, this needs to be confirmed through the design process. The size of the system will need to be determined through examination of network performance, construction considerations (such as sizes of tunnelling machines available) and the degree to which future projects will provide additional storage or remediation of some kind. We will be able to provide more detailed information at our next Open Days.

**What level of rainfall is required before the storage holding capacity is filled and overflows occur?**

This will be confirmed through the design process.

**How will city intensification affect these overflows? Will there be increased volumes?**

Once this project has been constructed, intensification in the drainage area serviced by this project will not increase the number of overflows or the volume. We note that Unitary Plan requirements require that any new developments must not increase the amount of runoff from the existing site.

The issue of overflows in the wider combined sewer area will be addressed through separate projects and initiatives arising from CANOPy.

**Will the overflows from the proposed new outfall (given it will service the entire St Marys Bay catchment) be large during heavy rain?**

The proposed scheme will collect combined sewer overflows from both St Marys Bay and from part of the Herne Bay catchment (picking up the existing overflow points from Sarsfield St that discharge to Masefield Beach).

The total volume of overflows will not be greater than that discharged currently through the existing outfalls. Instead of being discharged through separate outfalls, the volume will be

directed to a single outfall. This does mean that the total volume through one outfall will be greater than any current single outfall. However, the discharge will be directed out into the harbour where greater dispersion is available. Technical specialists have been engaged to examine any potential impacts of the new single discharge and to ensure the location is one that can maximise dilution as much as possible.

The frequency of overflows (how often an overflow occurs) will be significantly reduced.

**What volume of overflows are expected during heavy rain?**

We will be able to estimate this later in the design process.

**Is it possible for just storm-water to be discharged from the St Marys Bay catchment rather than the sewage/waste-stormwater mix?**

This is not currently possible. The combined sewer is designed to take both stormwater and wastewater. This Project is a reconfiguration of the existing outfall system, a first step ahead of future network improvement.

**Has any flow work been done to identify the likely effects of tidal flows on overflows from the proposed new outfall?**

A technical specialist has been engaged to examine the impacts of the current network operation on St Marys Bay, Masefield Beach and the surrounding area and compare this to effects from the proposed new outfall. We will be able to provide further information at a later date.

**What will be the effects of overflows and tidal movement on Herne Bay beaches and environment?**

We do not expect the Project to increase the concentration of wastewater contaminants at Herne Bay beaches over existing levels. Overall, the Project will reduce the wastewater being discharged to the harbour environment from the St Marys Bay and Masefield Beach outfalls. The amount of wastewater that can reach other areas from these outfalls will be reduced. The specialist work will examine this.

As above, this project will not reduce the impacts on Herne Bay beaches from other overflows. Similarly, until such time as wider improvements are implemented, overflows from other areas will continue to impact on St Marys Bay and Masefield Beach from time to time.

**Has there been an independent expert peer review of the project?**

Technical review will be undertaken. This is standard through the Resource Consent and design process and will ensure that the proposed infrastructure will perform as it is intended and that it meets Auckland Council's requirements.

**Has an ecological assessment been made on the likely effects of this new untreated sewage/storm-water overflow on the harbour environment?**

A specialist marine ecologist has been engaged to examine the ecology of the area, assess the impacts of the existing overflows on St Marys Bay and Masefield Beach and to compare this with any impacts that might occur from the new outfall.

**Does this proposal mean Council has abandoned the idea of designing a system that will in time eliminate untreated overflows?**

Auckland Council and Watercare intend to make further improvements to the combined network. A preferred technical approach has not yet been decided. The CANOPy project will examine whether network separation or improving the combined network or some combination of the two approaches is a preferred way forward for this catchment (and Herne Bay and others) for the long-term. The local community will have a chance to input to this decision.

**Will the old pipe be removed from Masefield Beach and the Harbour as part of the project?**

A photograph of the old outfall is below. We intend to remove this outfall as part of the project.

