

Options Considered

1. **Do Nothing**

The LWVDS has no obligations relating to the “private stopbank network”. There are no direct or indirect benefits to the LWVDS. The land adjoining Lake Wairarapa clearly benefits from the operation of the LWVDS. The new rating classification is based on the benefits and dis-benefits the specific land receives from a variety of factors.

During a large flood event all landowners in the LWVDS get affected to a varying degree depending on the location of their land. It should be noted that landowners outside Lake Wairarapa do not get affected during small flood events or during lake blockages. However the lakeshore landowners get adversely affected during a prolonged wet period combined with a series of small flood events, or due to prolonged river mouth blockages combined with a small flood event.

The landowners who have developed the “private stopbank network” around the lake are being treated differently to landowners who wish to construct river protection structures in areas outside of river schemes. The latter are eligible for a contribution from the isolated works budget, but the budget is limited and contestable across the region.

2. **Introduce the additional Isolated Works Funding specifically for such works**

Landowners who are located outside of river schemes anywhere in the Wellington region who wish to construct “private protection works” are eligible to bid for funds from the Isolated Works Budget. A total of \$130,000 is available in the budget per annum (that is \$39,000 from the general rates). The landowner receives a maximum 30% contribution from GW towards any approved works. The landowner is required to obtain the necessary resource consents and Flood Protection staff approval of the works.

If such an option was adopted by GW, the programme of works as detailed from the investigation could be spread over 10 years. This would mean an annual commitment from the general rates of either \$35,000 or \$92,000 per year depending on the standard of stopbank upgrade adopted (i.e. as constructed or LWVDS standard). This proposal would ensure consistent standards are used when constructing or maintaining such works.

3. **LWVDS takes over the upgrade and management of parts of the old stopbanks along the Ruamahanga Cut-off Channel**

Under this option the LWVDS would take over the old stopbanks along the Ruamahanga cut-off channel and upgrade and manage them like other Scheme assets. The rest of the areas would be managed using the isolated works policy. The reasoning behind this option is that these stopbanks provide protection to a number of properties.

As mentioned earlier there was no clear documentation found regarding the origin of the stopbanks along the Ruamahanga cut-off channel. They may have been constructed by the

former river board or by individual landowners with subsidy money from the river board. In either case they have not been constructed to a particular uniform standard.

If these stopbanks are taken over by the LWVDS, it would require the rating classification to be reviewed to assess who receives the benefits from the works. The comments made under 4 below also apply to this option, and it would affect all the ratepayers in the scheme.

It is to be noted that the flooding in this area is now due to high lake levels and not high river flows as in the past. The effects of flooding on the land in this area are the same as other land around the lake. Therefore, for consistency purposes all areas should be treated equally.

The cost of such works would be funded up to 50% by the LWVDS and 50% from the general rates.

4. LWVDS takes over the total upgrade and management of the “Private Protection Network”

Under this option the LWVDS would take full responsibility for the upgrading and maintenance of the “private protection network”. This would require the rating classification to be reviewed to assess who receives benefits from the works. This would affect all of the ratepayers within the Scheme, requiring increases in rate contributions. Given the recent adoption of the new rating classification it is considered that most ratepayers will view such changes negatively.

Further, it should be noted that the LWVDS does not provide protection for the whole scheme at the same level. There is a large difference in the level of protection between various areas. Therefore, there is no justification for special treatment of one area without considering the whole scheme.

As the LWVDS receives a contribution of 50% from the general rates the impact of this option over a 10 year improvement plan, would be to increase the general rate requirement by either \$59,000 or \$153,200 per annum, depending on the standard of stopbank upgrade adopted.