



**greater WELLINGTON**  
**REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
**Te Pane Matua Taiao**

If calling please ask for: Democratic Services

3 August 2018

## **Environment Committee**

Order Paper for the meeting of the Environment Committee to be held in the Ramaroa Room, Queen Elizabeth Park, Paraparaumu on:

**Thursday, 9 August 2018 at 9.30am**

### **Membership**

Cr Kedgley (Chair)  
Cr Brash (Deputy)

Cr Blakeley  
Cr Gaylor  
Cr Laidlaw  
Cr McKinnon  
Cr Ponter  
Cr Swain

Cr Donaldson  
Cr Laban  
Cr Lamason  
Cr Ogden  
Cr Staples

Peter Gawith

Ihaia Puketapu

***Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council***

## Environment Committee

**Order Paper for meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 August 2018 in the Ramaroa Room, Queen Elizabeth Park, Paraparaumu at 9.30am**

### Public Business

		<b>Page No</b>
1.	Apologies	
2.	Declarations of conflict of interest	
3.	Public participation	
4.	<a href="#">Confirmation of the minutes of 21 June 2018</a>	<b>Report 18.273 3</b>
5.	<a href="#">Action items from previous meetings</a>	<b>Report 18.281 6</b>
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7.	<a href="#">RiverLink - Preliminary Design</a>	<b>Report 18.326 46</b>
8.	<a href="#">Proposal for a Wellington region approach to community-council coastal adaptation work programme</a>	<b>Report 18.328 139</b>
9.	<a href="#">GWRC submission on Draft National Planning Standards</a>	<b>Report 18.311 144</b>
10.	<a href="#">Council submission on the Local Government New Zealand's draft sector position on climate change mitigation</a>	<b>Report 18.320 162</b>
11.	<a href="#">Whaitua programme update – July 2018</a>	<b>Report 18.288 171</b>
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**greater WELLINGTON**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Pane Matua Taiao

**Report 18.273**

21/06/2018

File: CCAB-10-521

**Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Thursday, 21 June 2018 in the Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Level 2, 15 Walter Street, Te Aro, Wellington at 09:30am.**

**Present**

Councillors Kedgley (Chair), Blakeley, Brash (Deputy Chair), Donaldson, Gaylor, Laban, Laidlaw, Lamason, McKinnon, Ogden, Ponter, Swain, Peter Gawith and Ihaia Puketapu

**Public Business**

**1 Apologies**

*Moved*

*(Brash/Lamason)*

*That the Committee accepts the apology for absence from Councillors Laidlaw and Staples.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

**2 Declarations of conflict of interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**3 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**4 Confirmation of the public minutes of 10 May 2018**

An updated set of minutes were circulated at the meeting.

*Moved*

*(Cr Donaldson/Cr Blakeley)*

*That the Committee confirms the public minutes of the meeting of 10 May 2018, Report 18.193.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

5 **Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga FMP draft Volumes 1 and Volume 2 – endorsement and approval for public engagement**

Francie Morrow, Project Manager, Floodplain Mgmt Plans and Graeme Campbell, Manager, Flood Protection spoke to the report.

**Report 18.228**

File ref: CCAB-10-518

*Moved*

*(Cr Donaldson/Cr Kedgley)*

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Endorses the draft Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga Floodplain Management Plan – Volume 1 and Volume 2.*
4. *Approves the communications and engagement strategy to seek feedback from the wider community.*
5. *Recommends Council approve that Subcommittee members are paid a set fee of \$150 plus mileage for public engagement events attended during the engagement process*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

6 **Climate Change update**

Iain Dawe, Senior Policy Advisor (Hazards) and Jake Roos, Acting Climate Change Advisor spoke to report. Cr Blakeley also made a presentation at the invitation of the Chair on the Draft Productivity Commission Report: Low-emissions economy.

**Report 18.245**

File ref: CCAB-10-512

*Moved*

*(Cr Blakeley/Cr Brash)*

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 and

**7 Are we meeting our environmental outcomes on Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour**

Penny Fairbrother, Senior Science Coordinator spoke to the report.

**Report 18.208**

File ref: CCAB-10-511

*Moved*

*(Cr Donaldson/Cr Brash)*

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

**8. General Managers' report to the Environment Committee meeting on 21 June 2018**

Wayne O'Donnell, General Management, Catchment Management and Tim Sharp, Contractor, Environmental Policy spoke to the report.

**Report 18.208**

File ref: CCAB-10-507

*Moved*

*(Cr Gaylor/Cr Lamason)*

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting closed at 1:10pm.

Cr S Kedgley  
(Chair)

Date:



**Report** 18.281  
Date 2 August 2018  
File CCAB-10-528

**Committee** Environment Committee  
**Authors** Nigel Corry, General Manager, Environment Management and  
Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management

## Action items from previous meetings

**Attachment 1** lists items raised at Environment Committee meetings that require actions or follow-ups from officers. All action items include an outline of current status and a brief comment. Once the items have been completed and reported to the Committee they will be removed from the list.

No decision is being sought in this report. This report is for the Committee's information only.

### Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

**Nigel Corry**  
General Manager,  
Environment Management

Report prepared by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
General Manager, Catchment  
Management

**Attachment 1:** Action items from previous meetings

**Action points from previous Environment Committee meetings**

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>Status and comment</b>
15 February 2018	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Requests officers to prepare a communications plan for the Wellington Harbour and Hutt Valley Whaitua for consideration by the Committee Chair and for distribution to Committee members as a matter of priority, and to report to the next Committee meeting on progress.</i></p> <p><i>(Noted: The Committee requested that the communications plan include provision for communications with relevant stakeholder groups.)</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <i>Completed</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Preliminary material has already been sent to Councillors, post discussion with the Committee Chair. Further report on current agenda.</p>
15 February 2018	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Requests that officers include regular Resource Management Act reporting in the General Managers' report to each committee meeting.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <i>Under action</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Action noted and reporting will commence on a regular basis from here on in.</p>
22 March 2018	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Requests officers to arrange a workshop inviting both Wellington Water Limited and Regional Public Health to discuss their respective responses to the broader set of Inquiry recommendations. The workshop could also incorporate an update on the 'Waiwhetu Aquifer contamination' workstream.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <i>Under action</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>
22 March 2018	<p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p><i>Requests officers to work proactively with territorial authorities, Wellington Water Limited and Regional Public Health to finalise the Memorandum of Understanding clarifying arrangements and responsibilities with respect to providing safe public drinking water supply in the Wellington Region.</i></p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <i>Under action</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>

**Attachment 1 to Report 18.281**

22 March 2018	<b>Resolution</b>  <i>Requests officers to accelerate work with Wellington Water on wastewater and storm-water issues.</i>	<b>Status:</b> <i>Under action</i>  <b>Comments:</b>
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**Report** 2018.307  
**Date** 9 August 2018  
**File** CCAB-10-545

**Committee** Environment  
**Authors** Fiona Colquhoun, Parks Planner  
Kyn Drake, Project Officer

## **Parks Network Plan review initial consultation feedback**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide a summary of the feedback received during the initial consultation period for the review of the Parks Network Plan.

### **2. Background**

The current Parks Network Plan was approved by Council in 2011 and encompasses eight parks and forests:

- Akatarawa Forest
- Battle Hill Farm Forest Park
- Belmont Regional Park
- East Harbour Regional Park
- Kaitoke Regional Park
- Pakuratahi Forest
- Wainuiomata Recreation Area
- Queen Elizabeth Park

Note: Whitireia Park has its own management plan.

In May 2018 the Environment Committee approved '*Everything is Connected*', the Parks Network Plan Review Discussion Document, for an initial six week consultation period. The aim of the consultation was to seek feedback and suggestions from the public and park stakeholders to inform the development of a new Parks Network Plan.

#### **2.1 Consultation and engagement undertaken**

The consultation and engagement undertaken was a **listening and information gathering opportunity**. We sought general comments as well as specific feedback about the issues identified in our consultation material about the management of our regional parks into the future, and what facilities and

services might be needed. The discussion material supported dialogue on a wide range of topics and feedback indicated that it was well and received useful.

Consultation and engagement activities between 21 May and 29 June (and extending into July) included:

- Mana whenua engagement
- Information on the website including the discussion document, supporting documents and an online survey form
- Copies of consultation material available in all Greater Wellington offices and all major libraries throughout the region as well as park ranger offices
- Summary flyer with feedback form available in all park brochure holders in park entrances
- Over 1400 flyers handed out over two occasions at Wellington Railway Station
- A series of social media (Facebook and Instagram) posts on a range of topics
- Direct emails to over 1900 people on parks and environment related databases. This included regional and national conservation and recreation groups, and individuals who submitted feedback via other Greater Wellington planning processes
- Meetings and discussions with interested stakeholders and groups across the regional park network, such as friends groups.
- A drop in discussion session for East Harbour Regional Park stakeholders
- Meetings with territory authority open space and parks planners, DOC officers, NZTA cycle network staff and others
- One to one meetings with park rangers
- Public notice in the Dominion Post
- Media release.

The six week engagement period was informally extended to eight weeks by leaving the online survey on the website to allow for more feedback.

### **Queen Elizabeth Park**

Over the past two years there have been periodic and vocal objections to some aspects of park management at Queen Elizabeth Park. For this reason, more intensive engagement activities were undertaken to listen to community and stakeholders concerns about the park. This included:

- Meetings with local iwi and most park stakeholders over a period of three days to seek their feedback.

- An independently facilitated workshop with iwi and stakeholder group representatives to explore common key issues topics in more detail. The feedback is summarised in **Attachment 2**.
- The consultation flyer and feedback form was mailed to all residents in Paekakariki and all residents in the streets immediately north of the park in Raumati South. In total over 1200 residents were mailed the information.

In addition, the annual parks satisfaction telephone survey, which took place between February and April this year, included extra questions to inform parks management planning. The survey also included an increased population sample size (+150 people) within the vicinity of Queen Elizabeth Park and some specific questions for this park.

## 2.2 Community feedback

The level of engagement has confirmed that the community is very interested and engaged in regional parks. Many respondents know our parks well and have made a significant effort to provide detailed commentary about concerns they have as well as suggesting possible improvements for management of parks.

Over 345 people submitted feedback in writing, and many others provided feedback via officer discussions and in response to social media posts. In addition, a petition in favour of developing wetlands titled ‘*Restore the Raumati Wetlands in Queen Elizabeth Park*’ was provided with 712 signatures (as of 30 July; the petition is still open for signatures).

Feedback was received in the form of:

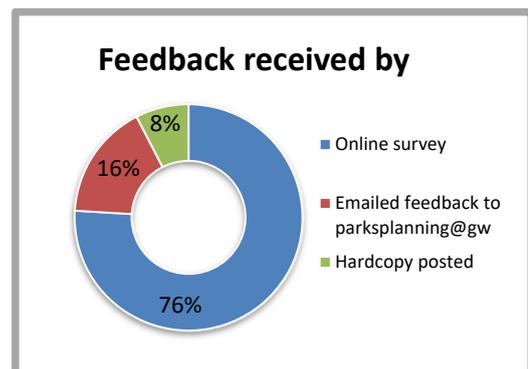
- Online surveys and hard copy feedback forms
- Emails to [parksplanning@gw.govt.nz](mailto:parksplanning@gw.govt.nz)
- One to one meetings between officers and stakeholders
- A workshop for iwi and Queen Elizabeth Park stakeholders, drop in session for East Harbour stakeholders and individual meetings with other park stakeholder as they expressed interest
- Public comments on a series of social media posts (Facebook and Instagram).

The feedback provided by the community during this consultation will help us develop a new management plan which reflects community needs and aspirations for regional parks.

### 2.2.1 Feedback themes

- 262 online surveys were completed
- 26 hard copy surveys returned
- 57 email

Total 345

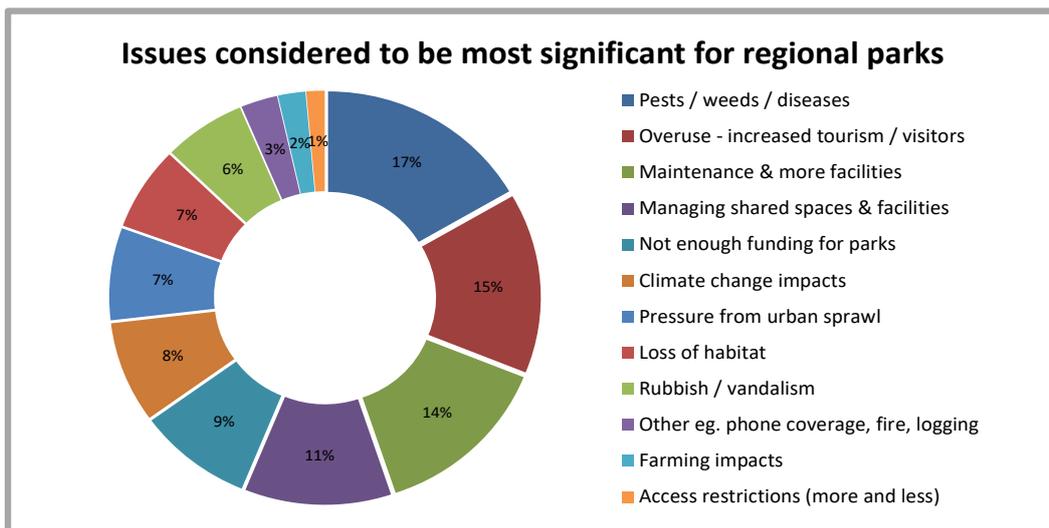


A summary of the feedback received is set out in [Attachment 1](#).

In the online survey we asked for feedback via five questions. The results are set out below.

Note: It was not compulsory to answer every question; therefore the number of respondents to each question varies. Respondents could provide multiple answers to each question.

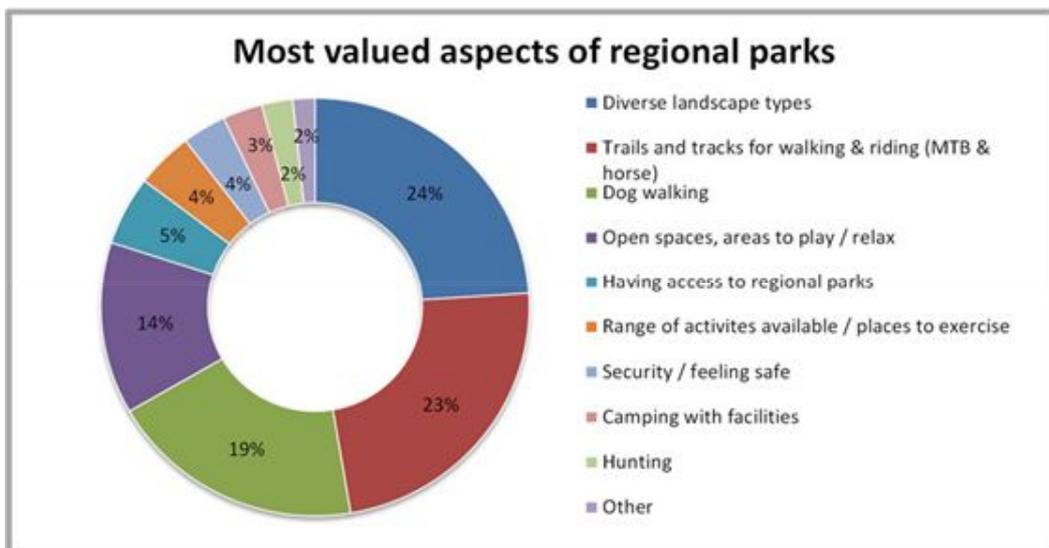
**1. What do you think are the most significant issues facing regional parks now and over the next ten years?**



A significant proportion of respondents are concerned about the natural environment within parks. Managing the environment to minimise the impacts of pest plants and animals is the most significant concern. This is followed closely by concerns about the pressure on parks from tourism and visitors, and the challenge of providing more facilities and maintaining parks. Concerns about managing shared spaces often related to dog walking and horse riding on shared trails.

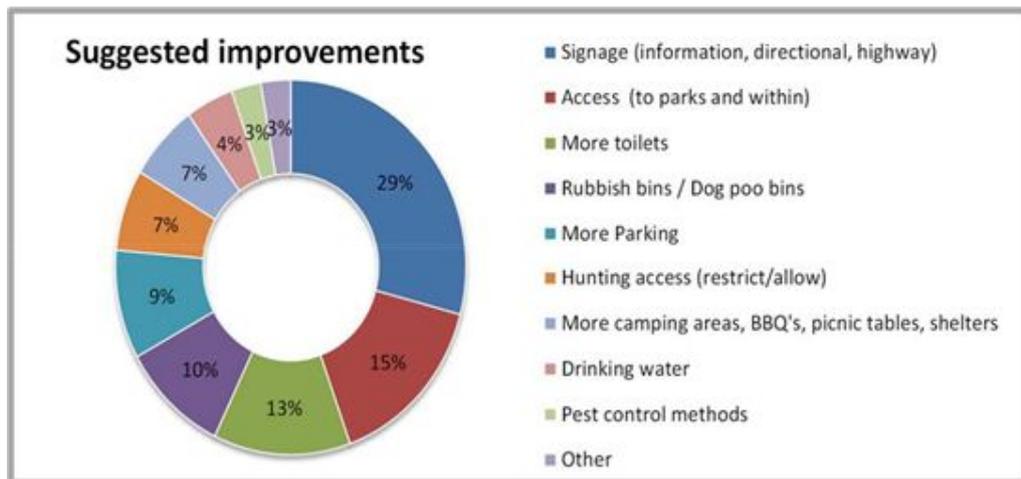
Community feedback about issues of concern is explored further in [Attachment 1](#).

**2. What do you value most about particular regional parks? For example, particular landscapes, places, trails, or recreation activities?**



Diverse landscapes were the most valued aspect of regional parks. This was followed closely by the trail based recreation opportunities of walking, bike and horse riding and dog walking. Responses to this question are explored more in [Attachment 1](#).

**3. What could Greater Wellington do to improve our regional parks? For example, are facilities needed in a particular place or accessibility improved?**



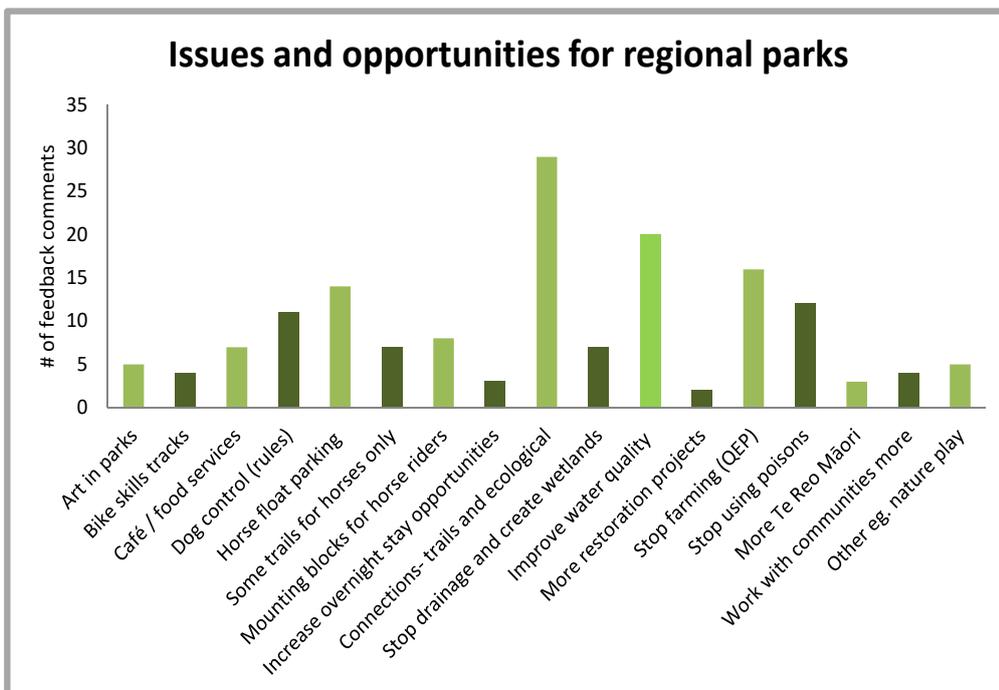
Community feedback here relates to recreation facilities and public access.

More work is required to improve signage to and within parks, and to improve a range of other facilities to support recreation activities. Concerns about signage are also reflected in feedback provided in the annual parks telephone survey.

Access to and within parks is identified as a significant opportunity for improvement. Commentary provided within feedback includes concerns about restrictions on ‘freedom to roam’ in some parks which are recreation reserves;

in particular Belmont and Queen Elizabeth Park. There are many references in the feedback to fences and gates making access more difficult, and the feeling of recreation access being shaped or constrained by farming licence activities, rather than farming activities accommodating recreation access. **Attachment 1** describes community suggestions for improvements for recreation facilities in more detail.

**4. Do you have any feedback about issues or opportunities raised in this discussion document or the supporting documents (External Influences on Parks and Farming in Regional Parks)?**



Throughout the feedback and officer/ stakeholder discussions the common overall theme is the desire for ‘connections’, in particular ecological corridor habitat connections and trail connections to and within parks for recreation purposes. Discussions with territorial authority and other land management agencies were also often focused on open space connections. The consultation theme, ‘Everything is connected’ appears to have been particularly pertinent.

The current Parks Network Plan identifies areas where **ecological corridor connections within and beyond parks** could be made. Community feedback is that further work is required to support and enhance ecological corridors, and that this needs to happen in a deliberate and collaborative manner with adjoining private land owners, other land management agencies and community groups. Feedback was critical of Greater Wellington where stated ecological corridors have not been achieved to the extent community members expected.

Looking beyond park boundaries, **trail connections** to parks for cycling and walking from public transport and home are also seen as important by the community. The boom in cycling activities and retiring baby boomers could be

generating some of this demand as well as general community interest in sustainable transport options. The desire for better park access and facilities for horse riders is also apparent in community feedback. Social media posts relating to horse riding in regional parks received many 'likes' and 'shares' of the survey link. Regional parks are seen as key destinations in the region for horse trail riding. Other trail related feedback includes the desire for more circuit trails within parks and trails with easy or intermediate gradients.

**Improving water quality** was the second most important issue and opportunity identified by the community. Feedback also included references to perceived poor water quality and upstream grazing activities in parks. The community has identified that they expect regional parks to be exemplars of best practice in sustainable land management and expressed concern that not all streams or seeps are fenced from stock grazing activities. Where parks encompass the headwaters of catchments respondents see Greater Wellington as having a core role in downstream water quality. Concerns about management of wetlands and waterways in Queen Elizabeth Park were also raised and an online petition to change park management practices has been received.

Overall, throughout feedback there is support for more use of **Te Reo Māori** in park names and signs, and for more mana whenua heritage story telling in parks. This will be explored more with mana whenua. In meetings with mana whenua, particular aspirations for parks were identified and these will also be explored in more detail as planning progresses. For example, Ngati Haumia, a hapu of Ngati Toa has expressed interest in development of community meeting facilities on Ngati Toa owned land within Queen Elizabeth Park.

Feedback showed a desire for Greater Wellington to phase out **farming activities at Queen Elizabeth Park** and for farming activities to be reduced over time in Belmont Regional Park with more areas restored to native vegetation. Both parks are comprised of land largely classified as recreation reserve under the Reserves Act and therefore managed for the purposes of conservation and recreation, whereas Battle Hill is a dedicated farm park.

Also at Queen Elizabeth Park, many respondents identified that they would like to see trail development for recreation activities throughout areas currently closed to public access on the Raumati South side of the Park and in the south eastern area of the park (see [Attachment 2](#) for suggested trails and recreation facilities). Feedback included the desire for the northern end of the park, servicing Raumati and Paraparaumu residents, to have similar facilities and access as the Paekakariki end of the park, for example meandering streams and shaded picnic facilities and circuit trails. An equestrian focus and beach access via east-west circuit trails was also sought.

Community feedback is that Greater Wellington has adopted a 'flood management' style approach to stream management in Queen Elizabeth Park and they would like to see a different focus. Positive community feedback relating to farming included better weed management under the current grazing licence.

Many members of the Kāpiti and broader community have expressed a desire for **restoration of wetland areas at Queen Elizabeth Park**. A petition of 712 signatures is provided under the title ‘Restore the Raumati wetlands in Queen Elizabeth Park’ with the request for Greater Wellington to *‘Please retire the Raumati wetlands from farming, re-wet the peat by stopping drainage and restore with wetland plants. The 85ha wetlands, once part of the Kāpiti Coast’s Great Swamp, comprises all of the flat land between Poplar Avenue and Waterfall Stream parallel to State Highway 1 and drained by the North Whareroa drain for farming by a private lessee. Queen Elizabeth Park is a publicly owned recreation reserve and managed by GWRC’*.

Information about the petition can be found at:

<https://our.actionstation.org.nz/petitions/save-the-raumati-wetlands-in-queen-elizabeth-park-and-create-kapiti-s-biggest-carbon-sink>

Concerns were also widely expressed about Greater Wellington’s use of **herbicides and pesticides** and possible environmental effects, as well as application methods. Further public feedback can be expected on this topic, with the Draft Regional Pest Management Plan was recently on public display.

**5. Do you have any feedback about particular aspects of the current Parks Network Plan?**

Whilst many respondents did not answer this question, responses included:

- Support for delivering identified trail connections and facility improvements identified in the management plan
- Support for continuing to prohibit windfarms in Belmont and Battle Hill parks
- Requests to carry forward long term outcomes which have not been delivered yet into the new draft Parks Network Plan such as ecological corridor connections
- Support for working with other agencies to remove known fish passage barriers such as Parangarahu Lakes outlets
- Keeping the overall structure of the Parks Network Plan as it is now but identifying outcomes which are reported on.

**2.2.2 Community aspirations for particular parks**

This section summarises both written and verbal feedback. Note that the aspirations are identified without identifying short, medium or long term priorities or identifying resource requirements or possible funding sources. Queen Elizabeth Park aspirations are more extensive due to the feedback gathered from individual meetings and a stakeholder workshop.

**Akatarawa Forest**

- A desire for greater connectivity to other parks e.g. Queen Elizabeth Park / Whareroa / Battle Hill to Upper Hutt through trails and ecological connections, in particular better access and facilities for horse riders.
- Ongoing support for motorised recreation activities in the park

- Better maps and signage for park visitors
- A desire for policy to prohibit the development of wind farms in the forest.

#### **Battle Hill Farm Forest Park**

- Concerns about potential downstream effects from forestry harvesting, such as sediment to Porirua Harbour
- A desire for replanting in native species when plantation forests are harvested
- Concerns about the Transmission Gully motorway dividing the park, and also the opportunity for promoting it to passing motorists
- Additional camping facilities such as picnic tables and BBQs
- Improvements to park entry layout which visitors find confusing
- More ‘farm park’ education and interpretation activities.

#### **Belmont Regional Park**

- Support for more mountain biking trails with easy and intermediate gradients to get to high points and enable a wider range of people to ride in the park
- A desire for whole catchments to be progressively retired from grazing activities and to be allowed to return to native vegetation
- More focus on restoration activities in the western hillsides of the park which will become more visible with Transmission Gully traversing them
- Concerns about the Transmission Gully motorway dividing the park, and also the opportunity for promotion of it to passing motorists
- A shift in focus from a ‘farm’ with recreation to a freely accessible park with some grazing to support management
- Removal of obstacles to bike and horse access such as gates and fences throughout grazed areas
- Establishment of a community reference group for the park as a way for different groups to work together in a collaborative way across the park on recreation and conservation works.

#### **East Harbour Regional Park – Northern Forest**

- Development of lower level trails to create circuit loops between residential areas for local walkers and to create easier trail opportunities
- Development of further mountain bike trails or circuit opportunities
- More and less hunting access to the park. Feedback has been provided for both
- Support for further pest plant and animal management
- Work with other land owners to remove barriers to fish passage

#### **East Harbour Regional Park – Baring Head**

- Support for ongoing natural and cultural heritage conservation works
- Allowing limited walk/bike in camping at the lighthouse complex
- A shift to sheep only grazing

### **Kaitoke Regional Park**

- Improving trail connections to the park from Te Marua
- Camping facility improvements as per Long Term Plan proposals
- Improving amenity values and security at Te Marua and mini-master plan development and implementation

### **Pakuratahi Forest**

- Support for wide riparian and trail native vegetation setbacks from plantation forests to support water quality and recreation amenity
- Support for mountain bike trail development
- Improved trail connections and signage
- Promote and improve access to Mount Climie as a key destination for the forest

### **Queen Elizabeth Park**

- Recreation access and further trail development throughout the park but particularly in the northern areas including circuit trails
- Development of a network of easy and intermediate 'single track' trails to enable Queen Elizabeth Park to become a key 'family trails' destination for Wellington, including mountain bike skills tracks
- Support for realisation of mana whenua interests in the park as expressed through consultation and engagement
- Phased out retirement from farming activities, but continuing horse grazing as it relates to recreation
- Creation of connected wetlands throughout the park including the 'Great Raumati wetland' and stream rehabilitation works
- Restoration activities and rehabilitation of dune blow out areas
- Support for the development of an overall landscape masterplan for Queen Elizabeth Park to spatially identify projected changes. The master plan can be used as a blue print to guide projected changes in land use based on expert advice
- Consideration through master planning of integrated and improved equestrian facilities in the park to enable it to become a key Kāpiti Coast equestrian hub
- Establishment of a community reference group for the park in the short term to support planning and ongoing operational management of the park. The stakeholder groups saw the value of working together in a collaborative way on shared aspirations for the park.
- Development of nature play opportunities throughout in the park
- Development of interpretive trails focusing on different stories
- Opportunities for art in the park such as community initiatives or events
- Orchard or 'food bowl' plantings (in liaison with Kāpiti Coast District Council community garden development)
- Fitness stations along trails
- Enhancement of equestrian facilities including riding arena, additional toilets, shower and horse wash down facilities to support major events

- Café or food truck staging facilities
- Park entry for vehicles and picnic facilities for the Paraparaumu and Raumati South communities at the northern end of the park
- Further storytelling and heritage interpretation
- Relocation of recreation facilities away from coastal erosion
- Allowing walk in self-contained camping for groups such as Scouts and Venturers
- Public transport support infrastructure to enable destination travel not having to be car-exclusive, including a train platform option at MacKays Crossing/ Eastern Access
- Entranceway improvements, potable water supply and Tram facility improvements, MacKays Crossing/ Eastern Access
- A name change for the park or additional mana whenua name

#### **Wainuiomata**

- Support for a name change to Wainuiomata Regional Park (from Wainuiomata Recreation Area)
- Support for more trail development including longer and circuit trails

### **2.2.3 Overall possible future directions for a new Parks Network Plan**

From the feedback provided it is apparent that, while our parks are appreciated and enjoyed by the community, some changes to land uses and management practices may be necessary to better reflect the current community expectations and aspirations.

Some of the topics and issues to be explored in more detail as we develop a new draft Parks Network Plan are set out below. As part of this process, a series of officer workshops and meetings are planned, as well as a workshop with councillors.

#### ***Managing the natural environment of parks and climate change***

The Natural Resources Plan has meant some changes for park management. We need to explore in more detail how we manage all forms of waterway on parks to achieve or exceed water quality outcomes sought in this plan, and to meet community expectations. This could include both better communications about the work that we are doing and well as changing land management practice to reduce effects on water quality.

Some feedback indicates that there is an opportunity for Greater Wellington to better identify the ways in which volunteers can contribute to wetland and other restoration project work.

The community is seeking a long term vision for native habitat restoration in parks, with more retirement of grazed areas and restoration. They are also interested in Greater Wellington's response to climate change and in particular coastal erosion in Queen Elizabeth Park. Removal of barriers to fish passage was also considered to be a priority by many people.

Across parks where there are grazing activities, and in particular Queen Elizabeth Park, options (including estimates costs) for land management

alternatives to grazing will be explored with Greater Wellington land management, environmental science, biodiversity officers and external experts. This will be a topic in the planned workshop with councillors.

Community feedback shows support for Greater Wellington's Sustainable Land Use Plans, which have been developed for Queen Elizabeth, Belmont and Battle Hill parks. These plans are land use focused and guide operational management by identifying land management zones, land use capability based on soil types and other influences and waterway management considerations. They include an action plan to guide activities such as progressive retirement from grazing activities and restoration and riparian plantings.

The Queen Elizabeth Park Sustainable Land Use Plan identifies opportunities for biodiversity protection and enhancement. For example under 'Corridors and linkages' it identifies that *Queen Elizabeth Park offers outstanding opportunities to create continuous corridors of habitat from the coast and dunes, across coastal wetlands and low altitude streams to kohekohe forest in Whareroa Farm and north to the Mataihuka escarpment area. Behind these areas there is almost continuous linkage to Maugakotukutuku, Akatarawa and Tararua forests.*

*The proposed network of restoration, riparian and wetland restoration planting creates an almost continuous network of linked habitat through the flat eastern parts of the park. This network partially restores the original network of inland lakes and wetlands that would have provided food sources and transport links for Maori.*

Community feedback supports ongoing implementation of the directions of sustainable land use plans, but in Queen Elizabeth Park there is a desire for the plan to have a wider scope and a faster rate of restoration and retirement from grazing. In this and other recreation reserves where grazing takes place such as Belmont, Baring Head and Kaitoke parks and Battle Hill Farm Forest Park (which is held in part for farming purposes) the national *Good Farming Practice Action Plan for Water Quality 2018* provides additional guidance for sustainable land management. It identifies 21 'Agreed National Good Farming Practice Principles' (refer **Attachment 3**). Implementing the principles outlined in this plan will help reduce adverse effects on water quality.

Current thinking is that an overall landscape masterplan would be useful for Queen Elizabeth Park to serve as a blue print for changes in the park and incorporated into the management plan. Development of the draft masterplan will be informed by existing plans, reference material and mana whenua feedback and considering community feedback received during this initial consultation period. A 'mini' masterplan is currently being developed to respond to the immediate climate change effects of coastal erosion.

For long term native habitat restoration, we need:

- Specific Environmental Management Planning for sites, Sustainable Land Use Plans inclusive of Good Farming Practice Action Plans for Water Quality
- The respective stakeholder groups to come together for overall communication opportunities and to ensure positive collective impact, and at times, specific coordination

- Detailed implementation planning inclusive of investment plans to secure resources
- Ensuring a lead or support role is resolved with Iwi, territorial authority and other partners in an integrated implementation planning and delivery approach, where multiple landowners and agencies are involved. This means extensive collaboration for people working on common goals such as the Wahitua programme.
- Data and research values to increase, also allowing for those residing within Citizen Science and community led initiatives, e.g. pest control and weed removal.

### ***Recreation experiences and facilities***

Across parks where horse riding is permitted, community feedback indicates that we need to improve facilities and services for horse riders. This includes access arrangements, float parking areas, horse tie up rails and mounting blocks.

In camping and picnic areas, feedback indicates that additional facilities such as BBQs, shelters and picnic tables would be beneficial to visitors.

To improve access to parks, the Regional Trails Framework provides some direction. Working with others to improve trail connections and facilities such as signs to regional parks, and better identifying public transport connections will also make a difference. Within parks, community feedback was in favour of further development or improvement of trails, in particular easy and intermediate gradient trails for cycling and walking and riding loops between residential areas in parks such as East Harbour and Belmont. Development of more mountain bike skills tracks such as small informal mounds and obstacles was also suggested.

Improving access for recreation activities was clearly identified in feedback. In recreation reserves where grazing occurs, we will need to consider operational changes to the way we are managing areas of some parks. Where this approach is adopted farming activity tends to shift further toward 'grass control via grazing' with more planted areas, environmental diversity and increased recreation opportunity.

To enhance visitor experiences, community feedback indicates that nature play opportunities and more story telling/ heritage interpretation would be beneficial. Community members expressed the desire for existing well-loved nature play places not to be removed, such as good climbing trees (even those that may not be native).

### ***Working with mana whenua and the community***

We work individually with many community groups to achieve positive conservation and recreation work which benefits both park visitors and the natural environment. A key opportunity presented in the feedback is for Greater Wellington to establish community reference groups for individual

parks. These groups would work on shared outcomes and provide input to park management.

Community reference groups generally work to address and support a resolution of issues and opportunities or changes in operations in parks. This is an established and successful model used by other park management agencies. They would need to be guided by a terms of reference and include members of park stakeholder groups.

### **Long term focus**

Community feedback about issues and opportunities in regional parks includes matters relating to both to daily practical recreation access and activities, and broad, long term biodiversity restoration work.

The current Parks Network Plan focuses largely on natural values and recreation facilities within park boundaries, and has a ten year management horizon. However, it is apparent that the community would like to see us managing regional parks with a core focus on long term conservation and ecosystem restoration outcomes, with appropriate recreation activities facilitated. They would like us to look beyond short term means of land management, such as grazing licences which are not delivering the desired outcomes expressed by the community.

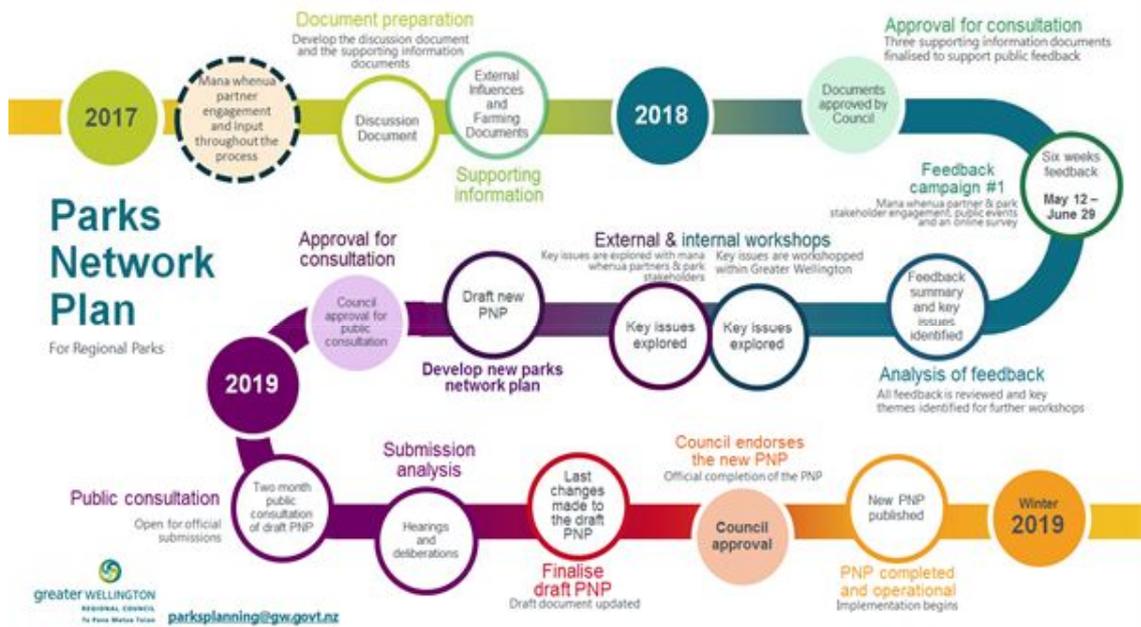
The primary purpose of parks for conservation of open space and recreation activities, which deliver both social and environmental benefits, was noted by stakeholders.

A commitment to change was seen as more important than any specific timeframe to effect change, recognising that a transition e.g., weed species prevalence, was already underway. Stakeholders identified good improvements with weed control, the removal of 'fuel load' with flammable species and detritus present was on the decline, attributable in part to farming practices and management work. The community appreciates that we listen to their suggestions and aspirations for management of parks and make positive changes as a result of their feedback.

## **2.3 Where to from here?**

This report describes the consultation and engagement undertaken and summary of feedback received. The information we have received during this stage of the process will be used to help inform the development of a new draft Parks Network Plan.

The Plan review process and timeline is set out in the diagram below. We are currently at the 'Analysis of feedback' stage.



As we move into the ‘External and Internal workshop’ stage of the process, issues and opportunities will be explored in more detail. As part of this process workshop(s) with Councillors will be organised. Further discussions with Ara Tahi are also planned.

When a draft plan is developed it will be considered by the Environment Committee and approved for public notification and formal consultation. At this stage, the Reserves Act requires a consultation period of two months, and an opportunity for submitters to attend formal hearings to present their submissions.

Over the next two months we plan to explore issues and opportunities in more detail with key internal and external stakeholders and subject matter experts.

### 3. Consideration of climate change

The discussion document and supporting document ‘External Influences on Parks’ explored park management issues related to climate change in detail. Climate change effects for park assets and resilience of facilities and services and minimisation and mitigation measures were detailed as well as climate change projections for each Whaitua, as well as Greater Wellington’s interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme and the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative. Climate change concerns were reported in the feedback received in Attachments 1 and 2. Climate change will be addressed in the draft new management plan.

### 4. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

The formal notification process for the new draft Parks Network Plan is outlined in the Reserves Act (s41(6)). This applies only to the new draft plan which will be developed after this initial period of consultation concludes.

#### **4.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter has been outlined above and was supported by a communications and engagement plan which was prepared and sent to councillors in December 2017. The plan will be updated prior to the formal consultation on the new draft management plan.

### **5. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the contents of the report and appendices.*
- 3. Notes that a workshop with councillors is planned to explore future directions for the new draft management plan in more detail.*

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**Attachment 1:** Summary of feedback on the Parks Network Plan review discussion document

**Attachment 2:** Queen Elizabeth Park – feedback from conversations with the community

**Attachment 3:** Good Farming Practice Action Plan for Water Quality 2018 Agreed National Good Farming Practice Principles.

## **Summary of community feedback on the Parks Network Plan Review Discussion Document**

### **Introduction**

The Parks Network Plan 2011 is now being reviewed. To support public comment a discussion document and two supporting documents, 'External influences on parks' and 'Farming in parks' were produced and made widely available.

On May 21, 2018, the public feedback period began and ran for six weeks, informally extending another two weeks to allow more feedback. During the consultation period, community members and park stakeholders submitted feedback via email, an online survey and in hardcopy via a freepost feedback form. Meetings were held with interested stakeholders, and an independently facilitated workshop was held at Queen Elizabeth Park, as well as a drop in session was held for East Harbour Regional Park. Officers also met with territorial authority officers and other stakeholders who expressed an interest to discuss park issues and receive their feedback. Over 345 people submitted feedback to parks planning and others made comments on social media posts.

### **Issues considered to be most significant for regional parks**

In the online and paper survey five questions were asked. Feedback is summarised based on these questions. It includes general feedback submitted via email and provided in meetings.

### **Significant issues**

#### **1. What do you think are the most significant issues facing regional parks now and over the next ten years?**

A variety of issues were raised; some of more concern to community members than others. Feedback included:

- Regional parks are areas of natural conservation which means the community views **Pests, weeds and diseases** to be a real issue in the future. This has different levels of factors, some being newly introduced into parks, some being the ability to maintain or control them, and some being the negative impact they have on the native habitats.
  - *“A demand for use while budgets are reduced or stagnant. Invasive species or diseases in our parks are a real worry.” (submitter #94)*
- Visitor numbers have been increasing and are set to rise even more and this has lead the community to feel **over-use of the parks** will become an issue. The concern over how the increasing number of visitors would impact sustainability and lead to other issues such as vandalism, rubbish and a strain on the ability to keep up with maintenance.
  - *“The overuse of existing park facilities by increasing local and tourist numbers” (submitter #85)*
- More **development or construction** was seen as an issue because people said the valued the natural beauty of the parks and also had concerns that the more man made parts of the park, would put too much strain on maintenance.

- *“I value open space, natural landscapes that are free from urbanisation, commercialisation and manmade structures. Bush, views, clear rivers, quiet, ridges and hills that are free from infrastructure.” (submitter #61)*
- The ability to **manage shared spaces** or allocating spaces for particular recreational activities over others has been expressed as a potential issue. People are already expressing issues with other users not showing consideration for other users, or users in places they shouldn't be. We the increasing number of users, many see this as an escalating issue which will need to be managed better.
  - *“Managing the expectations of the different user groups... common shared access trails and activity specific areas to reduce contention.” (submitter #328)*
- **Funding** was seen as a common issue too. Several views around funding were shared as the fear of funding being reduced due to budget cuts or economic changes which would negatively impact the upkeep of the parks.
  - *“the Wellington region has beautiful parks but the cost of upkeep is high... lack of funding for maintenance and upkeep.” (submitter #150)*
- **Climate change** was raised as an issue because the physical effects of coastal erosion are evident and causing many problems with coastal walkways and beach access as is it now in Queen Elizabeth Park. People also suggested that we need to show case the parks as a contributing to combating climate change with increased planting and wetlands.
  - *“Climate change causing increasing damage to trails, and the increased expenditure on their maintenance.” (submitter #141)*
- There is a general concern that Greater Wellington will give into pressures for urban development as neighbouring communities need to sprawl causing a **loss of habitat** was also a significant issue. In conjunction with the loss of land, the way in which some areas of land are managed now raise concern because habitats such as the penguins on the *Kāpiti* coast are attacked by unleashed dogs.
  - *“Retaining them (regional parks) in the face of urban spread & the forces of commerce & development” – (submitter #344)*
- **Farming in parks**, specifically Queen Elizabeth Park and Belmont Regional Park, has been expressed as non-recreational and confining the user experience. Although people enjoy the ability to see and experience animals in the park, farming or any form of intensive farming has been expressed as not in the best interest of the parks or the people who use them.
  - *“The principle purpose of the reserve is recreation. That is currently not happening because the land is being farmed.” (submitter #51)*
- A range of other issues were mentioned, such as more **rubbish** being dumped, property being **vandalised** and **lack of respect** for the natural environment.
- Certain groups, such as hunters, expressed they saw more **restrictions** to their recreational activities a significant issue; whilst others expressed they did not condone hunting by non-professionals.
  - *“I am strongly against amateur hunting in East Harbour Regional Park” (Submitter #50)*
  - *“Professional deer culling should continue, but at more frequent intervals” (submitter#22)*

## Most valued aspects of regional parks

The next question in the survey asked people what they valued most about the regional parks.

### 2. **What do you value most about particular regional parks? For example, particular landscapes, places, trails, or recreation activities?**

- Throughout the feedback it was apparent that people value having regional parks that have **diverse habitats and landscapes**.
- The **diversity of the parks** was greatly valued. Having some parks with forest, others with open space, some with beaches and others with camping and not having the parks homogenised was a real strength.
  - *“From a Capital Kiwi perspective the parks provide a space where endemic biodiversity can thrive, and where people can enjoy experiencing our natural taonga. And from a technical perspective, where we can learn and apply 'best practice' lessons about being effective kaitiaki (guardians) of these spaces.” (submitter #153)*
- They value having the **ability** to walk tracks, ride tracks on their bikes, ride trails on their horses and the space to do a range of other recreational activities.
  - *E-bikes will revolutionise cycling and make it attractive to a wider range of the community for commuting and exercise/recreation.” (submitter #70)*
- The ability to **access** these spaces and facilities are also highly valued.
  - *“the fact that you can be in the heart of the city and in 20mins walk to a place... that feels like completely remote and serene.” (submitter #332)*
- Other highly valued qualities were the ability to have areas to get **exercise, camping** and the camping facilities, the sense of **security** and how safe the parks feel and for some the ability to go hunting.
  - *“Protecting the biodiversity and encouraging people to use the parks by creating a wider range of recreational options within them like camping and mountain biking.” (submitter #212)*

### **Suggested improvements for Greater Wellington**

What Greater Wellington could do to improve our regional parks was asked and although there was plenty of positive feedback about how much people enjoy the parks, they had plenty of suggestions for improvement.

#### **3. What could Greater Wellington do to improve our regional parks? For example, are facilities needed in a particular place or accessibility improved?**

**Signage** was by far the greatest idea expressed for GW to improve.

- Signage is very important to the safety of visitors to any park. Having signs to notify people about track information, such as the length, time to complete, and the level of difficulty can influence the decision to use the track or not. It is suggested that many tracks may not get used as much as they potentially could because people currently have no knowledge of the track and if they can do it with the time they have or even the shoes they have on.
  - *“major improvement needed is upgraded signage, map signs, distances and names of tracks and peaks” (submitter #183)*
  - *“More signage is always helpful, e.g. times of walks and km markers, dogs on or off lead, warnings about karaka berries etc.” (submitter #90)*
- Many tracks and trails don't have signage at all, or the information to clearly indicate who the track is for. Equestrians often mentioned they encounter cyclists on trails that were meant to be for horses only.
  - *“Ensure adequate signage and facilities at trail heads” (submitter #225)*
  - *“parks with signage advising other users how to approach riders...” (submitter #322)*

- Signage throughout the parks, from the entrance to the focal points on the tracks, is lacking information and/or interpretation signage. This is an opportunity to educate visitors about the history, natural features, wildlife, and the biodiversity of the area.
  - *“Clear consistent directional signage - more story telling interpretation.” (submitter #91)*
- Outside of the park there are plenty of opportunities to improve signage according to submitters. *‘Attracting people into the parks or even guiding them in easily is something GW needs to be more aware of’*. It is suggested that with infrastructure being developed, such as the *Kāpiti* express way and Transmission Gully, big road signage could greatly improve visitor knowledge of the parks.
- **Visitor access to parks** has been expressed as a concern by many submitters. This includes access to parks and within them. Most visitors must rely on personal car transportation to be able to access any of the parks unless they live within a close proximity. *‘Integrating the parks into the public transportation network would offer a great deal of people with access’*. Currently there is a train line that runs parallel with Queen Elizabeth Park and to develop a train station/stop outside the park entrance would greatly support recreational users of the park according to some respondents.
- **Public access within parks.** Respondents noted that currently, there are some farming related management practices in parks, such as Queen Elizabeth Park and Belmont, which restrict public access to areas of the park. Visitors say that they experience locked gates, fences and other obstructions which many consider as inappropriate in public recreation reserves.
  - “Fair access to all users” (submitter #204)*
  - “Farming is a management tool and should not take precedence”*
  - “Farm management should be required to put ewes and lambs, stock and calves, in paddocks which are not traversed by tracks”(submitter #43)*
  - “the board advocates for the opening up to the public of this sand dune area for the purposes of allowing public access to the north eastern corner of QEP and link to the cycleway and walkway areas in the west of the park, as shown with yellow and red dashes on the map below” (submitter #75)*
- **Facilities** such as toilets were commented on frequently. Much of the feedback requested that we added more toilets, in more locations. Some need to be more central in the park for those who are too far from any to get too, some need to be at other entrances to parks, and some need to be in places where events could be held or camping could be potentially established.
  - “In areas where there is easy public access I think there is a need for more facilities like toilets e.g. at all the Belmont RP road-ends, and also around the Pencarrow lighthouses (almost every time I go there I see someone pissing against the wall of the lighthouse)” (submitter #219)*
- A lot of the comments said there are no **rubbish bins** which some have said they understand as the general attitude is that you take out everything you take in, however relating to their significant issues facing the parks, more visitors (especially those who do not respect the parks) will leave more rubbish laying around. They would prefer rubbish bins and a good collection service so the parks don’t become polluted.
  - “Rubbish bins by the car park and toilets...” (submitter #135)*
- **Parking** needs to increase as the numbers of visitors is increasing. Also there are a vast number of horse riders that commute in from other areas and often struggle for suitable float parking. When equestrian groups have events there are many floats needing space to park too.
  - “Infrastructure as more people use park....toilets...parking ...maintenance.” (submitter #223)*
- **Camping** (more camping areas too)
  - Gas BBQ’s would be useful for visitors who come for the day with friends or family.

- Picnic tables and areas
- Access to water
- *“More signage about shared use and freedom camping areas for legitimate park users” (submitter #272)*
- **Water stations/access**, for people as well as dogs. Several comments have said that during the heat of summer they often worry for their dogs wellbeing when they are out in the parks and don't have enough water for their dog or access to water for their dog.
  - *“Ensure there are toilets and/or potable water available at all major entrances. Ideally with a permanent dog bowl fixture.” (submitter #86)*
- Other things such as **pest control** options or better practice methods. Recreational hunters can offer a more viable option to eradicating deer from some parks.

*“Look at new, innovative ways of plant and animal pest control.” (submitter #141)*

## Issues and opportunities

From the three supporting information documents that were made public, people were asked if they had any feedback on any issues or opportunities raised in the discussion document. Many issues and opportunities were raised although not all were directly related to the documents.

### **4. Do you have any feedback about issues or opportunities raised in this discussion document or the supporting documents (External Influences on Parks and Farming in Regional Parks)?**

- **Climate change**
  - *We concur with the discussion document in identifying climate change and the changing age distributions of the region's population as the dominant external influences, but we contend that the changes in the social concerns towards the natural environment and rural activities in an urbanising society is the dominant issue to be addressed. Cultural perception, both directly and via legislation, drives the acceptability or otherwise of activities within Parks, both desired and unwanted. Of particular importance is the positive feedback loop Cultural perception- commercial activities- Climate change- state of natural environment- cultural perception. We consider this to be the major factor in establishing what commercial activities should be allowed in regional parks and the conditions of operations imposed on them. (submitter #44)*
- Being an issue but also a fantastic opportunity for GW is **connections/linkages** equally for trails and tracks as well as the natural eco-corridors to empower the smaller native wildlife to migrate safely around the region.
  - *“We would like to see PNP include the development of a regional-wide ecological linkages plan... none of the ecological corridors in the eastern side of Belmont Regional Park have been established...” (submitter #69)*
- **Water quality** issues arise from more than just farming practices according to submitters. A number of respondents noted that forestry industry has also caused some long term negative effects on streams. Also, the perceived 'best practice management of streams due to flood control has allowed diggers to dredge the streams leaving absolutely nothing behind, destroying the natural eco systems' according to some submitters.
  - *“Water quality - we should aspire to be able to drink from the streams once more.” (submitter #141)*
  - *I am very keen to see the northern end of the park return to wetland and have the farm area reduced. Less carbon emissions, less weeds, less use of herbicides and pesticides (submitter #21)*

- Phase out **farming**. (See below)
- Horse **float parking** is a necessity for the volume of park visitors that use the trails for horse riding. There are also multiple stakeholders that hold equestrian events that attract hundreds of horses and their handlers.
  - *“GWRC need to consider the areas equestrian community who need safe off road riding and provide increased access to riders with more shared pathways and improved float parking I.e. Belmont Dry Creek” (submitter #142)*
- Some **track segregation for horses** has been expressed due to the nature of horses. Some users of tracks have been reported to be disrespectful of horse riders, being loud, fast and/or irresponsible. Horses can be frightened easily causing a danger to the rider or others.
- Use of **poison** has been mentioned consistently. The use of 1080 has been controversial as the community believes this has evident negative knock on effects. Other poisons such as herbicides and pesticides have also been expressed as unnecessary and potentially dangerous to other animals and people. The community has clearly said stop the practice of aerial spraying.
  - *“Ideally some poisons may be used to control mustlids and vermin but not the broadcasting of 1080 into the bush for all pests. Concern around waterways and poisons decomposing on the forest floor and invertebrates and birds ingesting them and other food chains and webs be susceptible to secondary poisoning - especially our great native birds” (submitter #174)*
- The community has expressed that **dog control** needs to be looked into. There are too many dogs off leashes in areas that they need to be on leashes. Some dog owners appear to have very little control of their dogs which poses a risk to other users of the parks.
  - *“Ensure dogs are kept on leads and that there is enough space or alternatively separation for multi-users...” (submitter #316)*
- **Te Reo Māori** needs to be used more. There is very little signage that has Te reo Māori which is seen as disrespectful to Māori culture. Using Te reo Māori is a good way to show that the local Iwi are important and are partners with GW.
  - *“Very few names in the parks recognise the Māori story for the area.” (submitter #53)*
- **Mounting blocks** for horses and bikes, especially near toilet blocks would make it a lot easier for riders to be able to use the facilities without fear of losing their horse or bike.
- **Café** and/or food truck area in Queen Elizabeth Park to compensate for the lack of food places either side of the park. This space would also allow people to stay in the park for longer periods without having to go in search of food.
  - *“I support the inclusion of commercial activities such as coffee carts” (submitter #62)*
- **Work more with communities** to promote activities and utilise volunteers better.
  - *The predominant economic benefits from regional parks are derived from social wellbeing (submitter #44)*
- **Stop the drainage** of wetlands in Queen Elizabeth Park and let the natural environment restore.
- **Art in parks** as either features or part of a temporary event/exhibit to attract visitors.
  - *“There should be sculpture and art everywhere and integrated with local arts programmes.” (submitter #95)*
- Increase **overnight activities** such as camping for some parks so that people can experience the night stars, such as Baring Head, or provide a place for those who’ve travelled for horse riding events.
  - *“the potential to allow some camping should be considered.” (submitter #21)*
- **Skills courses** to promote safe bike riding and/or family friendly activities.

- *“Te Whiti Park and track are awesome and I use them frequently for walking and exercise . My children and grandchildren often meet at Avalon Park where they practise bike skills.” (submitter #341)*
- **More vegetation/restoration projects** as the communities’ emphasis for conservation priorities is more prominent.
  - *“It’s important that the council find the right balance between access to our regional parks, and ecological protection and restoration. People better recognise the value of our ecology when they’re able to interact with it, so it’s important that opportunities are available for everyone to get out and enjoy our open spaces, bush and forested hillsides.” (submitter #119)*
- **BBQ’s** that are free to use in all parks for visitors to use with their friends and families are a great way to encourage people into the great outdoors without having to do a long walk or bike ride.
- **Nature Play** areas where children can enjoy playing outside without it having to be an artificial playground.
  - *“There should be more nature play spaces.” (submitter #95)*
- **Farming.** Some community members say that they like seeing animals and the experience of seeing animals and even engaging with them, but other don’t. There appears to be less concern with sheep grazing than cattle. Farming in Queen Elizabeth Park has additional access restrictions which some see as not appropriate in public recreation reserve. For example:
  - *“Farming QEP is not a recreational activity” (submitter #11)*
  - *“I recommend that termination of the farming lease be arranged with urgency, so that the remaining wetlands and their associated flora and fauna communities can recover from decades of adverse impacts.” (submitter #43)*
  - *“QEP is designated for recreation and yet 60% of it is farmed, and whilst this has been a conscious choice by GW in the past, we do not believe this is appropriate any longer” submitter #42)*
  - *“Farming at QEP, Kāpiti is a serious problem and must be phased out” (submitter #89)*
  - *The principle purpose of Regional Parks is recreation. All other activities within the parks are secondary and should only be allowed if they contribute to this primary goal, or are managed in a way that is compatible with it. Commercial activities must not compromise nor restrict access by the general public. Farming within parks is a necessary and valuable landscape management tool. Important that farming is seen as an adjunct to the primary purpose of recreation and landscape management. It is not acceptable to restrict public access because of practices that owe more to conventional NZ farming attitudes than the cited reason of animal welfare. (submitter #44)*
  - *Over the past few years we have seen the dominance of farming over recreation and conservation. For example, we see the systematic changes to the farmland that are steadily reducing the natural values of the park, e.g. water quality and we know that there has been no progress on the eco corridor to the Raumati escarpment because it would require the farmland to be retired. (submitter #51)*
- **Pest animals.**
  - *.. the plan should provide for the eradication of all deer from EHRP. (submitter #48)*
  - *Game animals should be valued rather than treated as a pest (submitter #27)*
  - *It is important that GW puts this removal of amateur deer hunting into the proposed plan as it is dangerous for an individual to propose this publicly. The hunting lobby is very vocal, does not respond to reason (e.g. their reactions to 1080 including nasty comments to people doing conservation work). One of the people lobbying for hunting in this park has (over another issue) threatened to “go home and get their gun”.*

## Queen Elizabeth Park – feedback from conversations with the community

Queen Elizabeth Park is a recreation reserve and one of the most diverse and multi-user recreational parks managed by Greater Wellington. It is the most visited park in the region and has a high level of community involvement.

In recent years the community has expressed concerns about farming activities in the park and the way they have been undertaken. This culminated in two community meetings in a local public hall where members of the public and park stakeholders expressed concerns about management activities such as herbicide spraying. Park managers have faced ongoing community opposition to some aspects of park management, in particular farming activities.

To help develop directions for a new plan, a higher level of community engagement than for the other parks was deemed appropriate. By working more closely with the community, concerns and issues were explored in detail - over a period of three days, individual meetings were held with mana whenua and all park stakeholder groups.

Community feedback revealed a wide range of issues and opportunities. From this, six key themes for further discussion and investigation were identified and groups were invited to a workshop to explore these together. The six key issues and opportunities for discussion were:

- The environment and climate change
- Recreation facilities and trails
- Connecting Queen Elizabeth Park – community, environment, transport and other connections
- Story telling
- Animals in the park (horses, farm stock, dogs etc)
- Mana whenua partner interests, and opportunities for revealing cultural heritage stories



Community members were also asked to help identify priorities – short, medium and long term actions. A summary of the results of the workshop follows.

QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

# STORY TELLING

Animal stories such as horses and their CONTRIBUTIONS TO QEP

A big empty picture frame for people to capture the view

More events and guided activities

People's memories from childhood reflections

Use digital media and technology to help people connect better

Native species stories – the birds, the plants, the insects etc.



A reflective QUOTES walking trail

More Maori history of the park and area told

RAMAROA could be used more to tell stories about the park, where to go, how to volunteer, what to look out for etc.

Stories of Kai, in the streams and how to keep them clean

Stories from famous people and their use of the park, e.g. Mark Todd

MAORI PLANTS used for medicine or similar uses

Stories of the restorations projects, e.g. eventing wellington using 40 volunteers to clear paddocks where the army used to occupy

## Community/Ngati Haumia Marae



MIRIONA'S HOUSE moved to the care/ownership of Ngati Haumia within the parks

Use wetlands or waterways to show a waka and the stories of once being able to travel by water

USE FARMING to teach people about animals, food and working the land

A past, present a future story board

Stories of how QEP is connected to the surrounding area. E.g. the connection with Maori Pa sites and coastal routes

A mihi welcome

A mana whenua journey re-enactment story through the park

Use SCULPTURES to tell stories or to ATTRACT people to a story

WWII influence on the park

Introduce soundscape, E.g. at the entrance use bird calls

Multiple points for visitors to tell their story of their experience in the park

Find more interesting ways to tell stories or introduce guided tours/walks

The stories of the girls who married US Marines and where are they now



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

# ANIMALS IN THE PARK

More connected trails for dog walkers



Aerial spraying is NOT acceptable near any animals (and people)

More involvement with the community to learn about animals

Help visitors experience wildlife at QEP – Bird hides, weta motels etc.

Focus on increasing native birdlife



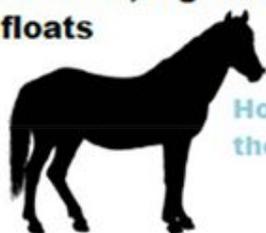
More attention to NATIVE ANIMALS – lizards, birds, penguins, fish etc.

Dog off leash area should be fenced

Water stations and compost bins

Better PARKING for visitors with animals, e.g. horse floats

Get rid of the feral cats, stoats, ferrets and rats



Horses have been a part of the park since it started

Advocate PROTECTING the catchment areas to ensure habitat and fish passage

Horses are recreation

QEP has a great horse trail reputation, build this.



Promote eels. They indicate healthy wetlands and streams

Weeds (gorse) need to go

Improve WATER QUALITY for fish and animals

Penguin HABITATS for Korora sand dunes



Sheep are great at keeping the pasture clean, good for other users. E.g. equestrian

If any farming in the park, set better standards

Progressively remove intensive farming and restore ecological values



Farm to the environment, not change the environment to farm

Promote examples of predator free control so locals can help

Sheep and Cows are not recreation and should not be in the park



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

# IMPROVING RECREATION FACILITIES

**Keep open spaces,**  
Less dividing fences



## Signage

to show what tracks are for what users

**Raumati wetland trail on low dunes**

**Reduce noise -**  
No motorised activities

Cross country routes  
**Short intermittent routes between trails for user flexibility**



Increase park visitor hours

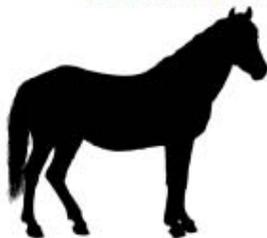
**Fitness trails with outdoor gym equipment**

**Extend trails through farms tracks**

**Replace locks with horse stiles & gates** so visitors don't need keys



Connecting tracks across regional parks



**Equestrian tracks** made wider and kept clear - riding only areas

Mountain bike skills track

More connecting walking tracks across the dunes

**Camping sites** with water

Art sculptures

**Art/sculptures** walks with local artists work featured throughout



Places to light fires



More picnic areas with gas BBQ's

More recreation LINKS to other parks

**Pickle Pot - outdoor natural amphitheatre space**

**NEW surf lifesaving building**

**Nature play spaces created**



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

# CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT

## Aid plant restoration –

seed bombs and all means practicable



Naturalise streams, drains into **WETLANDS** and bush

More **Planting** and **streams** protection

Increase quantity of **longer living** trees to maintain carbon absorption

**Educational** signage and quiet spaces



Consider *projected regional impacts* of **Climate change** effects

## Long Term Conservation

educating about what is really happening and the effects on the park

Adapt the tracks/trails to avoid storm damage prone areas

Convert more land back to **WETLANDS**, Raumati end of the park

Use **WETLANDS** and peat areas as carbon sinks



Retire and restoration **DUNE** land areas for resilience and habitats

**RESTORE** natural / native areas

**Fish and Wainui** stream restoration



Mountain to sea connected habitat

Encourage setting for **TRADITIONAL HARVESTING**, e.g. wetlands for eel (tuna) farming

Provide and promote **SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT** to access all regional parks

Create signage or information boards to educate the visitors about climate change impacts

**Creation and protection** for **eco-corridors** so critters and plants can migrate

Plan for staged relocation of assets along the coast



Adapt land use to suit increases in coastal erosion



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

# CONNECTING QEP

Support personal **CONNECTIONS** through experiences, volunteering and recreation

Work with other agency connections - NZTA, KCDC, DOC, for shared outcomes connecting communities



**A TRAM CONNECTION** from Raumati to Paekakariki

More connections to the **POINTS OF INTERESTS** for visitors who aren't there for the trails. E.g. learn about environmental restoration



Promote family **easy/free** fun days out

**Battle Hill to Mt Wainui to QEP** **ECOLOGICAL** links/connection

**Make Ramaroa a place to visit** and see the story of QEP, include maps, events and safety tips

**Raumati escarpment to Whoreroa via QEP**

Make the park more **user-friendly**, E.g. install gas BBQ's



**Eco Café / food service base** at the park

**ECOLOGICAL-CORRIDORS** to connect the Raumati escarpment

Encourage **NZ Tourism** to promote QEP as a destination



Create and advertise more awareness of **VOLUNTEERING** opportunities - and support the volunteers

Make better connections to Whoreroa, Battle Hill and Akotorawa



Advertise the trail connections between the parks in newspapers or on social media

Encourage **schools** to bring children to learn about the environment etc.

Make an **interactive app or a QR code** system for people to be able to hear and see information as the walk around the park

**Create a TRAIN STOP** outside the park



Better or more public transport on event days such as

More public transport connections coming from the North and South

**'spadeaid'**

**DEVELOP ecological** links



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

## MANA WHENUA PARTNERS

Work with mana whenua to explore their aspirations and vision for the regional parks

### **Rename the park in TE REO MĀORI**

**Significant tapu areas and give appropriate respect - Kowo Urupa** – north of whereroa stream inland of dunes

Key sites with audio interpretation E.g. Pa sites

**Restore the wetlands – Mahinga Kai**

Support the construction of a **MARAE / meeting place for Ngati Haumia near Paekakariki entrance**

**Welcome Mihi at Ramaroa** –Audio or/and visual

**More TE REO MĀORI throughout the park**

Art works or other media to support *SIGNIFICANT PLACES*

**On DEMAND INFORMATION,** auto screens or group shows

**Establish a Ngati Haumia/iwi walk that feeds into the story and artwork**

**More STORY ZONES** to explain the history and lives of the area including historical taonga – food baskets, travel routes, art, medicine, etc.

**MIRIANA'S HOUSE...** What becomes of it?

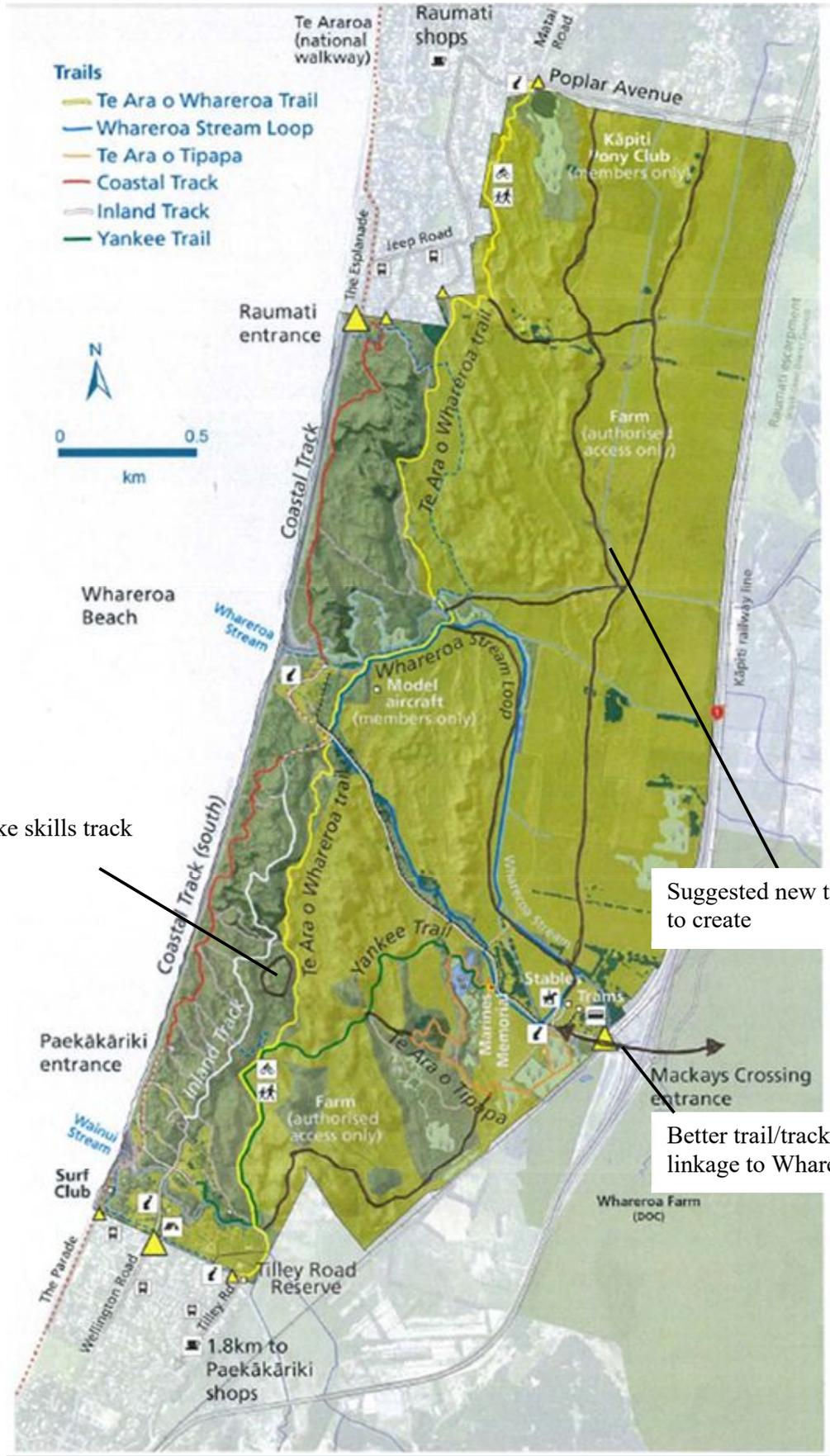
*Flaxes*, plant more, walk through, use flax, educate about flax



**Area Use Concepts**



**New Trail Concepts**

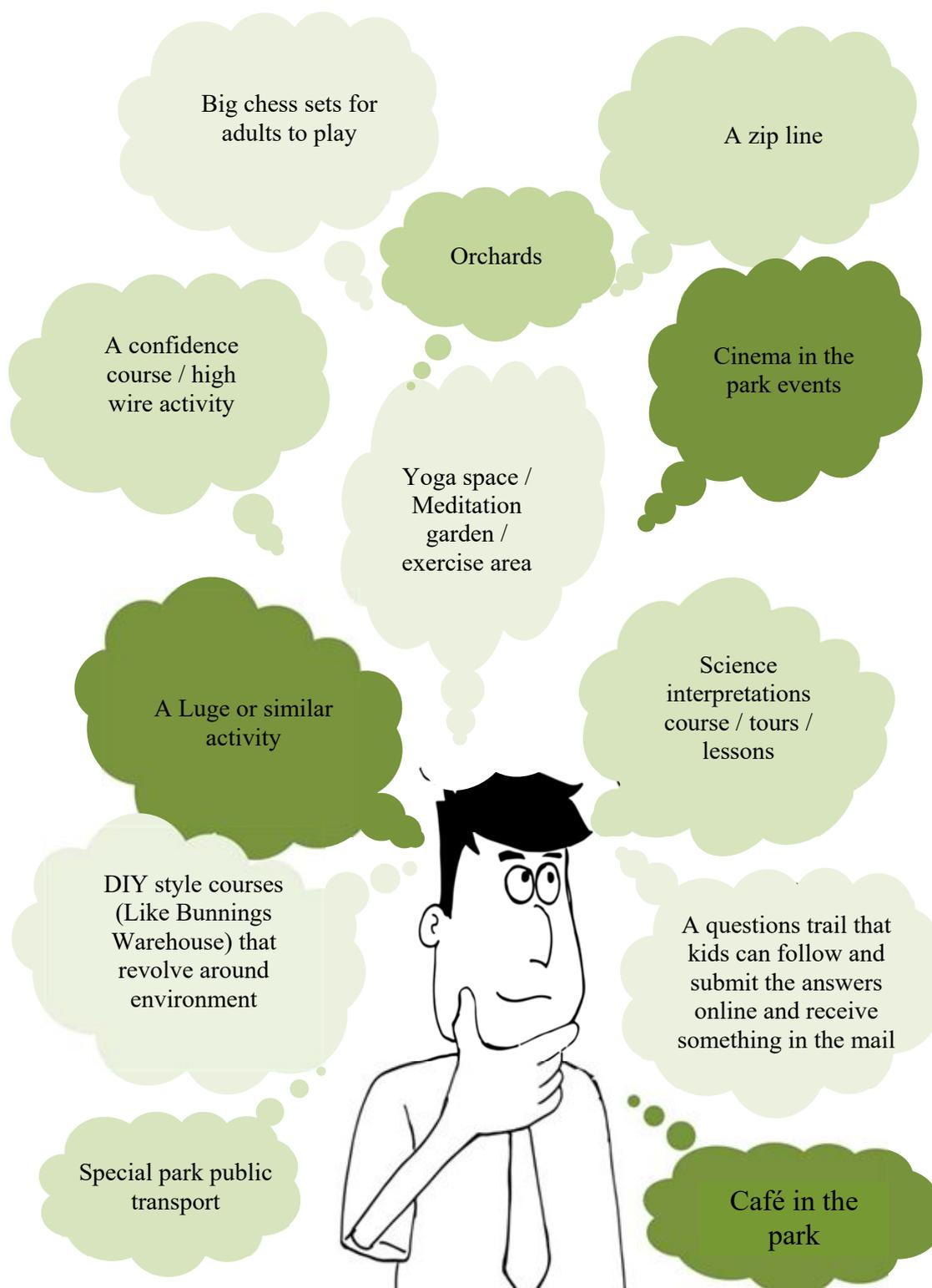


Potential bike skills track

Suggested new tracks to create

Better trail/track linkage to Whareroa

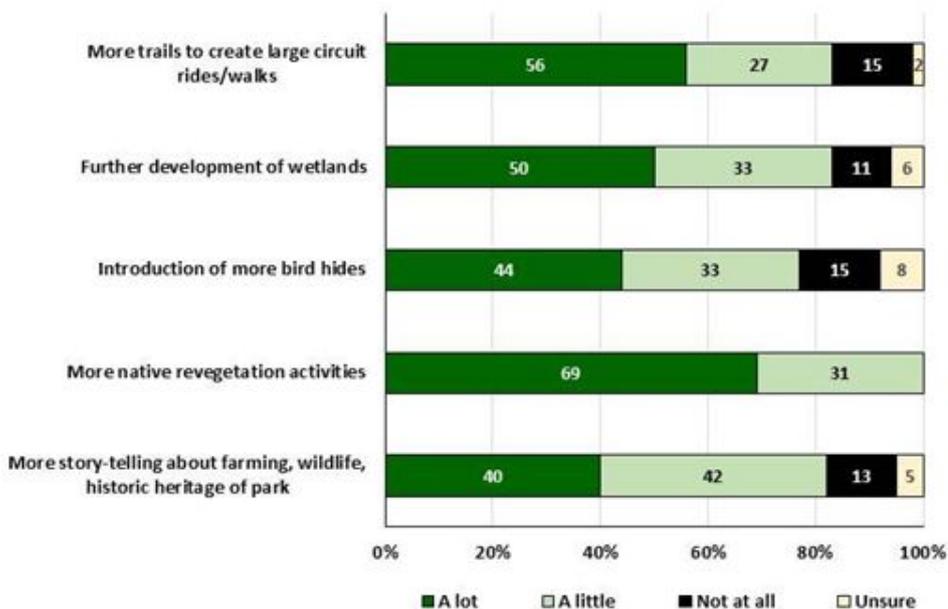
## The big crazy ideas – budget-less, limitless park possibilities



### Annual parks telephone survey results

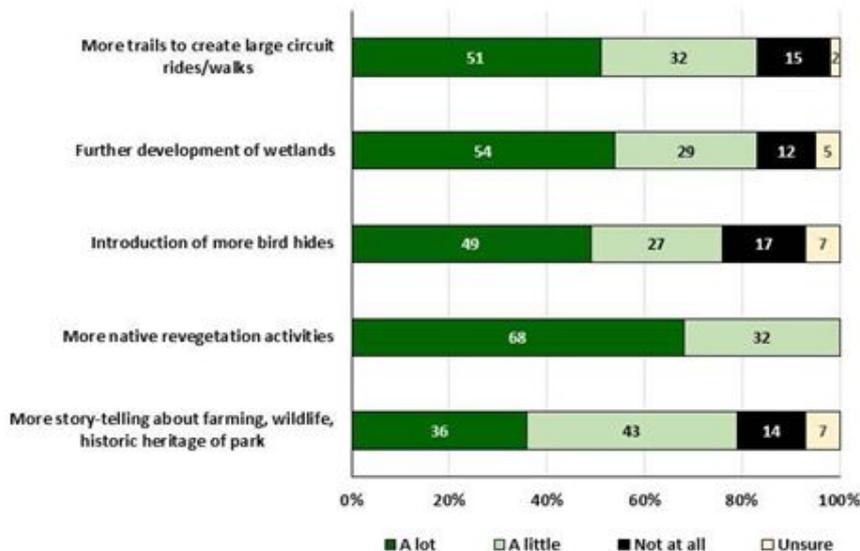
The annual parks survey included two additional questions relating to Queen Elizabeth Park for Kāpiti Coast residents. These questions were included in the survey so that feedback was received from residents in addition to stakeholder and special interest group feedback.

Feedback on a number of ideas considered to enhance Queen Elizabeth Park was sought:

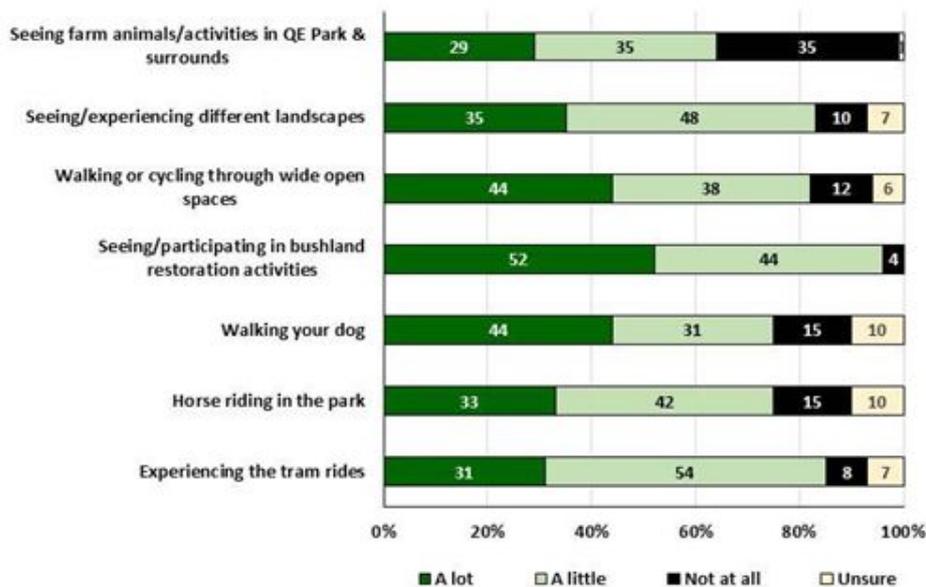


Results indicate that all of the concepts presented had some appeal to the majority of the Kāpiti residents. ‘More native revegetation activities’ was, however, the idea most strongly supported for enhancing Queen Elizabeth Park followed by further development of wetlands.

These results were further analysed by current users and non-users of Queen Elizabeth Park. All respondents answering this question were Kāpiti Coast residents.



1. “To what extent do you, or would you, like the following experiences when visiting Queen Elizabeth Park – a lot, a little, or not at all?”



The majority of Kāpiti residents felt that each of the experiences would appeal to some extent. ‘Seeing, or participating in, bushland restoration activities, such as native vegetation plantings for wildlife’ held the greatest degree of appeal overall. This is consistent with the earlier findings relating to the appeal of ‘the native revegetation activities’. In relation to seeing farm animals, community responses were more divided with the highest ‘not at all’ response.

### What Kapiti residents like most about the inland parts of Queen Elizabeth Park

The research participants were asked to freely identify what they like most about the inland parts of Queen Elizabeth Park, i.e. the areas of the park that are away from the beach. 87% of the Kapiti residents interviewed identified an aspect of the park that they particularly liked. On average, they identified 1.62 different elements. The elements of the park that respondents identified covered the following:

QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK ASPECTS <u>MOST LIKED</u>	% of total Kapiti residents (n=151)
	<u>54</u>
<u>THE LANDSCAPE/SCENERY:</u>	<u>54</u>
The wide open space (and the sense of freedom it gives)	13
The wetlands/restoration of wetlands; the last bit of unspoilt wetlands	8
The sand dunes	8
The ruggedness/barren landscape	8
The (natural beauty of) the scenery/landscape	8
The rolling/undulating landscape	7
The farmland	2
<u>THE BUSH, WATER, BIRDLIFE, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:</u>	<u>20</u>
The native bush/trees/foilage	10
The water/streams/river	5
The birds/native birds; there is a lot of birdlife there	3
It is safe bush to walk through (you don't have to watch where you step)	2
<u>THE TRACKS/TRAILS:</u>	<u>16</u>
The cycle tracks/trails/newish cycle track (diverse terrain, uphill and down)	11
The tracks are wider/well paved/well maintained	5
<u>THE PEACE, QUIET, SOLITUDE</u>	<u>10</u>
The peace and quiet/solitude (away from people/the crowds/the traffic/the concrete jungle)	
<u>THE ACCESSIBILITY</u>	<u>10</u>
The accessibility; the access is good/easy; the park is accessible but retains a feeling/sense of non-urban	
<u>THE PICNIC AREAS</u>	<u>8</u>
The picnic areas; there are good areas/a lot of different areas for picnics	
<u>HORSE RIDING</u>	<u>5</u>
It is an excellent/great place to ride horses (in their natural state); the new/improved equestrian facilities are excellent	
<u>THE TRAMS</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>	<u>13</u>

## Good Farming Practice Action Plan for Water Quality 2018

### AGREED NATIONAL GOOD FARMING PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES	
1.	Identify the physical and biophysical characteristics of the farm system, assess the risk factors to water quality associated with the farm system, and manage appropriately
2.	Maintain accurate and auditable records of annual farm inputs, outputs and management practices
3.	Manage farming operations to minimise direct and indirect losses of sediment and nutrients to water, and maintain or enhance soil structure, where agronomically appropriate
NUTRIENTS	
4.	Monitor soil phosphorus levels and maintain them at or below the agronomic optimum for the farm system
5.	Manage the amount and timing of fertiliser inputs, taking account of all sources of nutrients, to match plant requirements and minimise risk of losses
6.	Store and load fertiliser to minimise risk of spillage, leaching and loss into waterbodies
7.	Ensure equipment for spreading fertilisers is well maintained and calibrated
8.	Store, transport and distribute feed to minimise wastage, leachate and soil damage
WATERWAYS	
9.	Identify risk of overland flow of sediment and faecal bacteria on the property and implement measures to minimise transport of these to waterbodies
10.	Locate and manage farm tracks, gateways, water troughs, self-feeding areas, stock camps, wallows and other sources of run-off to minimise risks to water quality
11.	Exclude stock from waterbodies to the extent that is compatible with land form, stock class and stock intensity. Where exclusion is not possible, mitigate impacts on waterways
LAND AND SOIL	
12.	Manage periods of exposed soil between crops / pasture to reduce risk of erosion, overland flow and leaching
13.	Manage or retire erosion-prone land to minimise soil losses through appropriate measures and practices <sup>1</sup>
14.	Select appropriate paddocks for intensive grazing, recognising and mitigating possible nutrient and sediment loss from critical source areas
15.	Manage grazing to minimise losses from critical source areas
EFFLUENT	
16.	Ensure the effluent system meets industry-specific Code of Practice or equivalent standard
17.	Have sufficient suitable storage available for farm effluent and wastewater
18.	Ensure equipment for spreading effluent and other organic manures is well maintained and calibrated
19.	Apply effluent to pasture and crops at depths, rates and times to match plant requirements and minimise risk to waterbodies
WATER AND IRRIGATION	
20.	Manage the amount and timing of irrigation inputs to meet plant demands and minimise risk of leaching and runoff
21.	Design, check and operate irrigation systems to minimise the amount of water needed to meet production objectives

1. *Implementing this principle may mean that Class 8 land is not actively farmed for arable, pastoral or commercial forestry land uses as this land is generally unsuitable for these uses as described in the Land Use Capability Handbook.*

These principles were updated from the 2015 Industry-Agreed Good Management Practices Relating to Water Quality. While first applied in Canterbury, they were developed to be applicable across all regions of New Zealand.



**Report** 2018.326  
**Date** 1 August 2018  
**File** CCAB-10-543

**Committee** Environment Committee  
**Author** Alistair J N Allan, Team Leader, Floodplain Management Plan Implementation

## RiverLink - Preliminary Design

### 1. Purpose

To seek Environment Committee endorsement of the recommendation from the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee [18.250] for the flood protection components of the RiverLink Preliminary Design, the RiverLink implementation programme, and to communicate support for the completion of decision-making processes of the RiverLink partner organisations, Hutt City Council, and the New Zealand Transport Agency.

### 2. Consideration by Subcommittee

The matters contained in this report were considered by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee at its meeting on 26 June 2018. The recommendations of this report are consistent with the resolutions of the Subcommittee.

### 3. Background

RiverLink is a transformational project for Lower Hutt City. The RiverLink preliminary design has been created through a collaborative partnership between Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Hutt City Council (HCC), and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZ Transport Agency).

RiverLink brings together these partner agencies to support the aspirations of the communities of Lower Hutt to increase the vibrancy and liveability of Hutt City. RiverLink focuses around the heart of Hutt City, extending from State Highway 2 across to High Street in the CBD, and between Ewen Bridge and Kennedy Good Bridge and along a 3km length of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River.

Each organisation's focus in RiverLink ties back to their overarching roles, strategies and plans; for GWRC, the flood protection upgrades support the delivery of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (2001) and protect Lower Hutt City's CBD by connecting the recently completed works between Ewen Bridge and Ava Rail Bridge (completed 2009) and the Boulcott

Stopbank (completed 2011). At a broader level, RiverLink also delivers, to varying degrees, across three of the priority outcomes for GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-2028 of regional resilience, public transport, fresh water quality and biodiversity.

#### 4. Preliminary Design

The preliminary design is outlined in the Preliminary Design Summary Report contained in **Attachment 1** to this report. More detail on the individual elements is also contained in:

- Attachment 2:** River Works Peer Review
- Attachment 3:** The Making Places Story
- Attachment 4:** Riverlink Communication Strategy
- Attachment 5:** Riverlink Consenting pathways
- Attachment 6:** Consent Legal Advice
- Attachment 7:** Riverlink Outline Programme

The Flood Protection components, for which approval to proceed to design and consenting is being sought in this report, are outlined in section 2.1 of Attachment 1, and comprise of a range of flood management tools to deliver the target level of flood protection for Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River of 0.23% Annual Exceedance Probability (1-in-440 year return period flood event). These include:

- Widening the space available for the river and flooding, including channel widening between Kennedy Good Bridge to Ewen Bridge
- Stopbank strengthening and raising from Mills Street to Ewen Bridge, on the true left bank of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River
- Stopbank retreat, strengthening and raising from Ewen Bridge to just north of Melling Bridge, on the true right back of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River
- Integration of the flood protection structures with associated components of Making Places, in particular the connection between the Hutt City Centre and the river between Margaret Street and Andrews Avenue, along Daly Street
- Integration with the associated components of the Melling Transport Improvements
- Associated berm, riparian margin and in stream improvements to facilitate the environmental, ecological and recreational enhancements guided by Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan 2018.

## 5. Budget

GWRC and HCC have committed budgets in their respective draft Long Term Plans to enable implementation of RiverLink. NZ Transport Agency has committed to completing the Detailed Business Case for the Melling Transport Improvements project, and through their board decision, will confirm future intent regarding the project.

GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-28 will be adopted on 26 June 2018, and thereby confirm funding for implementation of the RiverLink project.

Project delivery budgets will continue to be refined throughout the next stages of the design process.

## 6. Programme

The RiverLink Programme has been developed in draft format based on available information from, and pending the decisions of, the partner agencies. The Programme will be refined throughout the next design stages and updated accordingly. The outline programme is contained in **Attachment 7** to this report.

A key component of the Programme to implement RiverLink is progression with obtaining necessary statutory approvals to complete the work. It is estimated that this process, including hearings, will take up to two years to complete. The current decision Programme means that the earliest point that consenting can commence is in 2019. Therefore, any works requiring resource consent will not be able to commence prior to 2021.

NZ Transport Agency, at this stage, has not identified a Programme for delivery of the Melling Transport Improvements.

## 7. Communication

The RiverLink project has taken an open approach to community engagement throughout the development of the Preliminary Design. This has taken a range of forms, to ensure a high level of awareness of the project within the community, and frequent opportunities are created to input and influence the design development. This process has continuously showed strong levels of support for project delivery that have been communicated to the partner organisations at all levels.

Endorsement of the Preliminary Design establishes a commitment by GWRC to the collaborative design outcomes, and the opportunities and dependencies arising from this approach. Decisions will be made by HCC in July 2018, and NZ Transport Agency at the end of 2018, to confirm the partner agencies' commitment to RiverLink outcomes. At each of these decision points, an update will be reported to the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee, and the decisions that have been made will be shared with the community, to keep the community informed of the decision-making outcomes.

## **8. Consideration of climate change**

The matters addressed in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

### **8.1 Mitigation assessment**

*Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.*

The GWRC components of the RiverLink Project are subject to GWRC's initiatives designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and enhance sequestration capacity. We will work with our project partners to develop a joint procurement approach that supports GWRC's mitigation objectives once we have entered that stage of the design process. The current basis that will be referred to for the mitigation objectives include the proposed Code of Practice (which guides all river management activities undertaken by GWRC for the purposes of flood and erosion protection across the Wellington Region), the GWRC corporate sustainability programme, and GWRC's procurement process, and will encourage suppliers and contractors to minimise emissions.

### **8.2 Adaptation assessment**

*Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.*

The design development for RiverLink acknowledges the need to adapt to a changing climate, and aims to address these predicted impacts. GWRC has included allowances for climate change impacts and these are being finalised for the purposes of completing RiverLink Preliminary Design.

## **9. The decision-making process and significance**

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

### **9.1 Significance of the decision**

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance. The decision to proceed with the RiverLink project was made by

Council in December 2015. The recommendations contained in this report relate more specifically to completing the next stage of this project, which is to proceed with detailed design and the lodging of the necessary statutory approvals to allow construction work to proceed.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

## 9.2 Engagement

Engagement on the matters contained in this report aligns with the level of significance assessed. The following engagement processes have been followed:

- Use of the RiverLink info container to share preliminary design development with the community. The container has been sited at locations of high community-use including HCC Riverbank carpark, HCC Highlight Festival, Melling Station, and Avalon Park.
- Newsletter updates, advising of design development and promotion of workshop-type events, distributed by mailing list, email, and available at the information hubs and at council office locations.
- Reported through the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee meetings
- Making reports, plans and information about the preliminary design available through [www.riverlink.co.nz](http://www.riverlink.co.nz)
- Media releases to advise of design updates and workshops
- Static displays at Queensgate Shopping Centre, Lower Hutt
- Attendance by invitation to meet with leaders of community and business interest groups including Rotary, Probus, and the Chamber of Commerce
- Recording community opinions and aspirations through interactive workshop sessions and online resources.

## 10. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Fully supports the NZ Transport Agency completing its Detailed Business Case for the Melling Transport Improvements that form part of RiverLink in collaboration with Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council, and the recommendation of this Detailed Business Case to the NZ Transport Agency board at the end of 2018.***

4. **Fully supports** Hutt City Council in completing its preliminary design for the urban design, city infrastructure and local road components that form part of RiverLink, and approving its funding and programme in July 2018.
5. **Recommends** that Council:
  - a. Approves the detailed design and the obtaining of resource consents proceeding for the flood protection components and associated works contained within the RiverLink preliminary design, as outlined in the RiverLink Preliminary Design Summary Report and in section 3 of this report, jointly with GWRC's project partners, Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency.
  - b. Agrees to work proceeding on the basis of the outline programme for implementing RiverLink including consenting and construction included in the RiverLink Preliminary Design Summary Report [Attachment 1].
  - c. Notes that programming is subject to decisions to be made by Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency.

Report prepared by:

**Alistair J N Allan**  
Team Leader, FMP  
Implementation

Report approved by:

**Graeme Campbell**  
Manager, Flood Protection

Report approved by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
General Manager,  
Catchment Management

- Attachment 1:** Preliminary Design Summary Report  
**Attachment 2:** Executive Summary of River Works Peer Review  
**Attachment 3:** The Making Places Story  
**Attachment 4:** Riverlink Communication Strategy  
**Attachment 5:** Riverlink Consenting pathways  
**Attachment 6:** Consent Legal Advice  
**Attachment 7:** Riverlink Outline Programme



# RiverLink

## Preliminary Design Summary Report

Prepared for the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee

Issue No.	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved for Issue
1 DRAFT	15 Mar 2018	R. Polvere A. Allan	R. Burra K. Kelly	
2 DRAFT	11 Apr 2018	R. Polvere P. Maaka	R. Burra	
3 DRAFT	13 Jun 2018	A Allan	G Campbell R Polvere	
4 DRAFT	14 June	A Allan	R Polvere K Kelly R Burra E Anand	G Campbell

For more information, contact the Greater Wellington Regional Council:

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## **1. Introduction**

RiverLink is a transformational project for Hutt City. Its preliminary design has been created through an informal collaborative partnership between Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Hutt City Council (HCC), and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZ Transport Agency).

RiverLink brings together these partner agencies to support the aspirations of the communities of Lower Hutt to increase the vibrancy and liveability of Hutt City. RiverLink focuses around the heart of Hutt City, extending from State Highway 2 across to High Street in the CBD, and between Ewen Bridge and Kennedy Good Bridge and along a 3km length of Te Awa Kairangi/the Hutt River.

Each organisations focus in RiverLink ties back to their overarching roles, strategies and plans; for GWRC the flood protection upgrades support the delivery of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (2001) and protect Hutt City's CBD by connecting the recently completed works between Ewen Bridge and Ava Rail Bridge (completed 2009) and the Boulcott Stopbank (completed 2011). At a broader level RiverLink also delivers, to varying degrees, across three of the priority outcomes for GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-2028 of regional resilience, public transport, fresh water quality and biodiversity; for Hutt City Council, RiverLink delivers key parts of the vision of the Making Places Strategy for the CBD, and upgrades sought by the Hutt City Infrastructure Strategy and Environmental Sustainability Strategy; for NZTA the Melling Transport Improvements are part of the Regional Land Transport Plan, State Highway 2 Programme Business Case, and thereby support delivery of its primary purpose to provide an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system.

GWRC and HCC have committed substantial budgets in their respective Long Term Plans to implement RiverLink. NZTA have committed to completing the Detailed Business Case (DBC) for the Melling Transport Improvements project and through their board decision at the end of 2018 will confirm future intent regarding the project.

### **1.1 Conceptual design phase process**

In 2012 conceptual design for RiverLink commenced between the three organisations. At this stage each organisation had identified work that they intended to complete that overlapped with the interests of the other agencies. A memorandum of understanding focusing on the Melling Intersection Investigations was developed between the agencies that outlined the overlapping interests and the intent to work together to pursue these with a focus on the areas immediately adjacent to Melling Bridge. The three projects that fell into this area were; GWRC's Hutt River City Centre Upgrade Project (HRCCUP) that sought to improve the flood capacity of the flood protection system protecting Hutt City Centre; HCC's Making Places Strategy; and NZTA's Melling Intersection Investigations.

In 2014 design objectives for the RiverLink project were confirmed by the Hutt River Management Subcommittee. These objectives are detailed in Appendix A.

In 2015 GWRC made its decision to proceed to Preliminary design phase for the flood protection works, including a decision to enter into property acquisition of land required to deliver the conceptual design. This decision was strongly supported by the community of Hutt City to “do it once, and do it right” through their endorsement of ‘Option A’, that would provide a 90m wide river channel with 25m berms and supporting the acquisition of 118 properties required to achieve these outcomes.

In 2016 NZTA completed its indicative business case (IBC) and shortly afterwards committed funding to complete a detailed business case (DBC) for the Melling Transport Improvements.

In January 2017 Hutt City Council completed its Riverside Promenade Business Case and allocated funding towards that project through its Annual Plan process during the same year, to support delivery of the riverside components of the Making Places Strategy envisioned in 2009.

These key design steps and decisions brought the three organisations into a closer working relationship and strengthened the appetite to continue development of each organisations design focus under a RiverLink umbrella.

## **1.2 Preliminary design phase process**

The development of a closer working relationship between the organisations to support completion of a RiverLink Preliminary Design commenced in 2016. This was facilitated by establishment of a cross organisation working group, a cross organisation management group, and the scheduling of regular meetings between the CE’s of GWRC, HCC and the Regional Relationship Director at NZTA. The existing decision making structures within each organisation remained in place, meaning decisions regarding project commitment and resources at each organisation needed to be made by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee (GWRC), Hutt City Council, and the New Zealand Transport Agency board (or its appropriate committees). Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc. who represent iwi with statutory acknowledgement over Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River have positions on the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee and within the RiverLink Management Group.

Given relevant approvals, from each partner organisation, the Preliminary design for the flood protection and associated elements of Making Places will be recommended for approval in June and July 2018 respectively. The design process for RiverLink has involved collaborative design development between the three organisations. The recommendation to each organisation will primarily relate to their respective areas of responsibility and recognise the links, synergies and dependencies across RiverLink.

This report provides a summary of the RiverLink Preliminary Design with a focus on the delivery of the flood protection outcomes.

## 2. RiverLink Preliminary Design

The RiverLink Preliminary design has resulted in a strong overlap, support and dependency between the outcomes each organisation is trying to achieve. This also means that the current design requires decisions and support from each organisation in order to deliver the full benefits sought by RiverLink, and to confirm and agree budget allocation, programme and approach to implementation.

The design can be roughly broken down into consideration of Flood Protection (largely delivered by GWRC), Making Places and City Infrastructure (largely delivered by HCC) and the Melling Transport Improvements (largely delivered by NZTA).

Each organisation has led the design components that align best with its primary focus, however the design teams for this have drawn on the expertise across the organisations required to deliver outcomes that support each organisations primary goals. The preliminary design process established the following three primary goals;

1. Improve the flood protection system between Kennedy-Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge to meet the design flood as set out in the Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan
2. Promote growth through urban development and connecting the city to the Hutt River
3. Improvements to transport options at the interface between the State Highway and the local community.

The preliminary design delivery against these goals is summarised within this report, further information is available within the full preliminary design report and the supporting technical reports developed to create each part of the preliminary design. These reports are available to read in hardcopy at GWRC and HCC offices, or online at [www.riverlink.co.nz](http://www.riverlink.co.nz).

### 2.1 Flood Protection

The flood protection outcomes, delivering on providing regional resilience, are set out in the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan 2001. The plan establishes a safe and agreed flood conveyance protection level (including predicted climate change effects) of 0.23% Annual Exceedance Probability (1-in-440 year return period flood). This translates to a flood conveyance capacity of 2800 cumecs (cubic metres per second) which allows for climate change impacts and uncertainties associated with flood risk, and thereby set the design flood for development of the flood protection designs.

The flood protection designs combine improvements to the river channel that aim to target the majority of general maintenance activities outside of areas that

would be more sensitive to these, considering impacts on cultural, ecological and amenity values within the river system.

The flood protection designs work as a combination of channel improvements, soft and hard bank edge erosion protection, maximising width of river berms and upgrading stopbanks to allow for increased flood conveyance and flood security.

The flood protection works will protect against an estimated \$1.1B of direct damages from the design flood event, and prevent the flooding of up to 3200 homes, 730 businesses and 5 schools.

### 2.1.1 Melling Bridge

Melling Bridge is a key constriction point on the Hutt River, and without replacement only a 0.5% annual exceedance probability (1-in-200 year return period) level of service can be achieved. The bridge is owned by the Hutt City Council. As part of its detailed business case for the Melling Transport Improvements the NZTA has identified that any future grade separated interchange would need to be integrated with a replacement bridge. The NZTA has identified three alternative locations for a replacement for Melling Bridge. If built, any of these three designs could be engineered to achieve the target level of service for flood protection of 0.23%AEP (1-in-440 year return period flood) and assist delivery of the flood security goals of RiverLink. The DBC will recommend one of the three options to the NZTA board at the end of 2018.

### 2.1.2 Ecology, Amenity and recreation

The Hutt River Floodplain management plan is supported by the Hutt River Environmental Strategy that guides the delivery of community aspirations for ecological, amenity and recreational outcomes for the river and contributes to the Biodiversity and Freshwater Quality Outcomes sought by GWRC's 2018-2028 LTP.

The RiverLink project has been developed alongside the recently endorsed Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy and Action Plan. The RiverLink design makes space available for inclusion of stormwater treatment wetlands on the river berms, outlines areas of landscaped native and exotic plantings, placement of habitat boulders and natural vegetation features within the river, and spaces for a mix of recreation types recognising the diverse uses of the river park and combining design approaches to create a variety of experiences along the riverside. The designs also include improvements to the very popular River Trail by widening the space available to cyclists and pedestrians on the mix of pathways through the area and exploration of creation of a cultural trail telling the story of the river from mountains to sea.

## 2.2 Making Places and City Infrastructure

The Making Places and Hutt City infrastructure components of RiverLink seek to reinvigorate Hutt City, with a focus on attracting people to live, work and invest in the CBD. The key components of this are the riverfront promenade and associated private investor development of new apartment and office

buildings along Daly St, a pedestrian and cycling bridge connecting Margaret St to Pharazyn St and a relocated Melling Train Station, upgraded stormwater infrastructure to support the desired additional CBD population and improvements to the local road network and streetscapes in the areas bounded by Melling Bridge, Ewen Bridge, Cornwall St and the river.

The combined urban design and infrastructure improvement works are forecast to add \$2.5B to the local economy, support development of 1300 new homes, and create up to 2700 new jobs.

### **2.3 Melling Transport Improvements**

Melling Transport Improvements Investigations (2016) work programme is considering a range of options that seek to deliver;

1. Safer journeys for all road users
2. More reliable and efficient journeys
3. Better access to travel choices at Melling
4. Better security and availability of the transport system at Melling

It is considering the accessibility of the city by a range of modes including public transport, walking and cycling.

The DBC has refined these transport options down to three combinations of grade separated interchange and bridge. These options all aim to support delivery of the Flood Protection and Making Places outcomes and therefore strive to achieve a preferred Preliminary Design across RiverLink.

The transport improvements DBC will be recommended to the NZTA board at the end of 2018.

Investigations looking into the options for Transport Improvements at Melling seek to maximise the synergies between Transport, Flood Protection and Making Places. The major synergies incorporate:

#### **2.3.1 Melling Train Station Relocation**

For all proposed upgrade options, the train station will need to be relocated minimum 250m south to provide sufficient space to construct an interchange. Locating the train station opposite Margaret St (~500m south) with the pedestrian cycle bridge connection over the Hutt River, enables a direct public transport connection between the Lower Hutt CBD and Wellington CBD.

#### **2.3.2 Melling Bridge**

The investigations to date have identified that the options which best address transport issues at Melling all involve a grade-separated interchange. All the proposed options work best with a new Melling Bridge. Depending on the

option selected a new bridge may be beside the existing bridge landing on the city side of the river at Melling Link or a bridge further south landing on the city side at Queens Drive.

### 2.3.3 Intersections Upgrade

The intersections upgrade at Melling (new interchange) and local roads on Queens Drive and Melling Link (up to High Street) maintains all connections to the state highway and improves transport conditions for all modes including walking and cycling. With input from the RiverLink team, NZ Transport Agency have refined their longlist of ideas to identify a shortlist of three options which are being developed in more detail and have been the subject of community engagement. It is anticipated that a preferred option is identified in July 2018. The local road intersection improvements will be co-designed with the RiverLink team.

## 3. Implementation Budgets and Programme

The preliminary design has sought to identify and secure budget required for project delivery from each of the organisations. Both GWRC and HCC have committed funding for the project components that fall fully within their respective role responsibilities within their respective LTP's. NZTA will make a decision regarding the future programme and budget for the Melling Transport Improvements at its board meeting at the end of 2018.

Below is a summary of the RiverLink implementation costs. This has been provided for the 2020 – 2028 period and the work currently proposed following 2028.

The RiverLink implementation cost estimate for 2018 to 2028 is included in Table 2.1. The cost estimate includes the flood protection works, river ecology and amenity, the river promenade, pedestrian cycle bridge, city infrastructure, Melling Train station relocation, and the construction and design costs. It currently excludes the yet to be confirmed costs of the Melling Grade Separated Interchange part of the Melling Transport Improvements.

Total funding commitments to the project from GWRC and HCC are shown in Table 2.1. Unfunded items are in relation to those where a shared responsibility may exist and include the new Melling Bridge (\$34M), Melling Train Station relocation (\$23). It is not possible to resolve these until NZTA has completed its DBC process, however the process itself assists with refining a cost share model.

### 3.1 Implementation Budget

The budgets allocated by each of the agencies to implement RiverLink is summarised in Table 2.1.

HCC have approved funding as set out in the Hutt City Council Long Term Plan 2018-2028. GWRC will endorse its proposed Long Term Plan (LTP) 2018 on 26 June 2018. This includes the implementation costs for flood protection and river ecology parts of RiverLink.

The current NZTA budgets include no allowance for major highways improvements to the SH2 corridor between Masterton and Ngauranga in the ten year period 2016/17 to 2026/27. NZTA is currently exploring the case for accelerating funding for Transport Improvements at Melling. The Melling transport improvements project is currently being reassessed against the draft GPS 2018-21 priorities to determine alignment with the Government's new strategic direction which would see a land transport system that:

- is a safe system, free of death and serious injury;
- provides increased access to economic and social opportunities;
- enables transport choice and access is resilient;
- reduces the adverse effects on the climate, local environment and public health; and
- delivers the right infrastructure and services to the right level at the best cost.

NZTA notes that funding for state highway improvements is increasingly under pressure and that this could influence the priority afforded to the Melling transport improvements project by the Transport Agency and within the Regional Land Transport Plan.

**Table 2.1: RiverLink Budget and Forecast**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Current Allocated Budget \$M</b>	<b>Current Estimated Forecast \$M</b>	<b>Variance \$M</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Flood Protection Property	\$82	\$76	\$6	Figures exclude residual property value of \$15M  Property acquisition is currently in progress
Urban Design Property	\$7	\$7	0	Figures exclude residual property value of \$3M  Property acquisition is currently in progress
Flood Protection upgrades	\$43	\$43	\$0	Includes river channel, edge protection, and stopbanks. Includes allowance of \$5 for design, consent and delivery
River ecology and amenity	\$2	\$3	(\$1)	Includes instream and riparian ecology, habitat and biodiversity
Urban Design Upgrades	\$26.3	\$28.6	(\$2.3)	Making Places Components, Promenade, pedestrian cycle bridge
Pedestrian Cycle Bridge	\$6.5	\$7	(\$0.5)	Design and length will influence final cost
Stormwater	\$2.1	\$6	(\$3.9)	Includes wetland treatment infrastructure
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$168.9</b>	<b>\$170.6</b>		
New Melling Bridge	\$6.5	\$34	(\$27.5)	Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision
Melling Transport Improvements	\$TBC	\$TBC		Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision
Melling Station Relocation	TBC	\$23	(\$23)	Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision

Note:

1. *Detail design, consenting and construction supervision costs are estimated to be up to \$15M. Apportionment of costs will be confirmed following NZTA board decision at end of 2018.*
2. *The Melling Train Station, Melling Bridge and Bus Hub are yet to be fully defined and apportionment of costs will be confirmed following NZTA board decision at end of 2018. The budget provided is an order of magnitude cost and has been provided to understand the potential budget required for the entire programme.*
3. *The budget has been split into two tables to identify those projects that are part of RiverLink and those projects HCC has forecast in its infrastructure strategy outside of the next LTP.*
4. *A margin has not been applied to property costs*

Negotiations on how allocation of the implementation budgets from each agency will fund the construction of RiverLink will be undertaken in the next phase of work and are contingent on the decisions to be made by each organisation to commit to the Preliminary Design.

### 3.2 Projects after RiverLink 2018-2028

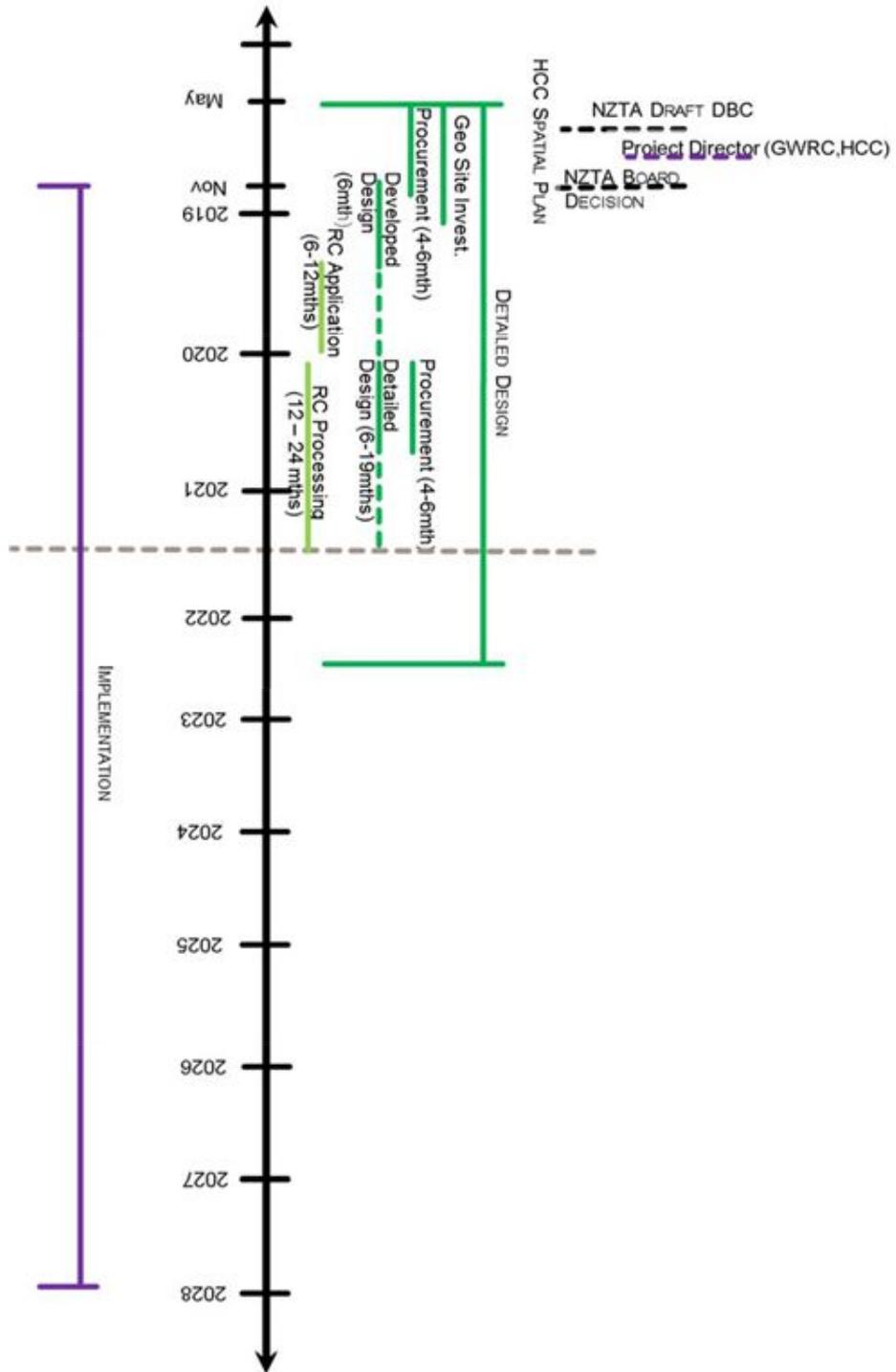
A number of design concepts were explored as part of the development of Preliminary Design. These projects have been developed to a conceptual level of detail but due to programming and funding decisions have been programmed to be delivered after RiverLink within the 2018-2028 LTP is completed. These have been identified within infrastructure strategies for each organisation. These projects and their current forecast estimates are tabled below.

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Project Est. \$M</b>
Making Places Future Projects	\$ 18
Water and wastewater – growth related covered by Development Contributions (2031 - )	\$ 11
Bus Hub	\$ 6
Design, consenting, construction delivery	\$ 2
Residual Property Value Recover	(\$15)

### 3.3 Implementation Programme

The implementation sequencing proposed is based on current best estimates for construction timing and past experience. It is anticipated and expected that once the Construction Contractor is appointed that the implementation programme will be refined. The programme is subject to decisions yet to be made by each organisation.

Figure 1: RiverLink Proposed Programme



The proposed integrated RiverLink programme has been developed to achieve the RiverLink outcomes before 2028, the duration of the next LTP. The programme dashboard [Attachment 7] includes programming estimates based on current designs for the flood protection improvements, Making Places components and Melling transport improvements. This programme includes some assumptions regarding timing of works and has been developed with respect to budget allocations made in both councils LTPs, and the investment decisions already in place for NZTA regarding State Highway 2. The RiverLink implementation programme is currently based on the assumption that NZTA funded works will occur 2026 - 2036. The implementation programme will be updated at the end of 2018 based on the decisions made by the NZ Transport Agency board.

The scope of the programme to deliver RiverLink has been broken down into:

**3.3.1 Detailed Design and Approvals 2018 – 2020**

This phase will see the completion of detail design sufficient to lodge joint Notice of Requirements (NoRs) and resource consent applications for the necessary statutory approvals to complete all components of work.

To be able to apply for NoRs and resource consents parts of the design will be required to be developed in more detail to understand the form of major structures, how they interface with each other while maintaining the hydraulic capacity and security of the proposed river channel.

Once the Consent is underway and preliminary findings are known, the design can be further developed to incorporate the statutory approval requirements and create the Construction documentation.

For further detail of what is entailed in this stage see Appendix B.

**3.3.2 Implementation concurrent with detail design and consents**

Discrete work packages, such as a the Belmont Wetland, streetscape upgrades and some services improvements have been identified from within RiverLink which can be implemented and delivered outside of the complexity of the overall project Resource Consent and statutory approval process.

**3.3.3 Implementation 2021 -2028**

Major construction will be undertaken during this period.

The implementation programme recommends an approach that starts at the Mills St stopbank as soon as consents to carry out the works have been granted, followed by works in the City Centre section, followed by the Marsden St section, and the Pharazyn/Belmont section of works will be implemented at the same time as the Melling Transport Improvement works.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Major Interdependency</b>
Mills Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial	New Melling Bridge location

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency
	ecological habitat.	
CBD Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Community facilities Promenade Andrews Ave to Margaret St Pedestrian Bridge City Connections	Stopbank, MSE retaining wall, promenade, pedestrian bridge, Melling Train Station,
Marsden Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Local road changes and street scape	Wellington to Normandale bike path
Pharazyn/Belmont Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Channel improvements Local road changes and street scape.	Recommended option for Melling highways interchange ,new bridge location, Melling train station relocation

*Current budget decisions mean that Melling Transport Improvements will not happen prior to 2026*

### 3.3.4 Melling Transport Improvements 2026 and beyond

The organisations will continue to collaborate on the design and continue to strengthen the interfaces between RiverLink implementation components and develop a project structure, commercial and management arrangements. The Transport Agency are also looking at options for staging investment as a potential way of providing early benefit to the Councils sought outcomes if the board decision recommends a later implementation of the Melling Transport Improvements parts of RiverLink .

The information will be presented to the NZ Transport Agency board at the end of 2018 for a decision on the preferred budget, timeline and involvement from the NZ Transport Agency.

## 3.4 RiverLink beyond 2028

RiverLink has been defined as a package of projects up to 2028 across the interests of all organisations. There are however future aspirations outlined in the Making Places strategy and Hutt City Spatial Plans that bear particular mention in relation to RiverLink design decisions that have steered the design to leave opportunity for the delivery of these outcomes beyond RiverLink.

### 3.4.1 Promenade Stage 2 and Stage 3 extension

The promenade could extend beyond the existing promenade between Margret St and Andrews Ave built during the RiverLink implementation phase, south from Andrews Ave. to Ewen Bridge and extend the promenade north from Margaret St. towards Melling Bridge. The aim of this project is to improve the social amenity and sense of place for all Hutt City residents, and promote the

CBD as a vibrant, attractive and liveable area, particularly for young and educated people in addition to its environmental and health benefits.

### 3.4.2 Bus Hub

Opportunity exists to master plan and future proof bus services into a dedicated central city interchange that better integrates with rail services, walking, cycling, and future growth. RiverLink triggers a once in a life time opportunities to obtain land, control land-use, influence key development, and to design and reconfigure the multi-modal central city transport network.

The existing bus situation does not match the quality of lifestyle or the transport choices being made. Research (Transport Outlook: Future State Report, Nov 2017 - Ministry of Transport) shows growing numbers of younger people are choosing not to own cars and instead are choosing to use other modes including public transport. HCC/GWRC research (Colmar Brunton 2016) shows bus users, pedestrians, and cyclists are significant contributors to the Lower Hutt CBD economy.

The optimum location for a bus interchange is expected to shift over time from its current location at Queensgate to somewhere toward the growth centred around the Promenade and pedestrian bridge connection to the relocated Melling train station. HCC and GWRC officers are now considering options that take into account the latest thinking and developments made through RiverLink and 2018 Review of the Making Places Strategy by HCC.

## 4. Supporting information

To assist decision makers regarding the RiverLink project a number of independent experts have been engaged to review and scrutinise the project. These reviews and opinions are included as an attachment to this report and include;

- Riverworks Peer Review Report Executive Summary, HR Wallingford, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Making Places Story
- RiverLink Communication and Engagement Strategy, Crestani, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways, Boffa Miskell, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Consent Legal Advice, Buddle Findlay, 21 Mar 2018

### 4.1 Preliminary Design Report

The full Preliminary Design report and full technical reports are available to view on [www.riverlink.co.nz](http://www.riverlink.co.nz) The Preliminary Design Reports presents a composite description of the design process, influences and elements for the project. The full technical reports detail each design component that makes up the preliminary design and the information fed into the design process.

The preliminary design phase has produced an integrated design incorporating the three partners' overlapping work programmes and optimising the benefits and opportunities created from the linkages between the programme elements.

## **4.2 Independent Peer Review of Flood Protection Design**

An independent peer review was completed, Nov 2017 – Apr 2018, to provide confidence to decision makers that the preliminary design work completed will, based on its current state and consideration of design assumptions, be able to deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by RiverLink.

The peer review excluded the structural perspectives of the various retaining walls, the design of the pedestrian bridge, cost estimate, constructability of the design, recreational values, ecological and biodiversity design, Iwi relationship and emergency management. The review also excluded design standards, these were reviewed and set through the process of developing the Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan 2001.

The peer review was undertaken by HR Wallingford (Oxfordshire, United Kingdom). HR Wallingford is a leading international specialist company in flood management and the water environment. The specialist areas of expertise covered by the HR Wallingford staff members who carried out this peer review includes flood management, hydraulic modelling, sediment modelling, geomorphology, flood protection banks (stopbanks), geotechnical and structural design and links with other projects. For instance Jonathan Simm (reviewer of the stopbank design) was the Project technical lead and part of the Technical Editorial Team, which set the international good practice on stopbanks through the creation of the International Levee (stopbank) Handbook, 2013.

The peer review concluded that a robust Preliminary Design has been prepared that will deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project. The design is considered to be pragmatic and realistic taking account of the constraints of the river corridor and the need to pass a large flood without failure of the stopbanks.

A number of detailed comments have been made which have been discussed with the design team. The conclusion is based on the understanding that the issues will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the project. They include comments on the design of the MSE wall that supports the promenade along the Lower Hutt CBD frontage and the rock protection on the river channel.

Some elements of associated projects including the replacement for Melling Bridge and the Making Places proposals have not yet been integrated into the flood protection design. These will affect the detail of the design but not the overall concept.

## **5. Consenting Pathways**

Undertaking the proposed improvements being sought through RiverLink, will require authorisation under the Resource Management Act 1991 through the designation of the land required for public works, and obtaining the necessary resource consents. Longer term changes to the City of Lower Hutt District Plan will also need to make provision for the consequential changes in land use

and to encourage forms of development that support the vision for the City Centre.

Achieving many of the project elements will be dependent on other elements occurring first – therefore there is a strong interrelationship between all the project’s components. The full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners.

In order to assist the participating organisations to decide on the preferred consenting approaches. ‘consenting pathways’ have been developed and are being considered. Once the pathway has been confirmed, a consenting strategy will be developed to map in detail the way forward and address particular designation and resource consent issues.

A range of recommendations were assessed for obtaining the RMA authorisations, with the key recommendation being that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a pathway that involves, as much as possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- Separate Notices of Requirement and resource consents applications prepared together as a single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

The development of the Notices of Requirement and applications will take between 6-12 months, the application processing 1-2 years, depending on appeals, and a decision is therefore forecast for 2021 at this stage.

## **6. Communication and Engagement Strategy**

Crestani were engaged to assist with the development of a Communication and Engagement Strategy to take the project through its entire life (for the full report see Attachment 3).

They have clearly articulated the needs of the project and provided a blueprint for which all communication and engagement plans at each phase of project will evolve.

For the project to be a success it requires all partner agencies, elected officials, the Hutt City business community and other stakeholders to support the vision and commit to working together to make it a reality. For the broader public, particularly the communities living in and around Hutt City, success lies in maintaining the strong public mandate for the outcomes RiverLink seeks to

achieve and in ratepayers supporting the investment required to complete the project.

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative and project ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and liveable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

Through interviews with stakeholders it has provided an opportunity to RiverLink by providing a strong steer on where future external and internal engagement and communications efforts should be focused. RiverLink engagement and communications blueprint must achieve two outcomes:

1. **Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in:** an aspirational and joined-up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's wider communities of interest
2. **Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project.** An engagement process that is inclusive and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the long-term success of Hutt City.

With the next steps outlined and recommended actions defined by key success factors, RiverLink will develop a Communication and Engagement framework for the next phase around this strategy. The framework will include addressing the recommendations, developing a plan and creating the right team to implement.

## 7. Delivery Structure Considerations

It has been identified through the technical Peer Review, Consent Strategy and the Communication and Engagement Strategy that objectives for RiverLink are best achieved through collaboration and co-ordination, (integrated), across the three projects (Flood Protection improvements, Making Places and Melling Transport Improvements).

The potential delivery models are currently being investigated by the NZ Transport Agency in collaboration with GWRC and HCC. By July 2018 an understanding of potential delivery models and commercial approach will have been developed.

## 8. Reference Documents

Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan. *For the Hutt River and its Environment*. Flood Protection Group. Wellington Regional Council. October 2001

Hutt River City Centre Upgrade Project River Corridor Options Report. Wellington Regional Council July 2015

Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee Report. Greater Wellington Regional Council. 20 Mar 2014 (File N/03/18/21)

## **9. Attachments**

- There is no [Attachment 1]
- RiverLink Riverworks Peer Review Report Executive Summary, HR Wallingford, Mar 2018 [Attachment 2]
- Making Places Story [Attachment 3]
- RiverLink Communication and Engagement Strategy, Crestani, Mar 2018 [Attachment 4]
- RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways, Boffa Miskell, Mar 2018 [Attachment 5]
- RiverLink Consent Legal Advice, Buddle Findlay, 21 Mar 2018 [Attachment 6]
- RiverLink Programme Overview Dashboard [Attachment 7]

## **Appendix A: Hutt River City Centre Project Design Objectives 2014**

The design objectives for the Hutt River City Centre Project were confirmed by the decision of the Hutt River Flood Management Subcommittee in 2014 and are repeated below:

### Flood Risk

1. Improve the Hutt Valley's resilience to flood hazard by a river channel, structures clearance, and corridor design that provides for a 2800m<sup>3</sup>/s flood flow.
2. Improve the Hutt Valley's resilience to flood hazard by managing development and infrastructure elements within the corridor (eg SH2 and any widening of it, stormwater and other pipe networks, or integrated building edges in the town centre) that can reduce the effective floodway, or affect stopbank integrity.
3. Plan for future increases in floodplain resilience by considering now the future options (such as the broadening of the corridor and increasing the height of the new stopbanks) to ensure that these are not precluded by the currently planned upgrades.
4. Improve the river channel edge protection so as to minimise the risk of failure of flood defences from erosion during a flood.

### Linking and Development

5. Improve the walking, cycling and other active mode linkages to and along the river corridor from the city centre, public transport nodes, and wider Hutt Valley urban area.
6. Facilitate development opportunities for sites that front to the river corridor in the city centre.
7. Create a direct frontage between river front sites in the city centre and a new river promenade.

### Traffic Movement

8. Identify and provide for the modifications to the wider transport network as required to accommodate Linking and Development objectives.
9. Improve the functioning, safety and accessibility of the intersection between SH2 and local road network and off road paths including residential areas on the hills.

10. Understand and recognise the need for car parking in strategic locations, including for recreational, commuter and shopper use

#### Community, Amenity and Ecology

11. Recognise and provide for the viability and amenity of public and private properties adjacent to or adjoining the river corridor and stopbanks.
12. Generate spaces and places along the river corridor that reflect Hutt River Environmental Strategy (Linear Park) and Making Places initiatives that are reflective of user's needs, cultural and landscape values.
13. Improve the ecological performance and biodiversity of the river corridor in respect of stormwater management, riparian and terrestrial habitat values recognising the needs for flood protection works.
14. Engage with iwi with mana whenua of the river in regard to cultural values and those values' representation in the project outcomes.

#### Implementation, Strategy and Economic Sustainability

15. Enable a staged implementation process such that developments can occur over time as practicable.
16. Ensure the design outcome is affordable in terms of its ability to be implemented and maintained.
17. Engage with communities of interest and seek their feedback as to the design options and costs of implementation.
18. Recognise that any design options developed will require consideration relative to existing statutes, strategies and plans.

## Appendix B Scope for Detailed Design and Consents 2018 - 2020

Table: Major Items of the Detailed Design and Consents 2018-2020

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency	Owner
Geotechnical Investigations	Detailed investigations to determine ground conditions, aquifer depth, construction material conditions.	Making Places (MSE wall and pedestrian bridge), Melling Transport Improvements	NZTA, GWRC, HCC
Melling bridge design	Melling Bridge is owned by HCC. Melling Intersection improvements will require a new bridge. Flood Protection designs require a new bridge.	Transport Improvements, Making Places Strategy	HCC (being designed by NZTA)
Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge design	HCC Making Places Pedestrian cycle bridge design	Project is part of making places strategy and design lead is HCC	HCC
Detail design – MSE Retaining Wall	Refinement of design for MSE Wall (Daly St) and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer Review report. Inclusion of findings of geotechnical investigations	Geotechnical investigations, Stopbank design, Making Places Design	HCC
Detail design - Promenade			HCC
Detail design – Hydraulic Model Update	Inclusion of bridges designs in hydraulic model and adjustments	Melling bridge design, Pedestrian cycle bridge design, Landscape design	GWRC
Detail Design – Sediment transport model	Inclusion of bridges designs in sediment transport model and adjustments.	Melling Bridge design, Pedestrian cycle bridge design, Landscape design	GWRC
Detail design – Stopbanks	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of Hydraulic model	Landscape and ecology detail design, Making Places Strategy, Transport Improvements	GWRC

<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Major Interdependency</b>	<b>Owner</b>
	update		
Detail design – Channel and Berms	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of Sediment Transport Model.	Landscape detail design, Making Places Strategy, Transport Improvements	GWRC
Detail design – Landscape	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of hydraulic model update and sediment transport model	Stopbank design, Channel and Berms designs, Hutt River Environment Strategy, Making Places Strategy	GWRC, HCC
Notice of requirement	Statutory requirements to facilitate designating required in order to undertake physical works		GWRC, HCC, NZTA
Consent preparation	Statutory requirements required in order to undertake physical works		GWRC, HCC, NZTA

# 1. Summary

## 1.1. Background

An independent Peer Review of the RiverLink project Preliminary Design has been requested by the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). As per HR Wallingford proposal (our reference P18512-GRE001-R03), the scope included an Initial Review (which was completed on 30 November 2017) and a Peer Review. The purpose of this document is to present the findings from the Peer Review.

The intention of the Peer Review is to provide confidence to decision makers that the preliminary design work completed will, based on its current state and consideration of design assumptions, be able to deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project.

Prior to this, an Initial Review was undertaken to clarify any additional information requirements or knowledge gaps and to request further information which we believed were necessary to undertake the Peer Review (our reference Memo 2 dated 28 November 2017). The memo also comprises the agreed scope for the Peer Review (also included as Appendix to the Initial Review summary, our reference MCR5863-RT001-R01-00).

## 1.2. Peer Review scope

The Peer Review covered the following aspects of the RiverLink Project:

- Flood management and hydraulic design;
- River morphology, sediment transport and rock protection;
- Hydraulic and sediment modelling;
- Geotechnics and stopbank design including retaining walls;
- Links with other projects.

The Peer Review did not cover the following aspects of the RiverLink Project:

- The design standard (in terms of peak flood flow);
- Consideration of Iwi rights and their involvement with the project;
- Project costs and financial sustainability;
- Cost-benefit and socio-economic evaluations;
- Constructability;
- Ecological impact assessments.

The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan recommended the design standard for the City Centre section and review of the design standard was outside the scope of the Peer Review. The design of the RiverLink project aims to upgrade the system to maintain a high design standard over a long period of time taking projected increases in rainfall and river flow due to climate change into account.

With regard to the Mechanically Stabilised Earth MSE (retaining) wall design, the Peer Review was not undertaken from a standalone structural perspective on how this will hold up the promenade. Since this wall

is the largest flood wall the stopbanks will interact with, the Peer Review included the wall design as part of the proposed flood protection system along Daly Street between Melling Bridge and Ewen Bridge (East side).

### 1.3. Peer Review procedure

Following the Initial Review, additional information was obtained from the GWRC. The Peer Review examined the information provided which included about 50 reports and other documents. Detailed checks were undertaken on some specific elements which were considered of key importance. During the review, contact was maintained with GWRC so that questions and matters of clarification could be discussed as the work proceeded. A limited review of the hydraulic modelling was undertaken in which spot checks were made on selected river cross-sections. The sediment model and the drawdown models were not available and therefore were not reviewed.

A draft Peer Review Report was issued to GWRC and a workshop with the RiverLink design team was held in Lower Hutt on 7 March 2018 to discuss the draft report. This final version of the report takes account of the workshop discussions which are included in Appendix C (GWRC reference Minutes - 7 Mar 2018 RiverLink Riverworks Peer Review Workshop) together with other comments on the report provided by GWRC.

### 1.4. Main conclusions of the Peer Review

It is concluded that a robust Preliminary Design has been prepared that will deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project. The design is considered to be pragmatic and realistic taking account of the constraints of the river corridor and the need to pass a large flood without failure of the stopbanks.

A number of detailed comments have been made which have been discussed with the design team. The conclusion is based on the understanding that these issues will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the project. They include comments on the design of the MSE wall that supports the promenade along the Lower Hutt CBD frontage and the rock protection on the river channel.

Some elements of associated projects including the replacement for Melling Bridge and the Making Places proposals have not yet been integrated into the Preliminary Design. These will affect the detail of the design but not the overall concept.

The Preliminary Design does not include detail of some of the structural elements, particularly the new bridge foundations and the MSE wall. The reason for this is that geotechnical information was not available for these structures. It is proposed that a two-stage approach is adopted for the detailed design of these elements where stage 1 would consist of a preliminary design to confirm the structural arrangements once the geotechnical data are available followed by a detailed final design stage.

### 1.5. The Peer Review Team

The Peer Review was carried out by HR Wallingford, a leading international specialist company in flood management and the water environment. The specialist areas of expertise covered by the HR Wallingford staff members who carried out both the Initial Review and the Peer Review includes flood management, hydraulic modelling, sediment modelling, geomorphology, flood protection banks, geotechnical and structural



design, and links with other projects. Background information on HR Wallingford together with CVs of the team that undertook the Peer Review is given in Appendix B.

**The Making Places Story**

Making Places has been progressing for more than a decade and its story has been well shared between Council, Stakeholders, and Community. Apart from the most recent work to update Making Places through a central city spatial plan everything that follows in this text should be well known within Council.

Making Places is the fourth development strategy adopted by Hutt City Council over the last thirty years for its central business district (CBD). All four strategies share the central theme of connecting the city with the river. For most of this thirty years little progress was made to understand how a meaningful connection could be achieved. In 2009 Making Places was fortunate to discover synergies with the flood protection upgrade project of Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Melling Interchange Upgrade project of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

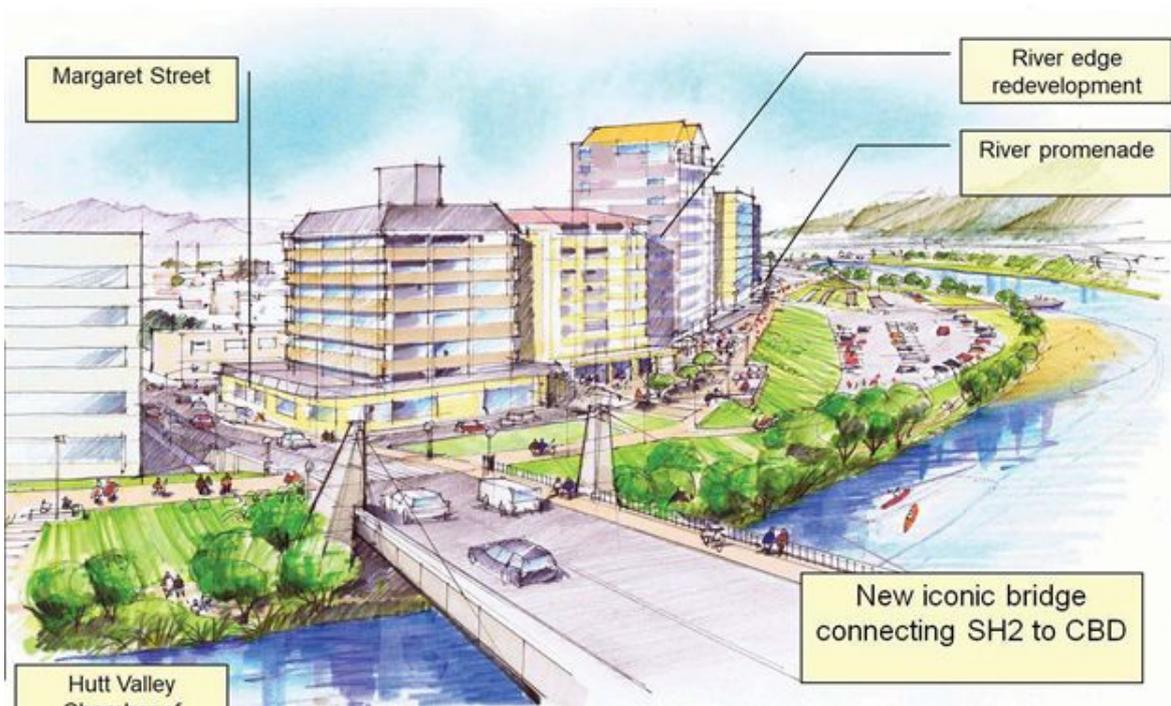


Image 1: 2009 Making Places drawing showing promenade & new road bridge.

It would be fair to say that the Lower Hutt CBD has been visibly under-performing over many years and that its main street High Street has fallen out of favour as the place to be seen doing business or to be seen socially.

The changing nature of retail including the development of malls has played a significant role in the demise of High Street but in many respects the fortunes of High Street have not been helped by an inability to adapt and complement the product offered by the Queensgate mall.

Though having lost its way the community is determined for the CBD to find itself again. The community continues to tell us (through annual surveys) that the river is very important to the

future of the CBD and that we need to connect with it, enjoy it, and take care of it. It seems that people increasingly want authenticity and they want to be surrounded by environments that reflect who they are and who they aspire to be.

Sense of place and self-identity done well are important factors to memorable and liveable cities. Liveable cities capitalise upon what makes them different from other cities. This can be through the built environment, for example heritage and quality of architecture and landscapes. This can be through creative and cultural industries such as science and technology, arts and culture, design, theatre, dance, music, and film making etc. In most cases what makes places inherently special are their natural features and local culture.

The Hutt Valley has a beautiful and diverse natural landscape and prominent amongst this is The Hutt River - Te Awakairangi or 'the river that eats the sky'.



Image 2: Te Awakairangi – Hutt River

Cities around the world are finding their rivers and seafronts for example Auckland, Wellington, New Plymouth, and Hamilton are reinventing themselves around their waterfronts and in doing so this reinforces who they are as communities of people.

For a number of decades Lower Hutt has had the slowest population growth of all cities in the Wellington Region. Though this has improved in recent years it is expected that growth will tail off and attracting and retaining working age population will be continue to be problematic.

Though Lower Hutt has access to a diverse landscape (hills, rivers, sea), flat land, good sunshine, good housing, good schools, employment, and Petone is admired as a desirable destination and place to live - Lower Hutt continues to lose people through internal migration to places like Wellington, Upper Hutt, and Auckland.

Through its Urban Growth Strategy council has identified that a lack of housing stock constrains growth and plays a significant role in population migration where we are literally 'losing' young people. New housing can be built through greenfield, infill, and brownfield development however greenfield land is limited and infill is difficult to orchestrate to scale and there are

conflicts where existing character built up over many decades may be considered too valuable to risk given loss of mature trees and inevitable shift in house type and reduced lot sizing.

Brownfield development through the conversion of existing or the construction of new buildings as mixed use apartment buildings is underplayed across the city with the exception of Petone. The CBD has latent potential to accommodate a significant residential population – arguably a new urban suburb of several thousand people. Council’s Promenade Economic Business Case modestly estimates 2,600 people to be living in the CBD within 20 years.

There are currently only 200 to 300 people living in the core CBD. Let’s Get Wellington Moving forecasts 100,000 population growth in the Wellington Region over the next 28 years. 50,000 of these will be in Wellington and mostly in Wellington Central. Wellington City Council indicates there are significant challenges to constructing multi-level apartment buildings in downtown Wellington due to availability of suitable sites, natural hazards, and sea level rise. Hutt City Council sees a growing role for Lower Hutt CBD to accommodate a greater share of regional population growth and to provide resilient locations for commerce and social activity.

A range of Wellington based property developers say that the Lower Hutt CBD is not currently seen as a good option for good quality apartment development and that the market needs to shift to attract their interest. The same developers did agree that Riverlink is encouraging and that the promenade was a likely catalyst to shift the market in the right direction. However developers indicated that interim actions would need to be implemented to nudge confidence and the market continually toward the quality of development being sought by the people of Lower Hutt.



Image 3: 2018 Riverlink image of the riverside promenade.

It has become evident that the Hutt CBD is under pressure to deliver on a number of opportunities at least including; regional population growth, local housing growth, resilient local and regional commercial activity, social vibrancy, sense of place, city wide self-identity, and contributing more to the regional economy and reputation.

Riverlink is viewed as the big ‘switch’ that will flip the Hutt CBD from what it is today and into the future downtown area that will house significant population growth, lasting economic growth, social vibrancy, better connect people with the river, and project a strengthened sense of self belief for the city.

The following diagram shows the Making Places components proposed under Riverlink that are funded by and supported by the people of Lower Hutt.

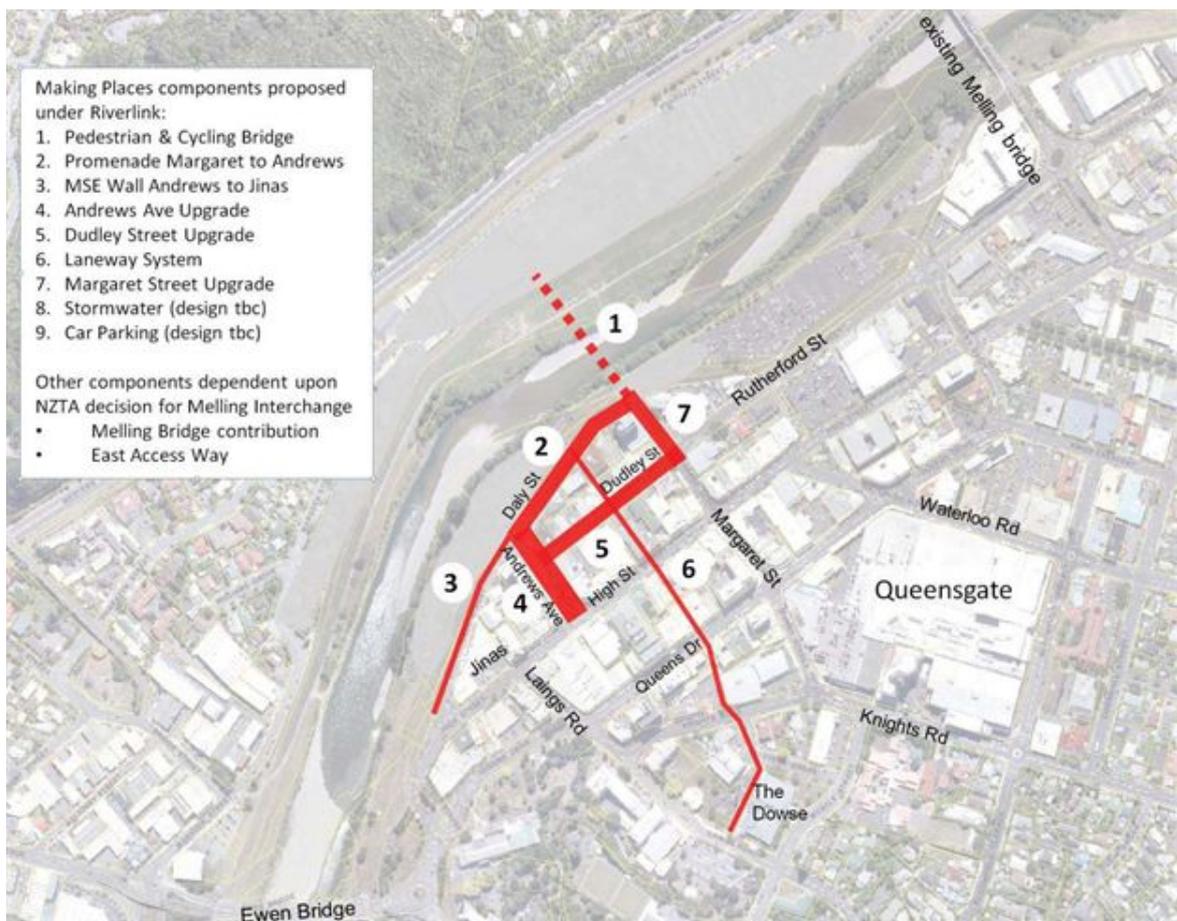


Image 4: Proposed Making Places components of Riverlink.

**Making Places components proposed under Riverlink include:**

1. Pedestrian & Cycling Bridge
2. Promenade Margaret Street to Andrews Ave – see section 2. Includes city access to the Promenade.
3. MSE (retaining wall to support promenade) from Andrews Ave to Jinas – see section 3.

4. Andrews Ave Upgrade – includes reconfiguration as shared space & city access to the Promenade.
5. Dudley Street Upgrade – includes reconfiguration for two way traffic.
6. Laneway System – includes upgrades that may have synergies for new development between Knights Road and access to the Promenade.
7. Margaret Street Upgrade – includes pedestrian & cycling access from the city to the pedestrian bridge.
8. Stormwater – design tbc.
9. Car parking – design tbc.
10. Melling Bridge contribution – dependent upon NZTA decision Nov 2018.
11. East Access Route – dependent upon NZTA decision Nov 2018.

**Projects not funded include:**

- Stages of Promenade additional to #2 above.
- Train Station
- Bus Interchange
- Community facilities in river plain.

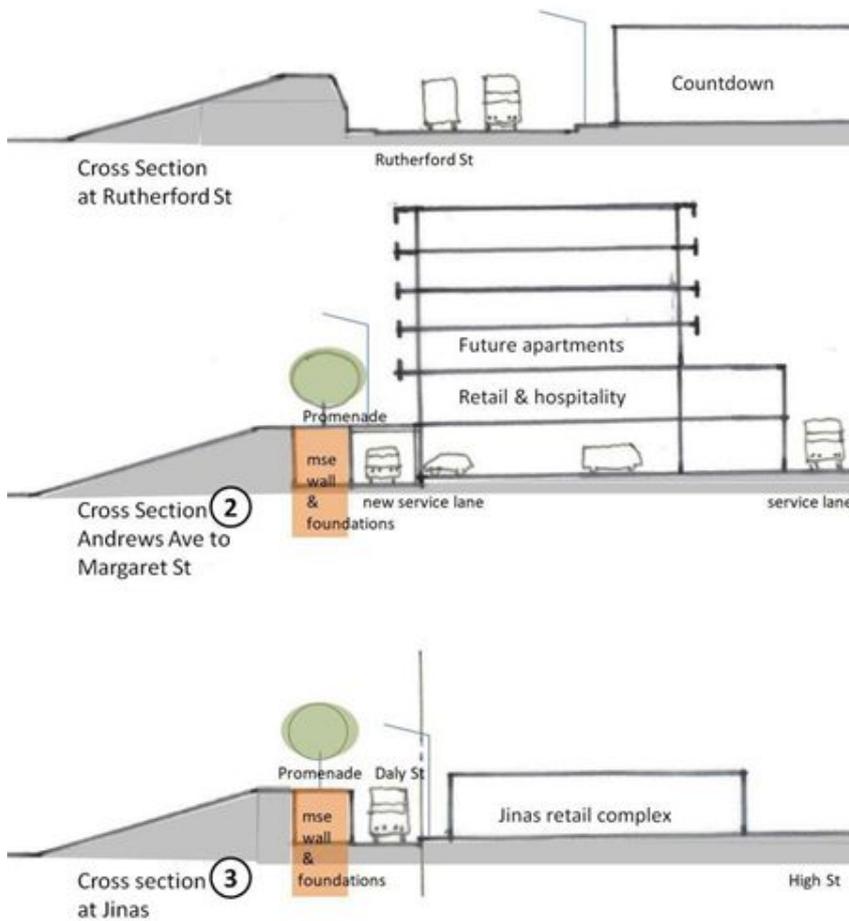


Image 5: Cross Sections through Promenade.

The Promenade will achieve a meaningful connection to the river by providing a generous and landscaped walkway that is level with the new stop banks and providing a platform into which mixed use property development can be directly integrated. This connection is expected to turn the future CBD around to face and engage directly with the river. This developed edge is expected to be vibrant with social and commercial activity lined with café's, restaurants, boutique shops, offices, and apartments juxtaposed to drive a more vibrant inner city lifestyle.

Council has allocated funding for the implementation of the Making Places components of Riverlink.

The Promenade will be made possible by the construction of a secondary structure MSE (mechanically stabilised earth) wall shown in orange of Sections 2 & 3 of Image 5 above. It is expected that the MSE wall will require significant foundations and drilling work will start in July 2018 to ascertain the geotechnical capability of the site along Daly Street.

Council understands that we cannot simply build the promenade and expect the right sort of development to happen under current market conditions and within timeframes compatible with the Riverlink and also to meet with the community's expectations of quality. Therefore Council approved the purchase of key properties on Daly Street essential for the development of the Promenade, and officers are progressing this. There are additional measures that may need to be considered such as partnering with appropriate partners to develop, potentially occupy, and activate the promenade and future CBD.

Council's Business Case for the Promenade shows very favourable outcomes for investing in Riverlink. \$2.5B is forecast to be added to the economy as well as 1300 new housing units (2600 people), and 2700 new jobs.

Surveys for the Business Case and those done annually under Riverlink and the CBD Spatial Plan continue to show high levels of community support for; the Promenade, residential development in the CBD, and connecting the CBD with the River. Business Case surveys indicated high levels of willingness by community to pay for this.

### **2018 Making Places Update**

During 2018 officers have been developing a Central City Spatial Plan as an update of the 2009 Making Places Strategy. A refresh is required partly as a stocktake of progress in the CBD and partly to capture shifts in expectations, and new opportunities and risks (political, social, economic, climatic, natural hazards etc).

Projects completed under Making Places include; Plan Change 14, Dowse Square, Redevelopment of the Civic Precinct (largely complete), Investigations of Margaret Street Bridge, Traffic Model, Stepping Stones Projects, Bus Interchange Investigations, Night Market, appointment of a CBD Manager, and various improvements to public safety, public art, public space, walkability, and of course progressing the Promenade through Riverlink.

Some Making Places projects did not go ahead such as the zoning of the central city into various employment and activity precincts and environmental factors came into play such as; global financial crisis, Christchurch and Kaikoura earthquakes, stronger awareness of climate change and other natural hazards, and significant changes to policy - especially from the new Labour government towards transport and urban development. The new government policy for land transport sees significant shift away from state highway projects towards walking, cycling, public transport, resilience, and regional growth. Council also saw changes in political leadership and the development of key policies/strategies particularly for Urban Growth, Sustainability, Infrastructure, Leisure and Wellbeing, and addressing deprivation etc.

Council has become more aware of the demographic challenges that face the city and that there are opportunities that can be best realised by aligning effort/resourcing with third parties toward mutual goals – though Riverlink is the best example of this it may be conceivable for the Cross Valley Link to be progressed upon the same objectives of flood protection, transport, and city growth.

The Central City Spatial Plan considers the whole land area of the central city from Market Grove in the south to VIC corner at the north, and from the western foothills of Harbour View/Tirohanga and eastward toward Waterloo Station.

Riverlink is a big factor for the Central City Spatial Plan but there are wider issues regarding latent growth and this includes how to balance housing intensification with the established character of central city suburbs eg. Woburn. Also to consider is how to treat the entire central city in order to best enable and leverage off the projected benefits of the Promenade and Riverlink.

#### **Draft Central City Spatial Plan.**

The following are the key findings of the work done to date for the Central City Spatial Plan – also refer Image 6.

1. The future central city is more likely to be about doing or experiencing stuff rather than buying stuff.
2. Retail (outside Queensgate) should consolidate between the Promenade and Queensgate.
3. Land freed up can be re-purposed to non-retail uses such as good quality med/high density housing.
4. Queens Drive will be the most legible transport route & needs to reinforce 'sense of arrival'.
5. New road bridge at Queens Drive will better define land-use & consolidate the city core.
6. Walking & cycling is very important & will contribute to amenity & liveability.
7. Margaret St will become a major walking/cycling connector.
8. Pedestrian bridge is crucial & needs to be built at earliest opportunity.
9. Riverlink is the only lever of scale to sufficiently overhaul the way the central city works.
10. Amenity of the river will play a major role in shifting perceptions of the core central city.
11. Quality is critical & the first developments need to set the tone for future growth & should build off the high quality housing stock of nearby central city suburbs.
12. A good activation strategy is very important to ensure a vibrant promenade.

13. Council needs to find partners to lead development and activate the future central city.
14. Council needs to carefully programme the roll out of implementation to build confidence, change perceptions, and shift the market.

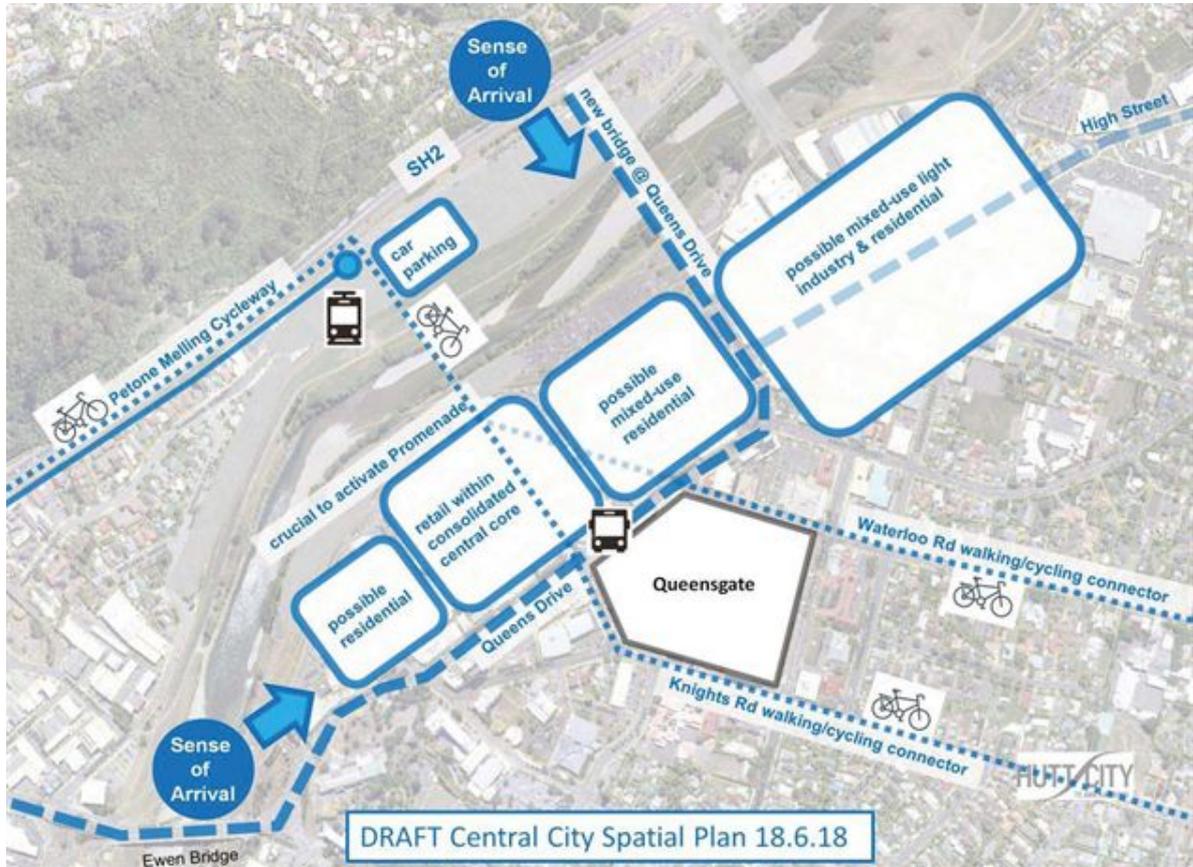


Image 6: Partial Draft for Central City Spatial Plan.

### Next Steps

During June 2018 the Draft Central City Spatial Plan will help to inform NZTA's Melling Interchange Detailed Business Case process for narrowing down from the three options currently being considered to one preferred option. The preferred option will be recommended to the NZTA Board for approval in November 2018.

The Central City Spatial Plan confirms Riverlink as the game changer for the central city and reinforces Riverlink's compatibility with the perceived goals of the government's policy statement for land transport. If approved by NZTA, a new Melling Interchange will enable full flood protection and all the additional benefits to optimise the rejuvenation and growth of the Lower Hutt central city.



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The brief

The RiverLink project team is responsible for developing an overarching approach to guide engagement and communications efforts, for the lifetime of the development and implementation of the RiverLink project. The approach needs to be the blueprint from which all communication and engagement plans at each phase of the project will evolve.

### The opportunity

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and livable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

What started as a very practical exercise in flood protection has evolved into an opportunity to revitalise the CBD of Hutt City into a vital contributor to greater Wellington's social and economic prosperity.

Multi-agency projects are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks, but the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort. RiverLink is also a unique and exciting opportunity for three agencies, all with mandates vital to the vision, to show what can be achieved when they constructively collaborate and authentically engage their communities of interest for visionary outcomes.

In the words of key stakeholders, this is the once in a lifetime opportunity to shape Hutt City's future.

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The RiverLink engagement and communications blueprint must achieve two outcomes:

- 1 Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in: an aspirational and joined-up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's wider communities of interest.
  - 2 Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project. An engagement process that is inclusive and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the long-term success of Hutt City.
-

### Engagement principles to guide our approach

- Telling a joined-up, consistent story that transcends individual projects to champion a bold vision for Hutt City’s future. The story needs to elevate the vision above the functional components (the ordinary) to the aspirational (the extraordinary).
- Engagement that inspires everyone with an interest in Hutt City’s prosperity to back RiverLink and throw their efforts behind it to achieve meaningful outcomes. Engagement is not for ‘consultation’s sake’ and must be more than a tick box exercise.
- Engagement that is sustained and comprehensive. This means connecting with stakeholders and the community in a meaningful and authentic way to drive outcomes together over the entire life of the project. It’s a marathon, not a sprint.
- Keep one step ahead. The blueprint should stay constant, but the time-specific communications plans should stay highly receptive and responsive to the political, social and economic landscape. Agility is crucial.

### The litmus test for engagement activities

This	Not This
One vision, one story	Random and disjointed activities
Gravitas and longevity	Business as usual
Inspiring, listening	Informing, telling
Authentic and meaningful	A tick box exercise to meet short term goals
Co-creating outcomes with the community	Imposing a fait accompli
Confident	Apologetic
Exciting and different	Typical
Finger on the pulse	Rigid and out of touch

### What engagement success will look like

- Stakeholders and community hear and understand one joined up ‘value story’ from each of the project partners, regardless of what agency they represent or what part of the project they are engaging on at the time.
- Strong public mandate and awareness throughout the lifetime of the RiverLink project – people know why the project is vital to Hutt City and are active advocates for it. They believe the outcomes are value for money and they’re prepared to invest.
- Stakeholders have the opportunity to collaborate and, where appropriate, co-create to positively influence the project design, implementation process and outcomes.
- All agency partners have visibility of and can influence technical and engagement work being undertaken by each other – creating a shared ownership approach and ensuring consistent engagement, aligned with this blueprint.

### How we will achieve engagement success – 4 priorities

1. Having a plan with the right success measures for the right time. Being clear what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole, and being clear about specific shorter term milestones at each step along the way. Success measures support and enable collaboration between project partners – each is clear about their and each other’s contributions to the engagement effort and each takes responsibility for making it happen.
2. Establishing the right systems and processes. Ensuring systems and processes support and enable the multi-agency team to deliver consistently high-quality and aligned engagement and consultation – ensuring each agency has access to the right information at the right time to inform engagement and technical work.
3. Picking winners. Prioritising stakeholders and partnerships, both internal and external, based on the current milestones and emerging issues or opportunities as the project evolves over time; and defining specifically the appropriate engagement outcomes at each point in time.
4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities. For a project of this magnitude and duration, success depends on engagement effort and expertise matching technical effort and expertise. Technical experts cannot and should not be expected to be experts in engagement too. Investing in the right capability and resources to deliver the right engagement outcomes is essential.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS BLUEPRINT: Winning and keeping the support RiverLink deserves**

### **Introduction**

RiverLink is a project partnered between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and the NZ Transport Agency designed to deliver greater flood protection, improve transport links and make the Lower Hutt city centre a more vibrant and livable city.

For the project to be a success it requires all partner agencies, elected officials, the Hutt City business community and other stakeholders to support the vision and commit to working together to make it a reality. For the broader public, particularly the communities living in and around Hutt City, success lies in maintaining the strong public mandate for the outcomes RiverLink seeks to achieve and in ratepayers supporting the investment required to complete the project.

### **Purpose**

This document sets out an overarching strategy to guide engagement and communications efforts, for the lifetime of the development and implementation of the RiverLink project.

It sets out the blueprint from which all subsequent communication and engagement plans will evolve.

This document explores what, why and how. What areas we need to focus on; why these areas are important to the success of the project; and how to 'activate' the strategic priorities.

It's about building and maintaining excitement and support for the transformational benefits RiverLink will deliver and to achieve community participation in making the RiverLink vision a reality.

### **The engagement opportunity**

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and livable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

What started as a very practical exercise in flood protection has evolved into an opportunity to revitalise the CBD of Hutt City into a vital contributor to greater Wellington's social and economic prosperity.

RiverLink is also a unique and exciting opportunity for three agencies, all with mandates vital to the vision, to show what can be achieved when they constructively collaborate and authentically engage their communities of interest for visionary outcomes.

In the words of key stakeholders, this is the once in a lifetime opportunity to shape Hutt City's future.

The integrated benefits of the individual elements of the RiverLink project will deliver an outcome far greater than their individual parts. Therein lies the opportunity for the project partners – to show residents, ratepayers and businesses how RiverLink is creating a vibrant, livable accessible and resilient city worth investing, working and living in.

That said, multi-agency projects and relationship dynamics are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks. There are many different processes, timeframes and cultures to align, and often divergent political expectations to take account of. But the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort.

### **The engagement challenge**

A project of this magnitude and duration needs a strong public mandate to succeed and the mandate needs to be sustained over many years and numerous election cycles. People need to be reminded about why the project is vital to the future of Hutt City, so they actively advocate for it and the project enjoys support over the long term.

To earn that mandate, RiverLink needs to stay in the spotlight. We will not be the only infrastructure project competing for public attention during RiverLink's lifetime.

Losing the public mandate is one of the most significant threats to the success of RiverLink. Stakeholder support is where project and engagement success merge.

### **Where are we at, where to next?**

To date, the RiverLink interagency project team has made positive progress in engaging stakeholders and building awareness of the project's scope and aims. However, the team agrees there are opportunities to:

- refine the value proposition into a single integrated and compelling story
- address stakeholder misconceptions that may have developed over the life of the project so far
- step up the way stakeholders are engaged with, now and throughout the project

- take a more joined-up approach to engagement, while maintaining the flexibility to accommodate each partner's distinct planning, consultation and decision-making processes.

You have asked us to develop an engagement and communications strategy for RiverLink that supports the project team to achieve:

- better internal alignment on community engagement, consultation and communication so that RiverLink is seen to 'speak and engage with one voice'
- a single, compelling narrative in which all project communication, engagement and consultation activities can be anchored so that the vision and value proposition are well understood and supported
- an exemplar of multi-agency collaboration delivering high value outcomes for Hutt City.

To inform the development of the strategy, Crestani completed an intelligence-gathering exercise comprising in-depth interviews with 14 key project and community stakeholders involved in or with an interest in the project. Participants were asked their view of the issues and opportunities associated with engaging all the organisations and communities essential to the success of RiverLink (e.g. business, commercial, residents, local and central government). The interview questions are set out in the appendices on page 22.

### What stakeholders told us

Feedback indicated there is a strong level of support for the project and respect for what the project team has achieved to date. In fact, stakeholders were consistent in asserting RiverLink is a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' for Hutt City and the single most important initiative they will see implemented in their lifetimes. There is consensus that without full commitment to RiverLink, Hutt City will struggle to thrive.

However, stakeholders also consistently told us they are yet to be convinced that RiverLink will deliver the revitalisation that Hutt City needs, and there are a number of challenges to overcome to allow RiverLink to achieve its stated goals. Stakeholders' concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. RiverLink is not aspirational enough to capture and deliver all possible benefits
2. Greater political and leadership 'buy in' is needed
3. Funding uncertainty is a barrier to progress
4. Lack of pace threatens engagement and support

Stakeholders interviewed made the following comments:

“

*“There’s a complexity with having three agencies and one is that there’s a lack of overall leadership. The politics of partnerships need to be managed well.”*

*“Nobody disputes we need it to happen, but people are asking what does this mean for me, and am I getting value for \$300 million?”*

*“The story needs to be told better. Communications are a good investment and need to go beyond what’s needed for consent processes.”*

*“It’s taking too long. People will only stay interested and supportive if they can see progress and see what’s changed.”*

*“The biggest barrier to success is the roading piece and the Melling Bridge, and who pays for it.”*

*“There needs to be more awareness and buy-in from politicians.”*

*“I think the economics are dubious and the benefits are pretty woolly, being polite.”*

*“There’s a lack of urgency. In fact, the pace is glacial.”*

”

Some of these challenges can be addressed through more innovative, purposeful, timely and consistent communications and stakeholder engagement. Others are more fundamental to the scope of the project itself and require the focus of the project team and management group to address.

In this communication and engagement strategy, we suggest how a different and more deliberate approach to community engagement and communication can better support progress and help ensure project success.

## Doing things differently

*“They’re not being innovative enough and I worry that all sorts of opportunities might be missed. They need to think outside the box. The business community is skeptical that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity that’ll be missed and there’ll be intergenerational debt left to our kids.”*

RiverLink is the single biggest opportunity for Hutt City to become a more vibrant and high performing part of the greater Wellington region.

The feedback stakeholders have given offers a great opportunity to the RiverLink project team and their respective partner agencies by providing a strong steer on where future external and internal engagement and communications efforts should focus so that RiverLink delivers for Hutt City.

This is an opportunity for Greater Wellington Regional Council, NZ Transport Agency and Hutt City Council to set the standard for the delivery of multi-agency projects; and to show how exemplar community engagement is a pre-requisite to the success of projects of this magnitude and impact.

This is a change in behaviour for the organisations involved in leading and developing the work. This necessitates moving beyond institutional silos and ‘talking amongst ourselves’ to a much more inclusive engagement process that lifts the vision above flood protection, transport links and turning the CBD to face the river to considering ‘the art of the possible’.

Taking a fresh approach to collaborative engagement doesn’t mean ignoring the statutory obligations each individual agency needs to meet. Quite the opposite, in fact. But it does mean being agile and innovative in the way statutory processes are executed and it means being open to combining the strengths of all three project partners into a cohesive and transparent engagement approach where your shared goal of a more vibrant, resilient and livable Hutt City is plain for everyone to see.

*RiverLink is engaging for action with one voice - this begins with all partners being aligned in your engagement efforts, reflecting shared responsibility for achieving the best outcomes for Hutt City.*

## The engagement and communication task

The RiverLink engagement and communications strategy needs to achieve two outcomes:

- 1 Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in: an aspirational and joined up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's communities of interest.
- 2 Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project. An engagement process that is inclusive of and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the success of Hutt City.

## The golden rules for RiverLink engagement

RiverLink must adopt the overarching engagement and communication principles of:

- Telling a joined-up, consistent story that transcends individual projects to champion a bold vision for Hutt City's future. The story needs to elevate the vision above the functional components (the ordinary) to the aspirational (the extraordinary).
- Engagement that inspires everyone with an interest in Hutt City's prosperity to back RiverLink and throw their efforts behind it to achieve meaningful outcomes. Engagement is not for 'consultation's sake' and must be more than a tick box exercise.
- Engagement that is sustained and comprehensive. This means connecting with stakeholders and the community in a meaningful and authentic way to drive outcomes together over the entire life of the project. It's a marathon, not a sprint.
- Keep one step ahead. The blueprint should stay constant, but the time-specific communications plans should stay highly receptive and responsive to the political, social and economic landscape. Agility is crucial.

## Four strategic engagement priorities

1. Having a plan with the right success measures for the right time. Being clear what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole, and being clear about specific shorter term milestones at each step along the way. Success measures support and enable collaboration between project partners - each is clear about their and each other's contributions to the engagement effort and each takes responsibility for making it happen.

2. Establishing the right systems and processes. Ensuring systems and processes support and enable the multi-agency team to deliver consistently high-quality and aligned engagement and consultation – ensuring each agency has access to the right information at the right time to inform engagement and technical work.
3. Picking winners. Prioritising stakeholders and partnerships, both internal and external, based on the current milestones and emerging issues or opportunities as the project evolves over time; and defining specifically the appropriate engagement outcomes at each point in time.
4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities. For a project of this magnitude and duration, success depends on engagement effort and expertise matching technical effort and expertise. Technical experts cannot and should not be expected to be experts in engagement too. Investing in the right capability and resources to deliver the right engagement results is essential.

### What does engagement success look like?

The RiverLink team have identified engagement success measures based on the question:

*“What would good look like as a result of engaging effectively on the RiverLink project?”*

Stakeholders interviewed had a number of their own suggestions:

“*“People – ratepayers, residents and businesses – would have certainty. They’ve told us do it once, do it right for the long term. We have an obligation to deliver on that for them.”*

*“People will know things are happening.”*

*“The business community are well informed and people need to feel confident to invest in the city. “*

*“People want to see more than pretty pictures and chat fests.”*

”

### Engagement success factors

- Stakeholders and community hear and understand one joined up ‘value story’ from each of the project partners, regardless of what agency they represent or what part of the project they are engaging on
- Strong public mandate and awareness throughout the RiverLink project – people know why the project is vital to Hutt City and are active advocates for it. They believe the outcomes are value for money and they’re prepared to invest
- Key stakeholders have the opportunity to collaborate and, where appropriate, co-create to positively influence the project design, implementation process and outcomes
- Each agency has visibility of and can influence technical and engagement work being undertaken by each agency – creating a shared ownership approach and phased and complementary engagement

### Engagement objectives

- Project team work collaboratively with the RiverLink Management Group on a joined up internal engagement approach, encouraging openness and leveraging key people and relationships to ensure high internal visibility and buy-in at the right level from each agency
- Shared development and ownership of engagement and communications plans supporting each phase of the project, and aligned with this overarching communication and engagement strategy; throughout the life of the project
- Develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders based on ‘mutual value’ to build understanding of the project and develop opportunities for involvement and for value to be added – particularly from the private sector
- Develop culture of openness to engaging in new and different ways

### Steps in the engagement process for project success

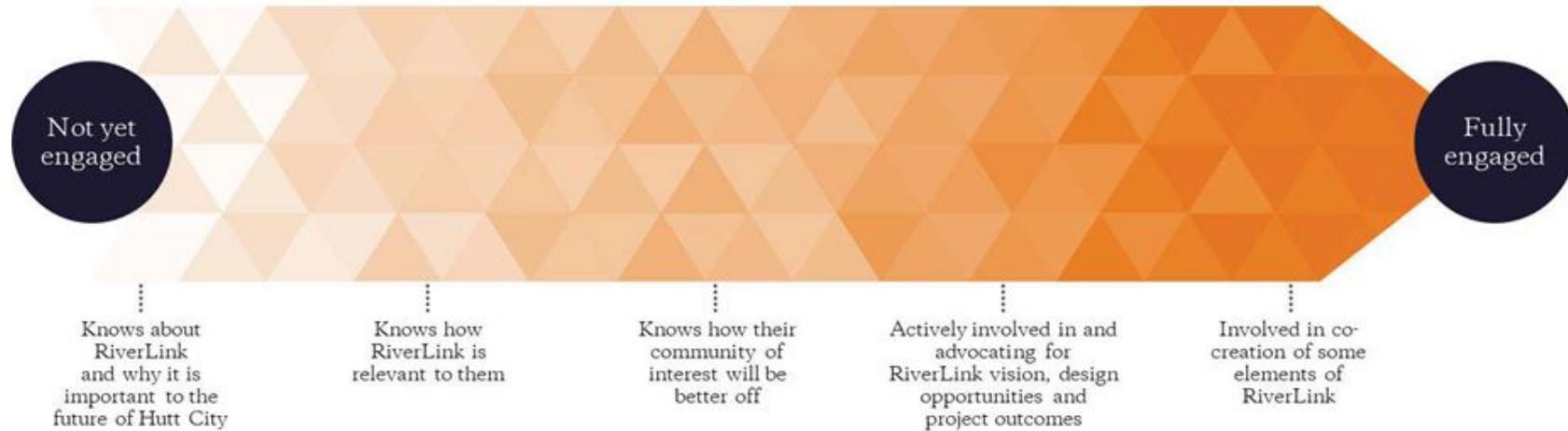
If the engagement objectives were reflected in an image the ‘*Steps in RiverLink’s engagement success continuum*’ below demonstrates how each engagement needs to have a defined purpose.

Whether it’s establishing a new relationship right from the beginning, or working in the co-creation space, every member of the project team, Management Group and others who support the RiverLink project should use these ‘markers’ to guide their efforts and keep them focused on outcomes-based engagement.

The goal is not to move all stakeholders completely along the continuum at the same time, but rather to recognise where the project needs particular stakeholders to be in order for that project phase to be successful.

For example: getting the media to understand how their community of interest will be better off as a result of RiverLink would be a successful outcome for that group, whereas the engagement success for some key people/organisations, such as Hutt businesses, councilors, MPs and community representatives would be to see them working alongside you in co-creation of the design and implementation.

### Steps in RiverLink’s engagement success continuum



### The engagement strategy - key success factors

#### 1. Having a plan with the right success measures

RiverLink’s success will, in large part, rely on engagement that is focused on telling a simple, lined up story between the three partner agencies and running a process that is highly coordinated and complementary of each agency’s work programme.

For the project team (and the key people in each agency supporting them), and the Management Group this means agreeing collectively what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole (alongside specific shorter term milestones), working towards a shared vision and developing and implementing actions together that will deliver on the engagement objectives.

As stated earlier in this document RiverLink is engaging for action with one joint voice - this begins with all parties being clear on an aligned ‘big picture’ engagement effort, pitched at the right level to achieve shared ownership and the right outcomes.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gaining the shared commitment of the project team, management and governance to the ambition of the plan. One of the first actions with this group needs to be buy-in to the engagement approach you want to take. The engagement principles in this strategy are the project’s ‘north star’ and must be front and centre for decision makers at every phase of the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team present engagement strategy to management and governance groups</li> <li>Workshop to agree the vision/ambition/value proposition that forms the basis of the joint story - focusing on the vision that the investment will deliver, rather than apologizing for the investment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring engagement objectives are understood and agreed by everyone. Being clear about the influence others can have on the process, ensuring the right measures of success for your engagement activities over the right timeframes, and having them understood and agreed by all in the project and management teams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make engagement principles visible to all those working on the RiverLink project, including at management and governance level to ensure engagement accountability. All engagement activities need to take the litmus test (e.g. is this a joined-up story? Is this authentic? Is this co-creating?)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changing behaviour to ensure ‘joint engagement’ is reflected in each part and phase of the project. Beginning with open and pragmatic conversations about the compromises each agency needs to make around information sharing, timelines, and engagement planning in order to progress the one vision, one story approach to develop a culture within the team of co-creation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a stock take of previous and planned engagement across all projects to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree what has worked well and what could be done better from a ‘lessons learned’ perspective</li> <li>Gain greater visibility of cross-agency engagement planning and timelines</li> </ul> </li> <li>Develop an overarching engagement and communications plan encompassing all parts of the project from which project specific ‘mini-plans’ can cascade from - always taking account of the overarching plan or blueprint</li> <li>Ensure interagency feedback is a key component of all engagement planning in the spirit of collaboration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting engagement at the top table. The successful joint engagement approach relies in equal parts on technical and engagement expertise. Engagement representation <b>must</b> sit on the RiverLink Management Group to ensure engagement risks and opportunities are given the same attention as technical aspects of the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify/ recruit an ‘engagement champion’ who sits on/can sit on the management group</li> </ul>

## 2. Establishing the right systems and processes

A key risk that has been identified is that cross agency/internal silos lead to divergence of views, timelines that don't align or engagement that can be counterproductive to the overarching goals of the RiverLink project. Multi-agency projects are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks, but the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort. This is why a large part of the engagement effort should be internally focused to ensure rigorous processes enable high-quality engagement.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the right mix of people and skills are involved in RiverLink. At the governance, management and technical levels - consider ability to communicate effectively and wide networks within their area of expertise/interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review make up of RiverLink Management Group to ensure representation is senior enough to translate into appropriate visibility and buy-in within each agency and demonstrate to stakeholders each agency sees RiverLink as a priority project</li> <li>Consider broader representation on management group to include a Hutt City business stakeholder role with direct links back into the private sector</li> <li>Consider creating a role to advocate on behalf of the RiverLink project to keep the various 'voices' on track, bring people together and be the 'go to' person for telling the RiverLink story</li> <li>Set up a RiverLink community board to ensure more consistent community representation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a strong focus on internal communications between agencies, so the project team has visibility of and can influence other related work sitting under the RiverLink umbrella. This also extend to creating visibility beyond those working on the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a 'home' base for the project team so people from various agencies can sit together regularly rather than on an ad-hoc basis and ensure each agency's engagement and communications team members are included as part of this</li> <li>Consider using secondments from each agency to foster understanding of different organisational processes and culture and to take advantage of reputation and technical expertise</li> <li>Develop an overarching RiverLink engagement calendar (for internal use) so all planned engagement is visible across the 3 agencies, and busy periods, workload pressures, and competing priorities can be identified and resolved early</li> <li>Regular project team meetings including engagement leads from each agency</li> </ul>

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring engagement techniques and channels used are fit for purpose for the overarching engagement task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a digital hub so that all people can access and share information</li> <li>As part of engagement stock take - conduct a review of all engagement and communications channels currently used and evaluate for effectiveness, effort and reach to help focus future engagement efforts and investment</li> </ul>

### 3. Picking winners - prioritising stakeholders and partnerships

Achieving the support and active engagement of a wider cross-section of stakeholders requires that they see value to them and they understand the benefits of participating. This means each and every engagement needs to focus on achieving relevance and purpose.

Not all stakeholders are created equal. What’s more, over a project of this scale and timeframe the definition of priority stakeholders will change depending on the intended outcomes at each phase. RiverLink needs to be nimble to ensure it remains relevant in both messaging and approach and alert to changes in stakeholder sentiment.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and regularly reviewing RiverLink’s key stakeholders, to make sure you are focusing on the right people at the right time with the right purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map RiverLink’s stakeholders to build understanding across the project team of who is important to each organisation and look for shared interest and opportunities to leverage relationships and engagement opportunities</li> <li>Regularly review the stakeholder map to ensure the project is engaging the right people at the right time</li> <li>Consider how RiverLink can bring more advocates for the success of Hutt City into the tent</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on an engagement approach that works for stakeholders. Look for opportunities to make it as easy as possible for stakeholders to contribute, piggy back off existing events, reach out to them and make it worth their while to attend.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of stakeholder mapping also focus on what stakeholders need to think/feel/do as a result of engagement - this will help focus the type of engagement efforts, the most appropriate channels used, and the right call-to-action</li> <li>Use engagement calendar to plan and undertake engagement with these people/groups in a coordinated way</li> </ul>

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan public engagement that hits the mark. Start investigating and planning now to identify the scope of the work and audience reach you want to have. Consider the strength of the interagency team and each organisation's engagement networks and channels for support and learnings. At every point, be clear about the influence you want and the influence others can have.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use engagement calendar to plan and undertake aligned public engagement/consultation</li> <li>As part of engagement stock take - conduct a review of all public engagement and communications channels currently used and evaluate for effectiveness, effort and reach to help focus future engagement efforts and investment and investigate potential new public engagement techniques as part of this process. Are we using social media to full effect?</li> <li>Review and redevelop all key messaging and storylines to ensure it reflects a simple, joined up, one story approach, with people at the centre (for example - shows the life/benefits to a range of different personas: an inner-city dweller, someone from a Hutt suburb, a train commuter, a driver, pedestrian/cyclist)</li> <li>Establish a school competition to design the new 'gateway to the city' bridge</li> <li>Look for 3<sup>rd</sup> party endorsement of RiverLink work to provide a different public angle or channel</li> <li>Consider a name change/rebrand of 'RiverLink' that better communicates the wow factor</li> <li>Look for opportunities to communicate regularly and show transparency - a joint engagement approach needs to have a strong focus on identifying milestones and communicating regularly, rather than going silent. This will be particularly important when it comes to socialising detailed plans with a broader set of stakeholders and the public. Warming the environment so people are aware of where things are moving is an important step</li> <li>Be proactive in the media - there will be many points of interest and eureka moments that can be shared so the story is kept alive in the public consciousness</li> <li>Create a more permanent physical presence for RiverLink in the city than the current container as a symbol of the project's importance and value to Hutt City and so stakeholders have a 'place' to exercise their support for and contribution to the RiverLink vision. This may also be the 'home base' for the project team, as recommended above</li> </ul>

4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities – to lead and execute the internal and external engagement effort required.

RiverLink has been described by stakeholders as the single biggest opportunity for Hutt City to become a more vibrant and high performing part of the greater Wellington region. Stakeholders and the community therefore deserve an engagement effort that is adequately resourced with engagement and communications specialists and allow for a range of engagement approaches to be used.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of an experienced, senior engagement lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider creating a dedicated RiverLink engagement and communications role jointly funded by the partner agencies to lead implementation efforts and work with the project team and to potentially provide a consistent public ‘face’ for the project</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing for a range of engagement approaches and channels. Workshops, websites, media, advertising, social research. Ensuring a budget is available up-front will avoid the need to ‘look down the back of the couch’ mid-project. Good engagement takes time and tends to be resource-heavy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include possible budget requirements as part of engagement and communications stock take and planning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing for the right content to support the engagement approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include budget requirements for the development of content to populate the engagement approaches and channels - for example the use of augmented reality to show the vision for the land</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising when external expertise is required to create and maintain engagement momentum. An engagement project of this scale will be challenging for the project team. Being aware of and open to bringing in independent advice and support when required (over and above creating a dedicated role) will give the project team the confidence they need to get the job done.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify where there are key engagement/consultation tasks to be completed or milestones where specialist advice and guidance is required (for example workshop facilitation, research, website development)</li> </ul>



### 3. APPENDICES

#### Risk and mitigations table

Risk	Mitigations
Lose public mandate due to lack of compelling story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner agencies agree joint vision and story, and commitment to speak as one voice</li> </ul>
Delays to project due to funding uncertainty or engagement issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the right people at governance level to reflect importance of project to the regional economy and allow for a more streamlined decision-making process</li> <li>Develop overarching engagement calendar</li> </ul>
Project not agile to new government direction or structural changes within partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the RiverLink ‘story’ reflects back the ambitions and direction of the the government of the day</li> <li>Invest in internal engagement and communications within each partner organisation to ensure the ‘value proposition’ is clear and regularly heard by the right people</li> </ul>
Criticism from a key stakeholder/group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to work with broad range of stakeholders, map and regularly review key stakeholder list for project as a whole as well as individual work programmes</li> <li>Look for ways to be more inclusive of stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle</li> </ul>
Project team works in silos without awareness of other work programme plans and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop project team culture that allows for more co-working, sharing of information and joint project planning and engagement processes</li> </ul>

RiverLink interviewee list

1. Prue Lamason Councillor GWRC (Chair HVFMS)
2. Ray Wallace Mayor HCC (HVFMS)
3. Chris Milne Councillor HCC (HVFMS)
4. Kim Kelly HCC (RiverLink GM Group)
5. Graeme Campbell Manager Flood Protection GWRC (RiverLink GM Group)
6. Kesh Keshaboina NZ Transport Agency (RiverLink GM Group)
7. Wayne Hastie GWRC (RiverLink GM Group)
8. Ginny Anderson Labour MP
9. Chris Bishop National MP
10. Sue Kedgley Councillor GWRC (HVFMS & Green Party)
11. Mark Futter CE Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
12. John Bank Banks Shoes
13. Paul Swain Councillor GWRC
14. Tony Stallinger Chief Executive HCC
15. Greg Campbell Chief Executive GWRC

### Stakeholder interview questions

1. Tell me about your interest in the RiverLink project and why
2. What do you think success will look like for Riverlink? How would you like Hutt residents and business, or someone from outside the region, to describe what's different because of RiverLink three years from now?
3. How do you think Hutt residents/businesses would describe RiverLink right now in terms of vision and progress? Do you think they know enough to be able to describe the benefits it will deliver for them?
4. Do you think there are other benefits RiverLink could deliver for the Hutt besides flood protection, transport links, and CBD regeneration? What might they be?
5. Riverlink is a collaboration between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and NZ Transport Agency. What's your experience of how effectively the three organisations have been working together to progress the initiative? Think about governance and working group, and at a business-as-usual level?
6. Do you think the project represents value for money for rate payers and taxpayers? Why/why not?
7. In your view, what's the biggest barrier to RiverLink being a success?
8. Are there are some areas where you think the RiverLink project has already been successful and could build on?
9. Who are the most important groups/communities/people you think need to support the RiverLink project vision? How well do you think they've been engaged with to date?
10. Any other comments you would like to make that haven't been addressed as part of this interview?



## SCOPING PAPER: CONSENTING PATHWAYS



**18 April 2018**

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## Executive Summary

RiverLink is a partnership project between Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council, and the NZ Transport Agency. The project area is a 3 kilometre section of the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River between Kennedy Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge and the immediate urban environs on either side, including part of Lower Hutt's Central Business District.

RiverLink's objectives are for better flood protection, transport and lifestyle for Lower Hutt, entailing a range of overlapping and integrated initiatives that will require ongoing and enduring collaboration to achieve its objectives. The full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners.

The proposed works include widening the river channel and river berms, raising the height of the stopbanks, improved access from the CBD to and alongside the River, a new riverside promenade on the eastern stopbank, improvements to the SH2 Melling intersection, enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes to and through Melling, and better public transport integration at Melling Railway Station. Achieving many of the project elements will be precedent on other elements occurring first – therefore there is a strong interrelationship between all the project's components.

Undertaking these improvements will require authorisation under the Resource Management Act 1991 through the designation of the land required for public works, and obtaining the necessary resource consents. Longer term changes to the City of Lower Hutt District Plan will also need to make provision for the consequential changes in land use and to encourage forms of development that support the vision for the City Centre.

This report presents a summary of the principal options for obtaining the authorisations required to implement the RiverLink Project, in order to assist the participating organisations to decide in on the preferred consenting approach: for brevity, the options are referred to as 'consenting pathways'. Once the pathway has been confirmed, a consenting strategy will be developed to map in detail the way forward and address particular designation and resource consent issues.

This report sets a range of recommendations for applying and obtaining the RMA authorisations, with the key recommendation being that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a pathway that involves, as much possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- The Notices of Requirement and applications prepared together as single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

The development of the Notices of Requirement and applications will take between 6-12 months, the application processing 1-2 years, depending on appeals and currently anticipate a decision by early to mid-2021.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project Purpose

RiverLink (the "**Project**") is a partnership project between Greater Wellington Regional Council ("**GWRC**"), Hutt City Council ("**HCC**") and the NZ Transport Agency ("**NZTA**"), together the "**Project Partners**". The project area is a 3 kilometre section of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River ("**River**") between Kennedy Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge and the immediate urban environs on either side, including part of Lower Hutt's Central Business District ("**CBD**").

RiverLink is a collaborative initiative that seeks to provide –

- Better flood protection for Lower Hutt's CBD and residential areas;
- Enhanced connections to and along the River, contributing to a more vibrant city centre; and
- Improved access and safety and reduced congestion on State Highway 2 ("**SH2**") and connecting roads at Melling.

The Project Partners recognises the strong interrelationships between the various elements of the project, and the full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners. This will require strong coordination in the planning and sequencing of the works associated within the Project: i.e., the sum will be greater than the individual elements themselves.

## 1.2 Project Elements

The Project comprises the following key elements:

- Flood protection works, including –
  - ▶ Upgrades to the flood protection defences to safely pass the design flood which includes but limited to, increasing the height of the stopbanks widening the river channel and edge protection improvements;
  - ▶ Where required, construct retaining walls on the stopbank (such as to limit impact of stopbank footprint on existing roads);
  - ▶ The acquisition of properties on the west side of the river on Pharazyn Street and part of Marsden Street to provide the area required for widening the river corridor;
  - ▶ The current constriction created by the existing Melling Bridge will be reduced by its proposed replacement (see transport improvements below); and
- New connections and recreational facilities to and along the River, including –

- ▶ Between Ewen and Melling Bridge, the riversides will be developed as a 'river park' that provides quality places for people to spend time by the river and enjoy its amenity: new river edges formed to facilitate safe and secure public access;
- ▶ Formation of beaches within the River, with connections from pathways and steps to enable access to swimming spots and fishing points;
- ▶ By the City Centre, steps and ramps to extend up to the stopbank and connect directly to the river to enhance connectivity and accessibility;
- ▶ Replacement of existing pathways within the river corridor to provide a hierarchy of path types along the stopbank top, berms and river edge, to enable walking and cycle movements, and creation of areas for passive recreation including dog exercise areas;
- ▶ Upstream of Melling Bridge, the river corridor will be more natural, with broader open spaces and tree groups to provide better space character definition, with some wetlands formed for stormwater filtering and to provide habitat; and
- Central City enhancements, including –
  - ▶ Daly Street will become a service lane, to allow for a direct and adjacent relationship between the new stopbank and new development in the City Centre: this will be achieved by the development of an 11-metre-wide promenade, part of which will be a deck over Daly Street below, that, ultimately, will be connected to new mixed use buildings developed to take advantage of the enhanced connections and riverside amenities;
  - ▶ Andrews Avenue and Margaret Street will be reconfigured to provide a shared street space to encourage walking and cycling and enhance connectivity to the river from the city centre;
  - ▶ Various stormwater, water supply and waste water network infrastructure will need to be replaced or relocated and this creates opportunities for upgrading and future proofing to contemporary standards; and
- Transport improvements, including –
  - ▶ The redevelopment of the SH2 intersection with Melling Link, Block Road, Pharazyn Street, and Harbour View Road to reduce congestion and improve safety, travel reliability and multi-modal accessibility: the exact form and extent of these improvements are under investigation currently;
  - ▶ In conjunction with the SH2 Melling improvements, the current Melling Bridge will be replaced, its exact location and form to be decided as part of the decision for the SH2 improvements;
  - ▶ The Melling Railway Station would need to be relocated when the Melling intersection is upgraded, and be better aligned with the City Centre (nominally opposite Margaret Street), and enable potential to create a better public transport 'hub' with bus transport; and

- ▶ A new pedestrian cycle bridge (nominally opposite Margaret Street) is proposed to connect across the river between the City Centre and western side of the River, and possibly the relocated Melling Railway Station.

There are a number of Project elements that have yet to be confirmed, and enhancements that would assist the Project Partners to further satisfy their strategies and policies. There are interdependencies between these elements. The enhancements include:

- Other possible pedestrian and cycle connections to enhance connectivity and greater transport choice;
- Possible raising of the ground level of the Pharazyn Street area to reduce the surplus fill and to allow for a realigned street to enable better utilisation of residual land and avoid developments within the seismic (faultline) zone;
- Additional parking on the Pharazyn Street side, including park and ride facilities, to offset reduced parking on the City-side river banks;
- Residual land on the realigned Pharazyn Street could be repurposed for new land uses, a potential that could be optimised by making changes to the District Plan to enable appropriate development in this area;
- Enhanced terrestrial biodiversity through additional native tree planting; and
- Additional recreation opportunities.

### 1.3 Time Frames

The Preliminary Design process began in February 2016 and the technical aspects were completed mid-2017. Design review and value engineering continued into the third and fourth quarter of 2017.

The next phase of the Project will be to seek approvals through statutory processes. For the GWRC and HCC components of the Project, the decision to proceed to seeking those approvals will be made by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee, GWRC and HCC following the documentation of the Preliminary Design, which is to occur early-mid-2018. From that point, the Assessment of Environmental Effects can commence for those aspects of the project other than the NZTA elements.

For the NZTA components of the Project, an Indicative Business Case for options at Melling was concluded in 2017, and the final scheme will be confirmed through a Detailed Business Case following public consultation on the shortlisted options coming out of the Indicative Business Case. A decision on the final scheme for Melling is anticipated to go to the NZTA Board in late 2018, following which, approval would enable funding for the consenting phase, starting in 2019.

It is anticipated that the draft applications for the entire project will be completed by the end of 2019, after which a draft application would be circulated to key stakeholders for input. It is then expected that the finalised full suite of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications would be lodged with the two councils in Q2 2020.

It is anticipated that the process of notifying and assessing the applications, as well as the hearing of submissions would occur over the following twelve months, with a public hearing process likely to occur in late 2020. This allows time for engagement with submitters and stakeholders to address any outstanding issues prior to the formal hearing.

If a decision is released in early-mid 2021, construction can commence immediately, if no appeals are lodged or any can be resolved promptly. Any appeal could extend the timeline by 1-2 years, but it may be possible to have any appeal ring-fenced to specific matters, to allow progress to occur on other aspects.

## 1.4 Integrated approach

The success of the RiverLink project depends on a strongly integrated approach being followed, with the Project Partners working together with an integrated design to address overlapping interests in what would otherwise be separate work programmes. The management of the project has been provided by a Management Group comprising members of the senior executive teams from the three partner agencies. Governance for the flood protection and city centre aspects is provided by the extant Hutt River Flood Management Subcommittee. The NZTA Board provides governance for its aspects of the Project.

The name “RiverLink” was coined at the outset of the concept design phase to provide an accessible and recognisable project descriptor that represents the interests of the three Project Partners.

As noted in Section 1.2, not only are the Project works occurring within the same area, there are strong interrelationships between the elements: some elements can only occur if other elements occur first. Further, the benefits of some elements will only be fully realised with the completion of others. The diagram below (refer [Figure 1](#)) graphically shows which elements are connected to each other. In considering these interrelationships, it can be seen that some of these elements are strategic and others represent opportunities discovered through preliminary design.

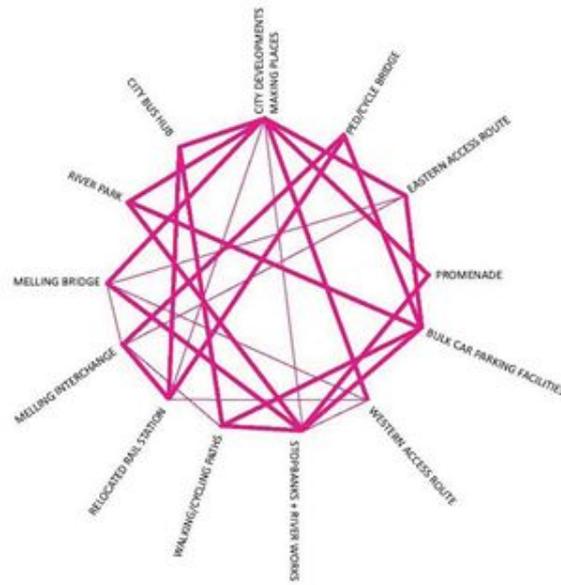


FIGURE 1: INTERRELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM

## 2 Project Objectives + Risks

### 2.1 Project Objectives for Designations

Any designation sought under a Notice of Requirement ('**NoR**') must specify the objectives for which the work and designation is sought. This is because, under the RMA one of the considerations for deciding on confirming a Notice of Requirement is “whether the work and designation are reasonably necessary for achieving the objectives of the requiring authority for which the designation is sought” (s168A(3)(c) and s171(1)(c)).

One of the tasks necessary for preparing the NoR for the Project therefore will be to specify the objectives for the designations and the works that they are authorising. It is likely that there may be some overarching objectives that can apply to all or most proposed designations, such as ones for resilience and integration; however, as the Project will have various designations for different purposes (such as flood protection, reserves, roading), each relating to the specific statutory functions and responsibility of each Project Partner, each Notice of Requirement will be required to have its own specific project objectives.

The consenting strategy (to be prepared in the next phase) will set out a preliminary set of designation objectives which are likely to be refined as part of the process of preparing the NoR and resource consent applications.

The original Design Objectives for the Project were very comprehensive: these may form the basis for the development of the project objectives, although in much more precise manner.

### 2.2 Project Risks

There remain a number of assumptions and risks within the Project that will continue to be addressed as Project design proceeds. These risks are in summary:

- That one or other of the Project Partners departs from the Project and it thus loses the opportunities to remain coordinated and mutually beneficial;
- That elements of the Project to be provided for by private development stakeholders are not delivered in a form that matches with the design intent, or not provided at all;
- That consents under the RMA and other statutes are not able to be acquired and the Project cannot proceed;
- That the current planning framework (i.e., district plan, regional policy statement, regional plans, national policy statements and national environmental standards) may present significant consenting risks;
- That funding for all of the elements of the design is unable to be secured;

- That due to the time required to take the Project through the design and consenting processes Project knowledge is lost from key people leaving either of the three agencies;
- That due to the time required for implementation there is a significant flood event;
- That community support for the project is unable to be maintained due to the time taken for design and consenting, the project costs, or for other reasons;
- That project support from the three agencies is usurped by changing political landscape or alternative priorities;
- That the agreement and/or participation by other key stakeholders such as KiwiRail is delayed or not forthcoming;
- That technical issues that could not be foreseen in concept design arise in detailed design that change the project design or delivery costs; and
- Changing market conditions increase the costs of implementation.

When the final consenting pathway is determined, a consenting strategy will be developed that will include a register of risks and methods to mitigate such risks.

A further key element of the consenting strategy will be to identify Project elements which can be best addressed through the designation or resource consent process.

### 3 Consenting Pathways

The next phase of the Project will be to obtain the statutory authorisations required under the RMA that are necessary to allow the work to occur. These could include designations, resource consents or, potentially, changes to the District Plan. Due to the large-scale integrated nature of the Project, there are a number of different ways to obtain these authorisations. For brevity sake, these options are referred to in this report as ‘consenting pathways’, with the term ‘applications’ including NoRs as well as resource consent applications.

This section –

- Sets out the principles used to guide the process for assessing the appropriateness of the various options under the RMA;
- Outlines the different statutory authorisations available under the RMA, their relative advantages and disadvantages, and the recommendations for proceeding;
- Outlines the options for preparing applications for those authorisations, the alternative processes for getting the applications heard and decided, and the recommendations for proceeding;
- Outlines the alternative ways that the Project Partners can work together to obtain and implement RMA authorisations, and the recommendations for proceeding, and
- Identifies a number of outstanding questions that have yet to be resolved.

Once decisions on the recommendations in this report are made, a consenting strategy will be prepared to map out the route ahead.

#### 3.1 Consenting Principles

In determining the most appropriate consenting pathway, the following principles have been used to guide the decision-making process:

1. **Accessibility** – keep the process local, ensuring opportunities for involvement by landowners, stakeholders and the community;
2. **Integration** – obtain consents in a way that support each agency’s desired outcomes: i.e., maintain an integrated approach;
3. **Transparency** – ensure the community is able to identify and understand what each agency is doing to benefit the overall outcome of the Project; and
4. **Flexibility** – ability to be able to adapt to meet the requirements of the Project Partners.

#### 3.2 Options for Statutory RMA Authorisations

The next phase of the Project will be to proceed to obtain the necessary statutory authorisations to enable the work to commence. An earlier Planning and Consenting Strategy Technical Report

(GWRC ref T-17/20) provided an initial overview of the options available for obtaining the statutory authorisations. Now that the configuration of the Project has been confirmed, these options are examined in greater detail below, with accompanying recommendations.

### 3.2.1 Designations

The three Project Partners are all *requiring authorities* under s 166 of the RMA, and are thereby enabled to lodge a NoR to designate land for public works under Part 8 of the RMA. A designation not only provides the necessary authorisation under the RMA, but it also enables land to be acquired under the Public Works Act 1981.

The Project comprises a range of public works for the purpose of flood protection, transport improvements, urban revitalisation and public space development. While designations may not be needed for every element of the Project (for example, street improvements on local roads may be undertaken by HCC under its road controlling authority powers under the Local Government Act 2002), designating all or most of the land needed for the Project would not only provide the necessary RMA authorisation, but also provide a single overarching integrated land use framework. Where needed, designating land would also allow land to be acquired where it is not already under the control of the Project Partners. For example, it is anticipated that GWRC will need to acquire the largest area of land for Project, primarily on the west side of the River to enable the river corridor to be widened.

Designations have a number of advantages over resource consents for public works, including –

- Once notified, a NoR has immediate effect, in that no person may, without prior written consent of that requiring authority, do anything in relation to the land subject to the designation that would prevent or hinder a public work, project, or work to which the designation relates, including undertaking any use of the land, subdividing the land, or changing the character, intensity, or scale of the use of the land;
- Designations generally provide for longer-term and more flexible protection than a resource consent or plan change – a designation cannot be altered by anyone else, unlike provisions of a plan (anyone is able to apply for a private plan change);
- NoR are normally publicly notified, allowing a transparent process that provides opportunities for any person or organisation to lodge submissions and be heard at a hearing, whether in support or opposition;
- Conditions can still be imposed to ensure the effects on the environment can be adequately managed;
- Designations are provisions in a District Plan, and are shown on planning maps – they thus have much greater transparency than resource consents
- Once given effect (i.e., constructed), designations provide an enduring authorisation for the ongoing operation of the work, and can be ‘rolled over’ into new revisions of district plans to maintain that provision;
- The level of design for a NoR need not be at detailed level, provided there is sufficient detail to establish the spatial extent of the designation and to enable the effects of the proposed

work to be adequately assessed; this provide some flexibility to make design improvements before construction starts, provided the changes are within the scope of the project and comply with any conditions;

- Future additional work in designations can be introduced through the Outline Plan process; and
- Allowing the requiring authorities to compulsorily acquire the land needed for the work under the Public Works Act (1981) if the land cannot be purchased on a willing buyer/willing seller basis.

There will be some technical issues in having three separate requiring authorities designate land in the Project area, such as:

- The potential for overlapping designations and the demarcation of responsibility for any work undertaken within such overlaps;
- There will be a need to spatially delineate the various elements of the Project and the responsible agency, not only for construction purposes but for ongoing operation and maintenance;
- One party's designation could be appealed and hold up another party's programme if there were interdependencies with the proposed works;
- There is the risk of one designation not being confirmed, resulting in "a hole" in the project;
- The need to obtain the support and involvement of any other requiring authorities with designations in the Project area which might either be affected by the Project or that might be needed to be altered to align with the project objectives – in particular, KiwiRail in relation to any changes to the Melling branch line and railway station; and
- The Project Partners could be forced to purchase land well in advance of being needed if designations are in place for the whole project (under s 185 RMA the Environment Court may order the taking of land) from the same time.

These issues and risks will be addressed in greater detail in the consenting strategy, once the consenting pathway has been decided.

There is an existing KiwiRail designation within the Project Area that covers the Melling Branch line and railway station. The potential relocation of the railway station and possible closure of the end section of line will require the involvement and agreement of KiwiRail, and discussions with that organisation have already occurred, and will be ongoing. While it is unlikely that KiwiRail would become a Project Partner, the organisation has been part of similar situations, such as the realignment of the NIMT railway line through Ōtaki to provide for the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway. The critical outcome will be to ensure the organisation's agreement to and support for the changes.

It is likely that many of the complexities involved with the overlapping works and sequencing matters can be resolved with side agreements between the Project partners. This is commonly undertaken in other similar situations, and can reduce the need for designation conditions to cover

the same matters. Furthermore, side agreements would be more readily amended than designation conditions which would need a s 181 alteration.

While an integrated approach to lodging the Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications is recommended, components of the Project could be delivered as separate outputs outside the Project if necessary, without adversely impacting on the overall Project framework and benefits. For example, some aspects of the flood protection work could proceed separately as discrete consenting workstreams,

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Project Partners seek to designate the necessary land (which includes the river corridor) for the purpose of authorising the works associated with the Project where control of the land is critical for constructing and operating the Project.

### 3.2.2 Resource Consents

A designation does not exempt a requiring authority from abiding by any restrictions on land use under s 9 of the RMA (other than district plan rules) or in relation to air, water and the coastal marine area (ss 12–15 of the RMA). Consequently, resource consents under a regional plan or a national environment standard ("NES") may also be needed to construct or conduct the work.

To undertake any works in the river or on land, resource consents are likely to be required under the Regional Plan(s). The consents are likely to be numerous, given the complexity of the work required to construct the Project, and will include but not be limited to discharges, diverting and bridging the river, and building of structures. The full suite of consents required will be determined when the final design is approved and the suite of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications is prepared. For example, any works affecting the railway corridor could require consents under the National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health ("NESCS").

Given the intention to commence construction in 2021-22, applications for any necessary resource consents should be made at the same time the designations are sought. It should be noted, however, that it is likely that the detailed design and construction process following the confirmation of the designations may trigger the need for further resource consents or changes to existing consents. This is normal for large and/or complex projects.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the resource consents that are required to implement the Project are sought at the same time as the designations to provide a single 'package' of applications and supporting information.

### 3.2.3 Changes to the Planning Framework

One of the preliminary tasks in developing the consenting strategy will be to comprehensively assess the current planning framework, not only to determine the types of resource consents that will be needed to authorise the Project works outside designations, but to assess whether there are any particular consenting risks present by the current regulatory and policy framework.

A key matter will be whether there are any "effects' avoidance" policies which may set very high thresholds to pass in order to obtain resource consent, particularly if the related resource consent categories for the particular activities is non-complying<sup>1</sup>. Under the 'bundling' principle, a whole suite of resource consent applications may be bundled together and determined collectively as non-complying if at least one of the consents being sought is as a non-complying activity. If such a risk is considered significant, then consideration may be required to seeking a plan change to accommodate the project.

This process occurred at the preliminary stage of the Transmission Gully Project, in which a change to one of the Regional Plans was requested (and accepted) prior to the lodgement of the Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications. While the consenting strategy will address this aspect, it will not be until the assessment is undertaken when it can be determined whether the current planning framework does present any significant consenting risks to the Project.

It should be highlighted that requesting changes to a regional policy statement or national policy statement would be more problematic. While any Minister of the Crown or any territorial authority in the region may request a change to a regional policy statement, such requests can only be made if the policy statement has been operative for at least three years. No requests can be made to change a National Policy Statement.

In terms of the District Plan, currently most of the work required for the Project would require a range of land use resource consents under the District Plan. While the District Plan could be changed to make such activities permitted (and thereby not require resource consent), given the scale and potential effects of the work, it could be difficult to develop a case under s 32 of the RMA to support making all such activities permitted. Such changes to the District Plan could also have consequences for the operation of the District Plan elsewhere in the City with the same zoning. Such changes would not alter the need to obtain RMA approvals under the Regional Plans or possibly a NES. For these reasons, it is not advisable that the work be authorised by changing the District Plan, but to seek designations to authorise the majority of the works entailed with the Project.

<sup>1</sup> Such thresholds may occur if a policy requires *avoidance* of a particular effect or activity, rather than *avoidance, mitigation or remediation*, following recent Court decisions

The Project will necessitate an alteration in the current property and land use patterns between Ewen and Melling Bridges: in some areas, this alteration will represent a considerable change in the existing pattern of land use and property ownership. At some point following the implementation of the Project, the District Plan will need to change to alter the zoning and any other spatial provisions that may be affected by the changes. For example, a large extent of the land which is river corridor is zoned “River Recreation” under the District Plan. The additional land that is to be included within the widened river corridor will have to be rezoned to River Recreation from its current commercial or residential zoning.

However, the necessity to make these changes provides an opportunity to review other plan provisions to support the Project objectives. For example, specific policies to support the Project could be introduced into the District Plan. Additionally, any residual land along the realigned Pharazyn Street could be rezoned to provide for more intensive mixed use multi-unit development that would support the enhanced transport, recreational and amenities of the area.

Furthermore, it is noted that the District Plan provisions for the CBD (zoned ‘Central Area Activity Area’) were reviewed and became operative in May 2011, and therefore will be due for review from May 2021. The zoning for the river corridor (‘River Recreation Activity Area’) is due to be reviewed as part of HCC’s rolling review process. These reviews will also provide an opportunity to make such changes as necessary to reflect and/or support the Project.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that, an early stage of the consenting process, a proactive review of the current planning framework is undertaken to identify whether there are any potential consenting risks for the Project, and if there are significant risks, develop a specific strategy to address these risks, such as via a plan change.

It is recommended that HCC programme a review of relevant District Plan provisions to support the Project outcomes, as part of any rezoning required, to occur following the implementation of the Project at an appropriate stage.

### 3.2.4 Other Approvals

There are expected to be approvals required under other statutes and these will require further detailed scoping once the design is confirmed. Commonly, for example, archaeological authorities are required under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 for work where there are pre-1900 places being changed (such as sections of Marsden and Pharazyn Streets where houses are to be removed). There are also processes under the Local Government Act 2002 for any street changes/road stoppings. Consent from the Department of Conservation under the Wildlife Act 1953 may also be required for any relocation of indigenous fauna.

These approvals have their own notification, assessment and processing requirements, noting though that road stopping proposals and archaeological authority decisions may be appealed to the Environment Court.

It will be critical that obtaining any other non-RMA approvals do not hold up giving effect to the Project, and therefore where such approvals are critical to implementation, their procurement should be aligned with the overall RMA consenting strategy. Therefore, part of the consenting strategy will be to determine which, if any, other approvals would be required to be sought in alignment with the designations and resource consents.

Where such approvals have no potential impact on the timeline, non-RMA approvals can be sought separately by the agency responsible for the works that trigger the need for the approval.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that, as part of developing the consenting strategy, an assessment be undertaken of likely non-RMA approvals for the Project, and where such approvals are critical to implementation, to align their procurement with the overall RMA consenting strategy.

### 3.3 Options for Applications

#### 3.3.1 Engagement with Iwi and Key Stakeholders

To date, the Project Partners have engaged with Ngāti Toa and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust over the course of the development of the Project objectives and its design. Ongoing engagement with iwi will ensure their full involvement in the continued progression of design and in addressing the consenting requirements, including in relation to cultural impact assessments, the formulation of mitigation measures and in the management of construction effects, particularly on the River.

Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders with an interest in the Project will also be requisite to addressing any concerns early and proactively, and to maintaining the level of support the Project has been receiving. A critical aspect will be to work closely with KiwiRail on the possible changes to the Melling Branch line, which will likely need alterations to its designation.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Project Partners continue with their ongoing engagement with Ngāti Toa and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, as well as key stakeholders with an active interest in the Project (particularly KiwiRail, whose designation will need altering) through the development of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications.

#### 3.3.2 Integrated Assessments

As part of preparing the notices/applications for the necessary RMA authorisations, supporting documentation will be needed to support the applications. In particular, an assessment of effects on the environment ("AEE") will need to be prepared to address the actual or potential effects of the

Project. In addition, information will need to be supplied that will, among other matters, address the assessment of alternatives undertaken, the consultation conducted, and the proposed measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment.

The assessments will need to be prepared by experts in a range of fields. Some of those assessments may require additional investigations to be undertaken to provide a sufficient depth of information. Because of the overlapping and integrated nature of the Project elements, many of the same technical assessments will apply across all designations and some resource consents, such as noise, air quality, freshwater ecology, and urban design. It would therefore more efficient to have the same experts assess the same matters across all Project elements, providing consistent advice on an integrated basis. An integrated approach will reduce duplication and also decrease risks and maximise the potential benefits of a collective endeavour.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the technical and environmental assessments undertaken in support of the NoR and resource consent applications are integrated and consistent.

### **3.3.3 Public Process**

Given the scale of the Project and its likely effects, the NoR for the Project will be subject to a public process through full public notification and a public hearing process.

As outlined, a range of resource consents are also likely to be required, primarily from GWRC. On their own, many of these resource consent applications could likely be decided on a non-notified basis. However, because of the overlapping nature of the various approvals required and to limit as far as practicable the potentially confusing or drawn out situation of each of these approvals being sought separately, it would be expected that the NoR and the resource consents applications would be lodged together. This would enable submitters to see all aspects of the Project together and attend one hearing should they wish to have their submission heard. This approach will also limit the costs to all parties in time and resources.

Under the RMA, an applicant or requiring authority can specifically request that its application and/or NoR be publicly notified. This request would avoid the need for the consenting authority to address the question of notification.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the agencies specifically seek the public notification of the NoR and resource consent applications to ensure the opportunity for full participation by potentially affected persons and interested members of the community.

### 3.3.4 Processing Consent Applications + Notices of Requirement

Under the RMA, where applications for resource consents in relation to the same proposal have been made to two or more consent authorities, and a hearing is required, the consent authorities must jointly hear and consider those applications. Joint hearings can also apply to situations where a Notice of Requirement to designate land has been lodged at the same time as the resource consent applications relating to the same proposal and involving two or more consenting authorities.

For RiverLink, it is anticipated that several NoR will be lodged with Hutt City Council at the same time as applications to the Regional Council for resource consent (for example, for work in the bed of a river). Thus, a joint hearing is anticipated to be required to hear submissions and make decisions on the Project applications.

Under s 102(2) RMA:

*When a joint hearing is to be held, the regional council for the area concerned shall be responsible for notifying the hearing, setting the procedure, and providing administrative services, unless the consent authorities involved in the hearing agree that another authority should be so responsible.*

Given that the principal authorities being sought will be for the designations for the public works, which will cover relatively extensive areas of land, it appears beneficial to have the HCC be the lead agency for providing the administrative services for processing and hearing the NoR and resource consent applications: HCC has agreed in principle to undertaking that role. It is important to highlight that this role would not affect the regulatory role of GWRC in processing the applications for resource consent under its Regional Plans.

In respect of the processing of the applications and notices, it is not unusual for a Council as an applicant and/or requiring authority to apply to itself as the regulatory authority: for example, GWRC's Flood Protection Group will occasionally seek regional resource consents for works in rivers. A Council will often have internal expertise and/or knowledge that is drawn upon to assess applications, and to make recommendations, such as about conditions of consent to manage construction effects. Where it is important, external expertise may be contracted to assist in processing applications, such as for peer review purposes, or to provide specialist expertise unavailable in-house, or where the Council does not have sufficient resources. For example, because of the scale of the Project, it is likely that HCC will outsource the processing of the NoR. A peer review process would be beneficial to address any potential perception issues of bias of the Councils processing their own consents/designations.

Due to the scale of the overall Project and the complex interrelationship between its various elements, it will be important to ensure that those assessing the resource consent applications and

NoR work closely together, whether they are in-house Council advisers or external contracted experts.

The other matter to consider is the level of independence required in the decision-making process for the applications. An essential principle of natural justice is that no person can judge a case in which they have an interest. The rule is very strictly applied to any appearance of a possible bias, even if there is actually none.

Thus, while it is reasonable that some degree of in-house expertise may be used to assess the applications, for a publicly notified proposal of any scale, such as RiverLink, it is advisable to have a visible degree of separation between the applicant or requiring authority and those hearing submissions and making the decision, to prevent any appearance of the councils being a 'judge in their own cause'. This can be achieved by appointing independent decision-makers to a hearing panel, who would have an appropriate delegation of decision-making function and powers. This could be achieved by appointing a panel of independent hearing commissioners, or by applying to the Environmental Protection Authority to have the applications heard and determined by a Board of Inquiry, or by directly referring the applications to the Environment Court for determination: the advantages and disadvantages of these three decision-making options are addressed in section 3.3.5 below.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly seek to have –

- the NoR and resource consent applications processed by a single independent processing team with appropriate qualifications and experience, with due delegation of appropriate authorities; and
- the hearing of submissions and decision-making by an independent hearing panel, hearing and determining all applications collectively.

### 3.3.5 Hearing and Decision-making Routes

There are several decision-making routes that could be pursued by the Project Partners, as follows:

- Hear and determine the applications at a council hearing (via delegated authority to an independent hearing panel); or
- Directly refer NoR and resource consent applications to the Environment Court for determination (termed 'direct referral'); or
- Refer NoR and resource consent applications to the Environmental Protection Authority for determination by a Board of Inquiry via the proposals of national significance provisions of the RMA.

Without addressing all of the advantages and disadvantages of each decision-making route in detail (which will be provided in the Consenting Strategy), the key disadvantage of the first pathway is that

it leaves open the potential for any decision to be appealed to the Environment Court and thereby create additional costs and potential delays to the programme.

However, the key advantage of the first pathway is that the two latter options are more formalised and daunting processes than Council-level hearings (recognising that any hearing can be intimidating to most lay people). Council level hearings can provide a greater level of informality than a Court or Board setting, through the choice of hearing venue and a more informal management of the hearing by the Commissioners (for example, no cross-examination is undertaken at Council hearings).

A two-step decision-making process allows for the flushing out of all issues and all parties with an interest in the project, with a better ability to proactively resolve matters: even if appeals were lodged, there will be opportunity to resolve outstanding issues without recourse to a hearing.

For this reason, to promote a user-friendly environment for potential submitters, a Council-level hearing is recommended. The principal means to reduce the risks of appeals would be to continue the level of community and stakeholder engagement and information delivery that has already occurred, including through the hearing process. If appeals do appear likely, then the agencies could consider resorting to a direct referral to the Environment Court at a later stage in the process.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a Council level hearing, supported by an appropriate communications and consultation strategy to maintain community positivity through information-sharing and feedback opportunities.

### 3.4 Alternative Consenting Pathways

Drawing from the consenting principles, three alternative consenting pathways have been identified that would provide for an integrated approach to the preparation and support of the resource consent applications and NoR through the consenting process:

1. **Coordinative Pathway** – separately prepare assessments but lodge the applications together at the same time, which are then heard and decided on by an independent hearing panel at the same time. The applications would be supported by each of the three agencies separately through the consenting process – for example, the Project Partners would contract their own experts who may or may not be contracted by the other Project Partners; the experts would undertake their own separate assessments, but would coordinate with the other experts to promote consistent approaches, information and advice, but ultimately may differ in the separate interests of their organisations. Separate designations and consents would be issued, and subsequently implemented by the respective agencies.
2. **Collaborative Pathway** – prepare and support applications collaboratively, lodged together, with a single AEE supported by a single team of technical experts and advisers who cover all elements of the Project. While prepared and lodged collectively, separate designations and resource

consents would be issued, and post-decision, implemented and governed by the respective agencies, but working closely together in a similar relationship as to date.

3. **Hybrid Pathway** – this pathway seeks to promote a collaborative approach as much as possible, but would allow for a coordinative approach if necessary, if all NoR and resource consent applications could not be lodged together (for example, if GWRC needed to proceed with flood protection works earlier, or if there is a significant delay in a project partner’s decision-making process).

It should be highlighted that the option of the three Project Partners forming a new purpose-built entity for the purpose of obtaining the necessary authorisations was not considered any further because of the legal, financial, resourcing and timing issues associated with pursuing this pathway.

An assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these pathways is provided in the table in **Appendix 1**. From this assessment, it is recommended that the third option, a hybrid of the Collaborative and Coordinative Pathways, is pursued for the following reasons:

1. An integrated approach can be achieved without the financial and legal uncertainties of forming a single agency with requiring authority status;
2. The integrated nature of the Project maintained through a single team of expert advisers, preparing a single package of applications and one overarching AEE;
3. A collaborative approach effectively continues the current successful arrangements, and could be continued through the implementation stages of the Project; and
4. Alternatively, this approach would not prevent a special delivery entity being formed to design and construct the Project.

In terms of designations, it is not unusual for a large-scale project to involve a number of requiring authorities and different designations sought for different elements. For example, the Transmission Gully Motorway project involved designations for both the State Highway component (the Transmission Gully Motorway itself as well as the Kenepuru Link Road, with the NZTA being the requiring authority), and the local road components (the Whitby and Waitangirua Link Roads, with Porirua City Council being the requiring authority). The project also required the relocation of part of a Transpower transmission line, requiring separate resource consents (with Transpower being the consent holder). In respect of the Transpower component of Transmission Gully, Transpower produced its own AEE but shared some witnesses with the Transport Agency (who produced their own statements of evidence). The Board of Inquiry dealt with the Transpower project in a separate chapter of its decision. This example shows that a coordinated consenting approach amongst a number of agencies can work well in practice.

What is unusual with the RiverLink project is the degree of overlapping interests and component elements, and the need for sequential programming of work undertaken by the three organisations. One option that could be considered is whether the three Project Partners could jointly designate land within the Project area, particularly where there may be a great degree of overlap or sequence of work from one party to another. This approach has not been used to date elsewhere in New Zealand, and would have to be investigated further if considered a potentially viable option.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a hybrid pathway involving, as much possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- The Notices of Requirement and applications prepared together as single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS FOR INTEGRATED CONSENTING PATHWAYS

Pathway Options	Advantages/Benefits	Disadvantages / Risks	Comments
<p><b>OPTION 1: COORDINATIVE PATHWAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate but coordinated approach – separate NoRs and applications but lodged and processed at the same time</li> <li>Separate technical expert assessments and evidence, but coordination between experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits of an integrated project, but good systems needed to achieve consistency</li> <li>Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged</li> <li>Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters</li> <li>Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency</li> <li>All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions, and different conditions</li> <li>Risk of inconsistent messaging in communications and stakeholder engagement</li> <li>Arrangements for area of overlapping interest would have to be reached</li> <li>Risk of increased overall costs: for example, with duplication in expert and technical input</li> <li>Inconsistencies with conditions for similar works causing problems during construction</li> <li>Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This option would be the best for maintaining independence for each of the agencies, while being part of an integrated project. However, relies on commitment from all parties to follow the same approaches to NoRs and resource consent applications, and work hard to ensure integrated and consistent approach</li> <li>Relies on ongoing commitment from all parties to meet agreed timelines</li> <li>Importance of managing land and land owners subject to the designation where works are not required in the short to medium term</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPTION 2: COLLABORATIVE PATHWAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare NoR and applications together as single package of documents, but with separate NoRs and consent components</li> <li>Single team of experts to undertake assessments, contributing to one overarching AEE, and providing one set of evidence</li> <li>Designations and consents implemented on an individual basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits of an integrated project, but need to put good systems in place to achieve this and to achieve consistency</li> <li>Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged</li> <li>Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters</li> <li>Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency</li> <li>All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions and recommendations, levels of information, conditions</li> <li>Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately</li> <li>Leading partner required for contractual arrangements with consultants, requiring funding agreements between Project partners: need good financial systems for transparency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each partner would separately designate that part of the Project area for which it has responsibility over works</li> <li>If overlapping designations not preferred, other arrangement needed for any works undertaken by one partner in area designated by another partner</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPTION 3: HYBRID PATHWAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work collaboratively together towards preparing NoR and applications as a single package, although, if necessary, have a separate but coordinated process for one part of the Project – for example, if the Melling Intersection upgrade is delayed</li> <li>As far as possible, a single team of experts would undertake the necessary assessments; alternatively have strong coordination between experts</li> <li>Designations and consents implemented on an individual basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefit of having flexibility to adapt if circumstances prevent a fully collaborative approach from being pursued</li> <li>Benefits of an integrated project, provided there was not too much but need to put good systems in place to achieve this and to achieve consistency</li> <li>Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged</li> <li>Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters</li> <li>Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency</li> <li>All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions and recommendations, levels of information, conditions</li> <li>Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately</li> <li>Risk that a lack of detail for a critical part of the Project could delay or frustrate a full assessment of the overall project and an integrated approach</li> <li>Leading partner required for contractual arrangements with consultants, requiring funding agreements between Project partners: need good financial systems for transparency</li> <li>Risk that separate experts could take differing views or advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each partner would separately designate that part of the Project area for which it has responsibility over works</li> <li>If overlapping designations not preferred, other arrangement needed for any works undertaken by one partner in area designated by another partner</li> </ul>

**BUDDLE FINDLAY**  
NEW ZEALAND LAWYERS

21 March 2018

**To**

Rebecca Polvere  
Project Manager  
Greater Wellington Regional Council

**From**

David Allen  
Libby Cowper

**By Email**

rebecca.polvere@gw.govt.nz

Dear Rebecca

**RiverLink Project – Determining a preferred consenting approach**

1. Thank you for your email of 15 March 2018, which followed from our meeting on 22 February at Boffa Miskell where we discussed a draft version of *RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways* (the "**Report**").
2. You have sought further advice to accompany the final Report and support the RiverLink Management Group and the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee to decide on a preferred consenting approach for the RiverLink Project ("**Project**").
3. You asked us to build on our advice of 20 January 2017, in which we assessed the viability of the Notice of Requirement<sup>1</sup> ("**NOR**") process under the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**") to deliver the Project and concluded that:<sup>2</sup>

*"Overall, on the information provided and at the high level requested for this advice, we consider that a NOR is a viable option to deliver the vision of the Project. Robust investigations are required to ensure all the statutory requirements for a NOR are achieved and that the public work elements of the Project are clearly identified. Also, the Project Partners must be committed to the control and delivery of their parts of the Project. While the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, the Project as a whole with its integrated nature is, in our opinion, greater than the sum of its parts."*

4. We set out our further advice below. In essence, our advice is that advancing the Project as one integrated package is likely to have considerable benefits, in RMA process terms and substantively, over the Project Partners<sup>3</sup> advancing their parts of the Project separately. We consider that although the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, it provides opportunities to demonstrate that the Project as a whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.

<sup>1</sup> A 'Notice of Requirement' under Part 8 of the RMA which, if confirmed, leads to the creation of a designation in a district plan authorising a project or work.

<sup>2</sup> At paragraph 4.

<sup>3</sup> NZ Transport Agency, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council.

### Integrated nature of the Project

5. As you know, the Project is a collaborative initiative that seeks to provide:
  - (a) Better flood protection for the Lower Hutt CBD and residential areas;
  - (b) Enhanced connections to and along Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River, contributing to a more vibrant city centre; and
  - (c) Improved access, safety and reduced congestion along State Highway 2 and connecting roads at Melling.
6. The Project includes a range of overlapping and integrated initiatives within the same Project area. We understand that strong interrelationships between each of the Project components means the benefits of some elements will only be fully realised following the completion of others, while other elements will be reliant on others occurring first.

### Benefits of an integrated consenting framework

7. Due to the integrated nature of the Project, we support the 'hybrid' consenting pathway recommended in the Report and consider that advancing the Project as an integrated package will have considerable benefits, in RMA process terms and substantially, over each Project Partner advancing its part of the Project as an individual project.
8. Integrating the consenting pathways will result in considerable cost savings and timing efficiencies, requiring a single team of experts across all Project components to develop one over-arching application, Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, as well as integrated public consultation and joint hearings.
9. Another key benefit of the hybrid approach is that the same decision-maker<sup>4</sup> is likely to consider all applications collectively. This is important as it enables the decision-maker to assess the benefits of the Project as a whole, rather than in a piecemeal manner.
10. A useful illustration of the potential benefits of integration (or rather, the potential pitfalls in seeking approvals for one component of a wider scheme separately) is the Board of Inquiry decision of *Basin Bridge*.<sup>5</sup>
11. *Basin Bridge* involved an application for a NOR and related resource consents to construct, operate, and maintain a two lane one-way bridge on the north side of the Basin Reserve in Wellington City. The proposal formed one part of the inner city component of the Wellington Northern Corridor Road of National Significance, but was lodged separately to applications for other, related aspects of the wider project.

<sup>4</sup> In the case of designations, the territorial authority will make a recommendation under section 171 of the RMA to each of the requiring authorities. The requiring authorities may accept or reject the recommendations in whole or in part (Section 172(1)).

<sup>5</sup> Final Decision and Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Basin Bridge Proposal, 29 August 2014; *NZ Transport Agency v Architectural Centre Inc.* [2015] NZHC 1991.

12. The stand-alone nature of the Basin Bridge proposal gave rise to significant debate throughout the hearing about which benefits and effects could be attributed to that project. In particular, the Board considered the issue of contingent benefits (benefits flowing from related projects, which are intended but not consented) and enabling effects and determined that these could not be attributed to the Basin Bridge proposal.
13. On appeal, the High Court confirmed that a project's enabling benefits could constitute an effect to be taken into account under section 171(1) and/or section 5 of the RMA, but that the Board had not erred in deciding that:

*"We cannot place any significant weight on a supposed (but not quantified) Project benefit which is not real – in that we have no certainty or assurance it would actually materialise".<sup>6</sup>*

14. This example highlights the importance of ensuring that linkages to the different parts of a project are clear to the decision-maker and illustrates the challenges in seeking approvals for one element of a wider scheme in isolation of its other components.

#### **Development of Project objectives**

15. That said, as we have discussed with you, one feature of the hybrid consenting pathway is that despite seeking to promote a collaborative approach and the development of a single consent package, it also provides sufficient flexibility to enable NOR and associated applications to be lodged separately – for example, in the event that one component of the Project is delayed.
16. In order to ensure each individual part of the Project is able to stand on its own, we consider that each individual Project component and related NOR should be required to have its own specific project objectives, in addition to the over-arching Project objectives.
17. In addition to this, it will be important to ensure that the demarcation of responsibility is clear and that all Project Partners are committed to the control and delivery of their parts of the Project. This will include ensuring that even if lodged together, each agency is issued its own package of designations and consents for which it has responsibility.
18. These steps will help to ensure that both individual and common Project objectives are achieved.

#### **Conclusion**

19. Overall, we support the hybrid consenting pathway recommended in the Report and consider that while the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, it also provides opportunities to demonstrate that the Project as a whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.
20. We consider that following the approval of a consenting pathway, the Project Partners will require time to undertake robust investigations to ensure that all statutory requirements are achieved and that the public work elements relevant to each part of the Project are clearly identified. This will require strong coordination in the planning and sequencing of the works associated with the Project

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<sup>6</sup> Above n5, at [513].

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NEW ZEALAND LAWYERS

and ongoing collaboration between the Project Partners to develop a consenting strategy that can deliver achieve the objectives of the Project, both collectively and individually.

Yours sincerely



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Solicitor

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# Reimagine Hutt City living.

You've got all the ingredients of an unbeatable lifestyle right here on your doorstep. We're working together to help make that future a reality.



### MORE VIBRANT

We're encouraging development and recreational opportunities that will embrace the riverbank and draw people to the area, and make Hutt River a central part of our city's lifestyle and identity.

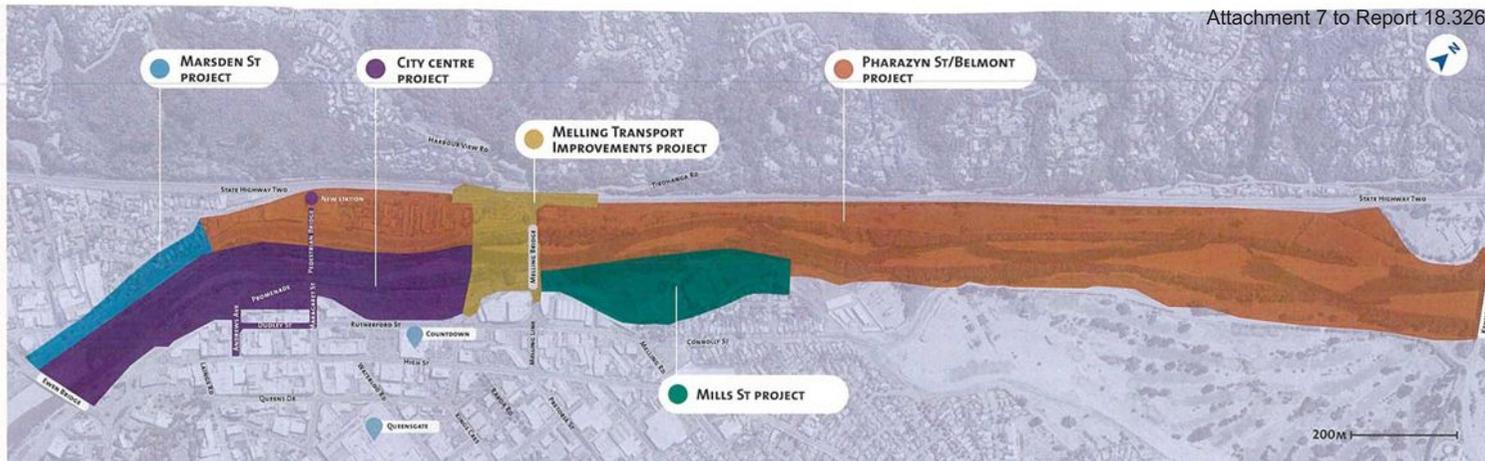
### MORE RESILIENT

We're taking big steps to protect lives and Lower Hutt's \$1 billion worth of assets from the impacts of climate change, finding better ways to manage our environment and provide flood protection.



### MORE CONNECTED

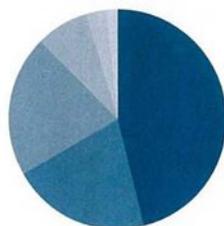
Replacing Melling Bridge, moving Melling Station, and creating a pedestrian bridge over the river are all being explored as ways to make it easier to access and get around our city.



### TIMELINE

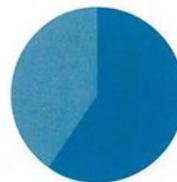


### PROJECT ESTIMATES



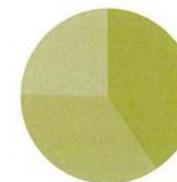
COMBINED FUNDING 2020-2028 (LONG TERM PLANS)

- PROPERTY REQUIRED TO BUILD - \$89M
- RIVER PROMENADE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - \$40M
- FLOOD PROTECTION STOPBANK AND RIVER CHANNEL - \$38M
- PROJECT DELIVERY COSTS - \$15M
- CITY STORMWATER AND INFRASTRUCTURE - \$6M
- RIVER ECOLOGY AND AMENITY - \$3M



FUNDING STILL TO BE AGREED

- NEW MELLING BRIDGE - \$34M
- NEW MELLING STATION AND PARK & RIDE - \$23M
- MELLING INTERCHANGE - \$TBC (OPTIONS BEING CONSIDERED)



BEYOND 2028

- EXTENDED PROMENADE - \$20M
- CITY STORMWATER AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES - \$17M
- CITY BUS HUB - \$12M

# RiverLink





**Report** 18.328  
**Date** 1 August 2018  
**File** CCAB-10-544

**Committee** Environment  
**Author** Dr Iain Dawe, Senior Policy Advisor (Natural Hazards and Coasts)

## **Proposal for a Wellington region approach to community-council coastal adaptation work programme**

### **1. Purpose**

For the Committee to consider and approve in principle the proposal to establish a regional community-council partnership approach to develop a coastal adaptation programme in response to the impacts from climate change, sea level rise and related coastal hazards i.e. erosion and inundation. This programme of work is being undertaken through the regional natural hazards management strategy and overseen by a sub-group of the Wellington Regional Climate Change Working Group (the Working Group).

### **2. Background**

In late 2017 the Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group was established, the group comprises iwi and elected representatives from all of the territorial authorities in the region and Greater Wellington Regional Council. To briefly recap the scope of the Working Group is as follows:

*“To address mitigation (reducing emissions) and adaptation (adapting to impacts such as sea level rise) relating to climate change and the Regional Natural Hazards Management Strategy, including its guidelines for action in key areas such as coastal hazard management”.*

The Principles of the Working Group include:

**Empowering** by supporting individual council’s needs, for example:

- Providing a platform for local authorities to share knowledge and build capacity;
- Enabling initiation of joint projects/initiatives/campaigns that impact on, or require the active involvement of more than one local authority;
- Input to central government policymaking on climate change mitigation and adaptation including consideration of a possible National Policy Statement (NPS) on natural hazards and/or sea level rise, and the implications this has for planning, both local and regional.

**Collaborating** by providing coordination of initiatives that are effective at the regional level where that will add value, for example:

- Research across local authorities on climate change impacts and implications;
- Ensuring consistent, integrated and coherent messaging for climate change-related outreach and awareness-raising activities;
- Advocacy to central government.

**Action** focused by providing practical recommendations for implementation within a timeframe that meets councils' needs, for example:

- Identifying a coherent regional pathway for reducing greenhouse gas emissions e.g. by articulating these via a Regional 2050 calculator<sup>1</sup>.

**Providing leadership** on regional challenges and opportunities for climate change mitigation and natural hazards management. This approach would be consistent with that set out in the LGNZ Local Government Leaders Climate Change Declaration 2017.

Since the establishment of the Working Group they have had two meetings.

In March 2018 the Working Group had a presentation from Tania Kerr the Deputy Mayor Hastings District Council and Simon Bendall, Mitchell Daysh on the "Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy 2120, a community-led coastal adaptation programme. Included is the link to the full presentation - [click here](#)

Following the presentation the Working Group asked the Wellington Region Natural Hazards Management Steering Group (the Steering Group) to report back to the Working Group on whether or not there would be merit in picking up the methodology used in the "Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazard Strategy 2120", Hawkes Bay and applying it to the Greater Wellington Region.

At the recent meeting on 5 June 2018 the Steering Group presented back to the Working Group outlining support for such a programme identifying the pros and cons of such a methodology and a possible outline of an approach within the region. Here are the links to the presentation:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/96sza5r1t05vrzk/2018-06-05%20N%20Etheridge%20Coastal%20Planning.pptx?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/t5hh5qr44dpcw1z/Mitchell-Daysh%20Coastal%20memo%20proposal%2029-5-18.docx?dl=0>

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<sup>1</sup> A 2050 calculator is essentially a website that enables users to explore how energy and transport choices will shape a population's emissions footprint. Users vary 'levers' that affect how energy is used and produced – e.g. improving public transport, increasing the amount of electric vehicles on the road or the amount of renewable energy being produced. The calculator will help users understand what changes can be made between the present time and 2050 to enable the region to transition to a low carbon economy. A calculator of this type was recently developed by the National Energy Research Institute (NERI) and Enspiral for the Wellington City Council and is online at <http://climatecalculator.org.nz/>. GWRC have done preliminary modelling work to develop a 2050 Pathways calculator for the Wellington region and the next step is to work with other councils and stakeholders to test the assumptions and develop the optimal configuration of the calculator.

Following the presentation the Working Group resolved to:

- Agree in principle to the community-led coastal adaptation work programme for 2018-19 dated 29 May 2018 by Mitchell-Daysh.
- Recommend to the member councils and the Mayoral Forum that they agree in principle to the work programme for 2018-19 dated 29 May 2018 by Mitchell-Daysh.
- Prepare a specific plan for a community led coastal adaptation planning process for the region with governance, resourcing, timeline, regional buy-in and recommended priority areas to be submitted for agreement by councils and the Mayoral Forum prior to commencement of the programme.
- Agree to engage central government, through the Ministry for the Environment in this programme.
- Agree to form a sub-group to develop detail of the proposed plan (in point 3.) for submission to the Working Group and then to the constituent councils for agreement. Membership of this group will include: Cr Roger Blakeley (Chair), Cr Lisa Bridson, Deputy Mayor Janet Holborow/Mayor Gurunathan, Cr David Lee, Mahina-a-Rangi Baker, Cr Chris Petersen and Cr Ana Coffey.

### **3. Communication**

No direct public consultation on the matters discussed in this report will be undertaken at this point. Consultation has been undertaken through the Wellington region natural hazards management strategy with stakeholder and public feedback unanimously in support of a partnership approach to managing the impacts from natural hazards in the region.

### **4. Consideration of climate change**

The matters raised in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

#### **4.1 Mitigation assessment**

*Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.*

Officers have considered the effect of the matter on the climate. Officers note that the matter will have no effect.

Officers note that the matter does not affect the Council's interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) or the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI).

## **4.2 Adaptation assessment**

*Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.*

The matters being discussed in this report relate directly to climate change adaptation initiatives being promoted by Greater Wellington Regional Council and are part of implementing GWRC's climate change strategy.

Furthermore, the work will give direct effect to climate change adaptation policies in the Regional Policy Statement and the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington region.

## **5. Other considerations**

### **5.1 Policy considerations**

As set out above one of the key principles of the Working Group is to “*provide leadership on regional challenges and opportunities for climate change mitigation and natural hazards management*”. This approach would be consistent with that set out in the LGNZ Local Government Leaders Climate Change Declaration 2017. Developing a regional methodology for a community-council coastal adaption programme for the Wellington region is in line with this principle.

It is also in line with the Ministry for the Environment Coastal Hazards and Climate Change Guidance for Local Government.

It is important for the Working Group to have the full support of the member Councils to enable a specific plan to be developed.

### **5.2 Legal considerations**

While the Working Group is non-statutory, the scope and principles of the Group ensure that its purpose is to support the functions of both GWRC and the territorial authorities of the region in relation to developing a programme for the region. Decision making on planning and policy response will remain with the local authorities.

### **5.3 Financial considerations**

To move forward with the implementation of a community-council coastal adaption programme across the Wellington region funding from individual Councils and GWRC will be required as the work progresses for each area of the region. It is anticipated that this will be developed as each individual Council has available funding and may take some time.

### **5.4 Tāngata whenua considerations**

The Working Group includes iwi representation as one of the partners in the Group. The proposed sub-committee also includes iwi representation.

## 6. The decision-making process and significance

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance and interest to stakeholders and the community but that the significance is currently low as the programme is currently under development and the decision being sought is only approval in principle.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

### 6.1 Engagement

It is anticipated that the Working Group will work with the natural hazards strategy steering group to develop core communication channels to keep the community informed of the work the Group is undertaking.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Agrees in principle with the proposal for the sub-group of the Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group to develop a plan for a regional approach to a community-council coastal adaptation programme for the Wellington Region.*

Report prepared by:

**Dr Iain Dawe**  
Senior Policy Advisor (Natural Hazards and Coasts)  
Environmental Policy

Report approved by:

**Matthew Hickman**  
Manager, Environmental Policy

Report approved by:

**Nigel Corry**  
General Manager,  
Environment Management



<b>Report</b>	<b>18.311</b>
Date	1 August 2018
File	CCAB-10-533
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Environment Committee</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Lucy Harper, Team Leader</b>

## **GWRC submission on Draft National Planning Standards**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC) submission on the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) Draft National Planning Standards (the planning standards) for approval and highlight three key issues.

### **2. Background**

The aim of the planning standards released by MfE is to simplify the planning process. The amendments in the Resource Management Amendment Act (2017) provided the timeline to be met for mandatory planning standards to be provided by regulation. Council officers have been consulted on the draft standards and provided input to technical matters on a number of occasions.

MfE intends to standardise plan the format and definitions for all councils in the hopes of making plans easier to understand, compare and comply with. The planning standards focus on aligning the structure, form, e-delivery and some contents of planning documents under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The standards will not determine policy matters.

GWRC is concerned that the planning standards will not achieve the stated outcome of 'less time and fewer resources required to prepare and use plans'. The economic benefits of the planning standards do not sufficiently outweigh the actual costs for regional councils, and the associated risks from the significant mandatory changes.

The Ministry's own analysis confirms that there will be no benefit to the natural environment with these changes. In addition, it was confirmed in the consultation workshops that the main beneficiaries of the standards are big business and large infrastructure providers (who work across multiple plans). Regional councils will be faced with a choice to invest in either complying with the planning standards or continuing our efforts to improve land and water management and our responsibilities under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. We cannot do both at the same time.

### **3. Matters of concern**

The submission raises three principal issues of concern and provides a table of specific detailed comments:

#### **1. The costs and risks to regional councils have been seriously underestimated**

We consider that there will be is the significant planning costs associated with detailed analysis and restructure of the GWRC RPS and PNRP to ensure there are no gaps and especially, no unintended consequences of implementing the standards. Given the significance of some of the required changes, particularly around some definitions, we believe that this will ultimately lead to a Schedule 1 process being followed.

An additional cost for GWRC will be the time and resources needed to undertake further significant engagement with our community, for the purpose of explaining what the changes are and why these changes are required.

We recommend that MfE undertake that testing of regional documents to better understand the implications and the costs and benefits for regional plans. We also ask that consideration should be given to aligning the mandatory implementation of the planning standards to the regional plan review cycle.

#### **2. The Definitions will result in reviews and re-writes of regional planning documents – including the PNRP**

GWRC have noted that some definitions in the planning standards are not consistent with the RMA definitions, or are not appropriate for use in a regional plan context. Three particular definitions of concern to GWRC include:

- a) Site
- b) Stormwater
- c) Intensive primary production

We recommend that MfE keep all planning standard definitions using the current wording of the RMA as mandatory, but note that this will led to repetition in rule provisions in particular as the regional differences are

reflected in exceptions. We also recommend MfE review new definitions used in regional planning and/or provide for their non-mandatory use for regional planning documents.

### **3. The standards still need to reflect the integrated nature of regional planning and our relationship with mana whenua**

We are pleased to see that the idea of a separate tangata whenua chapter is not mandatory in the planning standards. While we can see the benefits of having a separate chapter to cover administrative provisions, we are concerned about the overall status the mana whenua chapter and how it will be represented throughout a council plan.

A single integrated plan recognises the multiple overlapping strategies needed to achieve effective outcomes and reflects how our community wants to engage with resource management. We expect considerable criticism from our partners and stakeholders should this change, and as mentioned previously, considerable costs from this.

At the request of Te Upoko Taiao, Natural Resources Plan Committee, GWRC uses the term “mana whenua” rather than “tangata whenua” in its plans and publications. This clearly differentiates GWRC’s mana whenua partners who have recognised kaitiaki responsibilities within their own rohe boundaries and across shared statutory acknowledgement areas from the other tangata whenua of Aotearoa who reside in the Wellington region and are usually referred to as mātāwaka or taurahere.

We recommend that changes such as the mandatory use of tangata whenua or mana whenua should be waived in favour of Councils working with mana whenua to agree how they wish to be identified in plans.

We recommend that plans are able to retain flexibility in how mana whenua information is presented in order that mana whenua perspective and values are able to be expressed in both form and content.

### **4. Shared concerns across the regional sector**

Greater Wellington officers have been discussing the draft standards with other regional and unitary councils and Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ.) Our concerns are shared across the sector with many plans requiring a rewrite caused, in particular, by the mandatory definitions. Many regional and unitary plans will be ‘broken’ by the suite of draft standards.

This sector response reinforces the unnecessary cost of these draft planning standards. The major downsides could be simply avoided by aligning implementation of the standards with the resource management planning cycle.

A sector discussion with the Minister is required for the Minister to fully appreciate the implication of the standards. We agree with the principle but the current implementation timeframe generates costs far in excess of benefits.

## 5. Communication

Officers are recommending a media release following submission of GWRC's concerns.

## 6. Consideration of climate change

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

### 6.1 Mitigation assessment

Officers have considered the effect of the matter on the climate. Officers recommend that the matter may have an effect on the emission of greenhouse gases, due to the increased engagement and hearings required to implement the standards.

Officers note that the matter does not affect the Council's interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) or the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI).

### 6.2 Adaptation assessment

Officers have considered the impacts of climate change in relation to the matter. Officers recommend that the impacts of climate change have no direct bearing on the matter.

## 7. The decision-making process and significance

### 7.1 Significance of the decision

Officers have considered the significance of the matter against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002, taking into account the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the nature of this decision, officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

### 7.2 Engagement

Engagement on the matters contained in this report aligns with the level of significance assessed. In accordance with the significance and engagement policy, no engagement on the matters for decision is required.

## 8. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Approves the attached submission.*
4. *Approves the Council Chair to sign off any minor wording changes.*

5. *Approves a media release to be drafted for the submission and for the Council Chair to seek a meeting with the Minister for the Environment.*

Report prepared by:

**Lucy Harper**

Team Leader, Environmental  
Policy

Report approved by:

**Matt Hickman**

Manager, Environmental  
Policy

Report approved by:

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**Attachment 1:** Submission on Draft National Planning Standards



17 August 2018

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## Submission on the Draft National Planning Standards

Please find enclosed the Greater Wellington Regional Council's submission on the Ministry for the Environment's draft National Planning Standards.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely

**Lucy Harper**  
Team Leader, Environmental Policy

Encl: Submission

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## **Greater Wellington Regional Council submission on: The Ministry for the Environment draft National Planning Standards**

### **Opening statement**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Ministry for the Environment draft National Planning Standards (planning standards). We are grateful for the opportunity to provide further input on the planning standards, and acknowledge the changes already taken into account from earlier consultation. In particular, we appreciate the extended timeframe to implement the standards, which would allow Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) up to 7 years to make the required changes. We also note and support the flexibility of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Regional Plan (RP) structures proposed.

However, GWRC is concerned that the planning standards as currently designed will not achieve the stated outcome of 'less time and fewer resources required to prepare and use plans'. The economic benefits of the planning standards do not sufficiently outweigh the actual costs for regional councils, and the associated risks from the significant mandatory changes.

We are disappointed to see that the Ministry's own analysis confirms that there will be **no benefit to the natural environment** with these changes. In addition, it was confirmed in the consultation workshops that the main beneficiaries of the standards are big business and large infrastructure providers (who work across multiple plans). Regional councils will be faced with a choice to invest in either complying with the planning standards or continuing our efforts to improve land and water management. We cannot do both at the same time.

We raise three principal issues for your consideration.

### **Principal issues**

#### *1. Evaluation of economic efficiency*

#### **The costs and risks to regional councils have been seriously underestimated**

We appreciate that the planning standards enable plan changes without the associated time and financial costs of following the Schedule 1 process. We recognise that a cost-benefit analysis of the planning standards has been undertaken by Castalia, showing considerable savings in time and resources once implemented, however, we do not believe this analysis adequately reflects the actual additional costs to regional councils. It is further interesting to note that the Ministry has adopted the sub-optimal timeframe that was not the preferred option in the cost-benefit analysis (the 10-year timeframe).

It seems that the analysis has adopted an approach that has grouped councils together meaning that the costs and benefits between district and regional planning cannot be separated out. The greatest benefits lie with district planning and not regional planning. This is a serious shortcoming of the analysis.

One omitted cost will be the time and resources needed to undertake further significant engagement with our community, for the purpose of explaining what the changes are and why these changes are required. Despite the mandatory changes being effected without requiring a Schedule 1 process, and as reflected in subsequent sections of this submission, the Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRP) in its current form has been developed through 6 years of review, stakeholder and community engagement and working closely with our iwi partners. We consider therefore that we have a duty to inform the community on the changes. Having to repeat this process outside of the usual planning cycle will not only induce community concern, but also waste scarce resources that could be put to better use.

We consider that there will be significant planning costs associated with detailed analysis and restructure of the GWRC RPS and PNRP to ensure there are no gaps and especially, no unintended consequences of implementing the standards. We appreciate and are willing to forego the Schedule 1 process until required to do so; however given the significance of some of the required changes, particularly around some definitions, we believe that this will ultimately lead to a Schedule 1 process being followed. This is essentially requiring a re-write of our resource management planning documents (and the PNRP is still in hearings).

As well as costs, the standards impose greater risk for regional councils if changes are made out of the usual planning cycle. There is an enhanced litigation risk from two aspects:

- The risk of litigation from choosing to not follow the Schedule 1 process for plan restructuring and insertion of definitions
- The risk of required hearing time and appeals to redraft and notify planning documents using a Schedule 1 process.

The current costs of the PNRP development and hearings are approximately \$1 million per annum supported by a team of officers. In their current form, the draft standards will **increase** litigation risks and costs, not reduce them. Timing is crucial in order to fully realise the benefits of the standards (as the Castalia analysis showed).

We note that there is a more compelling argument for the planning standards to guide district plans only. The planning standards have recognised that there are fewer district plans available, with less cross boundary issues, and an integral difference in the way the RMA is addressed. We do not see the proposed benefit to regional planning should such consistency between plans be made mandatory. We would like to reiterate that the perceived benefits of these planning standards will have the greatest impact on smaller councils, or for any council starting the plan process from scratch.

When aggregated across all regional councils we see this as a very expensive exercise with no demonstrable benefit to the environment, as stated in purpose of the planning standards – *‘to help achieve the purpose of the RMA: promoting the sustainable management of natural and physical resources’*. In fact in their present form and at the stage GWRC is at in the regional plan development, we will be forced to make a choice when implementing national direction; the national standards or the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) obligations to maintain and improve

water quality. A substantial increase in work load and costs and a subsequent resourcing shortfall leads to the inevitability that we may no longer be able to meet the deadline of 2025 for implementing the NPS-FM.

While there may be wider benefits that the planning standards are trying to show, we request an approach is taken that minimises the potential risk and cost to regional councils. It has become clear through the consultation process that MfE has not tested a regional policy statement or a regional plan through the standards. We consider it would be highly desirable for this to occur before the standards are gazetted.

A further option to consider to reduce risk and cost would be to align the mandatory requirements for regional plans with the plan review cycle. This would leave the option for regional councils to implement any planning standards changes which are assessed as being low risk without using the Schedule 1 process, and to implement the others as part of the plan review cycle. This would then align with the findings of the cost-benefit analysis.

### **Recommendation**

We ask that MfE:

1. Undertake an exercise to test the planning standards for regional policy statements and regional plans.
2. Consider aligning the mandatory implementation of the planning standards to the regional plan review cycle.

### *2. Suitability of definitions for regional plans*

#### **Definitions will result in reviews and re-writes of regional planning documents**

It is clear that a considerable amount of time and effort has spent on creating the standardised list of definitions for the planning standards. We recognise that through current regional and district planning processes there is a large and diverse range of definitions utilised by each council, making it difficult to find common ground. We understand that this was particularly the case for regional council plans, with a lot of variation seen between them.

We support the use of definitions which are provided in the RMA in principle. We note however that this may lead to further repetition within plans as the exceptions which apply to a particular region or district will need to be repeated in the rule structure.

Due to the complexity of this issue, and from the examples provided in workshops, it is clear that a lot of definition analysis was based on the range of district plan definitions in use. We note that this has caused some definitions to become irrelevant or unusable in their current wording for regional planning, given that regional planning documents are designed to cover specific environmental effects from an RMA perspective. If the planning standards definitions were to become mandatory in their current form, while written from a district plan perspective, this could cause perverse outcomes for regional plans.

More detailed comments on the definitions are included in the appendix but in particular we draw your attention to three definitions of concern to GWRC:

1. **Site:** The definition of site is used purely in a legal sense around land tenure, titles and lots. Site in a regional plan sometimes refers to an area where an activity is occurring and in that sense is not incongruent with the definition as proposed. However site is also commonly used to define areas which have a common value, for example, 'sites of significance' and where the property boundary is only relevant for a resource consent application. If retained in its present definition, regional plans would have to use some other term to refer to these areas, as 'overlay' does not suit.
2. **Stormwater:** The definition of stormwater captures all precipitation, i.e. water, not just precipitation or runoff which has been concentrated in some form. As written the definition would exclude rain and stormwater which enters common stormwater management devices such as a soakage pit, or stormwater retention areas which are not necessarily a waterbody.
3. **Intensive primary production:** The definition does not take into account the environmental effects caused by intensification that occurs outside of buildings. It may be suitable for district plan land use effects, but would not be sufficient to allow provisions to address the effects on water in particular, arising from the increased intensification of farming methods. The issue was also not addressed by the previous proposed definitions of 'factory farming' and 'primary production'. A definition which includes the concepts of intensifying by importing of resources or of reducing the soil to a substrate on which animals stand has some merit, but still is difficult to define as some extra resource is often brought into the farming cycle over the seasons.

We consider that new definitions used in regional planning, which are not consistent with the wording of the RMA should be subject to further review and are not made mandatory for regional planning documents.

### **Recommendation**

We ask that MfE:

1. Review new definitions used in regional planning and/or provide for their non-mandatory for regional planning documents.
  2. Undertake an exercise to test the new definitions for regional policy statements and regional plans.
3. *Status of Māori concepts*

### **The standards still need to reflect the integrated nature of regional planning**

We are pleased to see that the idea of a separate tangata whenua chapter is not mandatory in the planning standards. We wish to emphasise that resource management partnership with mana whenua requires that the plans reflect that partnership in both form and content. This approach is consistent with the intent of National Policy

Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) Section D, which requires council to ensure mana whenua are actively involved in the management of freshwater and that their values and interests are reflected in management and decision making.

The NPS-FM prioritises a localised spatial approach to management under matters of national significance, Te Mana o Te Wai. The framework asks communities and mana whenua to focus on the health of individual water bodies and that councils develop “tailored responses for freshwater management that work within their region”. The NPS-FM provisions also now requires councils to engage with hapū. This is consistent with the tighter requirement to implement at a freshwater management unit (FMU) scale. Together these requirements demand flexibility in planning documents to reflect and respond to the increased specificity of local conditions and relationships. Councils must retain the necessary flexibility to ensure that community and mana whenua values can be managed and described appropriately in planning documents.

While we can see the benefits of having a separate chapter to cover administrative provisions, we are concerned about the overall status the mana whenua chapter and how it will be represented throughout a council plan. At the request of Te Upoko Taiao, Natural Resources Plan Committee, GWRC uses the term “mana whenua” rather than “tangata whenua” in its plans and publications. This clearly differentiates GWRC’s mana whenua partners who have recognised kaitiaki responsibilities within their own rohe boundaries and across shared statutory acknowledgement areas from the other tangata whenua of Aotearoa who reside in the Wellington region and are usually referred to as mātāwaka or taurahere. We recommend that minor editorial changes of this kind do not require a national standard and should be waived in favour of Councils working with mana whenua to agree how they wish to be identified in plans.

The PNRP for the Wellington region in its current form has been developed through 6 years of review, stakeholder engagement and working closely with our iwi partners. This has enabled GWRC to develop a framework that allows for expression of that iwi partnership *throughout* the provisions in the plan, rather than in separate provisions or a separate chapter.

Our submission on the draft ideas for tangata whenua provisions emphasised that with our methodology we have established a very good working practice with the iwi of our region. A single integrated plan recognises the multiple overlapping strategies needed to achieve effective outcomes and reflects how our community wants to engage with resource management. We expect considerable criticism from our partners and stakeholders should this change, and as mentioned previously, considerable costs from this and support the flexibility to provide for both integration of provisions, but also whaitua or rohe specific provisions.

**Recommendation**

We ask that MfE:

1. Provide for councils working with mana whenua to agree how they wish to be identified in plans.
2. Ensure that plans are able to retain flexibility in how mana whenua information is presented in order that mana whenua perspective and values are able to be expressed in both form and content.
3. Ensure that all plans state how and where mana whenua perspective is expressed and provide clear direction to plan users as to how to access and interpret the information through provision of glossaries, guides and explanatory text.

**Conclusion**

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the planning standards from a regional council perspective. We request that the planning standards strive for flexibility, ease of use and decreased costs. In the event that the draft planning standards proceed, GWRC requests that our recommendations are considered and amendments as sought in the appendix. GWRC welcomes the opportunity to clarify and further discuss the matters raised.

.....  
**Chris Laidlaw**  
**GWRC Council Chair**

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Attached: Appendix - Specific issues and recommendations

## Appendix - Specific issues and recommendations

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
Regional plan structure (S-RP)		Confirmation that there are two potential structures for a regional plan- objectives, policies, methods, rules as separate chapters, or integrated into theme chapters	Support and retain the flexibility of alternate structures
Tangata Whenua (S-TW)		Confirmation on the status of the tangata whenua chapter	Support and retain option that tangata whenua provisions can be provided across the plan
Schedules, Appendices, Maps (S-SAM)	Table 17 Pt 6 (pg. 48)	Schedule Table – final column ‘reference to study/material used for identification’. This is potentially the same for the entire table so the reference will be the same for each row in the column.  This refers only to district wide overlays – is that intentional?	Consider making the final column optional when there is a common reference to avoid repetition.  Amend to include RPS and regional plans
Electronic Functionality & Accessibility (F-1)	Table 18, Pt7, (pg. 50)	Requirement to provide a ‘note’ within any district or regional plan rule (and hyperlink to relevant plan) that clarifies an activity may also require consent from another plan. Though we understand the intent, this is potentially an extensive exercise for a regional plan which covers a number of districts and could end up being confusing for plan users. A second concern is the method for updating and how risk and cost free the process can be made. Hyperlinks can easily get out of date.	Reconsider the necessity of this as a mandatory standard.  Confirm the process for updating can be achieved without undue process.
Draft Mapping Standard (F-2)	Table 22 (pg. 55)	Refers to ‘sites of significance to Maori’ which may not fit the proposed definition of ‘site’. These sites in our regional plan are a polygon rather than a point to show the area valued.  Colour of hazard symbol may not be appropriate as blue colour may not be	Reconsider use of the word, or amend the definition of ‘site’ to be more applicable to the common usage in ‘sites of significance’.

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
Spatial Planning Tools (Region) (F-3)		<p>seen when used on coastal areas</p> <p>We note that there is no symbols given for the regional plan spatial planning.</p>	<p>Provide for sites as appoint or polygon and a symbology for the latter.</p> <p>Reconsider colour of hazard symbol</p>
Status of Rules and other Text and Numbering Format (F-6)		<p>If the regional plan can have two different structures then this numbering may not work for the structure with chapters, provisions- objectives, policies, methods, rules. If there is a theme chapter it would be e.g. NH – O1. If there is no theme chapter but chapters by provisions, it is unclear if it would be NH- O1, NH-O2 or O1, O2, O3 etc. If the former does the numbering start again with the new prefix, e.g. AQ- O1. Our preference would be to keep the numbers sequential as starting new number sequences in the chapter proved difficult to navigate in a draft of our regional plan.</p> <p>We agree with the use of common abbreviations for activity status for the rules.</p>	<p>Clarify that an alphabetic prefix by theme does not have to be used as well as the provision prefix if grouping objectives, policies and rules in chapters, rather than themes.</p>
Status of Rules and other Text and Numbering Format (F-6)	Table 28 (pg71)	<p>A regional coastal plan is not provided for in the standards, only the coastal environment.</p>	<p>Provide for a regional coastal plan, either integrated in the regional plan with a common indicator, or as a separate plan with coastal marine area provisions.</p>
Consequential amendments		<p>Giving effect to the planning standards will inevitably led to consequential amendments. The standards and the implementation guidance is silent on the issue of the scope that would be acceptable for consequential amendments and whether they are major or minor changes.</p>	<p>Further guidance is provided based on legal advice to decrease the opportunities for legal challenge and litigation costs when giving effect to the mandatory requirements of the standard.</p>
Definitions (CM-1)	Abrasive blasting	<p>We note there has been very little confusion over the use of the term and query its usefulness in the National Planning Standard. Wet-abrasive blasting may not include any material, and use only 'water'.</p>	<p>Consider if the difference can be better defined in a rule.</p>

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
Definitions (CM-1)	Addition	The current definition is not broad enough to cover regional plan requirements. Regional rules using the term 'addition' often to relate to additions to structures. The draft definition of 'addition' refers to the definition of 'building' which includes structures but requires them to be enclosed. This wouldn't include some structures which our 'addition to structures' rules apply to, for example, fords, sea walls, culverts.	Amend definition so that 'addition' relates to structures controlled by regional rules.
Definitions (CM-1)	Boundary	The definition refers to site, but boundary is commonly used in respect of the landward side of the CMA.	Make it clear in the definition of 'boundary' that the boundary of the CMA is defined elsewhere under the definition of 'coastal marine area'
Definitions (CM-1)	Cleanfill	The word "cleanfill" is more about the activity itself, rather than the material that goes into a cleanfill, which is often referred to as "cleanfill material". The definition provided is an excellent definition of "cleanfill material", but not of a "cleanfill", as the definition fails to capture the activity. Focusing on the activity rather than just the material may be beneficial in that it would align this definition more closely to the approach used for "landfill".	Acknowledge the linkage and overlap between cleanfill and landfill, and amend definitions so both are activity focused or material focused.
Definitions (CM-1)	Drain	The definition of 'artificial watercourse' takes it out of the RMA. There is still a need to define watercourses which, though highly modified and managed for stormwater or land drainage retain ecosystems values and are in essence the aquatic habitat remaining in the area. Providing such a definition has been difficult in our plan process.	Consider defining highly modified streams which have drainage and aquatic habitat or other values.
Definitions (CM-1)	Drinking Water	A regional plan may have different provisions relating to human and stock drinking water. Because the draft definition refers to 'human consumption' this would refer all references in our regional plans to stock or animal drinking water to be changed despite 'drinking water' being the most appropriate description.  The RMA (s14) and NES distinguish between 'human drinking water' and	Consider distinguishing between human and animal/stock drinking water

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
		drinking water for animals.	
Definitions (CM-1)	Earthworks	As in this definition, earthworks without any exceptions are a relatively simple term to define. Individual plans can define variations of earthworks to be controlled through rules as opposed to a long list of exceptions, but this will lead to repetition in the rules.	Note concern about repetition
Definitions (CM-1)	Footprint	Draft definition refers to structures only. However, regional plan provisions are sometimes in relation to the footprint of an activity (rather than a structure).	Amend definition of 'footprint' so that it would also apply to the footprint of the activity
Definitions (CM-1)	Functional need	Functional need is referred to in a higher order document - the NZCPS (Policy 6). Functional need is an important term and means that certain activities have a requirement to locate in a particular environment or place; a port is the obvious example in the coastal marine area for marine shipping and activities.	Retain wording of provision
Definitions (CM-1)	Green infrastructure	The intent of using the terms 'natural ecosystems' and 'natural elements' appears to be to acknowledge the natural processes that are occurring in green infrastructure, but referring to natural ecosystems potentially confuses the application of provisions in a plan. The use of these terms could create more ambiguity than clarity. Our plan process has had difficulty using terms such as 'modified'.	Support the intent of the definition and recommend further detail
Definitions (CM-1)	Greywater	The definition could be read to mean all untreated liquid waste from sources so adding ' <u>domestic</u> sources' could be clearer.	Support intent of definition
Definitions (CM-1)	Ground level	It is possible the definition of "ground level" may constrain the common-sense application of the term. It defines ground level primarily in terms of when the last subdivision activity occurred and specifically excludes earthworks to create new buildings etc. "Ground level" in an engineering (and lay person's) sense is the current level of the ground as in (b)	Reverse the presumption of the definition so that existing ground level is the initial premise

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
Definitions (CM-1)	Height Regional Plan	<p>Sea level varies around the New Zealand coast and MSL has to be determined by local measurements and pegged to a local vertical datum. Because of this variation, the local vertical datum's are not compatible with each other. Because sea level is rising, it is important that the latest figures for surveying are used as published by LINZ, rather than pulling figures out of a tide chart. LINZ states in the nautical almanac that those figures are not be used for cadastral or administrative purposes.</p> <p>If the figure used is pegged to the local vertical datum it can then be linked to the national vertical datum NZVD2016 as maintained by LINZ. This ensures there will be nationwide consistency in these measurements which has not always been the case in the past.</p>	<p>Recommend that figures used for surveying are as published by LINZ</p> <p>Provide explanation and methodology in guidance material.</p>
Definitions (CM-1)	Intensive farming	As in the body of the submission, the definition needs to address intensive farming land use that does not take place in buildings but which affects soil and water quality as it also does not rely solely on the physical properties of the site.	Amend definition to be applicable to regional plan concerns
Definitions (CM-1)	Landfill	Agree with the use of the umbrella term "waste", and the use of the phrase "primary purpose". See above comments on "cleanfill" – having one definition being activity focused and one being material focused is not ideal.	Align with cleanfill definition
Definitions (CM-1)	Mana whenua	At the request of our mana whenua partners through Te Upoko Taiao, GW uses the preferred term 'mana whenua' not 'tangata whenua'. This differentiates between iwi that have mana over and kaitiaki responsibilities within their own boundaries and statutory acknowledgement areas within our region and other tangata whenua of Aotearoa (also known as mātāwaka) who reside in our region	Retain flexibility in the use of mana whenua or tangata whenua
Definitions (CM-1)	Site	Concerns as identified in the body of the submission.	Consider using 'property' instead for this definition, or providing another definition for regional plans and regional policy

Standard type	Reference or definition	Issue identified	Recommendation
			statements.
Definitions (CM-1)	Stormwater	Concerns as identified in the body of the submission.	<p>Consider the following alternative                      'Runoff that has been intercepted, channelled, diverted, intensified or accelerated by human modification of a land surface, or runoff from the external surface of any structure, as a result of precipitation and including any contaminants contained therein.'</p> <p>The <a href="#">redline</a> version of the Plan also adds this note for further clarity:                      "For the avoidance of doubt, stormwater excludes the discharges associated with earthworks, vegetation clearance, break-feeding and cultivation."</p>
Definitions (CM-1)	Swale	The definition may distinguish a swale from an overland flow path which has formed naturally.	Consider if the distinction is necessary
Definitions (CM-1)	Water sensitive design	The definition as worded seems to be setting a policy approach within the definition -'minimise adverse effects' which is not appropriate.	Consider deleting second half of definition or amending to general wording such as 'in order to achieve a desired environmental outcome'



**Report** 2018.320  
**Date** 9 August 2018  
**File** CCAB-10-534

**Committee** Environment  
**Author** Jake Roos, Acting Climate Change Advisor

## **Council submission on the Local Government New Zealand's draft sector position on climate change mitigation**

### **1. Purpose**

To introduce the Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) draft position statement on climate change mitigation, and set out proposed responses to feedback questions.

### **2. Background**

Local Government New Zealand's Climate Change Mitigation Reference Group has conducted a stocktake of Council's actions related to climate change mitigation, and developed a draft document setting out the sector's position on the topic. The LGNZ National Council is seeking feedback on the position statement from members (and may make amendments) before officially adopting it. Feedback has been requested by 30 August.

Climate change mitigation is activity related to reducing the human-induced emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere to help slow or stop global warming and climate change.

In the stocktake results, councils listed a summary of their own emissions reduction activities and initiatives and any 'regional mitigation initiatives'. Only a few councils listed any regional mitigation initiatives, and these were exclusively the participation in regional groups. There was no mention of work programmes for these groups, suggesting they may mainly be fora for exchanging information. In addition to the Wellington Region Climate Change Working Group, there is a Canterbury Region Climate Change Working Group, the Tauranga Carbon Reduction Group (an informal forum convened by a community advocate but with participation by various local government agencies) and the Northland Sustainability Network (which includes their DHB and local industry).

Regarding their own initiatives, eleven councils mentioned having climate change mitigation or sustainability plans, policies or targets, and three others mentioned they were in the process of developing them. Six councils participate in the Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme (CEMARS) operated by a subsidiary of Landcare Research, which facilitates the production of a verified corporate emissions inventory annually, and requires adoption and maintenance of an emissions reduction plan with targets.

Deployment of LED streetlights was mentioned by a significant number of Councils, as were waste minimisation efforts, support for electric vehicles in their fleets and/or public EV chargers.

Greater Wellington compares favourably with other councils in the stocktake. Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Palmerston North City Council and Whangarei District Council are also undertaking significant action with regards to mitigation. Christchurch City Council has the most comprehensive set of mitigation policies, plans and initiatives, including a sustainability advice service for businesses, a contestable innovation and sustainability fund, a city-wide electric car-share scheme, holding CEMARS and Energy-Mark Gold accreditation and a target to be carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030 through a combination of internal improvements and offsetting their remaining emissions with tree planting.

### **Draft position statement**

The draft position statement ([Attachment 1](#)) is intended to outline the ambition that local government has for, and the commitments it makes to contributing to, the overall effort to reduce emissions in New Zealand. It commits local government to fulfilling two key roles in contributing to emissions reductions, namely:

1. Councils reducing their own emissions; and
2. Councils taking a leadership role to encourage, support and coordinate efforts to reduce emissions within the city, district or region they represent.

The document stresses that local government 'cannot credibly undertake a leadership role if it does not first demonstrate tangible commitment to reducing its own emissions'. It says local government will 'explore options for developing a nationally consistent approach to measurement of emissions, and provision of support for a framework that builds council capacity and capability in this area', but notwithstanding this, it will continue to make plans and take action to reduce emissions in the meantime.

The document also says existing legislative and policy frameworks do not sufficiently enable councils to deliver or facilitate the achievement of emissions reductions, particularly in respect of matters such as spatial planning, urban form, transport and the built environment, and that the sector will work to identify the aspects of these frameworks that need to be revised. The local government sector's lack of a statutory mandate to undertake climate change mitigation action is also mentioned. If central government does make changes

to induce mitigation action in local government, is urged to work with councils to understand the implications and support the sector to adapt.

### 3. Comment

Specifically councils are being asked to provide feedback on the following questions:

1. *Does your council agree with the direction of travel on climate change mitigation that has been described?*
2. *Is the draft sector position ambitious and specific enough?*
3. *Does your council agree with the commitments that the draft sector position makes, and in particular are there any commitments that should be omitted and/or other commitments that should be included?*
4. *Are there any other relevant matters that should be included and/or any matters that should be excluded?*

Officers recommend that a submission based on following comments be developed:

1. Yes. It is clear by comparing varying levels of action undertaken by councils, that more can be done. Most councils have not yet achieved the commitments that they have already made under the Local Government Leaders Climate Change Declaration. Decision making by councils is often not closely aligned with climate change mitigation, and more could be done by Government and the councils themselves to ensure that it is.
2. The statement could be more ambitious and specific by setting a target for emissions measurement and/or reduction by councils; for example, a certain number of councils will measure and disclose their organisational emissions inventories to a recognised standard by a particular date. Also a less tentative approach to advocating for legislative change could be taken – in Greater Wellington's recent submission to the Productivity Commission, we have already supported consideration of an RMA amendment that would allow local government to properly deal with climate change factors when making environmental, planning and infrastructure decisions. Greater Wellington has also supported the target of net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2050 currently being consulted on by the government.
3. Greater Wellington agrees with the commitments the document makes. Additional commitments could be those mentioned in our response to question 2 above. However, we recognise that the content of the document is arrived at by general consensus of all LGNZ members, and that more ambitious and specific content may take some time to work through. The commitment to explore the issues further in collaboration with central government is an approach that may allow for a consensus on more ambitious and specific action to emerge, although we do need to be mindful

of the urgent need for action to reduce emissions, which has been identified in the draft statement.

4. The document includes discussion of all relevant matters related to the topic.

#### **4. Communication**

No external communication is proposed as an outcome of the consideration of this report. When a response is approved by Council, it will be provided to LGNZ.

#### **5. Consideration of climate change**

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the Greater Wellington Climate Change Consideration Guide.

##### **5.1 Mitigation assessment**

Officers have considered the effect of the matter on the climate. Officers recommend that the matter will, in the longer term, have an effect on the emission of greenhouse gases, as that is what the draft position statement concerns.

Officers note that the matter does not affect the Council's interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) or the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI).

##### **5.2 Adaptation assessment**

Officers have considered the impacts of climate change in relation to the matter. Officers recommend that the impacts of climate change have no direct bearing on the matter, other than that the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions will reduce these impacts.

#### **6. The decision-making process and significance**

##### **6.1 Significance of the decision**

Officers have considered the significance of the matter against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002, taking into account the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the nature of this decision, officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

A formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is not required in this instance.

##### **6.2 Engagement**

Engagement on the matters contained in this report aligns with the level of significance assessed. In accordance with the significance and engagement policy, no engagement on the matters for decision is required.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Agrees that a submission based on the comments in section 3 of this report be developed.*
4. *Delegates to the Chair the ability to make minor editorial amendments to the submission.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

**Jake Roos**  
Acting Climate Change  
Advisor

**Nicola Shorten**  
Manager, Strategic &  
Corporate Planning

**Luke Troy**  
General Manager, Strategy

**Attachment 1:** LGNZ draft sector position statement on climate change mitigation

# Draft - Local government position on climate change mitigation

July 2018

Local government acknowledges that it has a role to play in contributing to emissions reductions, along with central government and every other individual, community, sector and business in New Zealand. LGNZ is seeking feedback on this draft position by 30 August 2018.



**We are.  
LGNZ.**  
Te Kāhui Kaunihera o Aotearoa.



## Introduction

In 2017, local government released its Position Statement on Climate Change. In that Position Statement, local government recognised an urgent need for action to avoid future risks from climate change.

Since the release of the Position Statement in 2017, the Labour-led Government has committed to doing more to address the impacts of climate change, including by introducing a Zero Carbon Bill to Parliament in late-2018. It is highly likely that this will set emissions reduction targets in law and establish an independent Climate Change Commission. Local government welcomes the Government's commitment to greater action on climate change, and looks forward to the introduction of the Zero Carbon Act.

Notwithstanding the current lack of a coherent plan for New Zealand's transition to a net zero emissions economy, territorial and regional authorities have demonstrated commitment to contributing to the domestic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (emissions) that New Zealand has committed to making, under the Paris Agreement. Councils have adopted a range of actions and strategies to reduce emissions within their organisations and their communities.

New Zealand's communities are also increasingly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change presents and the need for action.

For local government, climate change adaptation is a significant challenge and key area of focus. However, councils acknowledge that they have a role to play in climate change mitigation. In fact, local government sees climate change mitigation and adaptation as interrelated – they both require joint strategy. The introduction of the Zero Carbon Act will further cement the need for local government to play a role in both adapting to and mitigating the impacts of a changing climate.

This Sector Position on Climate Change Mitigation outlines the ambition that local government has for, and the commitments it makes to contributing to, the overall effort to reduce emissions in New Zealand. It also sets out the further support that local authorities need in order to enhance their contributions to emissions reductions. The Sector Position has been developed in light of the critical need for climate change mitigation if communities are to be prosperous and resilient, and in light of the anticipated increase in focus on climate change mitigation in coming months.

## Local government's vision for prosperous communities

Local government acknowledges that climate change will affect all current and future communities. The impacts that we observe today are the result of historical emissions and the increase in emissions in recent decades will lead to significant change in the coming years.

Local government has a shared vision for what prosperous communities will look like in 2050 and beyond. The 2050 vision encompasses the environmental, social, cultural and economic well-being of communities. Local authorities recognise that climate

change creates both opportunities and significant challenges for achieving prosperity in these four areas.

Responsive leadership and a holistic approach to climate change mitigation that takes into account impacts on community well-being is therefore urgent. Emissions reductions are urgently needed at every level to ensure that communities continue to be prosperous. Local government has ambitions for the direction of travel that it will take to contribute to the achievement of emissions reductions.

## Local government's role in climate change mitigation

Local government acknowledges that it has a role to play in contributing to emissions reductions, along with central government and every other individual, community, sector and business in New Zealand. Councils have a role to play in highlighting and helping communities understand the issues associated with climate change, and what people can do to address them.

Local government commits to fulfilling two key roles in contributing to emissions reductions, namely:

1. Councils reducing their own emissions; and
2. Councils taking a leadership role to encourage, support and coordinate efforts to reduce emissions within the city, district or region they represent.

### Local authorities reducing their own emissions

Local authorities will demonstrate leadership and commitment to their communities by taking a holistic approach to striving to achieve emissions reductions across all areas of their operations.

A stocktake completed in 2017 reveals that a number of councils are already taking action to reduce their own emissions. Councils can and will continue to build on the work that is already underway by adopting strategies and taking actions to reduce their organisation's emissions. Councils will draw on the best practice examples of actions already underway within the sector.

Councils acknowledge that there are areas where they can move on contributing to emissions reductions right now. Procurement, transport and waste management for example, are areas where councils know that they can have significant influence and achieve progress towards reducing emissions.

### Local authorities leading community emissions reduction efforts

Local authorities commit to taking a leadership role within the city, district or region they represent by encouraging, coordinating and supporting community-wide emissions reduction efforts. However, local government acknowledges that it cannot credibly undertake such a role if it does not first demonstrate tangible commitment to reducing its own emissions.

Local government will continue to communicate with its communities about the importance of reducing emissions, and the need for everyone to “do their bit” to contribute to emissions reductions. It will continue to advocate for, encourage and support wider uptake of action by its communities to reduce emissions. Councils will engage with a wide range of stakeholders to identify feasible options for reducing emissions within their cities, districts or regions, and will collaborate with stakeholders to maximise results. Local government acknowledges that it can play a coordinating role by supporting local efforts to reduce emissions, such as working with local businesses to provide electric vehicle infrastructure or support for waste minimisation initiatives, among other things.

## Greater action by local government on climate change mitigation

Local government recognises that if real progress on climate change mitigation is to be achieved, there is a need for greater action by all facets of New Zealand society. Local government therefore commits to building on its existing efforts to reduce emissions and the previous commitments that it has made in the Position Statement, and councils in particular:

1. Commit to exploring options for developing a corporate mitigation/emissions reduction strategy and action plan to guide internal decision-making.
2. Commit to taking an ambitious approach to operational decision making that prioritises emissions reductions. Councils will, through the decision making process, evaluate the potential of actions to contribute to, and give priority to those actions that will result in, emissions reductions. Councils will maximise opportunities to reduce emissions which offer co-benefits, such as, but not limited to, cost savings, prudent financial management, carbon sequestration, improved water quality outcomes and water catchment security.
3. Will take a more proactive role in sharing knowledge, learnings and resources that will further support the local government sector as a whole to learn off different initiatives and use that knowledge to contribute to emissions reductions.
4. Will take advantage of the range of opportunities that they are presented with to reduce emissions, both within their communities and organisations. For example, local government acknowledges that the Government's Provincial Growth (Regional Economic Development) Fund and 1 billion trees scheme present opportunities for councils to take up actions that can contribute to emissions reductions and offsets.

## Measuring emissions

Local authorities acknowledge that they will be better able to target efforts towards emissions reductions if they properly understand their council's and their city's, district's or region's emissions. However, the complexity and cost of emissions profiling is a barrier preventing a large number of councils from measuring and properly understanding their emissions profile.

Local authorities commit to exploring options for sharing learnings, knowledge and resources with respect to frameworks and approaches for measuring emissions. Local government will continue to seek to work in partnership with central government to:

- Explore options for developing a nationally consistent approach to measurement of emissions, and provision of support for a framework that builds council capacity and capability in this area; and
- Explore options for developing a framework that ensures equitable allocation of resources to support climate change mitigation leadership.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that a number of councils currently face in undertaking measurement and profiling of their emissions, local authorities commit to continuing to take actions and adopt strategies that are aimed at achieving emissions reductions.

## Regional collaboration to address climate change mitigation

Approaches to and strategies for achieving emissions reductions will depend on local conditions and circumstances, and therefore vary across New Zealand's regions.

Local government acknowledges that regional collaboration between territorial and regional authorities is one way that regions can coordinate opportunities to reduce emissions, share knowledge and achieve consistent outcomes that will work for the particular region.

Local authorities commit to exploring opportunities for regional collaboration on climate change action, and will encourage the involvement of stakeholders and other interested local parties on any regional climate change action groups that territorial and regional authorities choose to establish.<sup>1</sup> Conversations about what can be done to reduce emissions need to be collaborative and involve a wide range of sectors and stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> Note that regional climate change working groups have already been convened in Wellington and Canterbury regions.

## Alignment of climate change mitigation and adaptation

Local government recognises that climate change adaptation and mitigation are interrelated. The emissions trajectory that we get locked into now will determine the extent of the adaptation challenge that New Zealand has to deal with. As such, there is a need to think in a more holistic and integrated way about how climate change can be addressed.

Councils will take an integrated approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy and planning. In particular, councils commit to addressing their emissions trajectory hand-in-hand with increasing resilience. Councils will give priority to actions that simultaneously reduce emissions and better prepare their city, district or region for climate change impacts, by building resilience and enabling effective adaptation.

## Barriers precluding local government from doing more

Local government has previously recognised in its Position Statement the value of explicitly incorporating climate change considerations, including emissions, into land-use decisions, district plans, urban design and development, energy use, transport planning and waste management, notwithstanding the existing lack of a statutory mandate to do so. Councils have previously committed to:

- ensuring that low carbon, climate-resilient development is adopted as a key tenet of urban growth and development and land-use decisions; and
- developing their understanding of the impacts of zoning and land use decisions on the emissions trajectory for their communities, in order to be able to make land-use decisions that mitigate emissions.

Notwithstanding those commitments, and the work that a number of councils have been undertaking to fulfil them, existing legislative and policy frameworks prevent councils from doing more to deliver and contribute to emissions reductions, both directly (as a provider of infrastructure and services) and indirectly (through their influence over activities responsible for emissions).

A number of local government legislative and policy frameworks do not align well with, or make any provision for, the overarching goals of climate change mitigation and reducing emissions. Existing frameworks do not sufficiently enable councils to deliver or facilitate the achievement of emissions reductions, particularly in respect of matters such as spatial planning, urban form, transport and the built environment.

Central government policy settings and incentives must provide clear, consistent and enduring direction to ensure local government is making decisions and adopting actions that will contribute towards achieving a net-zero emissions future.

There is an opportunity for cities, districts and regions to be supported by a legislative and policy framework that encourages and supports them to take different approaches to achieving emissions reductions, which would be more consistent with New Zealand's overarching climate change mitigation goals. Local government would benefit from and will advocate for:

- A clear legislative mandate for councils to contribute to the achievement of emissions reductions through those matters over which they have reasonable control, including revisions to legislative and policy frameworks to ensure that they empower and support councils to take a wide range of mitigation actions. Revisions to the Building Act and procurement frameworks for example would better enable councils to contribute to emissions reductions; and
- New policy tools that support councils to deliver and contribute to emissions reductions. Legislative provision for regional spatial planning and policies promoting quality compact urban form, for example, are powerful tools that would help councils to deliver integrated land use, infrastructure and transport planning, and achieve emissions reductions.

The local government sector intends to work to identify in detail the aspects of existing legislative and policy frameworks which need to be revised and updated in order to achieve better alignment with, and better support councils to contribute to, the achievement of the goal of net-zero emissions in New Zealand.

Local government does however urge the Government to ensure that if it is considering making changes to existing legislation and policy to achieve alignment with mitigation goals, it must discuss and carefully work through those changes with local government and its communities first. Central government must work with local government to understand the implications of any changes it is considering and the support that councils would need to deliver on any changes.

**To comment with feedback on this draft please email [grace.hall@lgnz.co.nz](mailto:grace.hall@lgnz.co.nz) by 30 August 2018.**





**Report** 18.288  
**Date** 1 August 2018  
**File** CCAB-10-529

**Committee** Environment  
**Author** Tim Sharp , Whaitua Programme Manager

## Whaitua programme update – July 2018

### 1. Purpose

To provide information to the Environment Committee on the status of the three active whaitua projects and any key upcoming work.

### 2. Background

The whaitua process is a community-led, collaborative planning process to address a number of land and water management issues and carry out GWRC's obligations under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM). The programme aims to improve the integration of activities and achieve better resource management practices that reflect local aspirations.

The Wellington Region has been divided into five whaitua or catchments. Whaitua committees, consisting of community members, iwi representatives, partner representatives, and GWRC representatives will make recommendations to the Council through a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) report. A WIP will contain strategies and actions that will form a programme of work for the management of land and water in that catchment.

There are currently two committees operating: the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee and Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee. Council established the Hutt Valley / Wellington Whaitua Committee as an advisory body in December 2017.

A Collaborative Modelling Project has supported the first two Whaitua Committees by feeding knowledge into their decision-making process. Experts in the various topic areas (for example ecologists, economists, social scientists) work collaboratively to ensure information and data is up to date and to provide expert advice to the Whaitua Committee when required. The project involves partnering with mana whenua as well as having significant iwi and community input, as well as input from relevant stakeholders. A different

modelling approach is being developed for the Hutt Valley / Wellington Whaitua process.

### **3. Ruamāhanga Whaitua**

#### **3.1 Progress since the last update**

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee (the Committee) has continued to engage with the community, partners and stakeholders on their draft recommendations for the future of integrated land and water management in the catchment.

The Committee held three community meetings in early May to explain where they were landing on recommendations and to answer questions. Between 60 and 130 people attended each meeting. The Committee also held two meetings with hill country farmers to talk specifically about the recommendations that would impact them. Follow up meetings were held with kaitiaki and stakeholders in late May. A number of organisations requested one on one meetings with the Committee such as Wairarapa Water Users and Sustainable Wairarapa. The Committee also met with the CEOs and Mayors of the three district Councils to respond to their questions and concerns.

The Committee presented their draft WIP to Te Upoko Taiao and Councillors at a workshop on 12 June which was well received.

The Committee continued to refine their recommendations as a result of community and stakeholder conversations and agreed by consensus the draft Ruamāhanga WIP to go out for community comment on Wednesday 13 June. When comments closed on 11 July 2018, 41 email comments and 17 survey responses on a range of topics were received from stakeholders and community members.

The Committee is now in the process of considering what changes to make to the WIP in response to the community comments. The Committee is meeting on 30-31 July 2018 to complete this process.

#### **3.2 Key work in the coming months, completion of the WIP and presentation to Council**

In early August, the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will complete their discussions and make any changes to their WIP as a result of the community comments.

The final WIP will be presented to Council at their meeting on 16 August 2018. The WIP will then be ‘launched’ in the Wairarapa the following week and the work of all those involved in the process acknowledged.

Once the WIP is accepted by Council, officers will review the WIP to determine the various tasks for GWRC implementation. The Environment Policy Team, for example, will begin the process of drafting a chapter for the Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRP) drawing on the WIP recommendations.

The Whaitua Implementation Design Team will also begin its task of considering the task implications within the FMU framework from the WIP on GWRC and external parties.

The Committee has requested to continue as an advisory body following the WIP handover to Council, to ensure the direction and intent of their recommendations are incorporated into the subsequent plan change. A change to their Terms of Reference to provide for this will be put to Council at the meeting on 16 August 2018.

## **4. Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua**

### **4.1 Progress since last quarter**

Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua has continued to draft objectives for the Whaitua, namely freshwater objectives for the Macroinvertebrate Community Index (MCI), periphyton and native fish, and harbour objectives for sedimentation rate, the percentage area of soft mud, copper, zinc, macroalgae and invertebrates. The final objectives to be set are the numeric sedimentation rate and pathogens for the harbour.

The Committee has also undertaken an economic and social analysis of the implications of the objectives, which, at this stage, has not made the Committee alter their objectives.

At Takapūwāhia Marae, elder Taku Parae provided a korero covering the naming of the streams in the Whaitua and the history reflected through the names. At a later workshop, Ngāti Toa informed the Committee and Project Team that they had decided to withdraw from the Committee and participate in the Whaitua process alongside their work. They expressed their concern at being able to resource the demands of the committee process and their ability to fully articulate mana whenua values within the consensus decision-making model. They have since been in regular contact with the project team, intend to liaise regularly with the Whaitua Committee over the next few months, and aim to deliver a report at the same time as the WIP.

Committee and project team members have met again with Porirua City Councillors and Wellington City Councillors to raise awareness of the likely outcomes of the process, in addition to presenting to the PCC District Plan Reference Group, and seeking feedback. Project team members are working closely with officers from the territorial authorities and Wellington Water to begin to align policy outcomes between the Whaitua Implementation Programme, district plans, infrastructure investment plans and structure plans.

### **4.2 Key work in the coming months**

At the 23 August workshop the Committee will complete their draft freshwater and harbour objectives, incorporating the numeric harbour modelling results.

Once the draft objectives are completed, the first formal phases of the WIP drafting will begin. During that time, the Committee's focus will be on external engagement with stakeholders and the community. A rural landowners meeting is scheduled for early August to explore the implications of the draft objectives

with this community, and a second Wellington City Councillor Workshop is planned. A presentation to the Joint Harbour Committee is scheduled, and a second presentation to PCC's Developer Focus Group is likely.

The Committee will review and revise a number of iterations of the WIP before it is finalised in November, for council's consideration in December.

## **5. Hutt Valley / Wellington Whaitua**

### **5.1 Progress since last quarter**

Officers have met with all councils (councillors and officers), Wellington Water, Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa, all of whom have indicated strong interest in this Whaitua. Most organisations have selected nominees for the Committee.

Feedback from UHCC included that they would appreciate being involved in a process where all agencies and the community were working together and suggested that could include no council branding on engagement material, i.e., the Whaitua could have its own webpage and brand.

Officers are in discussions with Ngāti Toa to consider their best means of participation, whether on the Committee or in parallel. We are also discussing options with Taranaki Whānui to support their involvement.

An urban streams freshwater quality and ecology state, trends and pressures report is in the final stages of being completed. This report will be provided to councillors once completed as it will be a key input for the Whaitua Committee to start considering the issues.

A different process design is being prepared for this Whaitua. This includes:

- Making the process less “policy-led” and more “integrated” with operations, i.e., what can be done to fix the problems we know about? This will mean that implementation options and costs will be considered up-front and throughout the decision-making process. This could include fixing a particular wastewater overflow site, removing stormwater/wastewater cross connections, applying water sensitive design to greenfield developments and testing their feasibility and costs.
- Less theoretical modelling and more targeted modelling, e.g. to model the effects of a change in a specific practice like a new wetland on a new development site.
- Daytime meetings (rather than evening meetings), once a month.
- A tight design process aiming to be completed in two years (in time to meet Territorial Authorities' 2021 LTPs).

### **5.2 Key work in the coming months**

The focus of work in the coming months will be:

- Community engagement and requests for nominations
- Shortlisting and interviewing of community candidates by the Nominations Evaluation Group in accordance with the Policy on the appointment of non-elected members to committees, subcommittees and advisory groups (adopted by Council in 6 April 2016)
- Preferred community candidates and partner representatives appointed by Council at its meeting on 25 September 2018
- Preparation for first Committee meeting in October 2018
- Continuing developing buy-in with partners, including information collation for the Committee and co-designing the process.
- Developing support material for Councillors to help in conversations when being asked about the Whaitua and set up.

## **6. Communication**

No external communication is proposed as an outcome of the consideration of this report.

## **7. Consideration of climate change**

No decision is being sought in this report.

The matters addressed in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

### **7.1 Mitigation assessment**

*Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.*

Officers have considered the effect of the matter on the climate.

Officers note that the matter currently does not affect the Council's interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) or the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI). However, recommendations made by the Whaitua Committees could provide a co-benefit of mitigating climate change. For example, the retirement and planting of erosion-prone land could give effect to sequestering carbon, however this will not be able to be further analysed until the Committees make their recommendations. Officers involved in this work will ensure this is considered in the final WIP reports.

### **7.2 Adaptation assessment**

*Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.*

Consideration of climate change adaption has been built into the collaborative modelling projects which support each whaitua project.

Climate change impacts on rainfall and catchment hydrology are being modelled and will be applied to the scenarios developed by the Committees. This information will allow for analysis of changes in contaminant generation, water allocation and flow, and the effectiveness of mitigations (such as storm water treatment, erosion and sediment control) on a catchment-by-catchment basis.

## **8. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report. This report is for Environment Committee members to receive an update on the progress of the three whaitua projects.

### **8.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **9. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

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Programme Manager,  
Whaitua

Report approved by:

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Report approved by:

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Group



**Report** 18.292  
Date 9 July 2018  
File CCAB-10-530

**Committee** Environment  
**Author** Nigel Corry, General Manager, Environment Management  
Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management  
Luke Troy, General Manager, Strategy

## General Manager's Report

### 1. Purpose

To inform the Environment Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibilities.

### 2. Key/Strategic Issues

#### 2.1 Mycoplasma bovis (M bovis)

The arrival of M bovis in our region has serious repercussions for GWRC staff. All Council vehicles and equipment entering farmed cattle properties now go through a rigorous cleaning and disinfecting process. There is significant impact on activities that involve entering multiple properties in one day, for example biosecurity work.

A dedicated team of practitioners from several field oriented departments in the Masterton office are currently trialling cleaning equipment for multiple property visits. We are liaising with Federated Farmers, MPI and other regional councils to ensure we are applying best practice.

Whilst the M bovis infection is currently localised, there is a strong likelihood that other cattle farming properties will be impacted within the region. MPI are currently using the NAIT tracing system to check the historical movement of stock around New Zealand.

Wayne Cowan, Biosecurity Department, is still supporting the MPI response and has been deployed by MPI to support disease control in Northland. Wayne is now into his 5<sup>th</sup> month supporting MPI.

#### 2.2 Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) review

The GWRC Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan was released for public consultation following the 26th June Council meeting. The period for public

submissions closed on 27 July 2018. There were more than 110 submissions received on the plan. The submissions will be considered and heard by the hearing panel to be established at the Council meeting on 16 August 2018.

The project timeline has extended from the original project plan timeline. It is proposed that the new RPMP will be implemented early 2019 (as opposed to October 2018), dependant on the number and nature of submissions.

### **2.3 Commencing consultation on the Rural Options for the Te Kāuru Floodplain Management Plan (Te Kāuru)**

Engagement on Volumes 1 & 2 of Te Kāuru has begun with individual small group discussions (coffee groups) with riverside landowners. Three public drop in centres in Carterton, Masterton & Gladstone will also be held.

### **2.4 Regional Biodiversity Strategy**

The Biodiversity department is facilitating the development of a strategic approach to regional biodiversity, which seeks to align the effort around biodiversity protection and enhancement for better overall biodiversity gains. Seven regional workshops will be held during August and September, and invitations have been sent to GW staff and councillors, central government agencies, mana whenua and other organisations, as well as environmental restoration groups and interested individuals. The intent of these is to co-design a non-statutory strategy document and discuss what implementation might look like

## **3. Catchment Management**

### **3.1 Biosecurity**

#### **3.1.1 Surveillance and RPMP programme**

Wallabies are not known to be established in the wild in the Wellington Region. A photo was sent in from a runner who found a Dama wallaby on Ohiro Bay road. The body could not be recovered by us or DOC before someone else removed it. As they are nocturnal animals we sent staff into the surrounding areas at night with thermal imaging equipment. We also followed up another potential sighting of a wallaby joey and have come up with no other evidence of wallaby presence. In the past people have put dead wallabies they have shot in Bay of Plenty on roads in our region as a practical joke, so this maybe a similar situation.

We have secured a number of new releases of biocontrol agents and dung beetles for the coming season.

#### **3.1.2 Regional Possum and Predator Control Programme (RPPCP)**

The 2018/19 programme is planned to cover 110,000 ha of possum control and 3,900 ha of mustelid control. Approximately 95,000 ha of possum control and 200 ha of mustelid control is within the Wairarapa. The remaining treatment areas are located at Kapiti Coast, Porirua and Wellington.

OSPRI NZ has not declared any land area with Greater Wellington to be free of bovine Tb this year. However it is expected that additional 40,000 ha will be declared Tb free in June 2019.

### 3.2 Land Management

#### 3.2.1 Winter planting works

Our winter works programme has involved six flights (including Porirua) delivering willow and poplar poles to remote locations. We are two thirds of the way through the winter planting programme. Although we have been challenged by *M. bovis*, wet weather and difficult access into properties, contractors have performed great at completing both poplar/willow pole planting and native and exotic seedling jobs.



**Flat Point Farm delivering poles to site**

The months of May and June were significant for Akura Nursery. Over 9,000 poles and 102,208 seedlings were sold, including 79,544 native plants (42,548 Manuka) and 22,664 exotic seedlings.

#### 3.2.2 Riparian Programme

Implementation of the Riparian Programme has been slow with a significant portion of budget having been carried over from 2017/18 to 2018/19. A combination of the complexity of sites, a shortage of fencing contractors in the region, staff capacity to administer the programme, and low landowner awareness have all contributed to the challenges of implementing this programme.

A marketing campaign to promote the Riparian programme regionally will commence soon in an attempt to increase uptake amongst landowners. The focus will broaden to incorporate all landowners with Category 1 and 2 streams in the region. Including Category 2 streams will increase the scope of the programme significantly and there is evidence to suggest that these higher order streams have high potential for improving environmental effects. Other

policy revisions to the Riparian Programme are also being developed to improve landowner uptake whilst ensuring delivery of programme objectives.

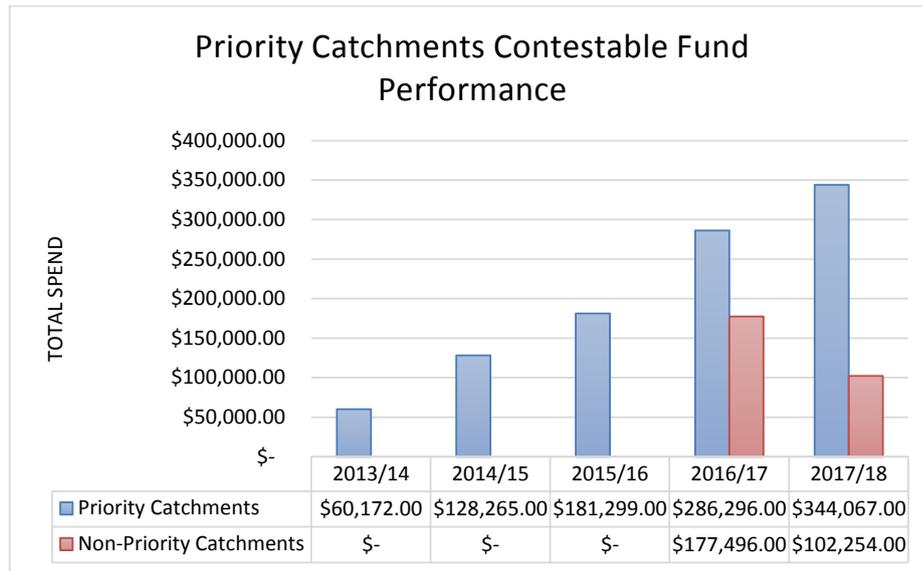


**Category 2 waterways fenced through the Riparian Programme (and new native planting done on right)**

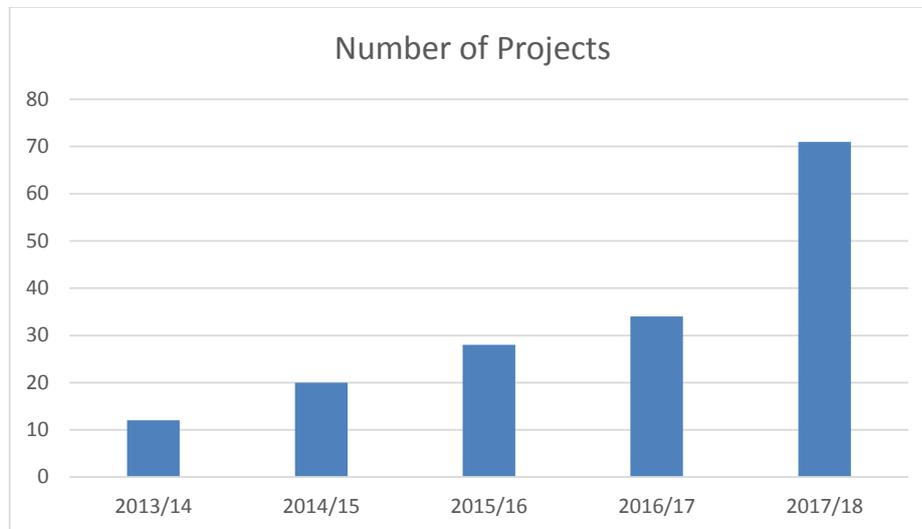
### 3.2.3 Priority Catchments Contestable Fund

The Priority Catchments contestable fund focuses on implementing projects on farms across the region that will improve water quality and biodiversity values. The catchments are prioritised by those indicated in Method 12 in the PNRP as well as targeted Kapiti coast catchments.

The programme had an excellent 2017/18 financial year with a large number of projects implemented across the region on a variety of land uses surpassing previous performances by the programme. This indicates that the programme is succeeding in engaging land owners and is part of their behaviour change in taking action on farms to improve water quality and biodiversity values. The table and graph below summarises the results from this year and previous years.



\* Non-Priority Catchments commenced in 2016/17



#### 3.2.4 Te Awarua-o-Porirua Catchment

Land Management operates two programmes in the Porirua Catchment – Soil Conservation plans, targeting erosion issues on properties >50ha; and the Porirua Lifestyle Sediment and Riparian (PLSR) fund for smaller block holders.

Eight large farm properties have been enrolled in the soil conservation programme since its inception in 2016. In the 2017/18 year, 6,000 seedlings and 600 poplar and willow poles were planted in riparian areas and erosion prone land on these properties. The aim of this programme moving forward is to continue to enroll all large properties and to continue to build landowner awareness of sedimentation issues in the harbor and the connection with land use.

In the 2017/18 financial year through the PLSR fund, 320 poles and 5,500 native seedlings were planted in order to reduce sediment leaving properties. In addition, 600m of fencing was erected to protect erosion prone land.

### **3.3 Flood Protection**

#### **3.3.1 RiverLink**

The Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee has recommended the Flood protection components of the RiverLink Preliminary design and proceeding to preparation of detail design and resource consents to the Environment Committee. This is covered in a separate report.

Hutt City Council has completed a similar process in relation to the urban design components of the RiverLink preliminary design.

The New Zealand Transport Agency will complete its Detailed Business Case this year, and intend to recommend this to their board towards the end of the calendar year.

#### **3.3.2 Asset Management Projects**

The region has experienced significant rainfall during the first weeks of the new quarter. Bank erosion has occurred at a number of sites along the Hutt River. One area, adjacent to Gibbon Street in Upper Hutt, is of particular concern because of the risk it poses to SH2. The access road through the area has been affected and safety fencing has been erected to protect the public. Staff are developing a solution and working with NZ Transport Agency to agree funding for the work. Arrangements are also being made to assist oversized vehicles to gain access through the area.



**Waingawa River willow pole planting**



**Hutt River Gibbons St erosion**

+  
Staff have been actively involved in coordination activities for the PP20 expressway and in particular the construction of the new Otaki River Bridge.

The project team responsible for the structure have been actively seeking the advice and expertise from Flood Protection staff to mitigate construction risks.

### 3.3.3 Te Kāuru FMP

Engagement has begun on Te Kāuru, with good turnouts for the first few coffee groups held with the riverside landowners. 23 coffee groups are planned from July-August 2018 as well as three public drop in centres in Carterton, Masterton & Gladstone in the first week of September.

Modelling of the Waipoua hydrology to feed into option development for Masterton is in its final stages.

### 3.3.4 Waiohine FMP

Waiohine flood maps are being finalised along with further development of triggers and management approaches that will inform the river management, planning controls and emergency management parts of the “living plan”.

Stakeholder consultation has continued with public drop-in sessions in Greytown to discuss and receive feedback on six stopbank options, ranging from “build nothing” though to a substantial stopbank; with the objective of narrowing down of stopbank options and further technical work prior to selecting a preferred option.

Stakeholder engagement remains a focus. We have had no Kahungunu ki Wairarapa representative on the Steering Group for several months. However, we have now engaged with the local hapu of Kahungunu based at Papawai marae, and the hapu associated with the urupa by the SH 2 bridge. These discussions are ongoing.

### 3.3.5 Otaki FMP review

The technical work for the Otaki FMP Review is largely complete and we are now completing final stakeholder and partner NGO consultation, and writing up the draft recommendations, prior to public consultation in August and September.

### 3.3.6 Pinehaven Flood Management Plan and Upper Hutt City Council Plan Change 42

Mediation for the Appeals against this plan change is to be held in August.

Development of designs and consent strategy for channel improvement works has recommenced. The programme is dependent on the ending of appeals period for the Plan Change 42 decision. UHCC will take over maintenance activities from commencement of construction date.

### 3.3.7 Porirua Stream

Officers have joined with Wellington Water carrying out consultation for the Porirua Stream draft flood hazard mapping in July, which to be part of PCC District Plan review consultation.

### **3.4 Biodiversity**

#### **3.4.1 Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) Programme**

OSPRI is planning an aerial 1080 operation for the northern Remutaka area from July. This will include the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo and Pakuratahi KNE sites. This should significantly reduce rat numbers, allowing GW staff to reduce baiting at the Wainuiomata Mainland Island.

A successful year of ungulate control was completed with 524 feral goats, deer and pigs culled, helping to protect the biodiversity values of several KNE sites

A community dune planting was held at Queen Elizabeth Park (QEP) KNE site to help build resilience to the erosive forces of storm surges and sea-level rise. Several metres of dune have been washed away in storms during the last three years leaving steep dune fronts along much of the QEP coast. The few remaining areas of low-lying dune provide opportunities to re-establish sand-binding vegetation that could provide some stability.



**Restoration plantings at the northern dunes area of the Riversdale-Orui Coast KNE site**



**Community dune planting at QEP KNE site to help build resilience to storm surges and sea-level rise**

#### 3.4.2 Wetland Programme

The Wetland Programme has expanded to fund the restoration of wetlands that are not scheduled in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRP). Funding levels have been increased to allow for more planting (up to \$1,000 per annum for up to 3 years) and some control of pest plants prior to planting. A \$20,000 cap per property has also been introduced. Biodiversity staff will be looking into networking and training opportunities for landowners to share restoration successes and learn more about wetland restoration.

Thirty six landowners with wetlands (scheduled and non-scheduled) are now signed up to the Wetland Programme (a total of 45 wetlands). Twenty five of these wetland sites have approved Wetland Restoration Management Plans.

Staff from Land Management and Biodiversity are refining the process for developing Livestock Access Plans. These plans set out where complete stock exclusion is not feasible and what alternate mitigation measures will be used to manage the adverse impacts of stock on the water bodies.

#### 3.4.3 Biodiversity Advice

A guide to biodiversity offsetting under the RMA, co-managed by staff from the Biodiversity department, is scheduled to be presented to the Regional Council CEOs Group in August for their sign off. It will be publically released soon after with the document being made available on the Local Government New Zealand website. Workshops on the guidance will take place around the country in spring.

#### 3.4.4 Collaborative Restoration: Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and Catchment Project

A staff member attended a professional development day for teachers organised by Enviroschools and Porirua Harbour Trust. This involved leading a workshop with teachers on how to use stream health assessment kits with their pupils and promoting GW's other work with schools.



**A workshop run by a Biodiversity staff member on how to use stream health assessment kits as part of a professional development day for teachers organised by Enviroschools and Porirua Harbour Trust**

## **4. Environment Management**

### **4.1 Water Wairarapa – Water Storage**

Water Wairarapa received \$200K in Year 1 of the LTP. We will be working with the three Wairarapa councils around developing a 12 – 18 month work programme looking at integrated water options, which could also support water storage. An informal Governance Group of the three Wairarapa Mayors and Regional Council Chair has been established to work together on this, supported by senior staff in each organisation. Wairarapa TA's have a combined \$80k in their long terms plans in year 1 towards developing and delivering this integrated work programme. This work will link closely the aspirations expressed through the Ruamahanga Whaitua Implementation Plan.

The only 'outstanding' piece of work for Greater Wellington with the final Crown Irrigation Investment Limited contract is the completion of the reframing report by 31 August.

The Water Wairarapa Governance Group had its last meeting in July. Water Wairarapa Limited is now operating, independently of Councils, with the aim of testing farmer demand and raising an initial tranche of capital from farmers and industry.

### **4.2 Harbours**

#### **4.2.1 Recreational boating and education**

The Oriental Bay swim rafts were removed for winter. They are stored on WCC land at Evans Bay and will be cleaned and replaced towards summer.

Two staff attended a review and planning workshop run by Maritime NZ and attended by other participants in the "No Excuses" campaign. This looked at success and learning from last summer and started discussion about the coming summer. There is a strong leaning towards shared resources, knowledge and experience between the Councils and Maritime NZ.

We have been awarded \$34,000 for summer education and enforcement work from the Fuel Excise Duty, via Maritime NZ. Planning is underway on how to best use this, it includes the five "No Excuses on the water enforcement day as well as promoting the use of marine VHF radios. Alongside this is our usual message of lifejackets and observing the speed rules.

Recreational activities are relatively low at this time of year however clubs are already planning their events for the coming summer season.

#### **4.2.2 Navigation aids**

The navigation aids have been performing well over the darkest time of year.

#### **4.2.3 Safety and Exercises**

We completed our Safety Management System self-assessment along with CentrePort. We were able to reflect on the positive changes both parties had made in the last year and produce a work list for the coming year based around ongoing improvement. The overall impression was that we are both operating

in accordance with the Port & Harbour Marine Safety Code. This reflected well on what we have done and resulted in a positive work. This will be tested by an external review panel next year.

In early July, GWRC hosted the Navigation Safety SIG. Two topics of particular note were regulatory consistency and the Nairobi convention on salvage.

Most regions have Bylaws in place relating to wearing of lifejackets (we do), Maritime NZ's Part 91 only requires them to be carried. The Harbormasters' expressed frustration that there is not national consistency around this. Maritime NZ indicated that the Ministry of Transport is unwilling to make any rule changes at this time. The SIG is going to ask the Regional CEO's to write to the Ministers of Transport and Local Government and ask for that they push for a review of the national rule. This has implications for consistency and simplifications for both the Councils and the boating public.

The pros & cons of the Nairobi International Convention of the Removal of Wreck were summarized by Maritime NZ. In brief, the convention, if we signed, would require ships to have compulsory insurance for wreck removal (providing certainty for payment) however that is capped at a calculated level, in terms of the Rena that would have been \$49M, actual cost was about \$600M. This would be a certain payout against the current position, unlimited liability but no guarantee of anything actually being paid. The convention only applies between 12 and 200 nautical miles from shore, unless the New Zealand Government wishes to suspend its domestic legislation and include the first 12 nautical miles. Also it only covers work to remove the hazard to navigation, not necessarily the entire wreck. In the case of the Rena that would have meant significantly less work than was actually carried out. There is no straight forward answer to whether or not NZ should sign up to this as there are many factors that cannot be anticipated.

Immediately following that was the Maritime NZ hosted Port and Harbour Marine Safety Code forum; the theme was Continuous Improvement in Safety Management. There were several excellent and honest presentations reviewing shipping incidents around the country and lessons learnt. Much of this focuses on risk and the management of that risk. There is work being done by Port Nelson on developing a guide to risk management practices and how they relate to maritime risks that will be shared with participants later this year. There is an increased focus of shared knowledge and expertise in this area which is a positive change.

The annual audit and service of Maritime NZ's oil spill equipment was carried out, this is done by Harbours' staff but we also invite other Maritime NZ trained GW staff to enable them to remain familiar with some of our equipment.

A yacht under sail hit a small anchored power boat near Somes Island, the Maritime Police are following up on this. No one was injured however a young child in the small boat was badly scarred by the event.



We had a visit from a southern right whale, probably a juvenile male heading north. This created considerable public interest and some disruption for shipping. Regular shipping was keeping look for the whale and made frequent enquiries to Beacon Hill, on some occasions they altered course or stopped, as much to avoid the small craft following the whale. Our workboat "SeaCare" spent part of a day escorting the whale as did the Police launch on another day. Generally, public behaviour was good around the whale. The sky-show fireworks display for Matariki was delayed on Department of Conservation's advice that the combination of fireworks and small boats on the Harbour at night could be hazardous both for the whale and for the recreational vessels.

Once the whale departed, the sky show went ahead in perfect conditions, one week after it was scheduled. The display went well and boating behavior on the water was very good with a reasonable number of boats on the water.

Centerport's trainee Pilot has returned from training in Port Ash, Australian. This is an artificial lake with scale models of shipping and tugboats used for training. It does look like playing with big toys, in reality this is an extremely useful and relevant part of Pilot training. It is hands-on and can simulate a range of conditions and actions in a very safe and low risk environment. As our candidate found out, some "misinterpreted" instructions by the instructed had the 'ship' nose into the bank. An important lesson was learnt and no damage was done. This training does not come cheaply. We are involved in the examination of Pilots and this high level of commitment to training by CentrePort is very reassuring as the Pilots are a key part of keeping shipping moving in and out of Wellington Harbour safely.



### **4.3 Environment Regulation**

#### **4.3.1 Regional bore security investigation**

We have reviewed the information collected for the Kapiti Coast bores. We will be engaging a bore drilling contractor within the next few weeks to accompany us on site visits to the Kapiti Coast to confirm whether bores are secure, and provide advice on the works required to fix any insecure bores. The Wairarapa bore investigation is continuing, and we expect the initial investigations to be completed by the end of June. This will determine which bores require a physical inspection by a specialist drilling contractor.

#### **4.3.2 Wellington Region drinking water Joint Working Group (JWG)**

GWRC, Wellington Water Ltd (WWL), Regional Public Health and Territorial Authorities across the region met in late May to work through a Terms of Reference, Memorandum of Understanding and Governance Structure for the new joint working group. Representatives of the JWG also attended Ara Tahī with a view to understanding how Mana Whenua would like to participate in the work of the Group. The JWG has also commenced three projects around risk identification; private bore risks and working on an Emergency Response Plan. The JWG will also be looking to respond to the Government's Three Water's review as a collective.

#### **4.3.3 Owhiro Stream community initiative**

In early May we held our second Owhiro information day at the Owhiro Bay School. We are taking feedback from the day as we plan to engage further with the community again, this time at the Community Fair in November 2018 which is known for its big turnout!

#### **4.3.4 Western wastewater pipeline-notified consent**

A hearing was held on 4 May 2018, and the decision was released on 1 June 2018. The hearing panel recommended that the condition to replace the main outfall pipeline could be cancelled, but recommended a number of condition changes including a Monitoring and Technological Review Report. No appeals were received and the consent is now operational.

#### **4.3.5 Silverstream Landfill odours**

We recently concluded an investigation into odours generated in early March from the Silverstream Landfill operation. The investigation found that there are

some significant issues with the way that consent addresses the capture, treatment and discharge of landfill gas. We will meet with HCC, operators of the gas generation plant and their consultants in July to work together on resolving this matter.

#### 4.3.6 Porirua Wastewater Collaborative Pilot Project

The progress continues on the 'PPP' as we are now shaping up how we take the preferred short list of options for the wastewater treatment plant and the wastewater network out to the community for input and feedback. This is a particularly exciting phase as it is where the community can see and question the work the group has been doing – and really put their 'fingerprints' on it. The most exciting and truly collaborative part of this will be the roll out will be with all the parties (Wellington Water, Ngati Toa, PCC, WCC, GWRC, and representatives from the Te Awarua o Porirua Whaitua, and Porirua Harbour Project and the Community Trust) presenting the options as a group to the community – a totally different concept we are going to 'pilot'.

#### 4.3.7 Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant re-consenting

SWDC's applications to re-consent Featherston wastewater discharges were notified in May. The period for public submissions was extended to 12 July 2018. A total of 159 submissions were received of which 152 were opposed, 4 neutral and 3 were in support. Commissioners have been appointed and directions set down for key dates for reports and any expert caucusing to be undertaken with the hearing itself being set down to commence on 16 October 2018.

#### 4.3.8 Roads of National Significance (RoNS) Projects

*Transmission Gully and Porirua Link Roads:* The projects have scaled down earthworks operations for winter. There remains a focus on erosion and sediment control performance over winter and the site is being audited by GWRC weekly. Earthworks management and performance improvement systems are being set up in anticipation of the 2018/19 summer earthworks season. A steady stream of SSEMP changes have been processed, while the number of consent applications has reduced. Ongoing discussions are occurring regarding ecological mitigation and legal protection of this to ensure appropriate outcomes are achieved.

*Peka Peka to Otaki:* Works are mainly occurring around Bridges 2 and 3 in Otaki, Otaki River bridge piles, local roads, temporary stream diversions and earthworks south of Mary Crest. The site is being audited by GWRC weekly. SSEMPs were approved for these works and others are being processed. Discussions are occurring with NZTA to clarify ecological mitigation protection requirements.

#### 4.3.9 Education and engagement

Three education and engagement programmes are underway as a result of identification of broader environmental risks at a local, regional and national level. The *Better Burning* campaign is a joint community engagement, environmental science and environmental regulation campaign aimed to reduce the environmental effects of indoor and outdoor burning. The team is also working with local authorities and partners on programmes to tackle the risks

of hydrocarbons entering the stormwater network in Seaview and the degradation of Wellington Harbour by plastics.

#### 4.3.10 Significant investigations, enforcement

Two potentially significant investigations were concluded with infringement notices to the parties involved. As a result of the parties high level of cooperation with the council, it was not necessary to pursue more serious action and those involved are now working collaboratively with the Environmental Protection Team in targeted education and behaviour change programmes.

No charges have been laid in this period. There is one live case before the courts, a prosecution for works in the bed of a river. This is still waiting to proceed to trial.

### 4.4 Environmental Science

#### 4.4.1 Highlighting the Value of Data

The Environmental Science department collects a variety of environmental data that is used both internally and externally by all types of groups and agencies. We always take the opportunity to show how, why and where these data are collected. Recent examples include:

- Fishing Urban Streams - The Marine and Freshwater team are currently running a programme looking at biodiversity in Wellington's urban streams. They recently gave a fishing demonstration for Ministry of Environment–Water Directorate staff to highlight the values of urban streams, in this case Owhiro Stream. It provided an opportunity to discuss the intersection of National Policy Statements and the challenges of managing cumulative effects in these heavily modified habitats.
- Collecting Hydrological Data – the Hydrology field team recently took Water Resource scientists/consultants from Opus Wellington out in the field. It was a terrific opportunity to demonstrate techniques and equipment used for data acquisition, and to emphasise the importance of why an end user should know how data are derived.



**Hydrology team (Sam, Aaron and Ethan) demonstrate our hydrology equipment for Opus Wellington scientists.**

- Reviewing Category A Groundwater Allocation - Hydrology scientists have been working closely with Environmental Policy and Regulation Officers on reviewing how Category A groundwater allocation is managed. This is a complex piece of work that will aid greatly in how consents are assessed in the future and will inform the decision making of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua.
- Rain Gauge Network - The Wellington Water four cities rain gauge network continues to develop with new sites now operational in Petone, Seaview and Avalon. The real-time data from this network is a critical piece of information for Wellington Water’s NowCasting project that allows for very fine scale prediction from rain radar of where heavy rainfall will fall across the urban catchments allowing them to deploy resources effectively.

#### 4.4.2 How’s the air out there?

So far this winter air quality in Masterton has exceeded the national environmental standard six times. Extra monitoring, using SmokeTrak (a mobile air monitoring device), was done over several nights this winter with help from Masterton District Council (MDC). Results will be used to build a ‘smoke map’ showing worst affected neighbourhoods.

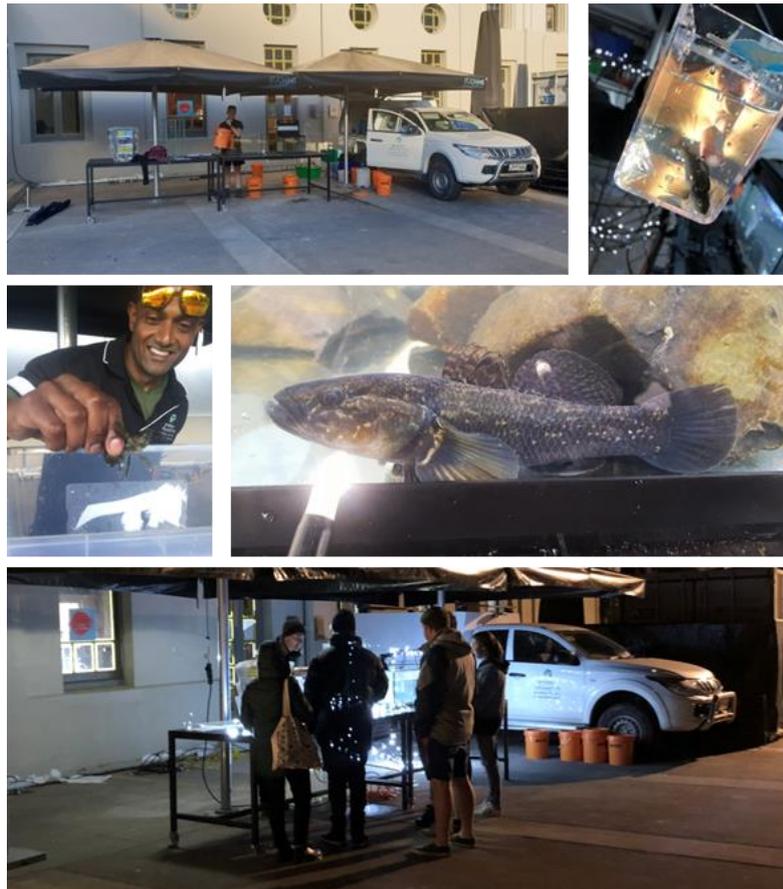
We’ve been putting in some extra monitoring effort in Masterton to set the scene for working with MDC towards improving air quality using a ‘behaviour change’ approach as directed by the PNRP. Research shows that older, sub-optimally operated wood burners release a lot more fine particulates than modern wood burners operated with good fire lighting technique using dry

wood. Working with Environmental Regulation and Customer Engagement we are designing new webpages and a video to start raising community awareness of good fire lighting technique and the importance of not burning treated timber. The campaign is called “better burning”.

Mobile PM2.5 monitoring was carried out on several nights this winter with help from MDC. We will use the results to build a ‘smoke map’ to show which neighbourhoods are worst affected. This information could be used to inform future interventions such as targeted education and assistance to households. We are also monitoring arsenic and lead (contaminants emitted when treated or painted timber is burnt) at the Masterton East air quality monitoring station. This monitoring will give us a baseline from which to evaluate the effectiveness of our education work in the community to reduce the burning of such prohibited materials over the coming years.

#### 4.4.3 Celebrating Matariki

Shyam Morar and Mark Heath represented GWRC and the Environmental Science department at Ahi Kā / Streams of Light, the first annual Matariki Māori New Year celebration run by Wellington City Council. Those attending got to see the variety of freshwater fish that live in our city streams. Shyam and Mark showed how to look after the city waterways that these fish live in and, importantly, why drains are for rain. A highlight was the black flounder (pātiki) which put on an impressive show, camouflaging itself with white spots to match the display’s fairy lights (check out the video on Greater Wellington’s Facebook page).



**Shyam and Mark setting up for Matariki Ahi Kā / Streams of Light**

#### 4.4.4 Catching Khandallah Koura

They came, caught a koura and SHMAKed it out of the park. Environmental Science, Biodiversity and Land Management staff spent a day in Khandallah Park mid-June with Mountains to Sea Wellington, learning how to use NIWA's updated *Stream Health Monitoring and Assessment Kit* (SHMAK). Our community members are keen to know more about what is happening in their local waterways, and the SHMAK tools can help them with this. The training was organised by Sheryl (ESci) to increase the number of GW staff who are confident in showing community members how to use a SHMAK kit.



**GW staff from Biodiversity, Environmental Science and Land Management receive SHMAK training**

#### 4.4.5 Native Birds Becoming City Dwellers

Philippa Crisp recently spoke with Alison Balance on Our Changing World about the increase of native bird species in Wellington. Data from annual bird surveys run by Greater Wellington, show that three urban bird species (kākā, tui and kākārīki) are on the increase and that the other 12 forest-dwelling species have stable populations..

This can be attributed in part to an enthusiastic network of neighbourhoods trapping rates and stoats as part of Predator Free Wellington. Philippa says that the initial trapping efforts have grown into a very successful [Predator Free Wellington](#) campaign, supported by Greater Wellington and the Wellington City Council. Neighbourhood trapping groups have sprung up around the city, and between them they are killing thousands of rats, mice and hedgehogs each year, making the city a safer place for the birds.

To read or listen to the full story, head to:

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld/audio/2018651967/native-birds-doing-well-in-wellington>

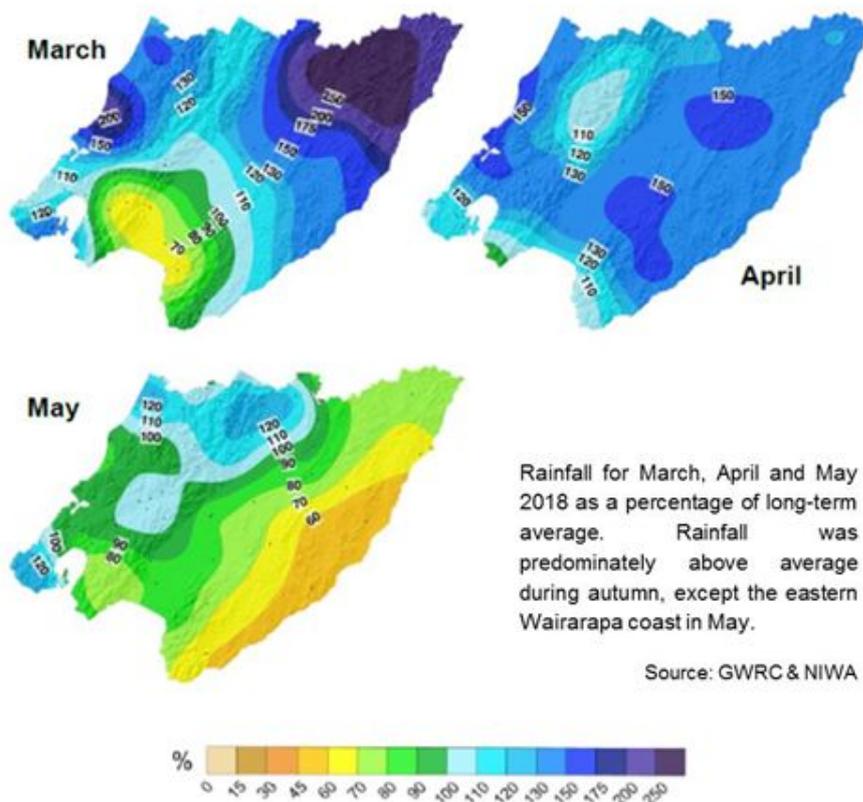
#### 4.4.6 What's a Wetland?

Wetland descriptions have been completed at a number of sites in the region as a result of requests from some landowners and the Parks Department. Understanding the new pNRP rules requires knowledge of the extent of each wetland, so the terrestrial ecology team have been helping Land Management, Biodiversity, Environment Regulation, Policy and Parks departments to define wetland boundaries. We are also preparing background information about how to identify wetlands for a publication needed by Policy for the pNRP.

#### 4.4.7 An Unsettled Autumn and a Frosty Winter

The latest climate and water report is out. Autumn had some unsettled weather patterns early on; stronger winds for most of the eastern part of the region, lower than normal sunshine hours (making us grumpy!), and total accumulated rainfall about 25% above average for the Kapiti Coast. In addition flooding and lightning strikes also made an appearance.

The outlook for winter remains relatively unchanged, except an increased probability of an El Nino (essentially warming) forming during spring. We're also likely to have some vigorous cold spells later in the season increasing the chances of frost.



### Autumn rainfall maps for Wellington region

## 4.5 Environmental Policy

### 4.5.1 Regional Council input into city and district planning

GWRC's interest arises from the Council's responsibilities for regional planning and the integrated management of natural and physical resources in the Wellington Region.

The below table summarises the Regional Council input into the statutory resource management processes of territorial authorities in the region for the period from 7 June 2018 to 25 July 2018.

Territorial Authority	Status of Document	Name of Document	Main topics commented on	Action
Wellington City Council	Proposed plan change	Proposed District Plan Change 83 – Kiwi Point Quarry	Effects of proposed quarry extension for gravel extraction activities on biodiversity	Summary of submission notified and no further submissions needed. Hearing date set for 17 and 18 September
Hutt City Council	Proposed plan	Proposed district plan change 43	Maintenance of water quality and quantity,	Summary of submissions released

<b>Territorial Authority</b>	<b>Status of Document</b>	<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Main topics commented on</b>	<b>Action</b>
	change	Residential and mixed use	transport integration and urban design principally	and being assessed for the need for further submissions.
Upper Hutt City Council	Proposed plan change	Proposed plan change 42 Mangaroa and Pinehaven Flood Hazard Extents	Flood hazard and policy provisions	Awaiting mediation date
Upper Hutt City Council	Proposed plan change	Proposed plan change 45 Signs	Nothing of issue	No further action
Porirua City Council	Preparation for Draft District Plan	District Plan Review	Alignment with policy and operational matters	Discussion focussing on stormwater management and objectives and policies to maintain water quality and quantity.
Kāpiti Coast District Council	Decision version	Proposed District Plan Decisions version 2017	Joined as S274 party to appeals on matters in submission	Mediation on some aspects of biodiversity protection and Centres policy and provisions to retain regional centre and centres hierarchy.

#### 4.5.2 Proposed Natural Resources Plan Update

Hearing 6 (Coast, Natural hazards, Historic heritage, contaminated land and hazardous substances, and Community drinking water supply protection areas) commenced on 28 May and concluded on 12 June 2018. Hearing 5 & 6 right of reply hearings are set down for the week 30 July – 3 August 2018, with reports due for pre-circulation on 16 & 18 July respectively.

Three right of reply reports will not meet this deadline. The key reporting officer has suffered a bereavement and as such is not able to meet the deadline. A waiver of the timeframe will be sought from the Hearing Panel; an amended timeline is yet to be determined for the circulation of the reports and hearing of the related evidence.

The Hearing Panel has indicated they may direct a Supplementary Right of Reply – for those matters which arose during the hearing which they have

further questions on, this is yet to be formally directed. All hearing information, including audio recordings is available on a portal accessed through the PNRP website <http://pnrp.gw.govt.nz/>.

#### 4.5.3 MfE's water work ramping up

The Ministry for the Environment is working on a number of areas that will influence future water policy. These include:

- Catchments at Risk: regional councils will be asked to identify 'catchments at risk' which could then become the basis for further interventions either regulatory or non-regulatory.
- Sediment Working Group: a working has been set up to establish a platform to discuss, develop and refine sediment and erosion management policy and linked support and implementation mechanisms.
- Feedlot advice: officials are pulling together advice on the definition and regulatory approaches to managing feedlots and break-feeding.
- Updates to the NPS-FM and RMA: it is likely that there will be an update to both the NPS-FM and RMA in the short-term.

#### 4.5.4 Feedback being considered for the Ruamāhanga WIP

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will be considering public and stakeholder feedback on the draft WIP on the 30th and 31st July. A summary of the feedback will be published on the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee website - <http://www.gw.govt.nz/ruamahanga-whaitua/>.

The aim is to present the final WIP to Council on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

### 4.6 Parks

#### 4.6.1 Parks Network Plan (PNP)review

A separate report about the PNP review has been presented to the Environment Committee which outlines the results of the initial community consultation to seek comments and suggestions about management of regional parks.

In summary, there was a very positive response from the community with over 400 people providing feedback via email and survey responses. More intensive engagement activities were undertaken for QEP where the community has previously expressed concerns about management activities in the park. One to one stakeholder discussions were held, followed by a combined stakeholder workshop with key issues explored in more detail.

Overall feedback indicates:

- A desire for joined-up planning with other agencies and land holders to realise practical ecological corridors between parks and areas of native bushland. This included fish passage and removing sometimes long standing, known barriers

- Better trail and public transport connections to parks, and further trail development within parks, such as trail enhancements to improve accessibility and basic facilities for horse rider such as tie-up rails
- More storytelling to reveal interesting aspects of parks, on-site in parks
- Support for additional facilities in campgrounds such as BBQ's, picnic tables and shelters
- In East Harbour Northern Forest a desire for recreational hunting access

Feedback and issues raised will be considered and explored in detail as parks planners develop a new draft management plan following the process outlined in the parks planning report.

In other parks planning matters, a ten year licence application for Kapiti Aeromodellers Club was assessed and licence conditions recommended.

#### 4.6.2 Park Projects

##### (a) Visitor usage

Results from the annual Community Usage and Awareness Survey were received. These show that regional parks visitation is the highest ever, at 72% of the regional population having visited at least one park in the last 12 months. This figure is consistent with the counter data, which shows visits totalling 1.8 million. Satisfaction remains at very high levels (95%). Consistent with previous years, the main improvement areas are those relating to provision of signage and toilets.

##### (b) Valuations

Independent valuers have completed their assessment of Parks assets including buildings and land. Replacement asset values have increased slightly from approximately \$77m in 2013 to \$81m in the present day.

##### (c) Asset inspections

A programme of two-yearly engineering re-inspections of vehicle bridges has been completed. The programme involves re-analysis of load capacities and updated condition ratings.

Following extensive staff consultation a we have prepared and circulated a set of procedures for ongoing condition inspections for eight asset classes. The 107 page procedure underpins the field inspection process and will help ensure a high level of data quality leading into the eventual migration into the Accela asset management system.

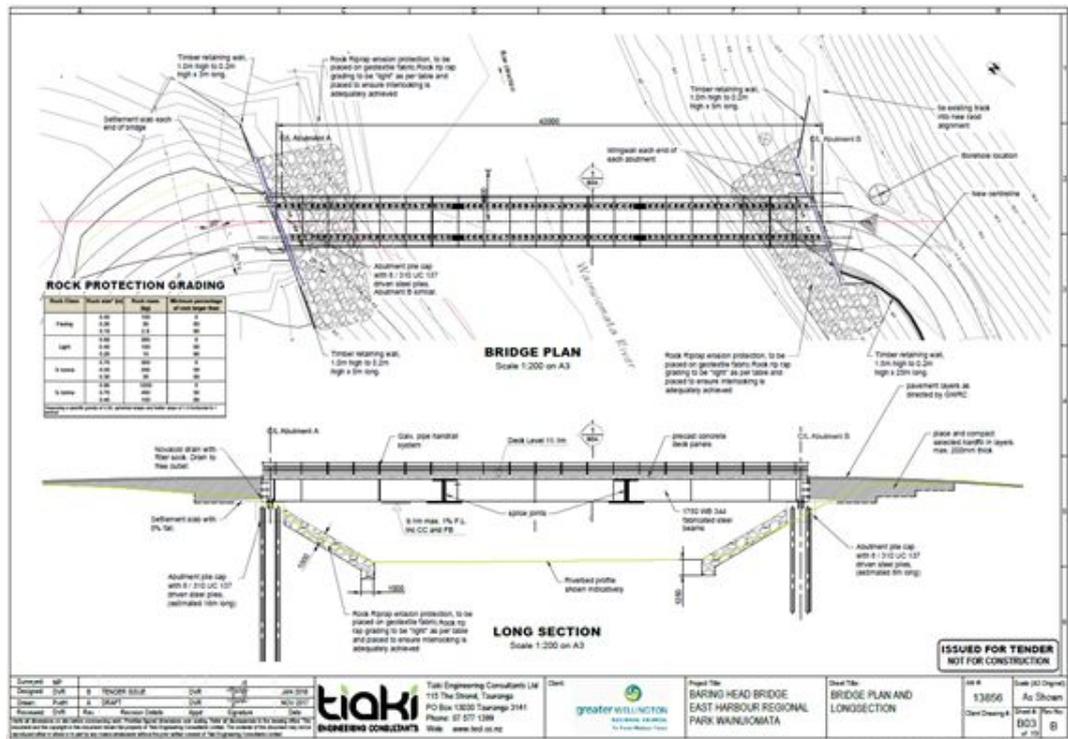


(d) Commercial dog walkers

A workshop was held with commercial dog walking operators to review arrangements and any issues and challenges in carrying out their activities on the parks. We received excellent feedback on the workshop from operators, who have felt included and listened to as part of the process of developing their licence conditions.

(e) Baring Head

Approval has been secured for a tender to construct a new vehicle bridge over the Wainuiomata River and remove the existing steel/timber structure. The new design will be constructed on deep piles, of steel beams and a concrete deck. It is designed with sufficient flood clearance to handle modelled 100 year return flood levels and has an expected life of 80 or more years.



Locks have been replaced on all the buildings at the Baring Head lighthouse complex. A water tank installed at the garage and an Asbestos Report was completed for the site buildings. Naylor Love IS currently pricing the next phase of works, which includes the houses and some key services.

Friends of Baring Head have secured \$150,000 from the Wellington Community Trust that will go towards reroofing the two houses and commencing initial heritage interpretation work for the generator building/day visitor hub. Parks planning has commissioned an interpretation plan to guide development and implementation of story-telling work at Baring Head.

(f) New track at East Harbour

Construction of the Kāeaea Track in East Harbour’s northern forest is now complete. The newly built track (referred to variously in the past as the Muritai Track upgrade or Harbour Views Trail) provides a consistent standard for walkers as part of a circuit including the Mackenzie Track circuit. The name Kaeaea (a version of Karearea or NZ Falcon) was agreed with our mana whenua partners and the Eastbourne Community Board. Viewpoints along this circuit provide excellent locations for interpretative signage, which is being developed by the Customer Engagement team.

(g) Korokoro Dam

The timber viewing lookout and boardwalk at the historic Korokoro Dam (Belmont RP) has reached the end of its useful life and is being replaced with a fit for purpose fully compliant design that anticipates future flood events. Materials were flown to the site, along with track metal to complete the final touches of the Korokoro Dam/Oakleigh Street loop track upgrade.

(h) Historic Belmont Munitions bunkers

Condition inspections for the historic Munitions bunkers at Belmont Regional Park are complete, together with specialist engineer inspections for those requiring structural assessment. Repair work will be scheduled in the 2018/19 year. Several bunkers have been closed-off as a precaution due to structural/safety risks.

(i) TGM

Boundary fencing on the western side of the Transmission Gully designation in Belmont RP has been 95% completed allowing mitigation planting to get underway. An already retired area in the head of Cannons Creek has been set aside for additional mitigation, and planting is underway in this site.



(j) Dry Creek gate

A new electronic gate was installed at the entrance to Dry Creek (Belmont RP), offering operational efficiencies similar to other park entrances where these gates have been installed. Additional surfacing along with the repositioning of a gate has created more parking in this area which has remained extremely busy with budget campers throughout autumn.

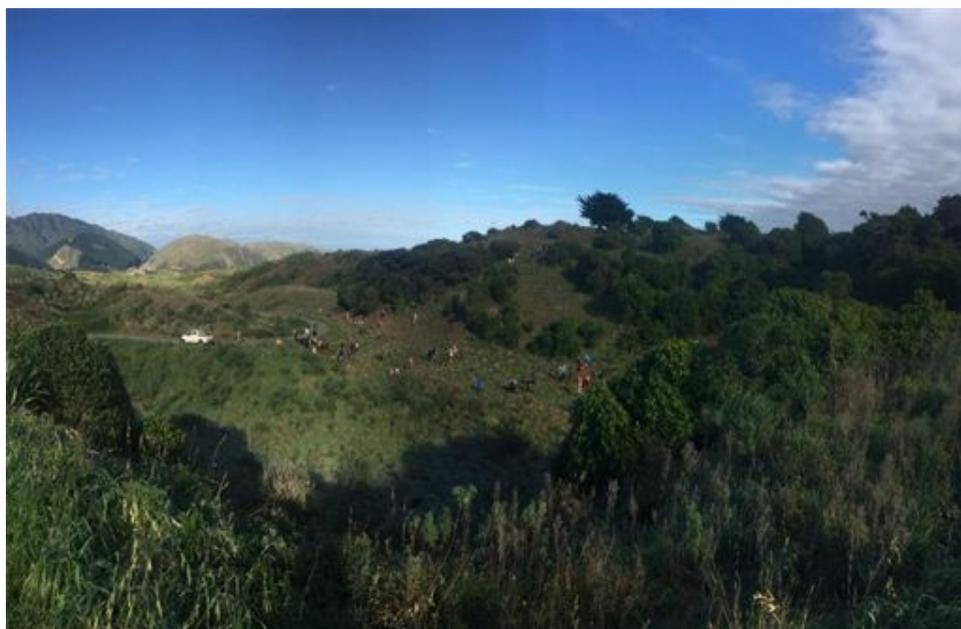
(k) Learner rider facility

The bike skills area at Stratton Street has been completed and is proving very popular with families looking for a child friendly experience.



(l) Planting days

The 2018 planting season is well underway with good turn outs to the Community, Corporate and Schools Arbor Day plantings completed to date.



(m) Warming Paekakariki

Thirty four poplar trees were removed from the banks of the Wainui Stream at QEP, many of which were at the end of their lives and contained sections of decay. All the salvaged wood was cut into rounds and offered to the local community as firewood. This proved extremely popular, with the five truckloads of wood removed over a 2 hour period.



(n) QEP workshop building

The new five bay implement shed/ workshop was completed at Queen Elizabeth Park.



(o) Mackays entranceway

Design drawings and specifications for the Mackays Crossing carpark and new exit road are being finalised and will go to tender in mid-August.

(p) Covered riding arena for RDA

Construction of the Wellington RDA arena has commenced with foundation works well underway at Battle Hill. Once these are fully cured the structure erection will begin. The opening of the building is scheduled for February 2019.

(q) Pou carpark

Final archaeological authority has been granted by Heritage New Zealand for the construction of the Pou carpark and installation of a gate to restrict access to Kaitawa Point at Whitireia Park. With this authority granted we can complete Porirua City Council consenting requirements, plan for the blessing of the site and get construction underway.

(r) Understanding hydrology

As part of the Maclean Trust-funded project in QEP a series of piezometer monitoring bores have been established to give a better understanding of the underlying water table. Bores at 3 and 6 metre depths cover the site. The results will help determine final planting sites and species along with areas to be further developed in wetland. The Parks department appreciates the support of the Environmental Science hydrology team in designing and installing the monitoring sites.



(s) Returns on investment in powered campsites

We have completed a year-long survey of the powered campsites at Kaitoke Regional Park to determine the return on investment and the cost of operating the sites. It showed the investment in these sites is paying off, with the total cost of operating four sites equating to \$1,343 for the year and revenue being \$6,792. As a result the sites are expected to pay for themselves within 2.5 years. 70% of visitors came from New Zealand with the remaining 30% from Germany, the UK, Australia, France and the Netherlands.



(t) KRP Festival

The contract for the *2019 Just Family Festival* at Kaitoke has been completed. This is a weekend long camping and arts/culture festival run by a not for profit entity that attracted over 40 performers and 670 participants in 2018.

(u) Forestry temporary access limits

Harvesting in Maymorn Forest (near Tunnel Gully) commenced in late June. Parks completed public consultation with the community which included a public meeting at the Te Marua Golf Club in late May. Recreational access through the site from Maymorn gate to the Maymorn Tunnel will be actively managed and available for the public on weekends. The harvesting is expected to take 6 months to complete, with the aim of finishing by Christmas. A Remutaka Cycle Trail diversion bypasses Maymorn and takes cyclists up Plateau Road to Station Drive. The Mangaroa Forest harvest is currently on hold while access issues are resolved with UHCC and a local landowner.



(v) Testing time for historic bridge

Engineering advice has been sought regarding the ongoing maintenance of the historic Pakuratahi Howe-Truss rail bridge. The existing hardwood timbers are on subject to a periodic drill/inspect monitoring system. Specific timber members are being identified for replacement.

(w) Smooth surfacing Tanes Track

Metalling on the popular Tane's Track in Tunnel Gully has been completed.

(x) Tunnel Gully access gate improvements

A new electronic gate was installed at the Tunnel Gully entrance in late June, greatly increasing operational efficiency and freeing up budgets for other areas in the forest. Prior to the installation Park Rangers manually opened the gate at 8:00am every day and it was closed at dusk by a local security firm.



(y) ARAC MOU signed

After more than 10 years in the making, GW has signed an MOU and Track Protocols with ARAC (Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee). This sets the context for working collaboratively on the forests recreational road and trail network.

(z) Akatarawa entrance upgrade

A fencing upgrade and replacement at the Maungakotukutuku entrance to the forest has improved the security and visual appearance at the entrance.

(aa) Trees

Gum tree felling was completed at the Kapiti Mana Motorcycle Club track at Bulls Run Road, enabling the club to complete their fencing.

(bb) Historic Wainuiomata Lower Dam

The historic Lower Dam has been subject to an independent Comprehensive Dam Safety engineering review by Stantec, commissioned by Wellington Water Ltd. The report makes a number of recommendations in terms of its ongoing maintenance and in relation to safety systems. They also recommend that the dam be integrated with Park's proposed engineering work (i.e. the Emergency Action Plan and Dam Safety Management System), and provide a level of integration and consistency.

(cc) Wainui spruce up

Several of the buildings, including the Ranger's house, the Hunters house and the chlorination shed, at the Wainuiomata Lower Dam have been stripped back and newly painted.

## 5. Climate Change

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

**6. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

**7. Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is not necessary

**8. Recommendations**

*That the Environment Committee*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report approved by:

**Nigel Corry**  
General Manager,  
Environment Management

Report approved by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
General Manager, Catchment  
Management

Report approved by

**Luke Troy**  
General Manager, Strategy