

Report 99.519

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Report to the Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee
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Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan : “Design Standard” Outcomes of Public Consultation

1. Purpose

To inform the Advisory Committee of the outcomes of the public consultation on the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan “Design Standard”, requested at its last meeting on 28 June 1999.

2. Background

The Committee adopted Report 99.354 (Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan : Consultation on “Design Standard”) at its last meeting on 28 June 1999. The report outlined the consultation process proposed and a programme for its achievement. Consultation was to be completed to allow reporting outcomes to the 20 September 1999 meeting of the Advisory Committee. The programme has been carried out and this report summarises the results of the consultation.

3. Consultation for the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan

The overall proposal for consultation on the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan was endorsed by the Advisory Committee at its meeting on 14 April 1999 (Report 99.148). The Community is to be consulted at a number of ‘milestones’ during the development of the Plan. A consultation database records submissions and responses. Submissions are registered chronologically and the data is regularly updated. Analysis of the database will ensure that submissions are reported on at the right time. This Report deals with the responses on the “Design Standard”.

4. The “Design Standard” Consultation Round

Report 99.354 approved a number of activities to facilitate the consultation round and a programme to achieve it. The programme is contained in **Attachment 1**.

4.1 Newspaper Insert

The four page newspaper insert published in the ‘Hutt News’ on 13 July and the ‘Upper Hutt Leader’ on 14 July totalled 47,000 copies. The insert contained detailed information on the “Design Standard” and included ‘For Your Consideration’ a set of eight questions to assist the community to respond.

4.2 Newsletter

“Living with the River – July 1999”, Newsletter No. 3 “Design Standard” based on the insert, was distributed in late July to recipients identified in Report 99.354. Copies were also made available at all meetings.

4.3 Meetings

A summary schedule of meetings held prior to 3 September 1999 is contained in **Attachment 2**. The meetings were with individuals or organisations significantly affected by the proposals or at locations where ‘risk based’ options have been recommended. Invitations, providing descriptions of the existing situation and the recommended measures, were prepared and individually distributed for each meeting. As a result of problems with the distribution of invitations, the Manor Park and Gemstone Drive meetings were repeated and Seaview landowners below Estuary Bridge were invited to respond individually.

4.4 Media Contact

Press releases, including the joint release from the Wellington Regional Council Chairperson and the Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt Mayors, were used by the local newspapers. Other articles were generated from the meeting with the Hutt City Works & Services Committee and the Upper Hutt City Council report on the “Design Standard”. Items for radio coverage were not arranged, although they had been considered.

5. The Response

The Community had opportunity to respond directly to Council initiatives (newspaper inserts, newsletter, newspaper articles) or to attend the public or area meetings.

The inserts, newsletters, meetings and targeted letters solicited response based on the eight questions listed under ‘For Your Consideration’. 47 responses on the “Design Standard” were received via letter (23), e-mail (14) and telephone (10) since the publication of the very first newspaper insert in March 1999. The schedule, attached as a separate document to this Order Paper, lists all responses, on the HRFMP to date, chronologically and summarises their content. The individual responses on the “Design Standard”, referenced in Section 6 of this report, are also included in the document separately attached to this Order Paper.

The record of each meeting outlines the issues raised and view points expressed. While no formal procedures were used, if the meeting agreed on a preference, this was noted and sent to all attendees for reference and confirmation.

6. What are the Outcomes? – The Community View

The Community view is summarised in this section.

Section 6.1 records the responses to the eight questions. Each submission is referenced by its number in the chronological record included in the document attached separately to this Order Paper. The ‘Comments’ on each question are derived from the written record of submissions and meeting records, and the ‘Trend’ is a subjective assessment developed over the consultation period.

6.1 ‘For Your Consideration’ – the Eight Questions from “*Living with the River*”

6.1.1 *Do you think the Hutt River flood protection works need upgrading?*

Yes - 3, 13, 33, 41, 42, 43, 47, 51

No - No support

Comments

- The substantial reporting on the scheme is accepted by the community.
- There is recognition of a need for a consistent and sustainable overall standard for the flood protection system.
- The ‘status quo’ does not have the confidence of the community.

Trend

- Universally to require an upgrade to a higher standard with assured quality.

6.1.2 *Do you have a preference for an option, and if so why?*

1900 - No support

2300 uniform - 39

2800 uniform - 33, 37, 45, 53

2300 risk based - 2, 14, 29, 40, 42, 44, 46, 47, 50

2800 risk based - 38, 43

Comments

- The concept of a risk based "Design Standard" was accepted as reasonable.
- Works to a 2300 standard should not compromise the ability to upgrade in future.
- The concept of bridge upgrades to a 2800 standard at the time of programmed replacement or renewal was universally accepted.

Comments cont.

- In support of a 2800 standard the cost was seen as small compared to the cost of damage to infrastructure and public health.
- The marginal extra cost of a 2800 over a 2300 standard would justify selecting it.
- The issue of balance of risk between floods and earthquakes was raised. The relative application of resources to reduce the risks from the seismic and slope hazard as well as from flooding should be closely considered in the “Design Standard” selection. Some studies to assist with this analysis were suggested. (48)

Trend

- The majority accept the Advisory Committee recommendation as a minimum standard.

6.1.3 Should the effects of climate change be considered?

Yes - 2, 40, 41, 47, 51

No - 42

Conditionally - See comment

Comment

- There was some scepticism about global warming, but generally it was accepted as a factor for consideration.

Trend

- To be conservative in selection of design standard to accommodate potential global warming.

6.1.4 How fast should the works be implemented? (20, 30, 40 years)

20 - 2, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 (\$4 million/year), 47, 53

30 - No response

40+ - 51

Comments

- General support for a 20-25 year (\approx \$3-4m/year) expenditure programme.
- Support for a risk prioritised suite of works whatever the implementation period or design standard selected.
- A short intensive construction period of 5-10 years would maximise benefit and minimise risk of being affected by a large flood. (14)
- A 40 year implementation period is generally not preferred.

Trend

- Generally faster than 40 years, 20-25 years preferred.

6.1.5 ***Can you accept the indicative flood protection rate increases?***

Yes - 2, 41, 42, 47, 51

No - No response

Conditional - 38

Comments

- Rates and increases are seen as small in relation to benefit.
- If rates are a burden, the project should be co-ordinated with other rate demanding projects. (38)

Trend

- Rate increases are acceptable for all options and annual expenditures presented, although both this response and the response to Question 4 may have been influenced by the range of data presented.

6.1.6 ***Are you comfortable with the risks to you, your family and future generations – for your preferred options?***

Yes - 2, 41, 47, 50, 51

No - No response

Comments

- Generally a preference to deal with the problem now by making a conservative choice.
- Selection of any standard now should not compromise opportunity to upgrade later.

Trend

- Generally comfortable, but still concern that **any** risk from flooding will exist.

6.1.7 ***Can you accept the Residual Risk for each option?***

Yes - 2, 33, 42, 51

No - No response

Conditional - 1

Comments

- Concept of Residual Risk was generally well understood.
- A desire to see Residual Risk well planned for and minimised.
- Seen as difficult to introduce land use/building controls in the built up areas.

Trends

- Support for minimal residual risk.
- Support for non-structural options, particularly comprehensive emergency management procedures.

6.1.8 *What is most important to you about the Hutt River and its environment?*

Response - 2, 10, 28, 31, 33, 39, 41, 42, 47, 51

Comments

- Wide support for the value of the river and its environs as an important recreational resource.
- Some concern that the quality of the fishery was deteriorating.

Trend

- To recognise and enhance the multiple and diverse values of the river and recreational and environment opportunities through the Environmental Strategy.

6.2 Location by Location up the River**6.2.1 *Below Estuary Bridge***

No response.

6.2.2 *Shandon Golf Club*

No particular view on “Design Standard” but generally they would prefer no increases to stopbank height and base width. Flood protection measures could be incorporated into course development.

6.2.3 *Alicetown**Meeting*

- A requirement that non-structural measures, especially emergency management, were well integrated into the Plan.

Submission (33)

- A 2800 standard preferred for the stopbank at Alicetown.

6.2.4 *Woollen Mills Corner*

The owner of the ‘Woollen Mills’ has been advised of possible impact on the property but discussions have not yet been held.

6.2.5 *Ava Rail Bridge*

A first meeting has been held with Tranz Rail. The initial impression is that bridge replacement is not desired by Tranz Rail. Investigations of the options, including improving the existing bridge, are continuing.

There is wide recognition by the public that this problem should be addressed. There is also concern for flood protection and transport impacts.

6.2.6 ***Strand Park***

The Ministry for Education and Hutt Valley High School have been advised of the possible impact on Strand Park and this will be discussed at the proposed meeting.

6.2.7 ***Hutt Central Business District***

Western Ward Submission (38)

- Looks forward to completion of bank edge protection at Block Road (Melling).

Submission (4)

- Wishes to improve Block Road situation so the road is closed less often.

6.2.8 ***Hathaway Avenue, Boulcott; Hutt and Boulcott Golf Clubs***

Public Meeting

- Acceptance that there should be a continuous stopbank to an appropriate standard (2300+).
- The need for a ponding area in the golf courses was queried.
- Stopbank location is the main issue with private land owners stating a preference for the bank not to be located adjacent, or on, property boundaries.

Golf Clubs

- Both accept the need for a continuous stopbank to an appropriate standard.
- Both would prefer a lower standard to a higher one as the visual and physical impact is less, but otherwise could accept any standard.
- Neither golf club wants a bank which runs through the fairways.
- Both clubs prefer a bank located as far to the east as is compatible with existing stopbank locations, or along Harcourt-Werry Drive on their western boundaries.

6.2.9 ***Transpower Sub-station***

Discussion with Transpower have been ongoing. It appears that Transpower's previous preference for relocation may have changed. Further discussion will resolve this issue.

6.2.10 ***Rentokil***

The WRC Property Consultant is discussing options for this site with the owners.

6.2.11 ***Connolly Street and other houses directly affected***

Discussion with the owners of houses which could be directly affected by stopbank upgrades has been ongoing. They were invited to the meeting. Further discussion is needed on this.

6.2.12 *Belmont*

Public Meeting

- General acceptance that stopbanking may not be desirable but wanted an analysis of costs and effects of a bank like that at Manor Park.
- Preference that bank edge protection should be installed to the design standard for the reach.
- The issue of the risk to individual homes needs to be resolved when a floor level survey has been carried out. This will identify any requirement for house raising, relocation or other measures.

Western Ward Submission (38)

- ‘Householders of at risk houses need to determine their own solution recognising that a stopbank could require house removal or relocation.’
- Edge protection works at Carter and Owen Streets need urgent repair.

6.2.13 *Manor Park*

Public Meeting

- The 2300 option with appropriate edge protection is supported.

Western Ward Committee (38)

- Complete stopbank system.
- Floor level survey to identify houses/buildings most at risk in a breach or overflow.
- Emergency management needs to recognise risk at each property location and buildings.

6.2.14 *Silverstream Bridge*

Upper Hutt City Council has identified replacement of this bridge in its Strategic Plan but this could be some time off.

There is public concern that this bridge, which is the principal transport link when the River Road is closed, is at risk. The bridge also carries the Regional Council’s (WRC) main water main and this is a concern for both WRC and water consumers.

6.2.15 *Whirinaki Crescent*

Upper Hutt City Council (43)

- An upgrade of the Whirinaki Crescent stopbank to a 2800 standard is desired.

6.2.16 *Moonshine Bridge*

Discussion required with Transit New Zealand to highlight the present constriction caused by this bridge and possible upgrading in conjunction with future State Highway 2 improvements.

6.2.17 *Totara Park*

Public Meeting

- The 2300 option for Totara Park was acceptable.

6.2.18 *Gemstone Drive/Bridge Road*

Public Meeting

- Sought a 2300 standard for Gemstone Drive area.
- Bank protection for Bridge Road should be to a 2300 standard to reflect the upgrade at Gemstone Drive.
- Sought that the options for Bridge Road properties such as relocation, compensation and house raising be considered under HRFMP.
- Accepted that stopbanking was not a viable option for Bridge Road.

Upper Hutt City Council (43)

- Recommends the 2300 option for Gemstone Drive.

Submissions

- Does not accept Bridge Road ‘write off’. Concern that this area would be overlooked. (51)
- Does not accept house raising as an option for his property. (51)
- A structural option is preferred for Gemstone Drive. This requires a stopbank upgrade and extension as proposed. Non-structural solutions, instead of a structural one, are inappropriate. (58)

6.3 **Submissions from Territorial Local Authorities**

Responses received from Upper Hutt City Council (43) and the Western Ward Committee of the Hutt City Council (38) are reported in earlier sections.

6.4 **Submissions received after 3 September 1999**

These will be reported at the Committee meeting. Meetings have been sought but not yet held with Transit New Zealand, Transpower and the Ministry of Education/Hutt Valley High School.

7. **Overview**

7.1 **The objectives of the Consultation Programme have been achieved**

The objectives for the programme in Report 99.354 have been met and are reported on below.

Objective 1

Stakeholders in the Plan will have had the opportunity to indicate preferences for a “Design Standard”, the suite of works, funding and timing.

Comment

Information on the “Design Standard” was included in the newspaper insert, the newsletter, newspaper articles, and other information, which were distributed widely. A full briefing was also given at each meeting. The community was invited to respond to this information.

Objective 2

Potentially directly affected property owners will be aware of their situation, i.e. the risk and choices to deal with it.

Comment

Property owners were then contacted directly by mail or sent an invitation to a local meeting. The invitation provided specific background information which was discussed in detail at the meetings. Response was sought at the meetings.

Objective 3

Ratepayers will be informed of risk, affects or impacts and consequences of the choice of “Design Standard”. This includes impact on rates.

Comment

These factors were directly reported in the newspaper inserts, Newsletter No. 3 and were discussed at all meetings.

Although a comprehensive programme has been carried out, the response has been relatively low. The reasons for this are difficult to ascertain but could include:

- apathy, other local bodies in the region and other parts of New Zealand report similar responses.
- failure to generate interest as this is essentially a non-topical, process matter.
- information, maybe it was not presented in an appealing way. However, most feedback on this has been positive.
- this is a non-issue. A number of property owners in the Seaview area stated “if it comes we will deal with it”. Future work will need to address this.
- confidence that the issue is already being well addressed and needs no further input. A high level of confidence in the quality of the public process and the information supporting it has been stated by a wide section of the public.

7.2 Looking Ahead – Future Consultation Opportunities

All parties and a number of other representative groups will be consulted in the development of the Environmental Strategy and the non-structural options. Consultation on “Design Standard” has established that some groups such as; iwi, disabled and ethnic minorities and property owners adjacent to the river or proposed works, are more directly affected by and have more interest in these components of the Plan.

The public process for the development of the Regional Council’s Long-term Financial Strategy provides another opportunity for agency and public input on funding of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan outcomes -particularly the "Design Standard" works.

Finally, comment on the Draft Plan will be sought before approval by the Advisory Committee.

7.3 In Summary

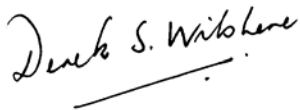
- A comprehensive programme of consultation has been completed and the community response reported on.
- Issues affecting individuals and groups have been identified and discussed with those involved or affected.
- The limited time available has, of necessity, required the consultation to be targeted, but this does not appear to have caused any problems. As a spin-off, we now have a comprehensive database covering both affected and interested members of the community.
- Where conflicts or concerns regarding options or affects have been identified, the process for resolving these has been established.
- The consultation programme has been well received and the responses have indicated satisfaction with the process.
- The results of the programme will substantially guide members of the Advisory Committee to make the ‘right choice’ of “Design Standard”. Future consultation on the Plan will confirm this.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- (1) *Receive and endorse this report.*
- (2) *Agree that a letter of thanks be sent to all submitters and meeting attendees.*

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Attachment 1 : Consultation Programme

Attachment 2 : Consultation Schedule

Consultation Database and Submissions Received (**attached separately**)