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Report to the Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee
from Alistair Cross, Resource Planner, Flood Protection

**Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan : Consultation Draft
Endorsement to Release for Public Feedback**

1. Purpose

- To seek endorsement from the Advisory Committee to release the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan: Consultation Draft.
- To explain the basic components of the Consultation Draft, discuss the process to date, and highlight the drafting and process steps required to complete the Plan.
- To enable the Advisory Committee to be confident about the content and standard of the Consultation Draft before endorsing it for release.

2. Background

2.1 A Draft Plan is Ready for Consultation

The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan: Consultation Draft is now ready for Advisory Committee consideration prior to its proposed release on 15 March 2001.

The Advisory Committee needs to endorse the Consultation Draft before consultation can commence. This report is intended to help the Advisory Committee reach an appropriate comfort level with the Consultation Draft and the drafting process that produced it.

2.2 Hutt and Upper Hutt Officers Provided Advice

In the limited time available, officers from the HRFMP working groups have provided valuable input to the Working Draft of this Plan.

The Regional Council has strengthened the Consultation Draft's key messages, and fine-tuned its overall content and purpose, as a result of feedback provided.

2.3 Key Plan Drafting Issues Clarified

Some key issues clarifying the plan drafting process and the status of the draft are discussed in Section 3 below. These include:

- Why we need to consult on the draft Plan now.
- The standard of this draft.
- How we propose to consult the community.
- How the Consultation Draft fits into the overall drafting process.
- Unresolved issues requiring work prior to the May Plan hearing.

Attachments 1 and 2 provide additional background to the drafting process and the intended Plan content. Additional content to be added to the Consultation Draft before release will be covered verbally at the meeting.

3. Considerations before Endorsing the Draft Plan

3.1 Why we need to Consult Now?

The floodplain management planning process for the Hutt Valley has relied strongly on public involvement.

The three councils have a responsibility to allow sufficient time for the public to provide feedback on the Consultation Draft. Releasing the Consultation Draft now provides the community with reasonable time to gain familiarity with the document, and a clear opportunity to make submissions prior to the hearing on 24 May 2001.

3.2 What about the Standard of this Draft?

The Consultation Draft has been scoped, information collated, and a draft produced, all in a relatively short period. The main focus has been to ensure the public will get full and clear information on the flood hazard and measures that will be implemented.¹

While the Consultation Draft provides adequate plans and maps depicting the flood hazard, it lacks the full range of photos, graphics and presentation effects intended for the final document. The text also requires work to improve readability. Work will begin in March to develop these aspects of the document and will continue through until production of the Draft Plan, to be presented to the Advisory Committee on 12 July 2001.

¹ The draft Plan provides full information regarding:

- The flooding problem
- Structural and non-structural measures to be implemented
- Concepts and ideas associated with the Environmental Strategy
- The processes followed to select measures
- Policy backing the Plan, selected measures and Environmental Strategy
- Funding and implementation arrangements
- Plan monitoring and review

The community's assessment of the Consultation Draft will not be disadvantaged by its current plain layout.

Attachment 1 provides a guide to the Plan's intended content.

3.3 How we propose to Consult the Community

When the Advisory Committee has endorsed the Consultation Draft, it will be released for public consideration and submissions. The proposed deadline for submissions is mid April.

Consultation will involve:

- A press release, newspaper insert and newsletter prior to releasing the draft Plan.
- An advertisement in the Evening Post, and other regional daily newspapers.
- Presentations to the Hutt and Upper Hutt City Councils.
- A one month submission phase.

Public feedback will be particularly sought on the Consultation Draft's structure, content, readability and ease of use.

No local area meetings to present and discuss the draft Plan are programmed, unless these groups request them. Local areas have already been consulted on Plan measures and the Environmental Strategy, which have now been determined. Public meetings about Plan content and structure will probably be of limited value.

Attachment 3 highlights the proposed consultation strategy to completion of the Plan.

3.4 How the Draft Plan fits into the Overall Drafting Process

The drafting process to date has been very intense. Scoping for the Plan was completed in August 2000, and base information for the text collated by mid November. The main drafting of the text began only in October, and by mid January 2001 the Working Draft was ready for review by Hutt and Upper Hutt City Council staff, and other Regional Council staff.

The main steps following endorsement of the Consultation Draft are:

• Public consultation and submissions	➤ Submissions close 17 April
• Public hearing of submissions and recommendations on re-drafting by the Advisory Committee	➤ Hearing 24 May
• Advisory Committee recommends the Draft Plan to WRC Landcare Committee	➤ meeting 12 July
• UHCC and HCC endorse the Draft Plan	➤ meetings in July
• Landcare Committee recommends Draft Plan to WRC Policy and Finance Committee for adoption	➤ meeting 26 July
• Regional Council adopt the Plan	➤ meeting 23 August
• Public launch of adopted Plan	➤ early October 2001

The drafting process follows the statutory model, although the Plan is not a statutory document. The statutory approach encourages a good standard of public involvement, and includes appropriate checks and balances in decision-making.

Attachment 2 provides a schedule of plan drafting steps, including the standards expected at each stage in the process.

4. **Communication**

Section 3.3 covers the methods proposed to inform the public about the Consultation Draft and the associated drafting process. These methods will be discussed in more detail at the March Advisory Committee meeting.

5. **Recommendations**

- (1) *That the report be received and the contents noted.*
- (2) *That the Advisory Committee endorse the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan: Consultation Draft for release.*

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Attachment 1 : Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan : Consultation Draft
(This will be sent separately, prior to the meeting)

Attachment 2 : Producing the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan :
Scope, Structure and Content

Attachment 3 : Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan : Drafting Steps
(Version 1 : January 2001)

Attachment 4 : HRFMP Consultation Programme : Consultation Draft Release to Plan Launch