

Flood Protection Manager's Report for period ending 21 February 2003

1. Manager's comments

New staff

Sam Richards joined us as on 21 January 2003 in the position of Engineer. Sam has had three years experience since completing his Civil engineering degree. He worked in a local engineering consultancy doing mostly domestic and commercial structural work. Sam's main role will be to support Daya Atapattu with the HRFMP implementation, plus some asset management work and general investigations and design.

Kim Hazlewood, a Riverhand based at the Mabey Road Depot resigned. As at 21 February we need to replace Kim and still have one engineering vacancy to fill.

Flood Protection Operating Plan

Preparing the new Flood Protection 2003–2013 Operating Plan has been a major task, despite the very good base we had to work from with the previous 2000–2010 plan. The plan preparation has been one of updating and refinement, rather than radical change.

The next three years should see a major step forward with our capital works programmes, completion of flood hazard investigations on the Waitohu Stream and Mangaroa River, further consolidation of our ongoing asset maintenance work and some significant environmental enhancement initiatives in all three major rivers.

Mabey Road Depot

I have engaged Peter O'Brien, Council's property consultant, to manage a feasibility study of options for the Mabey Road Depot. Flood Protection is the only occupant of Mabey Road now that Utility Services (Laboratory and the Pipeline maintenance team) have shifted to their new base adjacent to the Waterloo Pump Station. At its simplest we appear to have two options:

- Stay at Mabey Road, consolidate into the existing main building and dispose of the surplus land for housing. The surplus land includes part of the existing entrance driveway, and where the former laboratory and pipe store were located.
- Sell Mabey Road and find a new smaller site (most likely at Wingate) suited to the needs of Flood Protection.

Peter has completed an initial review, which suggests that staying at Mabey Road, and selling the surplus land may be the favoured option. We will now seek independent survey and valuation advice to confirm or otherwise, the outcome of this initial review.

2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Otaihanga Domain stopbank

Agreement has been reached with Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) and the adjacent residents to construct a flood wall on the Makora Road boundary of Otaihanga Domain. The completed concept design includes an exposed aggregate and shell finish on the wall, a walkway on the Domain side of the wall and intensive planting with native grasses. The design has been well received.

Work is now proceeding on gaining the necessary formal approvals to construct the wall. We require resource consents from Greater Wellington – The Regional Council (GWRC) and KCDC, and written approval from KCDC as landowner and utility operator.

The estimated cost of the wall is \$153,000, which is under the \$184,000 budget approval. Work is programmed to start in April 2003 and is expected to be substantially complete by June 2003. Some of the environmental planting may run into next financial year, as it will be done in conjunction with the KCDC.

2.2 Friends of the Waikanae River

A Friends meeting was held on 27 November 2002. No specific issues arose that need to be attended to by GWRC. An outline of GWRC's activities over the next few months was given to the group to ensure they were fully informed of ongoing river works.

3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Otaki River mouth lagoon enhancement works

Construction of the vehicle barriers and car parking areas is substantially complete. Only a few small tidy up activities remain to fully complete this phase of the project. Expenditure is within budget.

3.2 Friends of the Otaki River

Two meetings of the Otaki Friends have been held since the last report.

The AGM of the Friends Group was held on 27 November 2002 and an executive meeting was held on 11 December 2002. At the AGM Don Hunn stood down as chairman, although he remains on the executive, and Peter Pope was elected as chairman. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting, which was followed by a presentation by Bruce Dix of the Department of Conservation on the freshwater native fish present in the Otaki area.

The Executive meeting on 11 December 2002 was primarily to discuss the Friends submission on the KCDC future water strategy and did not require GWRC involvement.

4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen project

Council approval of a tender for the Strand Park River realignment contract is a significant step forward with this project. However, we are not in a position to formally accept a tender until we get 'access for work' approval from the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Hutt Valley High School and the Regional Office of MOE have executed the Strand Park transfer agreement. It is currently with MOE head office for approval. The next step is for MOE to send the agreement to Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) for their approval of the land transfer process. In a worst case scenario, this approval could take up to three months, but we are hoping to have it completed by the end of March.

We expect MOE to grant 'access for work' approval once LINZ accepts the land transfer procedure. Letting this contract will be a significant milestone in implementing the HRFMP. We will celebrate this with a press release (and possibly a drink on level 9).

4.2 Belmont improvements

The Belmont improvements project is progressing well on several fronts.

The preliminary design for edge protections and environmental enhancement is complete. We will present these proposals to the community at a public meeting scheduled for 13 March 2003. The designs will be finalised after considering community comments in April 2003. We have also consulted with all Belmont landowners affected by encroachment issues and the proposed house raising.

Out of the 13 houses targeted for house raising in Belmont, it is not necessary to raise five. The owners of the remaining eight houses located in Norfolk Street do not want their houses raised, instead, they have opted for a stopbank arrangement to protect their houses from Hutt River flooding. The Hutt River Advisory Committee (HRAC) accepted our recommendation that a stopbank be constructed at the southern end of Norfolk Street (in 2003/04), and that no house raising is required at present.

There are 20 properties with encroachments on to Council land. At the November 2002 meeting, the Landcare Committee approved guidelines for dealing with these encroachments. In the majority of cases, landowners will meet the Council guidelines. However, in five cases, variations from Council guidelines are necessary to achieve a practical and reasonable outcome. The HRAC has accepted our recommendations that these proposed variations be approved. Overall we propose to issue 17 licences to accommodate gardens, minor structural intrusions and the variations recommended to the Advisory Committee.

4.3 Non-structural measures

We are making good progress in developing non-structural measures. We have commenced drafting district plan provisions for both Upper Hutt City Council and Hutt City Council district plans. The Regional Council is leading the provisions drafting work for Upper Hutt while Hutt City is leading the process for Hutt City Council district plan.

Work on six emergency management projects is progressing well. IGNS earthquake hazard study and documenting Internet information on flooding are substantially complete. All six projects will be completed by June 2003.

5. Porirua Stream

5.1 Findlay Street

Ian Boothroyd from Kingett Michell Ltd has been engaged to undertake the ecological assessment of the Findlay Street reach of the Porirua Stream. Ian will look at the:

- Ecological characteristics of this section of the stream.
- Assess the likely effects of Options 1 and 2 for the reach.
- Consider what mitigation opportunities exist for Options 1 and 2.

The study fieldwork is due to be completed in early March with a draft report due later that month. Following completion of the report discussions will be re-initiated with officers from Wellington City Council.

5.2 Seton Nossiter safety review

Little progress has again been made with completing the review. Our consultant advisors Damwatch Services Ltd are heavily engaged with a number of other projects. We will continue to try and obtain an acceptable delivery date for the review.

6. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during the second quarter (October – December 2002) and January 2003:

	2 nd Quarter and January 2003	YTD
Requests brought forward	15	13
Additional requests received	55	101
Responses provided	56	100
Outstanding requests	14	14

Work on the review of the Kapiti Coast District Plan flood hazard maps and planning provisions has continued with a set of final *consultation draft* flood hazard maps provided to the KCDC in the last week of February. KCDC's Environmental Management Committee considered a report on the proposed Plan change on 28 November 2002 and endorsed the District Planner's proposed community consultation approach. Directly affected landowners will be consulted during March and initial meetings have already been held with iwi and community boards.

As previously reported (Report 02.604, Landcare Committee 8 October 2002) from now on the programme for the Kapiti flood hazard review (and proposed Plan change) will be determined by KCDC, with the Flood Protection Department providing assistance as needed.

The architect developing the proposed Melling Skateboard Park (to be partly in the Melling Station overflow carpark, at the north-eastern end of Melling Bridge) has provided final design details. These have been assessed by staff from both Flood Protection and the Transport Division, and are considered acceptable. Hutt City Council has been advised accordingly.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

Hutt River

Two rock linings have been extended in the “River Works Agreement reach” of the Hutt River over the last period, one at Maoribank, and the other at Moonshine. Maintenance has also been completed on the rock line at Marsden bend in the lower river. A total of 2,080 tonne of rock rip-rap was used to complete this work. Prices are now being sought from contractors for the supply of maintenance rock to complete this part of the works programme for this financial year.

Routine maintenance of floodgates and debris arrestors has been completed. The river access tracks were metalled and graded prior to Christmas. This removes large potholes and redefines the drainage channels. Survey blocks have been installed at the Owen Street groynes so that erosion at the tips of the groynes can now be accurately monitored.

The annual control programme to remove, and poison, Old Mans Beard, Wild Ginger and Japanese Honeysuckle is progressing well. We have employed a contractor to assist us with this work.

So far this year 6,330.92 cubic metres of gravel has been extracted from the lower river beaches between the Kennedy Good bridge and Ewen Bridge. The extraction programme in the lower river is running very smoothly.

Hutt River Trail

Maintenance of the Hutt River trail was undertaken at Melling, Mills Street and Taita Gorge and a new access stile/barrier has been installed at Hulls Creek.

Hutt River ranging services

The ranging service is progressing well, with positive feedback from river users. There were several good press releases in December on the use of the Hutt River and it’s environment and an excellent interview of Thane Walls by the Dominion Post on Boxing Day.

Our existing working relationships have been further developed with the Police, Upper Hutt City Council, Hutt City Council and also with the Ministry of Fisheries in relation to illegal fishing nets in the estuarine area of the river. Thane reports good relations with the majority river corridor users, although “educating” motorcycle and 4WD users on the appropriate-use of the river remains a challenge.

There have been several public recreational events over this period. Highlights include the Japanese delegation on the 26 November 2002, and the Councillors, Rotary and interested groups tour of the Hutt River trail on the 7 December 2002. A hazard plan and consent form for events has been formulated, and a concession policy has been drafted.

Litter dumping continues to be a problem, with a dozen-dumped cars removed since early December and general household rubbish being dumped on a weekly basis.

Signs have been installed in several areas; motorbike prohibition signs at Whakatiki and Belmont, and speed restriction signs installed in the Pomare/Taita area.

Watercourses

Stream runs to remove fallen and overhanging trees have been completed in the Stokes Valley Stream, the Wainuiomata River, and a clearing run is currently underway in the Porirua Stream.

Plans to extract gravel from the culverts under the Korokoro Stream are progressing well. We have agreement from the adjacent landowner for the use of their property for access and to stockpile gravel.

Work for other departments

Repairs have been undertaken on the air quality site at Waterloo after vandals had damaged it.

The Taita recorder tower has been flushed. Signs for ground water sites were installed at McEwan Park and the Esplanade reserve. A temperature probe pipe was installed on the Waikanae River recorder station.

7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

Otaki River

No in-channel works were undertaken during this period. All lower reach stopbanks were mown with the long-reach mower, and all lower reach berms and stopbanks were sprayed for noxious weed control.

Work resumed at the Otaki Estuary enhancement site with the installation of the carpark bollards at the floodgates, the first stage of the round log fencing of the northern part of the lagoon and placement of concrete block car exclusion barriers. The second project information sign was erected.

Waikanae River

The annual stream run is underway in the Waikanae River, with minor bank edge strengthening and pole planting undertaken at the left bank below the SH Bridge weir, along the lower Jim Cooke Park right bank, and at the Gas Crossing right bank. The weir at Kebbells' Corner was extended on the right bank, and the left bank rock wall was repaired, in all requiring a total of 120 tonnes of rock.

The berm area below the Dricon Plant was levelled, with all rubbish and noxious weed cleared from around and over adjacent native plantings.

A number of poplar and pine trees were cut down opposite the Otaihanga Domain. The trees were considered a safety hazard to the public who frequent the right bank and use the footbridge.

Kapiti watercourses

The Mangapouri Stream was hand-cleared of rubbish, aquatic and noxious weeds (Old Mans Beard) through St Peter Chanel School.

The middle reach of the Rangiuru Stream was machine-cleared of aquatic weed growth.

7.3 Operations support [Steve Murphy]

Waiwhetu Stream

Renewal of the resource consent to apply diquat to the stream is progressing. There were 20 submissions to the application, with only one in opposition. The opposing submitter has withdrawn their opposition after an agreed amendment was made to one of the consent conditions. No hearing is required and the decision will be made by the Environment Committee at its next meeting.

A group of neighbours who live beside the stream at the end of Hayward Terrace have been lobbying officers for flood protection works to protect their properties. In November 2001, floodwater from the Waiwhetu Stream entered several garages and one car was damaged (See activity reports for March 2002). Similar problems occur elsewhere on the stream but there are currently no improvement works planned for the Waiwhetu Stream. A comprehensive review of the Waiwhetu flood risk is probably warranted.

A start on the clearing work opposite Griffins is planned for early March. The work will open up the channel to increase its flood carrying capacity and should reduce the flood risk to both the aforementioned Hayward Terrace properties, and to the immediately neighbouring Riverside Drive properties.

Porirua gravel

The consent application to removal of gravel from the lower reach of the stream has been lodged. It is planned to remove approximately 4,500 m³ in total over two years. The extraction needs to be spread over two years to stay within existing budgets.

The first stage will start immediately the consent is granted, probably mid-to-late March. Access to the stream will be from the commuter carpark beside the upper Station Road Bridge. It will be necessary to close off up to 12 carparks to provide room for turning trucks. The first task will be to construct an access ramp from the stream to enable trucks to climb out with a full load of gravel.

Geoff Dick
Manager, Flood Protection