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**Committee** Hutt River Advisory  
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## **Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan: Progress report on proposed changes to Hutt City Council *District Plan***

### **1. Purpose**

To update the Committee on progress made towards implementing the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) and proposed changes to the Hutt City Council *District Plan*.

### **2. Background**

At the last Hutt River Advisory Committee we reported that a number of residents had raised concerns about the proposed District Plan changes and the extent of physical works carried out. Those concerns were expressed at two meetings held by residents. In summary, residents concerns related to the erosion hazard line, Norfolk Street stopbank and the general flood hazard. Residents also strongly expressed the view that they were not fully informed of the flooding and erosion risks that remain after completion of the works at Belmont.

We were disappointed at the strength of the resident's reaction to the proposed District Plan change, given the individual contact GW staff had with residents, and the meetings and newsletters we sent to affected residents. However, we took on board those concerns. In response, we undertook a number of actions (outlined in report 04.317) the outcomes of which are summarised below.

### **3. Consultation**

#### **3.1 Public Meetings at Belmont**

A newsletter and invitation was sent to the entire Belmont community as well as other individuals and groups affected by the Plan Change to attend a public meeting on the 22 July 2004. Despite being a wet night approximately 50 residents attended this meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to answer

residents concerns and inform them of the further investigations into the Erosion Hazard Line, (now called Building Setback Line) Norfolk Street stopbank and the general flooding issue affecting Carter, Edwin, Charles, Owen and Richard Streets.

Since that meeting we have met with four property owners individually (including one in Stokes Valley) and sent written responses to six property owners (including three of the four property owners we met with).

A second public meeting was held on the 2 September to report back to the community our findings. Approximately 25 residents attended this meeting.

## **4. Building Setback Line (Erosion Hazard Line)**

### **4.1 Residents meeting and feedback**

- Residents believed that there should be no erosion hazard on their properties once the edge protection works were completed.
- Residents requested that further erosion protection works are undertaken, if necessary, to shift the hazard line outside their private property.

We invited the seven affected property owners to attend a small group meeting at Belmont to discuss the erosion hazard line. The meeting was well attended and very constructive.

We also met with or wrote to several affected property owners about their individual properties.

The residents who attended the meeting requested the following matters be reported to the Hutt River Advisory Committee.

#### ***Resident's Preferred Position***

- *Total protection to remove residual erosion hazard from private property.*
- *Greater Wellington Regional Council should spend the money allocated in the original budget for Belmont.*

Residents think that GW/HCC officers should recommend this approach to the Hutt River Advisory Committee.

#### ***District Plan Option***

*If the line is to be included in the District Plan then it should be labelled appropriately as a building setback.*

*Include a better description of what it is and the potential risk in the District Plan.*

*Include a clear statement about the ability to undertake permitted activities on the landward side of the line (similar to the rest of Belmont) in the District Plan.*

## **4.2 Summary of Actions to be undertaken by GW/HCC**

In response to the residents concerns we agreed to:

- Rename Erosion Hazard Line to Building Setback Line.
- Undertake additional minor works on the riverside of 11 Charles Street. These works will enable the building setback line to be removed from the existing house.
- Extend the existing stormwater drain – this will enable the building setback line to be moved closer to the river benefiting 10 Charles Street and 9 Edwin Street.
- Make minor adjustments to the building setback line after the completed works were surveyed. This enables the building setback line to be moved closer to the river benefiting 10 Richard Street.
- Include a better description of what the building setback line is and the potential risk in the District Plan.

The design of the Belmont edge works involved a careful consideration of protecting properties to the agreed standard, as well as river morphology and environmental considerations, and cost. We believe we came up with a very good design that met all the design objectives. In saying this, we also recognise that we did not meet residents' expectations. After meeting with the most affected property owners we are making the changes described above.

We also agree that the terminology we used initially (erosion hazard line) overstated the potential risk to property. We have suggested the line is more appropriately called a building setback line. We have agreed that it would be appropriate to reflect this risk in any proposed District Plan change.

## **5. Norfolk Street Stopbank**

### **5.1 Feedback**

- Residents stated that they were of the understanding that there would be no flood hazard once the partial stopbank was completed.
- A number of residents expressed strongly held views that they did not want a stopbank that required sandbagging.
- Residents were also concerned about the age and number of residents that might be available to sandbag, should that be required in a flood event.

- Some residents considered that sand bagging could be done effectively to prevent river flooding. Others had doubts over whether the gap can be effectively closed every time.
- Residents now prefer a permanent stopbank with the flood hazard removed.
- Some residents, at the last public meeting, did not agree with the findings about the extent of the stormwater problem. They believed the 1976 storm was a one off event, due to the specific circumstances at that time, which would not happen again since a significant amount of works has been undertaken. For this reason residents consider that the issue of river flooding is the more important one.

### ***Residents Preferred Position***

A full stopbank with no District Plan controls is preferred. If this can not be achieved a stopbank with gates and no District Plan controls is also preferred.

## **5.2 Summary of Actions to be undertaken GW/HCC**

Following our investigations and feedback from the residents we intend to:

- Install gate/stoplogs at the Norfolk Street stopbank; and recommend that HCC proceed with the proposed District Plan controls.

We have listened to residents' feedback that sandbagging was no longer their preferred option.

Civil Design Services have investigated the stormwater run-off issues for us. They have concluded that while the stormwater system from the hills above Belmont has been improved since 1976, there remains the potential for significant amounts of stormwater to flow down Norfolk Street in a storm event and that it is not feasible to divert this stormwater outside Norfolk Street. On this basis we consider that it would not be prudent to permanently close the gap in the stopbank.

We have looked at the feasibility of installing gates/stoplogs at Norfolk Street and believe that this is achievable at a reasonable cost. When the gates are used in a flood event a very good degree of protection would be provided to Norfolk Street.

The second part of the gate option is whether the District Plan controls remain in place. After careful thought and consideration of both the residents desire to see the District Plan controls removed and our role and responsibility for hazard management we recommend that the proposed District Plan controls proceed.

## **6. Carter, Edwin, Charles, Owen and Richard Streets**

### **6.1 Residents meetings and feedback**

- Residents do not want any hazard lines on Belmont properties.

- Residents consider that structural measures should have removed the flood hazard from all properties (including Stokes Valley).
- Residents felt that the walkway is not safe – the path is quite slippery and, in their view, a waste of money.

## **6.2 Summary of actions to be undertaken GW/HCC**

Following our investigations and feedback we propose the following actions:

### **Proposed District Plan controls**

- Rename flood hazard to 1 in 100 year flood extent.
- Show as an extent rather than depths.
- Include clearer information about the nature of flooding in the District Plan.

The edge protection works completed in May 2004 have significantly increased the protection to Belmont from the Hutt River eroding its banks. These works do not however, affect the extent of flooding that would be experienced in Belmont and therefore the need to reflect the flooding hazard in the District Plan. A **direct** flood risk from the Hutt River remains.

### **Removal of Vegetation and Walkway**

We agree with residents that the riverbank needs surface stabilising with a vegetation cover as soon as possible. Accordingly we are looking in places to recontour and grass the banks.

We are also still to complete a number of small jobs that should improve the overall look and feel of the river trail area, including looking at the gradient of parts of the trail.

## **7. Other areas affected by the Proposed District Plan change**

Other areas affected include Stokes Valley and the four Golf Courses. They have been kept informed and invited to attend the meetings at Belmont. After the HRAC meeting we intend to respond to any submissions they made and outline the proposed next steps.

We also intend to formally ask HCC to include Hathaway Avenue properties in the District Plan change until such time as a stopbank is constructed in that area. We have yet to speak to Hathaway Ave residents directly but will do so well in advance of any plan change.

## **8. Communication**

GW and HCC will reply to submissions received from the public. Future communications will mainly happen through any proposed District Plan change process and flooding hazard fact sheets.

## 9. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *receive the report.*
2. *note the contents of the report.*
3. *endorse the actions described in this report following the consultation with residents.*
4. *recommend to Landcare Committee that Hutt City Council should proceed with the proposed District Plan Change as specified subject to the changes proposed in this report.*

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