

Report 99.351

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Report to the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan Advisory Committee
from Andrew Annakin, Divisional Manager, Landcare

**Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee,
"Design Standard" Workshop, 16 June 1999**

1. Purpose

To summarise the feedback and guidance received (**Attachment 1**) from the 16 June 1999 Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee "Design Standard" Workshop.

2. Recommendations

That the Advisory Committee:

- (1) *Receive this report;*
- (2) *Note the report (Attachment 1) from the Divisional Manager, Landcare, summarising the feedback and guidance received from the 16 June 1999 Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee "Design Standard" Workshop.*

ANDREW ANNAKIN
Divisional Manager, Landcare

Attachment 1 : Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee, "Design Standard"
Workshop, 16 June 1999

Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee, "Design Standard" Workshop, 16 June 1999

1. Purpose and Intent

The workshop was an opportunity for the Advisory Committee to consider the information and data presented by Officers on the technical conclusions and funding implications from the "Design Standard" investigations undertaken as part of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan.

The workshop covered a full review of: the background to the "Design Standard" exercise, the technical investigations to date, options for an overall standard of flood protection, risk based adjustments, and long-term funding implications and opportunities.

Modelling of funding scenarios for the three broad "Design Standard" options showed the potential effect on Regional Council debt and rates for three prospective levels of annual expenditure (including flood protection opportunities on the Kapiti Coast). Indications of how the Regional Council could choose to adjust its Funding Policy to accommodate any accelerated flood protection capital works were also floated, by Officers.

The Divisional Manager stressed that the Advisory Committee was not being asked for firm decisions. Rather, the aim was to create a forum for discussion to assist Officers to prepare formal reports for consideration at the 28 June Advisory Committee meeting.

The initial Advisory Committee recommendations to the Landcare Committee on a proposed "Design Standard" would then, subject to any review following public consultation, be considered for referral to the full review of the Regional Council's Long-term Financial Strategy, for the financial years commencing 2000/01.

2. Questions Posed

To assist the workshop, Officers posed several questions to the Advisory Committee:

- **Are you comfortable with the data/information [presented]?**
- **Do you want to upgrade the Hutt River Scheme?**
 - There is a status quo option [maintain the current system].
- **If so to what Standard(s)?**
 - Variations for risk and circumstance?

- **Your response to costs, residual risk and timing [financial models]?**
 - Possible Funding Policy variations for acceleration e.g., 40/60 or maybe 30/70?

3. **Summary of Feedback and Guidance Received**

Are you Comfortable with the Data/Information [as presented]?

The information and data presented by Officers was both comprehensive and useful.

Do you want to Upgrade the Hutt River Scheme?

Unanimous support to upgrade the Hutt River Scheme, particularly noting the "unfinished" aspects, plus the "near-misses" from the October 1998 flood events.

If So, to what Standard(s)?

Noting that the Hutt River Scheme already has a nominal standard equivalent to 2,800 cumecs and that the Ewen Floodway upgrade was to a 2,300 cumecs standard, several key points arose:

- The Advisory Committee was not bound by the nominal 2,800 cumec standard - set by an earlier regime. While a high level of protection already existed for much of the upper valley area of the Scheme, the most difficult elements had not yet been addressed. Therefore, the Advisory Committee must consider flood protection solutions to fit prevailing circumstances – but also as a platform for the Twenty-first Century;
- Arguably the original flood protection standard was unrealistic, relative to the ultimate flooding risk. Potentially the higher level of protection (2,800 cumecs) was the most insecure because subsequent development had assumed that the Hutt floodplain would never flood. Had the Scheme been established to a lower level, the nature of development on the floodplain may have been quite different;
- The final flood protection standard – security balanced against risk and cost (affordability) – should be assessed, and thereby prioritised, reach by reach (with specific works identified and further prioritised within that);
- A 1,900 cumec standard would be inadequate and inflexible, particularly noting the information provided on the possible impact of climate change;
- Strong support for a "Design Standard" based on 2,300 cumecs (Level 2).
- Nevertheless, where the Advisory Committee chose to deviate from the nominal 2,800 cumecs standard, this would need to be justified.

Variability Within a Chosen "Design Standard"

- Acknowledging the potential to vary the "Design Standard" within a "suite of works", a lesser standard of protection could prevail in some areas, but 2,800 cumecs may still be appropriate for high value areas or as a baseline for bridges;
- More consultation would be required with bridge owners – though political pressure could ultimately be brought to bear. However, it was prudent for some financial provisioning to encourage an accelerated renewal programme; similarly for in-stopbank services;
- The Ava to Ewen reach, including the Railway Bridge, was the most critical, followed closely by the Hutt/Boulcott Golf Club areas;
- Retaining scope to further upgrade lesser standard works to the nominal 2,800 cumecs standard should also be considered.

Specifically on Consultation

Members agreed, it was important to consult with the community on all of the suggested "Design Standards": 1,900, 2,300 and 2,800 cumecs. Points arising:

- Members acknowledged that it was critical to consult with the community on the technical design standards (including the status quo option);
- This should also outline the suite of works that would make up options, and programme, for implementing the higher (2,300/2,800 cumecs) standards, or a mix thereof;
- The Advisory Committee had held several meeting and workshops getting to grips with the issues. It would be a major exercise to communicate this to the community. The information had to be digestible;
- A number of affected and interested groups would be approached directly through the next consultative phase. The Newsletters and mail-outs would continue;
- An additional suggestion was to consider an "expert group" drawn directly from the community (similar to a Citizens Jury).

Response to Costs, Residual Risk and Timing [Financial Models]?

- As with the overall level of flood protection and security, members noted the importance of community consultation on the key cost elements: affordability and timing. That is, how long it would take to implement the chosen "Design Standard" for the desired level of security relative to the associated level of rate imposition and indebtedness;

- Members were mixed on how long it should take to implement the "Design Standard" (noting the associated security, environmental and resourcing implications). Opinions ranged from the full forty-year life of the Plan to twenty years or less. Reflected on the funding scenarios presented, this suggested a range of annual capital expenditure from \$2 million to \$4 million;
- The two Hutt Valley Councils want to consider the funding implications against their own rating priorities;
- It was acknowledged that adjustments to the Regional Council's Funding Policy may be inevitable.

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