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Dear Fred

Response to your Public Submission to Catchment Management Committee Meeting of 3 August 2010

Thank you for your email of 3 August 2010 and your presentation during Public Participation prior to the Catchment Management Committee meeting of 3 August 2010. Your email itemised 7 points relating to the management of the Otaki River and I respond as follows:

1. Otaki River Mouth

The Otaki field staff inspect the river mouth on a weekly basis to assess its position and whether there is any need to cut or widen the mouth for flood protection purposes. Our staff are very experienced in the operation of the mouth of the Otaki River and have been doing these inspections for many years. Our overall approach is to minimise our intervention in the natural processes of the river while ensuring the overall flood security of the whole system is maintained and we believe we have achieved the right balance.

2. The Estuary

Your concerns over the health of the Estuary are shared by many people and we are confident we are helping to improve the situation. An investigation of the site has been undertaken to ascertain the risk it presents. At this stage the decision has been made to cap the site and it is considered to be a relatively low risk site with no further action proposed at this stage.

In relation to diverting some of the Otaki River flow through the estuary we will consider the suggestions you have made, firstly to see whether it is desirable and secondly whether we would be able to achieve it in a reasonable manner.



3. River Bank Protection

I have had the engineers look at the situation at the bank of the river upstream of the mouth and confirm that they are more than happy with the way the erosion protection measures are working. In relation to the build-up of material on the south bank at what we call “Mangahenene Island” we will be removing vegetation build up in the area but only on the river face which is land owned by Council. We would not be removing the vegetation back beyond our boundary.

4. Tanalised Posts

We have no evidence that the tanalised posts used for fencing are causing any pollution within the estuary area. We have been informed by our Environment Division that the treatment used generally remains bound in the timber and will not leach into the surrounding ground in any significant quantities.

5. Proposed Viewing Platform

Please be assured that we are ensuring that the Friends of the Otaki River are following all of the proper processes to gain approval for the construction of the viewing platform. This project was initiated by the Friends and they have actively sought contributions from a range of organisations to assist with construction. Greater Wellington's Otaki staff are helping the Friends with some of the design and approval work and will also assist with supplying some of the fill material. We will take on board your comments about using natural features such as logs and rock for any natural barriers that are required.

6. Otaki Floodplain Management Plan Review

We have made some progress on collating the technical information required for the review of the OFMP but we have been delayed in progressing the work further because of other commitments within the Flood Protection Department. We have just recently confirmed a new completion date for this work of 2013. Please be assured that the options you have raised for improving flood protection along the Rangiora Stream have been noted and will be included in the review.

7. Management and Staff Performance

The Flood Protection Department has a very experienced team both on the ground in Otaki and in the Wellington office. Some of the staff have been actively involved in the development of the



Floodplain Management Plan and its implementation for more than two decades. I have every confidence that they are suitably experienced and performing to a high standard.

Yours sincerely

Ian Buchanan
Chairman Catchment Management Committee

Copy: Nathan Guy

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