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Report to the Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee
From Daya Atapattu, Project Leader, Flood Protection Group

Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) : Programme to Project Completion

1. Purpose

To obtain Advisory Committee endorsement for the programme to complete the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan.

2. Background

At the December 1998, meeting the Advisory Committee endorsed the scope and programme for Phases 2/3 and Phase 4 of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. The Phase 2/3 investigations are now practically complete and Phase 4, plan writing, started in July 2000.

The target for completing the draft plan is June 2001. The plan launch, originally planned for December 2001, has been brought forward to October 2001 to ensure it is completed within this Local Government triennium.

Attachment 1 shows the timeline and programme for completing the remaining HRFMP tasks.

3. HRFMP Phase 4 : Plan Preparation and Publishing

The plan preparation and publishing process involves:

- producing a working draft and subsequent refinement
- public consultation
- review, further refinement and Advisory Committee endorsement of the plan
- Wellington Regional Council (WRC), Hutt City Council (HCC) and Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) adopt the plan
- publish and launch

Attachment 2 shows the 15 month process from the start on the working draft in July 2000 to the launch in October 2001.

3.1 Working Draft

Flood Protection Group staff started preparing the working draft of the plan in July 2000. The preparation involves:

- producing a detailed format for all chapters.
- summarising investigation outcomes.
- producing diagrams, charts and selecting photos.
- developing supporting policy.
- writing the plan components.
- ongoing internal review.

The target date for completing the working draft is the end of December 2000. After feedback, officers will refine this draft to produce a “Consultation Draft” by mid February 2001. The Advisory Committee will receive the consultation draft for consideration and endorsement in March 2001.

3.2 Public Consultation

The public consultation process begins in March 2001. It involves:

- a newsletter, press releases and newspaper advertisements advising the community of the plan, key issues and where the plan may be inspected.
- submissions – four weeks from 12 March to 6 April 2001.
- presenting the draft plan to HCC, UHCC, the Landcare Committee and iwi.
- analysing and reporting on submissions to the Advisory Committee.
- the Advisory Committee hear submissions – May 2001.
- informing submitters of the outcomes.

The consultation process ends with the Advisory Committee hearing submissions in May 2001 and officers informing outcomes to the submitters. There will be no public meetings as they are considered an ineffective forum to discuss specific plan issues. Copies of the “Consultation Draft” will be made available at the WRC, HCC and UHCC front desks, WRC Mabey Road and Upper Hutt depots, public libraries and maraes. Copies will be provided to interest groups on request.

Hutt City, Upper Hutt City and Iwi Submissions

HCC and UHCC officers and iwi will receive the working draft in mid January 2001. This will give them an opportunity to provide comment before producing the “Consultation Draft”. Formal submissions can also be made during the submission period in March/April 2001.

3.3 **Plan Adoption Process**

Officers will prepare a “Final Draft” of the plan in June 2001 after incorporating submission outcomes into the document. A limited time window is available for modifying the “Consultation Draft” to produce the “Final Draft”. However, major changes are not expected as the three main components of the plan have already been through an extensive consultation process, and the major stakeholders will have an opportunity to review the work before the public consultation phase.

The Advisory Committee will receive the “Final Draft”, at their meeting on 28 June 2001, for recommendation to the Landcare Committee.

The proposed Plan adoption programme is:

- Advisory Committee recommend the draft plan to the Landcare Committee – June 2001
- Landcare Committee recommends the draft plan to the Regional Council and seeks endorsement to the plan by UHCC and HCC - July 2001
- HCC and UHCC endorse draft plan - July/August 2001
- WRC adopt plan – August 2001

3.4 **Plan Publishing and Launch**

The plan publishing process, comprising editing, formatting and printing, will take about three months. This process will start soon after the Landcare Committee recommend the Final Draft in June 2001. No changes, other than editorial improvements, are anticipated after this date.

The editorial review will be complete in July 2001. The document layout and design will start after the editorial review. Cover pages and other pages which are independent of text would be designed in advance. The document layout and design will be completed in August 2001. Printing will be in September 2001.

The launch is programmed for the second week of October 2001.

4. **HRFMP Phase 2/3 Continuation**

The combined phase 2/3 investigations are substantially complete and the remaining tasks are:

- Environmental Strategy presentations, adoption by Council and publishing
- Non-structural measures continued development
- Hutt River bed level management guidelines
- Hutt Valley Fault Rupture study
- HRFMP Process Review

4.1 **Environmental Strategy**

The target date for publishing the Environmental Strategy document is December 2000.

The programme is:

- Landcare Committee presentation – 24 August 2000
- HCC and UHCC endorse Environmental Strategy – 5/6 September 2000
- public presentations (on request) – September 2000
- edit and modify document – October 2000
- Landcare Committee adopt Environmental Strategy – November 2000
- publish Environmental Strategy – December 2000

4.2 **Non-structural Measures**

Further development and refinement of the non-structural principles and outcomes will continue up to December 2000. The options and outcomes will be presented to HCC and UHCC in February 2001 for endorsement, following discussions with the non-structural options working group. Officers will also arrange informal presentations to HCC and UHCC if appropriate.

4.3 **Hutt River Bed Level Management Guidelines**

Bed level variations influence the flood capacity of the system, the stability of bank edge structures and the operation of outlet structures. There is a general community impression that the observed gravel build up in the riverbed is dramatically increasing the flood risk. While high gravel levels do reduce flood capacity, the riverbed is managed to maintain a delicate balance between the water carrying capacity and erosion risk. However, in order to better prescribe when extraction should be carried out, it was decided to prepare riverbed level management guidelines as part of the plan.

The proposed bed level management guidelines will provide an envelope of preferred minimum and maximum bed elevations along the river. In implementing the guidelines, other issues, such as the cost of extracting gravel and the cost of edge protection works, will have to be considered. The analysis will consider the:

- capacity of the river channel and flood bank system.
- stability of structures such as bridges and edge protection works.
- storm water outlet operation and discharge capacities.
- stability of unprotected banks.
- visual effects and public perception of gravel build-up.

Work on the bed level envelope started in July 2000 and will be completed by December 2000.

4.4 **Fault Rupture Study**

The Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences (IGNS) preliminary studies indicate that a Wellington fault rupture could cause ground subsidence in the Hutt Valley. IGNS is currently preparing a detailed proposal to model the Hutt Valley topography after various fault rupture scenarios. The proposed study will consider ruptures on the Wellington Fault, the Subduction Interface and the Wairarapa Fault, and will cost about \$22,000. The study could be implemented in stages.

A number of organisations with an interest in the Hutt Valley will benefit from this work and IGNS is negotiating a jointly funded project. The Flood Protection group is committed to a reasonable share of the cost through the HRFMP investigations.

The expected study completion is June 2001.

4.5 HRFMP Process Review

The HRFMP process has been flexible and transparent. All options and measures were developed by experienced staff and consultants, had significant peer review and were discussed publicly. The proposed measures align with those adopted nationally and internationally.

HRFMP process review to date has ensured that:

- The most appropriate options for reducing flood risk have been selected.
- Measures presented to the Council are reliable and practical.

The HRFMP process review has four components:

- Design Standard Review (completed)
- legal advice and peer review on proposed Land Use methods
- Environmental Strategy peer review
- final and overall Peer Review

John Easter of Optimx Limited, completed the Design Standard review in May 1999 before the Hutt River Design Standard was adopted. The Non-structural Options Working Group carefully considered the proposed land use methods and obtained legal advice before recommending them to the Advisory Committee in June 2000. The Environmental Strategy was prepared by WRC; this work was peer reviewed by the Environmental Strategy Working Group.

The final peer review process will ensure that the overall plan is comprehensive, robust and covers the essential requirements of a floodplain management plan, including the environmental link. This final review will probably be co-ordinated by an experienced peer from another regional council.

5. Recommendations

- (1) *That the report be received and contents noted.*
- (2) *That the programme to Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan completion be endorsed.*

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Attachment 1 : HRFMP Programme 2000/01

Attachment 2 : Plan Preparation and Publishing – Process Chart