

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**  
**LOWER WHANGANUI RIVER MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD PROTECTION**  
**SCHEME**

**1. THE PROPOSAL**

- 1.1** Horizons Regional Council proposes to establish a river management and flood protection scheme for the Lower Whanganui River.
- 1.2** The Scheme will involve flood protection works to protect the Wanganui urban area against a 1 in 200 year flood (ie. a 0.5% annual exceedance probability (AEP) event).
- 1.3** Works are proposed to protect the following four areas:
- Kowhai Park, Anzac Parade – North and South of Dublin Street;
  - Putiki – upstream of Cobham Bridge;
  - Moutoa, Taupo Quay commercial area – Bates Street to Town Bridge; and
  - Balgownie industrial area - Wharf Street to Balgownie Avenue.
- 1.4** The flood mitigation works proposed comprise a combination of earth embankments, concrete flood walls and removable stop-logs.
- 1.5** The estimated capital cost component is \$10 million, borrowed over a term of 20 years. The estimated total cost of the project over that 20 year period is \$20.2 million (based on present day costs, and excluding inflation). The Regional Council will provide for the required expenditure, and the required new rates, in its draft annual plan for 2008-09 and its long-term council community plan.

**2. THE REASONS TO UNDERTAKE FLOOD PROTECTION**

- 2.1** Houses and other buildings will flood in a 1 in 20 year flood at Kowhai Park, Anzac Parade and in a 1 in 30 year flood at Balgownie, Putiki and Taupo Quay. In a 1 in 200 year flood, houses would be flooded

to depths of up to 2 metres in the Kowhai Park area (around Ikitara Road).

**2.2** Very substantial damage is projected for the Balgownie industrial area, while significant damage is expected for the Taupo Quay commercial area and for the Kowhai Park and Putiki residential areas.

**2.3** At those depths of flooding, the risk to human life cannot be discounted. Substantial economic and social impacts would also result. The Council has estimated flood damage of \$141.4 million from a 1 in 200 year flood (0.5% AEP event). This is considered to be an unacceptable level of risk.

**2.4** If works are constructed to the 1 in 200 year standard, then average annual savings in flood damage are estimated to be \$2.10 million.

### **3. THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S ROLE IN FLOOD PROTECTION WORKS**

**3.1** Wanganui District Council (WDC) has, as of 1 July 2007, ceased the provision of flood protection and river edge vegetation management services that it was carrying out in the lower Whanganui River. WDC continues to undertake major erosion mitigation works within the 'City Reach' as those works are primarily related to the protection of roading and drainage assets. The two Councils have agreed to further discuss options for the future management of the major erosion mitigation component, with the possibility that it could ultimately be included in the Lower Whanganui River Flood Protection Scheme.

### **4. OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR FLOOD PROTECTION**

**4.1** The following alternative options have been considered:

- Do nothing;
- Do not protect one or more of the four areas (a subset of 'do nothing');

- Protect areas to a different flood standard, such as a:
  - 1 in 50 year event;
  - 1 in 100 year event;
  - "Global Warming Flood" (1 in 430 year event);
- Lower river levels in the river by constructing an overflow weir through the sand spit to the south of the river mouth;
- Lower flood levels in the lower reaches by constructing a supplementary river mouth; and/or
- Relocate or raise dwellings in the flood risk areas.

**4.2** Full discussion on these options, and the reasons that they are not preferred, is included in the Statement of Proposal for this scheme prepared by the Council. None of the other options provide the levels of benefit for the cost of the preferred option.

## **5. FUNDING THE PROPOSED SCHEME WORKS**

**5.1** The Regional Council proposes to set and assess a new targeted rate to pay for these works. They will be assessed on the following four categories of land:

- (a) **Direct benefit: Rating categories W1 and W2:** A rate in the dollar based on capital value on those rating units within the Wanganui District rating roll group numbers 13080 to 13280 inclusive (as shown on Plan No. 4751), which, if not for the works, would be flooded in a 1 in 200 year flood (0.5% AEP event) (**W1**); and a rate in the dollar based on capital value on the rest of the properties in the Wanganui District rating roll group numbers 13080 to 13280 inclusive, also shown on plan No. 4751 (**W2**). These categories reflect the **direct** benefit of the proposed works to properties in the rating roll group numbers 13080 to 13280, which cover an area that closely relates to the former Wanganui District Council Urban Ward. A 100:60 differential between W1 and W2 will apply to reflect the higher direct benefit to the properties which would otherwise be flooded;

- (b) **Indirect benefit: Rating category N1:** A rate in the dollar based on capital value to reflect the indirect benefit of the proposed works to all properties in the Wanganui District rating roll group numbers 13080 to 13280 inclusive; and
- (c) **Indirect benefit uniform annual charge: Rating category N2:** A uniform fixed amount on all rateable properties in the Wanganui District outside the Wanganui District rating roll group numbers 13080 to 13280 inclusive, to reflect the indirect benefit of the proposed works to those properties.

**5.2** The Regional Council also proposes to meet 20% of the scheme costs from general rates on an ongoing basis. This is consistent with all other schemes for flood protection works in the region. In addition, the Regional Council will make an additional \$100,000 contribution from general rates income for each of the first 5 years, in order to reduce the levels of debt early in the project.

## **6. OTHER FUNDING OPTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**6.1** The Regional Council also considered the following funding options:

- (a) contributor rating (seeking contributions from landowners whose properties directly contribute to the flooding);
- (b) using a progressive rate (collecting less from ratepayers in the early years of the scheme);
- (c) repaying the loan over a term of more than 20 years; and
- (d) increasing the general rate component above 20%.

**6.2** The Statement of Proposal sets out in detail why these funding options are not preferred. The Council considers that its preferred funding option provides for a better and fairer allocation of the costs of the works than any of these other options.

## **7. HAVING YOUR SAY: HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK**

**7.1** You can obtain a copy of the full Statement of Proposal for the Lower Whanganui River Flood Protection Scheme:

- (a) at Regional House Wanganui, Regional House Palmerston North, and all Horizons Regional Council Service Centres;
- (b) by calling freephone number 0508 800 800 or emailing [helpdesk@horizons.govt.nz](mailto:helpdesk@horizons.govt.nz);
- (c) from our website [www.horizons.govt.nz](http://www.horizons.govt.nz).

**7.2** Written submissions on the proposal will be accepted for one month (until 2 May 2008). You may, if you wish, present those submissions to the Regional Council at a formal hearing. Hearings are scheduled for 19-21 May 2008. Submissions on this flood protection scheme proposal will be heard in combination with the submissions on the annual plan.