

# 1. HEATHCOTE RIVER FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

RR 8211

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The purpose of this report is to present the Heathcote River Floodplain Management Strategy to the Council for adoption.

The strategy provides a non-statutory approach to the management of flood damage issues within the Heathcote River floodplain. Development of the strategy is the result of a joint project with the Canterbury Regional Council and final approval is also being sought from them.

The strategy draft was presented to this Committee and full Council earlier this year prior to a final public consultation process. It was also presented to the Joint Christchurch City Council/Canterbury Regional Council Committee and the Regional Council's Resource Planning Committee. Without exception the draft strategy was supported in principle.

The opportunity for the public to comment has been provided through the distribution of 10,000 strategy summary pamphlets (requesting written comments) and the availability of the full draft strategy. In addition, two public meetings and one neighbourhood meeting were held. Approximately 70 members of the public attended the meetings and 37 written comments were received.

The comments have been analysed and summarised. While the comments received generally support the floodplain management principles and the measures presented in the draft strategy some minor improvements were suggested. These include:

- Clarifying its prime purpose, which is the management of floodplain damages rather than the management of other aspects of the environment (ie land use and water quality)
- Clarifying its relationship with statutory plans; and
- Strengthening the sections on liaison with the general public.

Appropriate changes have been made to the document to address these concerns.

Direct consultation with tangata whenua has also been undertaken through the Canterbury Regional Council's Iwi Liaison Manager. The preliminary comments are favourable towards the draft strategy and amendments have been incorporated in the document now being recommended. The amendments include recognition of:

- The holistic approach to management by the tangata whenua.

- The importance of the catchment, and particularly estuarine areas, to the tangata whenua.
- The potential for environmental enhancement to restore traditional values

It is expected that the comments of the tangata whenua will be formalised by the time of the Committee meeting.

Should the Council adopt the Strategy the next phase is implementation. This is discussed in the Strategy but for the Committee's information includes:

- Implementing appropriate stormwater soakage and retention measures in new subdivisions. A resource consent application has been made to the Regional Council to discharge residential stormwater to ground in the Upper Heathcote area.
- Increasing the storage within the Cashmere/Worsleys basin.
- Providing localised stopbanking and bunding for those at risk properties where other measures do not provide alleviation.
- Reviewing the current zoning and land management of the natural ponding basins.
- Restricting development on the low lying tidal floodplain to avoid flood damages as a result of tidal flooding and potential sea level rise.
- Setting appropriate minimum floor levels. It is anticipated that this will be achieved through a variation to the City Plan within the next 18 months.
- Reviewing emergency plans and procedures.
- Public education and liaison through written material and discussions with property owners.

**Recommendation:** That the Council adopt the Heathcote River Floodplain Management Strategy.