5. PROPOSED WAIMAKARIRI RIVER REGIONAL PLAN

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Corporate Plan Output: Regional Plans & Consents	

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committees' support to lodge a reference on the Proposed Waimakariri River Regional Plan.

This Plan was notified in September 1996, hearings were held in September-October 1999 and decisions were publicly notified on 22 July 2000. The Council made a variety of submissions and further submissions on this Plan concerning water quality, water quantity and controls on activities in the beds of rivers and lakes.

One of the Council's submissions requested changes to a proposed rule which allowed for restrictions, to groundwater takes from wells which are hydraulically connected to rivers in the catchment, during periods of low flow. In the case of municipal reticulated water supplies the restrictions did not apply to the first 250 litres per day for every person served by that water supply.

In summer months, without restrictions, typical water abstraction in the City Council area is 600-700 litres per person per day. Even with severe water restrictions, it is unlikely that the City Council could reduce demand to below 400 litres per person per day. Reduced levels of water input could lead to loss of pressure in parts of the system creating a serious health risk and reduced effectiveness for fire fighting.

Although, in the decisions, the limit at which restrictions apply has been raised to 350 litres per person per day, Council officers believe that this rule is still unduly restrictive and unworkable. Support is sought to appeal the decision. It is hoped that this will lead to a satisfactory solution through negotiation.

Recommendation: That the Committees support the lodging of a reference on the Proposed Waimakariri River Regional Plan and that the Council's confirmation of this action be sought.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the proposed action be endorsed.