

11. DECISIONS RELEASED ON COASTAL PLAN VARIATIONS

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The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee that Environment Canterbury has released its decisions on Variations 1-9 of the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. These variations cover the chapters of the plan which deal with Coastal Water Quality (Ch.7), Activities and Occupation in the Coastal Marine Area (Ch.8) and Monitoring and Review (Ch.11).

The City Council made a number of submissions on the variations, including submissions concerning water quality standards in the Avon Heathcote Estuary, stormwater discharges, access by motorised vehicles, structures of historical value and planting within the Coastal Marine Area (CMA).

In general the submissions were well received and a number of amendments, which meet the concerns raised in the City Council's submissions, have been made to the proposed plan.

Water quality standards set for the Avon Heathcote Estuary and Brooklands Lagoon areas remain as notified, a position supported in Council submissions. Brooklands Lagoon and the main body of the Avon Heathcote Estuary are classified as Contact Recreation (CR) water quality areas, while the areas around the mouths of the Avon and Heathcote Rivers are classified less stringently as Aquatic Ecosystems (AE) water quality areas.

Access by motorised vehicles within the CMA is prohibited, with some exceptions, on sections of Taylor's Mistake and Sumner Beaches, around the Avon Heathcote Estuary and along the beach from South Brighton Spit northwards as far as Heyders Rd (Spencer Park). Vehicle access is permitted along the seaward (eastern) side of the Brooklands Lagoon spit, but is prohibited on the western side of this spit and in the lagoon south of Dartford St.

Although the Council's submission requested that stormwater discharges and discharges of water into water be considered together, they continue to be dealt with under two separate rules. The discharge of stormwater continues to be a permitted activity provided certain conditions are met.

Policy dealing with the identification and removal of unauthorised structures has been amended to include the following: "Where structures have historical value, the first consideration will be in seeking their retention and, where appropriate, their restoration."

Rules concerning the planting of exotic plants within the CMA have been amended so that they do not apply to plants which have been present in the area for a period of five years or more.

I do not believe there are any outstanding matters which merit the City Council lodging a reference on these decisions.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the information be received.