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MEDIA RELEASE

Further progress for Wairoa flood mitigation – refined option 1C+ impacts less whenua Māori and fewer houses

Hawke's Bay Regional Council has today endorsed Option 1C+ as the preferred flood mitigation option for North Clyde – a refined flood mitigation solution that impacts half the number of houses and a third of the total area of whenua Māori when compared against the previous preferred Option 1C.

Crown Manager, Lawrence Yule, says the Council's decision to progress Option 1C+ demonstrates the continued commitment to the project's shared kaupapa.

“From the outset, we've made it clear our shared kaupapa for this project is about finding the best possible technically viable solution that minimises negative impacts on whānau, their land and homes and protects marae, urupā and cultural taonga in the process.

“When we started engaging directly with mana whenua, potentially impacted owners and the wider community back in October last year, the people of Wairoa reiterated the deeply significant cultural, spiritual and historical importance of whenua Māori.

“It is respect for that position that underpinned last month's commitment to further refine Option 1C in a way that further minimises the potential impacts to owners of whenua Māori, whānau, home and landowners wherever possible.”

Over the last four weeks, the project team has been working at pace to consider changes to the profile and alignment of Option 1C that simultaneously minimises impact to home and landowners whilst still maintaining the hydraulic integrity of the proposed flood mitigation solution, Mr Yule says.

“As a result of this process, we now have a refined Option 1C+ which is very similar to Option 1C, in that it is a floodway that crosses close to the most direct overland path and one that aligns with historical flood patterns, as the people of Wairoa have shared with us based on their lived experience.

“Most importantly, Option 1C+ significantly reduces impacts to both the amount of whenua Māori and number of houses impacted.”

Mr Yule says further cultural assessment activity is underway to ensure Option 1C+ continues to protect marae, urupā and cultural taonga.

“A Cultural Impact Assessment for the two previously preferred Options 1C and 1D was undertaken in January, and the information in that CIA was factored into the refinement process to ensure Option 1C+ avoids known sites of cultural significance such as the Makeakea urupā.

“We recognise that mātauranga Māori exists in many places and forms, and the project team and I remain very open to continuing to receive further cultural input as we work through this important process.”

Noting that progressing Option 1C+ remains subject to land accessibility, further engagement with mana whenua and potentially impacted home and landowners, including owners of whenua Māori, is also ongoing.

“We’ve been talking about flood mitigation in Wairoa for some time now, and we’ve said all along that this is about working together, doing whatever we can to help ensure the safety of the community for generations to come.

“There is still a huge amount of work ahead for us all, and our priority remains on working closely with potentially impacted whānau, home and landowners, and the wider community, to deliver much-needed flood mitigation for Wairoa.”

ENDS

Note to the Editor:



Above: a map showing the early concept stage of the refined Option 1C+

Option 1C+ is very similar to Option 1C – it is a floodway that crosses close to the most direct overland path and aligns with historical flood patterns. Whilst still being refined, when compared with Option 1C, it has similar overall construction costs and requires similar levels of secondary mitigation works on the southern side of the Wairoa River.

Option comparison	Option 1C+	Option 1C
Number of impacted houses	8	16
Area of impacted whenua Māori	2 ha.	6 ha.
Area of impacted general title land	29 ha.	18 ha.
Total footprint / total area of land impacted	31 ha.	24 ha.
Area of protected whenua Māori	49 ha.	46 ha.
Area of protected general title land	302 ha.	298 ha.
Total area of protected land	351 ha.	344 ha.

NB: Option 1C+ numbers are indicative only, as the Option is still at early concept stage and will require more detailed design.

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