

7 Community Engagement

The City Centre section flood protection project will be of significant interest to a range of stakeholders, potentially affected parties, and the public generally. The HRFMP adopted in 2001 (Figure 27) has set the basis for protecting the Hutt Valley from floods and this was conducted through a collaborative process with Council, iwi and the public.

In progressing now to the specifics of developing the design and the process of securing planning approvals for the City Centre section through the RMA, GWRC intends to continue with the comprehensive community engagement precedent established in developing the HRFMP.

To date the preparation of this Scoping Report has included meetings with asset stakeholders including HCC, NZTA, service providers (Transpower, Capacity, Wellington Electricity, Power Co, Hutt River Trail Committee) and GWRC officers including those with specific knowledge of use of the river corridor. Councillors in both Councils have also been briefed.

Separate meetings were held with iwi representatives to discuss issues, opportunities and their potential involvement in the governance and management of the project.

The range of matters raised by stakeholders and iwi are summarised in Appendix 1 to this report. Typically the issues are captured in this report under section 5 Issues and Opportunities.

It is recognised that there are potentially affected parties that will have an interest beyond that of the public generally, particularly those people who have their property affected. Although no specific discussion has been undertaken with all of those parties in the preparation of this report, there have been other discussions held that have highlighted matters that will need to be sensitively worked through as part of the planning and design of the project.

It is anticipated that in terms of community engagement there will be asset stakeholder representation in some form of project group (refer to section 8 Governance below). That project group will connect to specific technical interests through its representatives. In terms of the wider community interest there will be information provided at the initiation of the design development process, review of design options in public forums and opportunities given throughout for feedback. The planning process itself will present opportunities for submissions and hearings with independent decision makers appointed to conduct this process.

A community engagement plan and communication plan will be prepared at the outset of the project for the approval of the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee to identify the objectives of the engagement process, key messages, the nature and timing of key actions (like meetings and open days), and the techniques used for engagement including electronic media.

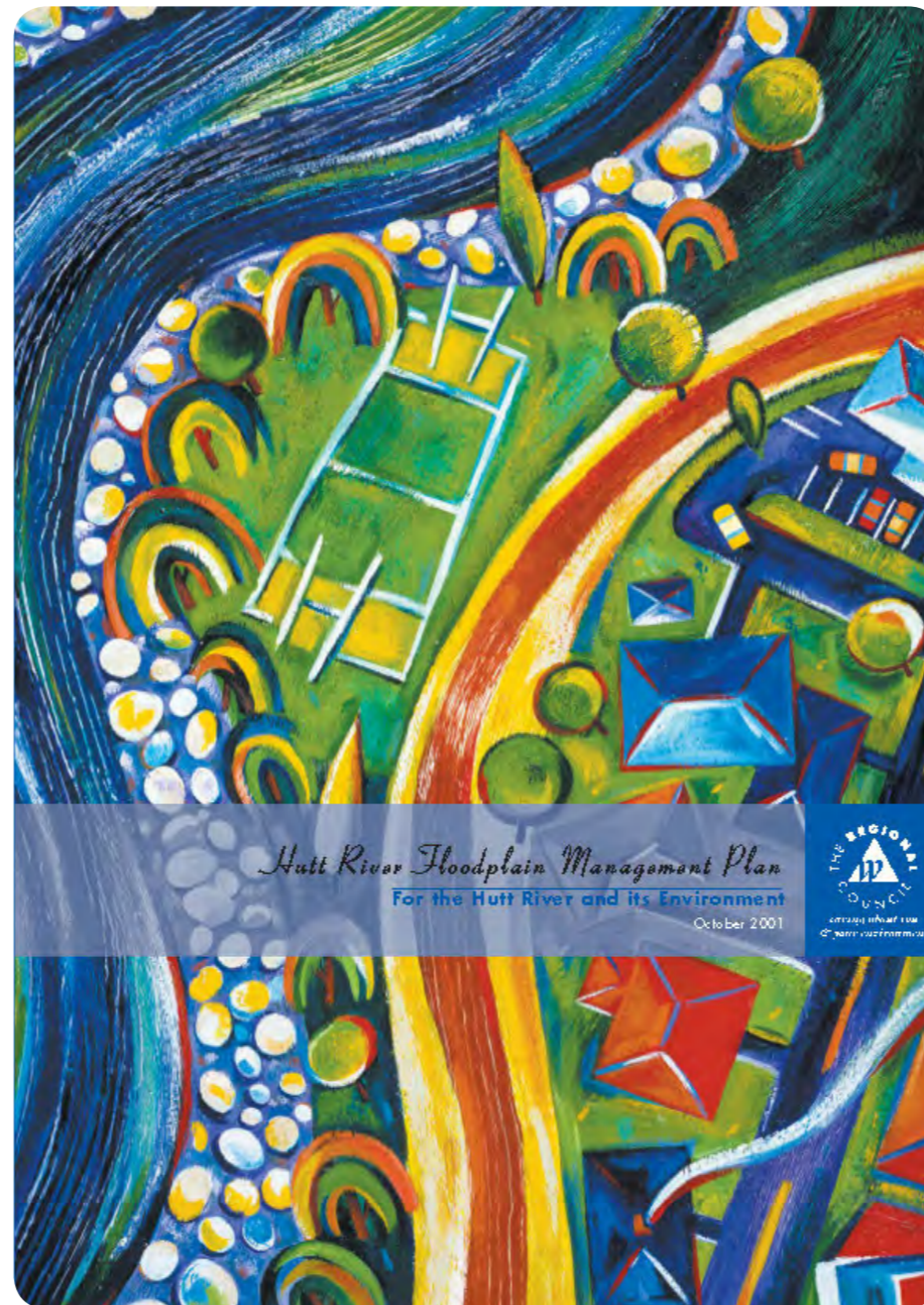


FIGURE 27 Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan

8 Governance

8.1 Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee

The implementation of the HRFMP is governed by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee (HVFMS) (previously known as the Hutt River Advisory Subcommittee and Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee). This Subcommittee was originally established in 1998 with an independent GWRC appointed chair and representatives of iwi, local councils (Upper Hutt and Hutt City), and GWRC at the time of the HRFMP's development. Since the HRFMP's adoption the terms of reference have been adjusted, and the purpose of the current subcommittee is to:

- A** Provide oversight of the development, implementation and review of Floodplain Management Plans (FMPs) of the Hutt River floodplain in a way which:
- recognises the need of the community to mitigate the effects of flooding to an acceptable level of risk and in a sustainable way
 - recognises that flood risk cannot be completely eliminated and that provisions must be implemented to handle residual risk
 - recognises that methods chosen to mitigate the effects of flooding must be affordable
 - balances the priorities of Council in funding flood mitigation methods with the aspirations and contribution of the local community for implementation of the methods and ensures that any flood management solutions chosen can be accommodated within the funding constraints of the Council's Long-term Council Community Plan
 - ensures that methods adopted through FMPs to mitigate the effects of flooding consider the river/stream environment, recognising the unique nature and the role that rivers/streams play in the lives of the community.
- B** Provide oversight of the public involvement process for FMPs within a framework recommended by this subcommittee which:
- ensures that the information base held by the community is made available to decision makers when appropriate
 - enhances community awareness of FMPs
 - develops public confidence in the process of FMPs
 - develops and maintains a network of contacts and mechanisms which can be used to provide community input required for FMPs and to obtain that input when appropriate.

The Subcommittee reports to the Environmental Wellbeing Committee of GWRC and is serviced by the Manager Flood Protection with the support of the Council Secretariat.

Since 2001, the HVFMS (and its predecessors) have overseen the implementation of the HRFMP. The City Centre upgrade project is part of the HRFMP and it is proposed that the HVFMS will continue to oversee the implementation of this project.

8.2 Project Steering Group

As noted previously in this report under section 5 Issues and Opportunities, there are significant opportunities that can be realised from integrating other public projects together with the proposed flood protection works. In particular the public projects associated with HCC's Making Places and NZTA's Melling intersection present potential opportunities to be integrated with the flood protection works.

In order to investigate and confirm those opportunities it is suggested that a Project Steering Group (or similar name) could be established. That group would include officer level representation from HCC, NZTA and iwi if they wish. It would be relatively small in size and tightly focussed. The group would not undertake planning or design work itself, but would appoint a design team to do so.

The HVFMS will remain as the governance body and the Project Steering Group will guide the design team on technical matters.

The Project Steering Group's brief, which would require some further development with the representatives and the HVFMS, would be aimed at guiding work towards the following outcomes:

1. The preparation of a master plan (commissioned from a design team) that integrates flood protection to the design standards set by the HRFMP with:
 - Making Places to the extent that these relate to the city-to-river connection and promenade
 - Melling intersection improvements to the extent that these relate to river interface and include the replacement of the Melling Bridge
 - Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan Environmental Strategy initiatives including improving cultural value references, stormwater quality, ecological and habitat values, recreational uses and movements in and connected to the river corridor
 - Service infrastructure network improvements, including stormwater, gas, sewer and power
 - Other opportunities to be defined

2. The preparation of a project plan including: (a) a strategy that identifies the critical connections between the component projects of the master plan and identifies those elements that can be undertaken independently, or that must be undertaken together; (b) a cost plan that estimates the costs of the project as a whole and the constituent elements, as well as any cost share arrangement ; and (c) a programme that describes the time frame over which the projects can be delivered.
3. The engagement with the constituent interests including public in determining a master plan that enables the optimum benefits for all those interests.

This approach will require the commissioning of a multidisciplinary design team to enable the three above objectives to be satisfied. It is envisaged that the design team would be commissioned by GWRC in consultation with HCC and NZTA and that a nine month time frame would be sufficient to deliver the outcomes sought.

The design team would be a specialist group including a project manager, river engineer, traffic and transportation engineer, landscape architect, ecologist, urban planner/designer and cost estimator. It is suggested the project design be led by an urban planner/designer to coordinate the various inputs, participate in consultation and document the concepts.

The design team would use the Project Steering Group as an interface with the interests of the key stakeholders.

At the conclusion of this process, the Project Steering Group would report through the HVFMS to the constituent agencies (HCC and NZTA and others as appropriate) and seek their confirmation of the plan, including any budgetary contribution. If the constituent agencies decide not to commit to the plan, then GWRC will revert to its base plan to achieve the required flood protection for Hutt City.