



If calling, please ask for Democratic Services

Environment Committee

Thursday 20 February 2025, 9.30am

Taumata Kōrero - Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council,
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington

***Quorum:** Seven Members*

Members

Councillors

Penny Gaylor (Chair)

David Bassett

Chris Kirk-Burnnand

David Lee

Daran Ponter

Yadana Saw

Simon Woolf

Quentin Duthie (Deputy Chair)

Ros Connelly

Ken Laban

Thomas Nash

Hikitia Ropata

Adrienne Staples

Appointee

Barbie Barton

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council

Environment Committee (A Committee of the Whole)

1 Purpose

Oversee the development, implementation and review of Council's:

- a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators to improve environmental outcomes for the Wellington Region's land, water, air, biodiversity, natural resources, parks and reserves, and coastal marine area
- b Regional resilience priorities in the delivery of plans, programmes, initiatives and activities for flood protection, erosion control, and regional parks and forests
- c Regulatory systems, processes and tools to meet Council's related legislative responsibilities
- d Plans, programmes, and efforts to increase volunteer uptake, community involvement and mahi tahi with others seeking to improve environmental outcomes in the Wellington Region.

2 Specific responsibilities

The Committee's environmental responsibilities include the areas of land use management, air quality, water health and quality, regional natural resources, river control, flood protection, regional parks and reserves, coastal marine environment, maritime navigation and safety, biosecurity and biodiversity.

- 2.1 Apply Council's Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles when conducting the Committee's business and making decisions.
- 2.2 Oversee the development and review of Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience prioritiesand recommend these matters (and variations) to Council for adoption.
- 2.3 Review periodically the effectiveness of implementing and delivering Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience priorities.
- 2.4 Consider regional, national and international developments; emerging issues and impacts; and changes in the legislative frameworks for their implications for Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regulatory systems, processes and tools.

- 2.5 Recommend to Council changes to improve the effectiveness of Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience priorities
 - c Regulatory systems, processes and tools.
- 2.6 Review Greater Wellington's compliance with Council's related legislative responsibilities¹, and the monitoring and enforcement of compliance.
- 2.7 Ensure that the Committee's decision making:
 - a Considers climate change-related risks (mitigation and adaptation)
 - b Is consistent with Council's plans and initiatives to give effect to Council's declaration of a climate emergency on 21 August 2019, including agreed emissions reduction targets.
- 2.8 Review, after each Farming Reference Group meeting, a written report of the business conducted at that meeting.

3 Delegations

- 3.1 Subject to sections 3.3 to 3.7, Council delegates to the Committee all the powers, functions and duties necessary to perform the Committee's responsibilities (except those that must not be delegated, have been retained by Council, have been delegated to another committee, or have been delegated to the Chief Executive).
- 3.2 The Committee has the authority to approve submissions to external organisations for matters pertaining directly to the Committee's purpose.
- 3.3 The Committee may make decisions on matters with a financial impact only where the related costs are:
 - a Budgeted for in the relevant business group's budget
 - b Not budgeted for in the relevant business group's budget, but can be met from savings within that budget.
- 3.4 Where the Committee considers a decision with a material financial impact is needed², the Committee must refer the matter to Council for its decision.
- 3.5 The Committee may not make a decision that is materially inconsistent with Council's Annual Plan or Long Term Plan.
- 3.6 Where a matter proposed for consideration by the Committee (including during the development of proposed Greater Wellington plans and policies) is of strategic

¹ These responsibilities include those under the Resource Management Act 1991 and for the granting of resource consents, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1967, the Biosecurity Act 1993, the Reserves Act 1977, and the Maritime Transport Act 1994.

² That is, where savings are identified from other business groups' budgets to meet the related costs; or no savings are identified across Greater Wellington's overall budget to meet the related costs.

importance to the Wairarapa Constituency, that matter shall first be referred to the Wairarapa Committee or its members for their consideration.

- 3.7 The Committee shall ensure that it acts under the guidance of the Memorandum of Partnership in working with Greater Wellington's mana whenua partners of the Wellington Region to ensure effective Māori participation in the Committee's deliberations and decision-making processes.

4 Members

- 4.1 All thirteen Councillors.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Farming Reference Group.

5 Voting entitlement

The Chair of the Farming Reference Group sits at the table and has full speaking rights, but has no voting rights at any Committee meeting.

6 Quorum

Seven Committee members.

7 Meeting frequency

The Committee shall meet six times each year, with additional meetings as required.

Environment Committee

Thursday 20 February 2025, 9:30am

Taumata Kōrero, Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington

Public Business

No.	Item	Report	Page
1.	Apologies		
2.	Conflict of interest declarations		
3.	Public participation		
4.	Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on 21 November 2024	24.621	6
5.	Greater Wellington Involvement in the Approvals Process under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024	25.59	9
6.	High Pathogen Avian Influenza (HPAI) Regional Response	25.25	27
7.	Farming Reference Group Chair's Report	25.47	33
8.	Te Rōpū Taiao Environment Update – February 2025	25.23	37



Please note these minutes remain unconfirmed until the Environment Committee meeting on 20 February 2025.

Report 24.621

Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on Thursday 21 November 2024

Taumata Kōrero – Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington at 9.30am

Members Present

Councillor Gaylor (Chair)
Councillor Duthie (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Bassett
Councillor Connelly
Councillor Kirk-Burnnand
Councillor Laban
Councillor Lee
Councillor Nash
Councillor Ropata
Councillor Saw
Councillor Staples
Councillor Woolf

Barbie Barton

Councillors Duthie, Ropata, Saw and Staples participated at this meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams and counted for the purpose of quorum in accordance with clause 25A of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act 2002.

Karakia timatanga

The Committee Chair opened the meeting with a karakia timatanga.

Public Business

1 Apologies

Moved: Cr Nash / Cr Kirk-Burnnand

That the Environment Committee accepts the apologies for absence from Councillor Ponter and early departure from Councillor Saw.

The motion was **carried**.

2 Declarations of conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

The Committee acknowledged the passing of Nicolas Boyack, Senior Staff Reporter.

The Chief Executive acknowledged Hikoi mō te Tiriti and the efforts of Metlink and operators (rail, bus and ferry), the Parks, and Communications teams in responding to the Hikoi. Councillor Nash, Chair of the Transport Committee, acknowledged the efforts and the unprecedented use of public transport services.

Noted: The Committee requested that the Chief Executive pass on Councillors' thanks to staff and public transport service operators.

3 Public participation

Lucy Thorburn, Wellington East Girls' College, Maya Davies, Wellington East Girls' College, Santino Morehu-Smith, Kāpiti College, Isabella Sharp, Samuel Marsden College, and Jemima Tito, St Oran's College, spoke to the Committee about their roles as environmental leaders at their respective schools.

4 Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on 17 October 2024 – Report 24.574

Moved: Cr Bassett / Cr Kirk-Burnnand

That the Committee confirms the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on 17 October 2024 - Report 24.574.

The motion was **carried**.

5 Farming Reference Group Chair's Report Update – Report 24.619 [For Information]

Barbie Barton, Chair of the Farming Reference Group, spoke to the report.

6 Annual Asset Management Condition Report – Report 24.366

George Bowman, Team Leader Assets and Performance, and Hamish Fenwick, Team Leader Flood Operations, spoke to the report.

Moved: Cr Bassett / Cr Laban

That the Committee:

- 1 Notes that overall, the proportion of assets in Very Good to Moderate remains high, but there has been a slight decline in the condition of assets, but that the approval of the 2024-34 Long Term Plan provides an increased level of funding for capital works and resources over the next 10 years.

- 2 Agrees that the major flood protection and erosion control infrastructure assets across the Wellington Region have been managed satisfactorily to the agreed Levels of Service in the 2023/24 financial year.
- 3 Notes that identified priority issues are being addressed through maintenance and improvement work programmes.

The motion was **carried**.

Councillor Connelly departed the meeting at 10.17am during the presentation of the above item and returned at 10.36am, during the final question, and was present for the vote.

7 Annual Floodplain Management Plan Implementation Report – Report 24.367 [For Information]

Tina Love, Team Leader Infrastructure Projects and Hamish Fenwick, Team Leader Flood Operations, spoke to the report.

8 Streamlining of Resource Management Regulatory Services – Report 24.620 [For Information]

Stephen Thawley, Project Leader, and Christina Cranston, Team Leader Consents and Compliance, spoke to the report.

9 Whaitua Implementation Update – Report 24.518 [For Information]

Nicola Patrick, Director Catchment, and Mikaila Ceelen, Advisor Catchment, spoke to the report.

10 Te Rōpū Taiao | Environment Update – November 2024 [For Information]

Lian Butcher, Group Manager Environment, spoke to the report.

Karakia whakamutunga

The Committee Chair closed the meeting with a karakia whakamutunga.

The public meeting closed at 11.06am.

Councillor P Gaylor

Chair

Date:

Environment Committee
20 February 2025
Report 25.59



For Information

GREATER WELLINGTON INVOLVEMENT IN THE APPROVALS PROCESS UNDER THE FAST-TRACK APPROVALS ACT 2024

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Environment Committee (the Committee) about Greater Wellington Regional Council's (Greater Wellington's) involvement as a local authority in processes under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FAA).

Te tāhū kōrero

Background

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

2. Parliament passed the Fast-track Approvals Act in December 2024. The Act provides a 'one-stop shop' for a range of approvals (including resource consents) for eligible infrastructure and development projects that have significant national or regional benefits. The FAA is a permanent replacement of the previous fast-track approvals processes under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (COVID-19 Act) and the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 .
3. The Act establishes an approvals process that bypasses the ordinary processes under existing legislation (including the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)). The process is comprised of several steps ([Figure 1](#)):
 - The first step is a referral application, where applicants apply to the Minister for Infrastructure to be referred into the substantive approvals process.
 - The second step is a substantive application lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and decided on by an expert panel. The decision of an expert panel can be appealed, but only on a point of law.
4. There is a high threshold for seeking approvals through the fast-track process. Applicants must demonstrate that their proposed project will have significant national or regional benefit, and that it does not involve one of several specified ineligible activities. Applicants must also undertake pre-application consultation with an extensive range of parties, including local authorities, mana whenua, and directly affected landowners. For substantive applications, applicants must pay an initial deposit of \$390,000 (excl. GST) to the EPA before processing commences.
5. Listed projects that are identified in Schedule 2 of the FAA skip the referral application process and are eligible to lodge a substantive application with the

EPA. These projects will also be required to pay the initial deposit of \$390,000 (excl. GST) to the EPA to initiate processing. There are 12 listed projects within the Wellington region, including 6 housing and urban development projects, 5 infrastructure projects, and 1 quarry expansion. A description of the listed projects in the region is set out in [Attachment 1](#).

6. Once an approval is granted under the FAA, it becomes an ordinary resource consent (alongside any approvals under other legislation that may have been granted as part of the fast-track approval). Greater Wellington then becomes responsible for the on-going compliance monitoring and enforcement of the consent and its conditions in accordance with the processes set out under the RMA.

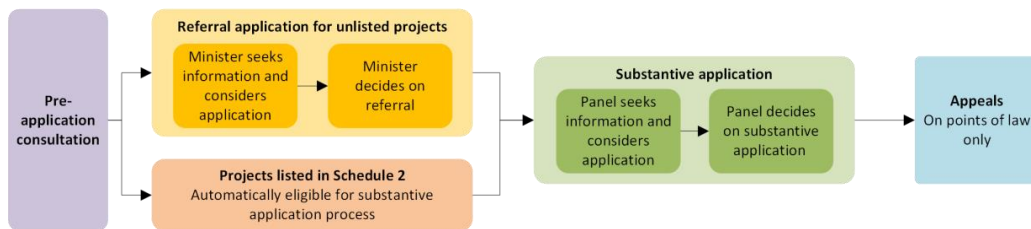


Figure 1: Summary of the fast-track approvals process

Key changes between the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020

7. At a process level, Greater Wellington’s role in the FAA is similar to that provided for under the COVID-19 Act with respect to participating to provide regulatory input and other input related to Greater Wellington’s functions, supporting the panel to develop conditions for the consent, and once the consent is granted taking on the lead environmental compliance role.
8. There are however a few notable changes between the COVID-19 Act and the FAA with respect to Greater Wellington’s involvement:
 - a. The FAA requires that panels must grant the approvals sought, unless the proposal involves an ‘ineligible activity’ or the adverse impacts of the proposal are “sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project’s regional or national benefits”. The requirement to grant approvals will usually shift the focus of decision-makers towards identifying whether the effects of a proposal are well understood and can be managed through adequate consent conditions. It is also important to note that the FAA states that the panel, “must not set a condition that is more onerous than necessary to address the reason for which it is set”.
 - b. The FAA provides improved involvement for local authorities, including by increasing the time available to provide comments on applications, providing additional steps for local authorities to provide advice on technical matters related to the processing of consents, and providing a separate process where local authorities are consulted on land exchange applications.

- c The FAA operates on a requirement that all costs associated with the approvals process are met by applicants and provides broader and clearer scope for cost recovery by local authorities.

Te tātaritanga Analysis

Greater Wellington involvement in the approvals process

9. Greater Wellington is not a decision-maker in the fast-track approvals process, unlike the RMA resource consent process. As a local authority, Greater Wellington's primary function under the legislation is to provide information to assist those making decisions on applications.
10. Because of the FAA's requirement to grant most approvals, and the tight timeframes all participants in the approvals system are subject to, it is particularly important that Greater Wellington's input into the approvals process is clear, coordinated, and focussed on matters that are most likely to support the panel to make good decisions within the new framework.
11. In practice this is likely to mean focussing our feedback on matters that decision-makers must or may consider under the FAA, including the statutory policies and plans that Greater Wellington are responsible for administering. This may also include providing advice on functions that Greater Wellington are responsible for (such as public transport related matters) where these are relevant to applications. We know from our experience with previous fast-track approvals processes that expert panels particularly value Greater Wellington's feedback and advice on how the environmental effects of activities are proposed to be managed, and whether consent conditions are robust, effective, and enforceable.
12. While providing overall positions on a project is likely to be of less value to decision-makers, there may be circumstances where it is desirable for Greater Wellington to take an overall position on a project, such as where Greater Wellington own, occupy, manage, or hold a designation over land subject to or adjacent to a fast-track application. This would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
13. The FAA provides for Greater Wellington's involvement at several steps throughout the approvals process. Our role in the approvals process is summarised in [Table 1](#), and our approach to managing Greater Wellington's involvement is set out in [Attachment 2](#). This approach is based on the principle of working as a team to provide coordinated input into the approvals process. At an operational level, our involvement will be led by the Environmental Regulation Unit with coordinated feedback being sought from relevant groups and units across Greater Wellington, including Strategy, Metlink, Te Hunga Whiriwhiri, Corporate Services, Finance, and various units within the Environment Group including Delivery, Policy, and Knowledge and Insights. Involvement of Greater Wellington internal teams in each individual approval process will be tailored to suit each project.
14. Decision-making in relation to Greater Wellington's involvement as a local authority in the approvals process is proposed to principally sit with the Group Manager Environment. A report seeking delegations of functions, duties, and

powers under the FAA to officers is planned to be presented at the Council meeting on 27 February 2025.

Table 1: Summary of Greater Wellington’s role in the fast-track approvals process

Step	Greater Wellington’s role (in order of occurrence)
Pre-application	Applicants consult Greater Wellington on their proposal, and Greater Wellington provides pre-application advice
Referral application	Greater Wellington provides feedback on the proposal to the Minister for Infrastructure, including responding to requests for further information
	Greater Wellington provides technical advice on existing consents and potentially competing consent applications
Substantive application	EPA consults with Greater Wellington on application completeness and scope
	Greater Wellington provides technical advice to the EPA on competing and existing resource consents
	Greater Wellington manages a process of notifying existing consent holders about the substantive application where their consents are due to be replaced and informing the Minister for Infrastructure once this process has been completed
	Director-General of Conservation consults with Greater Wellington where an exchange of Crown-owned reserve land is proposed
	Greater Wellington nominates a member to the expert panel
	Greater Wellington provides comments on the substantive application to the Panel, and provides further information where requested by the expert panel
	Greater Wellington participates in hearings (if these are held)
	Greater Wellington provides comments on draft consent conditions to the expert panel
Appeals	Greater Wellington notifies panel of any minor errors in the decision
	Greater Wellington may lodge an appeal (on a point of law) or file a judicial review
	Greater Wellington may join an appeal lodged by another party

Extra steps for local authorities on land exchange proposals

15. The FAA includes an ability for applicants to seek a land exchange as part of the fast-track approvals process. A land exchange involves the exchange of Crown-owned reserve land or conservation area for other land held by the applicant. Based on the information included in Schedule 2 of the FAA, we are aware that one of the listed projects in the Wellington Region includes a land exchange proposal, this being the Belmont Quarry Development (refer to **Attachment 1** for further information).
16. There are extra steps set out in the FAA for applications that include a land exchange. Where Greater Wellington is an interest holder in a proposed land exchange (as would be the case for the Belmont Quarry Development), Greater

Wellington will be invited to be involved in some of these steps. The additional steps occur prior to the applicant lodging a substantive application, and include:

- a The applicant must lodge a land exchange application with the Department of Conservation (DoC). Before lodging the land exchange application, the applicant must consult Greater Wellington on the proposal;
 - b Once the land exchange application is lodged, DoC must invite Greater Wellington (and other parties, including certain mana whenua groups) to comment on the proposed land exchange;
 - c DoC must then prepare a report on the proposed land exchange for the consideration of the expert panel. Prior to completing the report, DoC must provide Greater Wellington with the opportunity to comment on a draft version of the report;
 - d Only after DoC have completed the report can the applicant lodge a substantive application with the EPA.
17. Once a substantive application is lodged, the report prepared by DoC is then considered by the expert panel as part of their decision-making on the land exchange component of the substantive application.
18. Matters relating to land exchanges where Greater Wellington is an interest holder are generally specific to Greater Wellington's role as a manager of Crown reserve land (such as regional parks) under the Reserves Act 1977. Because the land exchange process is principally related to our role as a manager of reserve land, it is proposed that Greater Wellington's involvement in these steps is led by the Delivery function of the Environment Group.

Council engagement in the approvals process

19. Our approach to managing Greater Wellington's role in the fast-track approvals process is similar to the approach taken for the processing of resource consents under the RMA. That is, functions, duties, and powers related to the processing of applications are delegated to officers. This enables Greater Wellington to participate within the tight statutory timeframes required under the FAA. As noted at paragraph [14](#), a report seeking delegations is planned to be presented at the Council meeting on 27 February.
20. We are interested in the Committee's feedback on how elected members wish to stay engaged in the approvals process. This may include (but not be limited to), providing regular reporting to the Committee on the status of various projects using the fast-track approvals process in the region, and providing the Committee with information about specific projects where this is readily available.

Ngā hua ahumoni

Financial implications

21. The FAA operates under a 'user pays' principle. Applicants are expected to cover the costs of the approvals process, including Greater Wellington's involvement in it. To achieve this, the FAA enables Greater Wellington to recover actual and reasonable costs from applicants for providing pre-application advice and recover

- actual and reasonable costs from the EPA for providing comments, information, and other assistance during processing of the application.
22. Where Greater Wellington is an interest holder in a proposal to exchange land, Greater Wellington is also able to recover actual and reasonable costs incurred in relation to negotiating the land exchange from the applicant (whether or not the negotiation results in a land exchange).
 23. Because of the cost recovery provisions in the FAA, it is expected that Greater Wellington's involvement in the approvals process will be cost-neutral.

Ngā Take e hāngai ana te iwi Māori Implications for Māori

24. In its submission on the Fast-track Approvals Bill (the Bill), Greater Wellington submitted that the Bill did not protect and uphold iwi and hapū rights and interests set out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The FAA addresses some of the matters raised by Greater Wellington in its submission on the Bill (such as financial support for mana whenua participation). However, it is still the case that the FAA only empowers a Panel to decline consent if one of the criteria in section 85 is met. For example, the Panel could not decline a consent on the basis that the activity would result in the destruction of waahi tapu, unless that adverse impact was "sufficiently significant to be out of proportion to the project's regional or national benefits" (or there was a breach of a settlement or right under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2021 (MACA)). This is in part a consequence of the FAA's overall approach of prioritising development (subject to it having significant regional or national benefits) over sustainable management. The exception to this is where rights are recognised in statute (such as through Treaty settlement legislation or through customary rights recognised under the MACA).
25. Notwithstanding this, the FAA provides for all of Greater Wellington's mana whenua partners (but not all mana whenua groups) to participate in some steps in the approvals process, regardless of whether they have Treaty settlements in place. This is because all of Greater Wellington's mana whenua partners are considered *iwi authorities* under the RMA, and the FAA provides for the participation of *iwi authorities* as defined under the RMA. This includes requirements for applicants to consult iwi authorities prior to lodging an application, and requirements for decision-makers to seek comments from iwi authorities throughout the decision-making process. However, unlike the COVID-19 Act, iwi authorities cannot nominate a member to the expert panel, except in circumstances where a Mana Whakahono a Rohe provides for this.
26. Iwi authorities who participate cannot recover actual and reasonable costs. Rather they are paid a fixed contribution funded by applicants (\$1,500-\$2,000 for commenting on referral applications, and \$7,000-\$10,000 for commenting on substantive applications).
27. We consider that it is particularly important that Greater Wellington supports its mana whenua partners to participate in the approvals process, should they wish to do so. It is well understood in resource management practice that the only party

that can provide evidence with authority on the impacts that a project might have on the values held by mana whenua are mana whenua themselves. A panel would be more likely to consider the impacts of a project on mana whenua (and whether these are sufficiently significant to create a pathway to decline the application) if they heard this from mana whenua directly.

28. We are working with our Tuhonohono managers to explore how we can support our mana whenua partners' understanding of the new legislation and the opportunities for their participation within it. This may include (but not be limited to):
 - a Providing regular high-level updates to our mana whenua partners about the fast-track projects that are in front of us for consideration (as those same projects should also be in front of them);
 - b Advising our mana whenua partners when applicants are engaging with us during the pre-application stage;
 - c Advising applicants that they must consult with our mana whenua partners before lodging an application;
 - d At the technical end, touching base with our mana whenua partners particularly in relation to the effectiveness and enforceability of draft consent conditions that relate to addressing effects on mana whenua values.
29. Additionally, there is the potential for Mana Whakahono a Rohe. Mana Whakahono a Rohe are participation agreements between mana whenua and local authorities provided for by the RMA. The FAA refers to Mana Whakahono a Rohe several times, including in relation to both substantive considerations and procedural considerations. For example, the FAA does not provide for mana whenua to nominate a member to the expert panel unless this is provided for by a Mana Whakahono a Rohe agreement.
30. Our observation is that Mana Whakahono a Rohe have the potential to enable enhanced mana whenua participation in the fast-track approvals process. This is not a near-term solution because the process for establishing Mana Whakahono a Rohe under the RMA (if this is desired by mana whenua) would need to be worked through.

Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei

Next steps

31. Next steps for Greater Wellington's involvement in the fast-track approvals process includes:
 - a Detailed development of processes and methods for providing efficient, effective, and timely involvement in the fast-track approvals process that is coordinated across relevant stakeholders within Greater Wellington (to be led by the Environmental Regulation Unit);
 - b Taking a report to Council on 27 February seeking delegation of functions, duties, and powers under the FAA to officers.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachments**

Number	Title
1	Schedule 2 projects in the Wellington region
2	Approach to managing Greater Wellington’s role in the fast-track approvals process

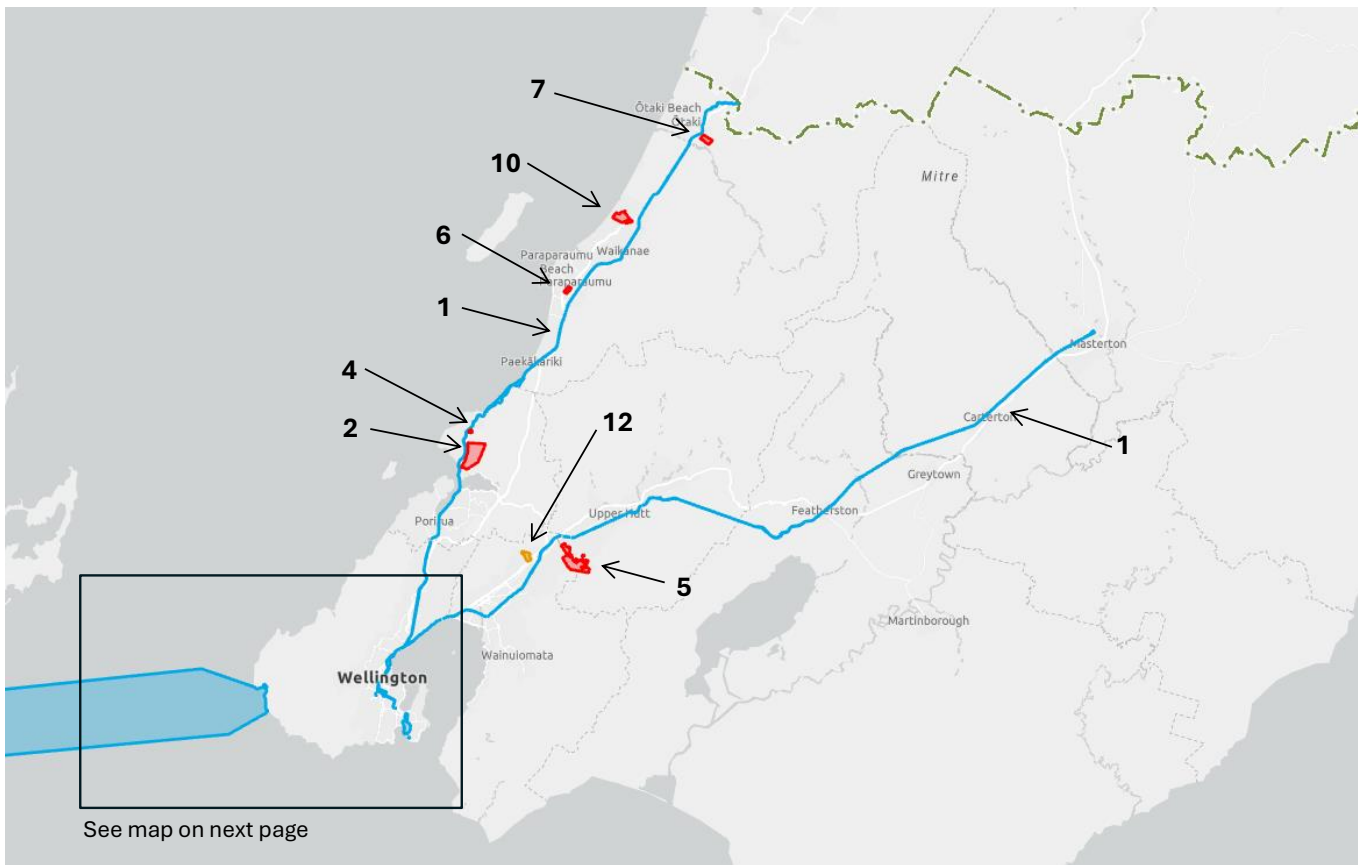
**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writers	Andrew Banks – Kaitohutohu Resource Advisor Richard Percy – Kaitaki-a-tima Team Leader, Consents and Compliance
Approvers	Shaun Andrewartha – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Manager, Environmental Regulation Fathima Iftikar – Hautū Rautaki, Kaupapa Here me ngā Waeture Director Strategy, Policy and Regulation Lian Butcher - Kaiwhakahaere Matua mo te Taiao Group Manager Environment

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> Greater Wellington's involvement in the approvals process under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 is relevant to the Council's role as a local authority under the Act and related legislation (including the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Reserves Act 1977).
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> This report does not seek any decisions. Because of this, there are no implications for the Council's Annual Plan, Long-term Plan or other key strategies and policies as a result of this report.
<i>Internal engagement</i> This paper has been prepared following engagement with the Environment Group Leadership Team (EGLT) and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> This report does not seek any decisions. Because of this there are no risks or impacts associated with this report.



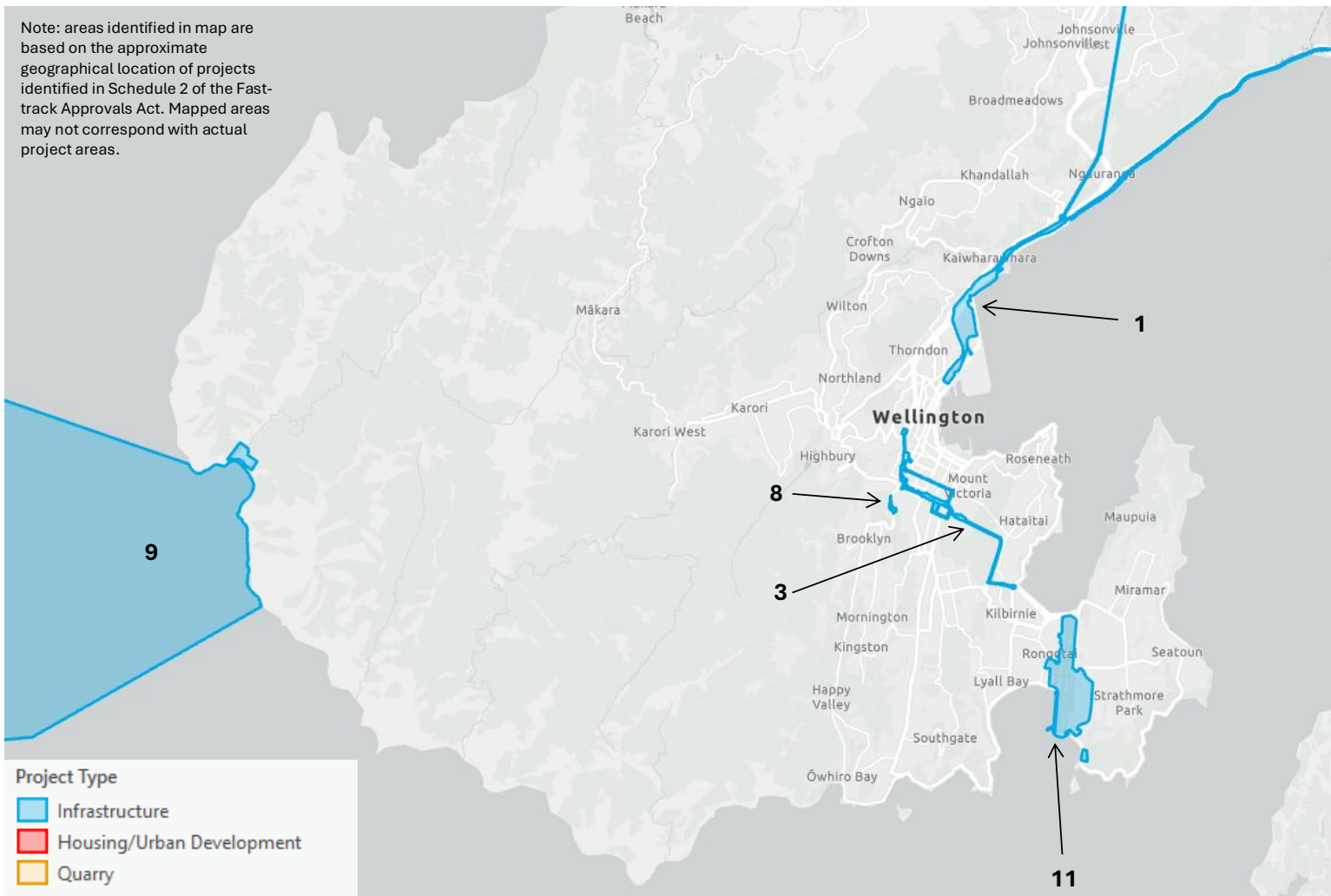
Attachment 1: Schedule 2 projects in the Wellington region



Note: areas identified in map are based on the approximate geographical location of projects identified in Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act. Mapped areas may not correspond with actual project areas.

Project Type

- Infrastructure
- Housing/Urban Development
- Quarry



Project name	Authorised person	Project type	Project description	Approximate location	Further information (Ministry for the Environment)
1 Lower North Island Integrated Rail Mobility and PBC—Stage RS4.3	KiwiRail Holdings Limited	Infrastructure	Upgrade existing rail network, comprising new or extended passing loops, additional stabling (Wellington and Palmerston North), a new depot and stabling facility (Masterton), and station upgrades (north of Waikanae and Wairarapa).	National rail network, comprising— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wairarapa Line (between Wellington and Masterton) • North Island Main Trunk Line (between Wellington and Palmerston North) 	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/lower-north-island-integrated-rail-mobility-inirim-and-pbc-stage-rs4-3/
2 Plimmerton Farm	KM & MG Holdings Limited	Housing/Urban Development	Develop approximately 2,400 residential dwellings, a commercial area, and a retirement village, and enable the potential development of a school.	18 State Highway 59, Plimmerton, Porirua	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/plimmerton-farm/
3 State Highway 1 Wellington Improvements	New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi	Infrastructure	Improve State Highway 1 between the Terrace Tunnel and Kilbirnie, including constructing either a second Mt Victoria Tunnel and Basin Reserve improvements or a long tunnel that bypasses the central city.	North of Terrace Tunnel to Kilbirnie, Wellington City	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/state-highway-1-wellington-improvements/
4 Mt Welcome, Pukerua Bay, Porirua	Tauriko Property Group Limited Partnership	Housing/Urban Development	In stages, develop approximately 900 residential allotments, a commercial centre, and associated infrastructure, including a water reservoir, wastewater storage facilities, roading, and improved	422A and 422B State Highway 59, Pukerua Bay, Porirua	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/mt-welcome-pukerua-bay-porirua/

Project name	Authorised person	Project type	Project description	Approximate location	Further information (Ministry for the Environment)
			pedestrian and cycle trails to Pukerua Bay Village.		
5 Silverstream Forest Development	The Guildford Timber Company Limited	Housing/Urban Development	Develop approximately 1,500 to 2,040 residential dwellings across 5 district neighbourhood areas.	330 hectares at Southern Upper Hutt, from Silverstream to Pinehaven	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/silverstream-forest-development/
6 New Central Park	The Wellington Company Limited	Housing/Urban Development	Extend the Paraparamu Town Centre, including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approximately 1,800 residential allotments • retail and tourism activities • aged-care residential facilities • realigning the Wharemauku Stream and wetland development. 	77 and 109 Kapiti Road, Paraparamu	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/new-central-park/
7 Ōtaki Māori Racing Club Development	The Wellington Company Limited	Housing/Urban Development	Develop— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approximately 550 residential dwellings of mixed typology, a childcare centre and a café • a housing assembly and distribution centre • existing racing activities over the remaining site area. 	20.3 hectares (total site 59.8 hectares) at 47 Te Roto Road, Ōtaki	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/otaki-maori-racing-club-omrc-development/
8 Central Park Resilience	Transpower New Zealand Limited	Infrastructure	Develop a secondary indoor substation with line connections to the existing substation and line.	92 and 96 Nairn Street, 67 Brooklyn Road, Wellington	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/central-park-resilience-project/

Project name	Authorised person	Project type	Project description	Approximate location	Further information (Ministry for the Environment)
9 High Voltage Direct Current Cable Replacement and Capacity Project	Transpower New Zealand Limited	Infrastructure	<p>Upgrade the HVDC inter-island transmission link and replace undersea cables connecting the North Island and the South Island, including—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> replacing, recovering, and disposing of 3 existing HVDC undersea cables, and installing a fourth cable constructing new or extended cable termination stations at the Oteranga Bay and Ōraumoa / Fighting Bay sites, and relocating existing transmission lines to connect to the termination stations. 	In the Cook Strait, generally in the area subject to the Cook Strait Cable Protection Zone, Oteranga Bay, Ōraumoa / Fighting Bay, and land under the BEN-HAY A line	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/fta296-high-voltage-direct-current-hvdc-cable-replacement-and-capacity-project/
10 Waikanae North Development	Waikanae North Developments Limited	Housing/Urban Development	<p>Development comprising—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approximately 1,000 residential dwellings a commercial centre parks, playing fields, walkways, and cycleways ecological restoration, including a wetland sanctuary, an amenity open space (approximately 19 hectares), dune restoration and enhancement planting (approximately 17.5 hectares), and restoration and re-naturalisation of an existing watercourse. 	169 to 171 Peka Peka Road, Kāpiti	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/waikanae-north-developments/

Project name	Authorised person	Project type	Project description	Approximate location	Further information (Ministry for the Environment)
11 Wellington International Airport International Airport Southern Seawall Renewal	Wellington International Airport Limited	Infrastructure	Replace and upgrade the existing seawall at the southern end of the runway at Wellington Airport, and carry out activities to support reconstruction, including a new or upgraded supply wharf and construction yards.	Southern Seawall landward portion: Wellington City Council (Record of Title WN45A/75) Southern Seawall seaward portion: Coastal Marine Area Miramar Golf Club and Airport site: 28 Stewart Duff Drive and 18 George Bolt Street, Rongotai, Wellington Supply wharf: within coastal marine area of Evans Bay	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/wellington-international-airport-southern-seawall-renewal/
12 Belmont Quarry Development	Winstone Aggregates (a division of Fletcher Concrete and Infrastructure Limited)	Quarry	Establish a new overburden disposal area adjacent to the existing quarry to enable the extraction of approximately 20 million cubic metres of aggregate, including land exchange with the Department of Conservation, earthworks, and establishing new access roads.	541 Hebden Crescent, Belmont, Lower Hutt	https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/acts/fast-track-approvals/fast-track-projects/belmont-quarry-development/



Attachment 2: Approach to managing Greater Wellington’s role in the fast-track approvals process

Step	Council’s role under the Act	Approach to manage Greater Wellington’s involvement
Pre-application	Pre-application consultation and advice to potential applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure consistency in approach and advice provided, Environmental Regulation are the point of contact for applicants. Environmental Regulation coordinates with relevant stakeholders within Greater Wellington, collates advice, checks for consistency and provides advice to applicants. Environmental Regulation may determine that, where there is a low risk of inconsistent advice being provided, it is more appropriate for applicants to engage directly with subject matter experts from other business units (for example transport) without the need for Environmental Regulation to play a coordinating role.
Referral application process	Providing comments on the referral application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation coordinates with relevant units/teams within Greater Wellington, collates comments, checks for consistency and provides comments to Minister within 20 working days.
	Providing advice on existing consents and potentially competing consent applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation reviews existing consents and applications being processed and provides advice to the Minister for Infrastructure.
	Responding to further information requests from the Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation coordinates responses to information requests with relevant units/teams within Greater Wellington and provides comments to the Minister within timeframe directed.
Substantive application	Providing advice to the EPA on application completeness and scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation reviews application in relation to relevant statutory policies and plans and provides advice to the EPA on completeness and scope.
	Providing information on competing and existing consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation reviews existing consents and applications being processed and provides advice to the EPA.
	Notifying existing consent holders about substantive applications where their consents are due to be replaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation notifies existing consent holders that they may be able to lodge an application for a replacement consent.

Attachment 2 to Report 25.59

Step	Council's role under the Act	Approach to manage Greater Wellington's involvement
	Notifying the Minister for Infrastructure once existing applications have been determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation notifies the Minister on behalf of Greater Wellington, once existing applications have been determined.
	Providing comments to the Director-General of Conservation where an exchange of Crown-owned reserve land is proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Group Delivery function provides comments to the Director-General of Conservation on proposed land exchange within 20 working days on behalf of Greater Wellington. Delivery function reviews and comments on the draft report by the Director-General of Conservation.
	Nominating a member to the expert panel (the Panel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation recommends nomination to the ELT delegated decision-maker. In proposing the nomination, Environmental Regulation will connect with the relevant Greater Wellington leads to agree on the recommendation. Greater Wellington has the ability to also recommend mana whenua nominees with the appropriate expert background to the panel.
	Providing comments on the substantive application to the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation coordinates with relevant Greater Wellington units/teams, collates comments, checks for consistency and provides comments to EPA within 20 working days.
	Participating in hearings (if these are held)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parties within Greater Wellington appear on request (with support provided by Environmental Regulation as required).
	Providing comments on draft consent conditions to the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation reviews and comments on draft consent conditions within timeframe set by the Panel.
	Identifying minor errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation notifies EPA of any minor errors in decision or consent conditions. Panel has 20 working days to correct minor errors.
Appeals	Lodging an appeal (on a point of law) or filing a judicial review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation undertakes decision analysis and in consultation with legal advisors and Greater Wellington leads make a recommendation to the delegated decision-maker where an appeal by the Council is considered necessary.
	Joining an appeal lodged by another party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Regulation in consultation with legal advisors and Greater Wellington leads consider whether Greater Wellington should become a party to other party appeals and makes a recommendation to the delegated decision-maker.

Attachment 2 to Report 25.59

Step	Council's role under the Act	Approach to manage Greater Wellington's involvement
Cost recovery	Pre-application cost recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Regulation manages pre-application cost recovery based on existing RMA cost recovery processes. • Environmental Regulation can manage this for input from across Greater Wellington given we have set up the processes to do so.
	Cost recovery once application has been lodged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Regulation coordinates the provision of necessary information to the EPA to enable cost recovery.

Environment Committee
20 February 2025
Report 25.25



For Information

HIGH PATHOGEN AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) REGIONAL RESPONSE

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To inform the Environment Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council's (Greater Wellington) preparedness planning for High Pathogen Avian Influenza H5N1 variant (HPAI) as well as highlight constraints for managing HPAI in the long term.

Te horopaki

Context

2. HPAI – H5NI has not been detected in in the country to date. It is expected to reach New Zealand through migratory birds. Once HPAI arrives in New Zealand, it will not be possible to eradicate, eliminate, or contain the virus as it moves through wild birds. The virus will likely become endemic in the future, and we can expect seasonal outbreaks.
3. Greater Wellington is responsible for managing responses of outbreaks on land we own, and land which we manage. Greater Wellington is also playing a connector role to bring together local councils (TAs), mana whenua and the Department of Conservation (DOC) towards a co-ordinated regional approach. The management of respective sites remain with the independent authorities.
4. As a first step, we have identified risk areas of bird congregations. We also cross referenced these areas with areas of high human interaction within these spaces. Our strategic approach is to slow the spread of the virus through limiting movement of carcasses and infected animals and to keep people safe by limiting contact with infected animals.
5. Transmission to humans is rare but HPAI presents a 50% mortality rate in infected people. Globally, there has been no human-to-human transmission. One of the biggest risks in spreading the virus is from people moving animals from one location to another.
6. There is no additional funding for managing HPAI – H5NI. The expectation from the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) is that it is taken onboard as part of business as usual (BAU). MPI has prepared a paper which will be presented to cabinet in February, requesting funding to manage HPAI in the long term across multiple agencies.

7. Advocacy for additional resources from central government with ministers to support councils, mana whenua and landowners to manage HPAI with a collective approach is needed.
8. HPAI or 'bird flu' is a highly contagious viral disease that affects both domestic and wild birds. The virus has been spread around the world by migrating wild birds, most of which are asymptomatic. HPAI is being spread through direct contact with faeces and respiratory secretions from infected birds, especially through contaminated feed and water.
9. This virus has been circulating globally for many years as several strains. The highly pathogenic H5N1 strain, which can be transmitted to humans, emerged in 2021 in the northern hemisphere and began to spread globally. New Zealand has not yet recorded a case of the H5N1 strain, but it is expected that it will eventually spread here naturally through migrating wild birds.
10. HPAI has the potential to impact the New Zealand poultry industry significantly and has been detected in dairy herds in the United States. It has devastated wild bird populations globally (especially waterfowl and sea birds) and has been transferred to mammals, causing mass marine mammal mortalities (of seals and sea lions) particularly across South America.
11. Transmission to humans is rare but presents a 50% mortality rate in infected people. Transmission is usually sporadic and has happened where people were in close and repeated contact with infected birds, livestock, or heavily contaminated environments. The use of appropriate PPE can mitigate the risk of transmission to humans. There is no risk to human health from consuming pasteurised milk and milk products and cooked poultry products.

Te tātaritanga Analysis

12. MPI have indicated that there will not be a biosecurity response in areas outside of the poultry industry to manage HPAI – H5N1. Outbreaks in parks, reserves, and public spaces would be managed through BAU by the relevant managing authority or owner.
13. The following breakdown highlights our current understanding of responsibilities
 - a. MPI is the leading agency for the national response, although their direct responsibility is to support primary industries
 - b. Wildlife (including birds and seals) will be managed by the DOC on public conservation land
 - c. Regional, TAs and mana whenua will manage wildlife on land they own, and which they are vested to manage.
 - d. Private landowners will be responsible for managing the response on their land with MPI providing advice.

- e. We acknowledge that there are large areas with shared ownership, management or interest. Regionally we are working towards collaborating in these spaces.
14. Greater Wellington response and readiness
- a. Prior to Christmas, we engaged with our managers of staff who would encounter infected animals, followed by a wider staff briefing for team leaders. Our approach is to slow the spread of the virus and to limit its impacts by reducing movement of carcasses and the exposure of people and animals to infected or dead wildlife. To date the virus has not been detected in New Zealand.
 - b. We have developed communications in line with MPI and DOC messaging which we shared through our internal all staff channels, social media channels and on our website, [Greater Wellington — Biosecurity in our region](#). Our key message is to check, avoid and report and cases of dead birds to MPI through their hotline 0800 80 99 66.
 - c. We are working on finalising a response plan for managing HPAI as an organisation and will be connecting with others in the region to discuss areas of collaboration and run scenario testing. Additionally, we have regular meetings with MPI to discuss any challenges that we face through the planning process.

Ngā hua ahumoni

Financial implications

- 15. HPAI will require increased resourcing to manage future management of outbreaks and effective collaboration in areas such as Wairarapa Moana and Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour among other areas, where there is shared interest across multiple organisations.
- 16. The financial implications of managing HPAI will vary on the scale of the outbreak and the degree of our response. The management of HPAI will be ongoing in the long term, with seasonal outbreaks. Estimating additional costs remains a challenge due to varied uncertainties but could be in the tens of thousands of dollars.
- 17. There is no additional funding for managing HPAI as part of our current operations. MPI are currently preparing a paper which will be presented to cabinet in February, requesting funding to manage HPAI in the long term. If no additional funding is made available by central government, councils would need to consider the additional cost to the rate payer or a reduction in delivering services.

Ngā Take e hāngai ana te iwi Māori

Implications for Māori

- 18. The full impact to Te Taiao is uncertain as HPAI has never been detected in New Zealand wildlife (birds or mammals). We expect the greatest impacts to sea birds and waterfowl, especially in colony breeding species such as gannets, shags, seagulls, and seals. In other countries, some bird populations have been able to

bounce back, although in New Zealand, due to pressure from predation and habitat loss, this may be more challenging for our species.

19. Impacts to mahinga kai and harvesting of natural resources are likely. DOC has put together a fact sheet with regards to cultural harvesting and keeping yourself safe, [highly pathogenic avian influenza \(bird flu\) and cultural harvest](#). By cooking meat or eggs properly will kill the virus. Freezing does not kill the virus, and it can remain active for a year in the frozen state. Waterbodies can also become contaminated, so general hygiene with harvesting any plant material is suggested.

**Te hiranga
Significance**

20. The arrival of HPAI will be a significant event for the country, the region and for the council. It will require collective biosecurity effort and vigilance, changes to standard operating procedures, increased biosecurity practices, cultural harvesting and the economy.

Te whakatūtakitaki

Engagement

21. MPI have asked Te Uru Kahika (Regional and Unitary Councils Aotearoa) to coordinate and connect with local and district councils, DOC, and mana whenua to share information and work towards a collaborative approach across each region.
22. We have been working closely with other regional councils, especially Auckland Council, to ensure that our approach is aligned. We have engaged with TAs and District Councils through operational staff, Chief Executives and Elected members to share information and discuss collective approaches.
23. We are working through Tūhonohono Mana Whenua team to engage effectively with local Iwi and we are aware that Te Tira Whakamataki, the Maori Biosecurity Network, have been informing Iwi through their channels about HPAI.

**Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei
Next steps**

24. Finalising Greater Wellington’s response plan and discuss this regionally with others to identify areas of overlap and collaboration and develop site specific responses to areas of shared interests.
25. Continue conversations with MPI regarding funding to support TAs, mana whenua and private landowners.

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writer	Henk Louw – Principal Advisor Ecosystems, Delivery
Approvers	Jack Mace, Director Delivery

	Lian Butcher, Group Manager, Environment
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<p>He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations</p>
<p><i>Fit with Council’s roles or with Committee’s terms of reference</i></p> <p>The impacts of High Pathogen Avian Influenza will hold significant impacts for native wildlife across the region. It will have financial impacts on how Greater Wellington operates and impact on the council’s effectiveness to deliver in the long term. Therefor aligning with the committee’s specific responsibilities and purpose.</p>
<p><i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i></p> <p>The implication of managing future HPAI outbreaks may impact on the ability to deliver on the Annual and long-term plan. The response requirement has not been budgeted for and would require re-allocation of resources to respond.</p>
<p><i>Internal consultation</i></p> <p>The following teams have been involved with the preparedness planning to date. Knowledge and Insights, Health and Safety, Legal, Te Hunga Whiriwhiri, Delivery, Policy and Regulation, Communications, GIS-ICT, Strategy and performance, Business resilience and consenting.</p>
<p><i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i></p> <p>There are financial, health and safety, legal, cultural and biodiversity impacts and risks</p>

Environment Committee
20 February 2025
Report 25.47



For Information

FARMING REFERENCE GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To update the Environment Committee on the items discussed at the Farming Reference Group meeting and field trip held on 10 February 2025 in Kapiti.

Te horopaki

Context

2. The Terms of Reference for the Environment Committee and the Farming Reference Group state that a written report will be provided to the Environment Committee after each Farming Reference Group meeting. The Chair of the Farming Reference Group is a member of the Environment Committee and will speak to the written report ([Attachment 1](#)).

Ngā āpitihanga

Attachment/s

Number	Title
1	Farming Reference Group Chair's Report

Ngā kaiwaitohu

Signatory/Signatories

Writer/s	Barbie Barton – Chair, Farming Reference Group
Approver/s	Fathima Iftikar – Director Strategy, Policy and Regulation, Environment Group Lian Butcher – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Taiao Group Manager, Environment

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> The Environment Committee's terms of reference state that they will review, after each Farming Reference Group meeting, a written report of the business conducted at that meeting.
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> The Farming sector is a key demographic within the Greater Wellington Region with a focus on environmental matters.
<i>Internal consultation</i> There was no internal consultation.
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> There are no known risks and impacts related to this report.

Greater Wellington Farming Reference Group (FRG) Report

Farming Reference Group meeting and field trip to Kapiti on 10 February 2025

To the Greater Wellington Environment Committee

This has been a summer season of complete contrasts with what has turned out to be an early summer in December, good rain in January (ruining the holiday break for some) and now February which has been mixed with a definite autumn feel to the mornings.

All this has led to a great grass growing summer for the whole region, with the Wairarapa not its usual brown hue for the time of year. Lamb growth rates have been excellent, ewe weight gain post weaning as good as it gets and milk production in the dairy sector is going really well. The question now is will this be a long autumn or an early winter.

Farmer morale is really good with both grass and improving sheep and beef prices, the only fly in the ointment is Trump and where he might settle on tariffs as the US is a big export market for us. The dairy farmers continue to hit new highs with the global dairy prices.

At the recent Farming Reference Group meeting on the Kapiti Coast, we had some very good discussion around pest management as we further progress into the post OSPRI era. I feel strongly that we are going to move to a joint model with landowners providing the trap management with Greater Wellington providing the training expertise and possibly a share of the traps for possum, mustelid and rabbit control, especially as the trapping technology evolves. The challenge for both parties is the human time element and how that needs to be managed.

Deer, goats and pigs continue to be more challenging to develop systems for control whilst the numbers continue to explode, ravaging all new plantings both forestry and riparian.

Greater Wellington will have a role in monitoring, identifying the problem pest areas and providing encouragement to landowners to help on the ground. The recent initiative of the Wairarapa Catchment Collective with contracting John Bissell to teach catchments the art of pest management is a positive step in this direction. I also feel that at the end or beginning of farm discussion groups we could look at an agenda slot to network about pest control and what the members are doing and share techniques and stories - everyone loves a good hunting yarn! In the van on our return from the trip one of our members let me know that there is a dog friendly rat bait in the market through Connovation Ltd that I did not know about, so sharing stories and approaches will only make us all more efficient.

Avian Flu has been a topic of conversation following the recent outbreak in Southland. A regions preparedness to react and contain is very important. Whilst discussions are still ongoing with the agencies involved, Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) will soon release a set of guidelines. The message we need to get out to landowners is what to look for and how to react when they see suspicious bird behaviour so as not to spread the virus further.

The SkyTEM team spoke about where they are at with the modelling from the data collected and made us all appreciate the complexity around creating the models - the data collection now looks like the easy part! With water storage always on a landowners mind the identification of underground aquifers could be very important on the ways we will harvest water going forward.

Attachment 1 to Report 25.47

Whilst this summer has been low for water demand the topic of water storage is still important and hopefully, we can look to the future again and try and create a Wairarapa Community scheme. I think the Wairarapa community will watch with interest as Greater Wellington goes through the resource consent process to create more storage north of Te Marua and hopefully we can all take learnings from this process to further the storage requirements for the whole region.

The afternoon was spent at Kerry Walkers farm at Te Horo looking at his extensive wetland plantings. There was very interesting discussion around a severe land class change due to him not being allowed to clean out drains. This has seen water retained on good pastureland. Some would say this is returning the land to a more natural state, but the reality is that this land can no longer support a viable dairy unit and Kerry has switched to a far less profitable dry stock farming system. Kerry has an intergenerational emotional tie to this land, so he has come to terms with the no drainage decision and is enjoying the challenge of establishing a wetland. Had he been a lot younger and in the early stage of his career and farming cycle with high debt this no drainage decision would have led to a very different outcome.

The judging for the Ballance Farm Environment Awards is complete and the difficult task of deciding who gets which awards is almost complete, ready for the Awards evening on 26 March 2025 in Carterton. Please consider buying a ticket and attending as it is a great evening showcasing great land management in our region. Please remember that Greater Wellington are a major sponsor.



Thank you
Barbie Barton
Chair, GWRC Farmer Reference Group
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Environment Committee
20 February 2025
Report 25.23



For Information

TE RŌPŪ TAI AO | ENVIRONMENT UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2025

Te take mō te pūrongo


Purpose

1. To update the Environment Committee (the Committee) on the strategic direction and priorities of the Environment Group and the work underway across the Wellington Region and within each catchment.

Te tāhū kōrero


Background

2. Progress on action items from previous Committee meetings is outlined in [Attachment 1](#).
3. To provide strategic context, most of the update items have been tagged with the most relevant 'outcome groups' from the Rōpū Taiao Strategic Framework. This provides a line of sight to our long-term outcomes and vision from the activities outlined in this report. The three outcome groups include:




Safeguarding and restoring ecosystems and natural environments across our rohe

Air, land, ecosystems, freshwater bodies, the coastal marine area and the indigenous species that live in these environments throughout catchments are enabled to thrive in an integrated and connected way.



Fostering connection to nature, recreation and safe harbour navigation

Mana whenua and communities across the region are connected to te taiao and know the stories of their home. Everyone can safely access and connect to nature across our regional parks network, river corridors and harbours.



Strengthening regional resilience and supporting our communities

Mana whenua and communities are becoming more resilient to the effects drought, flooding and sea level rise in ways that support a thriving environment. Net greenhouse gas emissions in the Wellington region are reduced.

4. Each of these outcome groups has a set of detailed 10-year outcomes associated with them. You can find more detail on the Strategic Framework in [Attachment 2](#).

Strategic Direction

Short-term direction and performance measurement

5. A project is under way to develop short-term direction under the Rōpū Taiao Strategic Framework and design a framework for measuring Rōpū Taiao's performance in line with its outcomes. We updated you in November with an overview of the Strategic Framework and this project is the next phase to allow us to implement the framework. The project will design a set of 3-year objectives that will guide our long-term planning (LTP) and business planning decisions. We are also concurrently developing a way to measure progress against these objectives and the wider set of outcomes we have committed to.

Regional Overview

Regional Policy Statement Change 1


6. The deadline for submitting appeals passed on 18 November 2024, and for joining appeals as an interested party passed on 9 December 2024. Officers are preparing an approach for appeals and mediation on Regional Policy Statement Change 1 (RPS Change 1). Maintaining positive relationships with key parties, notably territorial authorities (TAs) who form a significant portion of the appellants, will be a priority for the officers through this process. The intent is to utilise mediation to resolve as many points as possible, and to minimise issues taken to the Environment court.
7. Wellington Water have withdrawn their appeal on freshwater components of RPS Change 1 that was inadvertently lodged to the wrong Court. This means that the freshwater components of RPS Change 1 are now beyond challenge. Officers will now prepare advice on making these components fully operative with Council approval.
8. Officers are continuing to connect with internal teams around implementation processes and priorities.

Natural Resources Plan Change 1

9. Plan Change 1 to the Natural Resources Plan (PC1), notified on 30 October 2023, is in the hearings stage, with recommendations from Greater Wellington officers and submitters being heard by the independent Hearings Panels.
10. Hearing Stream 1 was completed in November 2024. This covered overarching matters for the whole plan change and region-wide topics that are not part of implementing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020. Right of replies from officers on outstanding matters were completed in December 2024 meaning the Hearings Panels are now able to start drafting decisions on these topics.
11. The officers and external experts are now preparing and reviewing recommendations and technical evidence for Hearing Stream 2. Hearing Stream 2 will run from 7 April to 17 April 2025 and covers the objectives for fresh and coastal waterbodies in Te Awarua-o-Porirua and Te Whanganui-a-Tara whaitua and related water quality and ecosystem health policies. These are significant provisions in the plan change and will likely attract a lot of attention from submitters. The

Wastewater topic was previously anticipated to be part of this stream but will now be heard at Hearing Stream 4 alongside the Stormwater topic.


12. Hearing Stream 3, covering earthworks, rural land uses and forestry activities, will commence in May 2025.

HPAI Response 


13. Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) is developing a long-term response plan in alignment with Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) and Department of Conservation (DOC) guidelines. It is liaising with TAs, mana whenua and across the biosecurity sector to ensure a collaborative approach.

Knowledge Risk Review  

14. Knowledge and Insights has commenced a review of risk management activities, to ensure the function continues to provide appropriate advice/recommendations. Current examples of risk management activity advice include:
 - a High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) – providing science advice to the Greater Wellington Response
 - b Acute Water Shortage – Supporting Regulation in the management of low flows and providing climatic science advice.
 - c Recreational Water Quality – Monitoring and modelling to support safe swim and toxic algae information.
 - d Flood Risk Management – Provision of modelling, risk management planning, advice, and forecasting and warning.

Flood Advisory guidelines 

15. Greater Wellington's Flood Hazard Advisory Service includes advice on flood and erosion hazards, hazard management plans, consent applications that require river works, and on any national, regional, and local plan that pertains to flood and erosion risk management.
16. We have commenced a collaborative project to review and update the guidelines and processes that underpin the service, assess options for automation, develop technical guidance for developers and the community, and develop awareness material for territorial authority planning teams on the service Greater Wellington provides.
17. Our broader outcome is to ensure that Greater Wellington can efficiently provide robust, defensible flood hazard advice to a range of stakeholders that supports our strategic objectives of safeguarding communities from major flooding, upholds the flood protection 'avoid' risk principle and ensures that all involved are legally protected.


Flood Warning & Response Improvements Programme 

18. In the last reporting period, we have continued to develop our regional flood incident management capability. This has included:
 - a Updating our flood procedures to align with the new roles in the Environment Group, and to better integrate asset management.

- b. Updating all flow rating information and providing draft river trigger information to Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office for review.
- c. Procuring and commencing two key flood warning and response improvements projects, 'Extreme event modelling' and 'Flood mapping for emergency management'.
- d. Commissioning structural and seismic resilience inspections at all flood monitoring stations.

Flood mapping for emergency management 

19. Greater Wellington undertakes a substantial flood hazard modelling programme which reviews and updates flood hazard models on an ongoing cycle. This programme is primarily aimed at producing hazard mapping for land-use planning. This project is converting the outputs from these models into maps that can be used during emergencies. The objectives for this project are to:
 - a. Produce flood mapping across a range of return periods for use by Greater Wellington Flood Duty Officers during emergency events to provide actionable intelligence.
 - b. Establish protocols for the sharing of flood hazard mapping for emergency management before, during and after flood events.
 - c. Progress the integration of other flood hazard mapping from TAs and Wellington Water.
20. The project is in its initial stage which is to conduct an assessment and gap analysis on all existing flood models. We will then be working with a consultant to develop the mapping outputs for display in an online map catalogue for effective sharing with Civil Defence Emergency Management teams around the region.

Extreme event modelling 

21. Greater Wellington generally constructs and maintains stopbanks to a 1% AEP plus climate change standard (with the exception of the Hutt Valley which has a higher standard of protection). Flood events can be larger however, overwhelming defences and flooding communities. A key lesson from Cyclone Gabrielle was the need for extreme flood event planning in stopbanked river catchments. This project is seeking to model larger floods in each of the catchments managed by Greater Wellington to determine where overtopping is likely to occur, where flood water goes on our floodplains once it is out of the stopbanks, and what that sequence of flooding will look like during real events. The objectives for this project are to:
 - a. Define a process for modelling extreme flood events in the Wellington Region.
 - b. Develop model runs for extreme flood events in each watercourse modelled by Greater Wellington.
 - c. Produce outputs that will support emergency management planning for extreme flood events.
22. We have engaged a consultant who has experience working with Auckland Council to understand their over design events to develop a methodology which will then be taken forward into modelling for the Wellington Region.

Flood risk management – community engagement



23. Between February and May 2025, we are planning five pieces of community engagement across the region, descriptions of each of these follows. Note that the dates of the engagement periods are subject to change but have been provided as an indication of what is planned.

a Waipoua flood risk management options for the Masterton urban area

Engagement period: 17 February to 16 March 2025

Purpose: Seeking feedback from the wider community on four concepts for managing the flood risk to Masterton including: improving and extending stopbanks in existing locations; increasing channel capacity through extensive work in the channel; retreat some stopbanks; and nature-based solutions in the upper catchment.

b Featherston flood hazard modelling (Donalds and Abbots Creek) Stage 3

Engagement period: 10 March to 6 April 2025

Purpose: Seeking input from the community about their recollection of the 2 December 2018 flood events to help calibrate the flood hazard model.

c Kāpiti flood hazard modelling (Ōtaki, Waitohu, Mangapouri, Mangaone, Waikanae) Stage 3

Engagement period: 17 March to 13 April 2025

Purpose: Seeking input from the community about their recollection of various flood events relating to each river or stream to help calibrate the flood hazard models.

d Upper Hutt flood hazard modelling (Hutt River) Stage 4

Engagement period: 28 April to 12 May 2025

Purpose: Inform the community and stakeholders that Greater Wellington have completed the flood hazard modelling to look at the risk of river flooding to Upper Hutt. To present the new flood hazard maps for their catchment for a 1% annual exceedance probability flood both with and without the predicted impacts of climate change.

e Featherston flood hazard modelling (Donalds and Abbots Creek) Stage 4

Engagement period: 5 May to 25 May 2025

Purpose: Inform the community and stakeholders that Greater Wellington have completed the flood hazard modelling to look at the risk of river flooding to Featherston from Donalds and Abbots Creek. To present the new flood hazard maps for their catchment for a 1% annual exceedance probability flood both with and without the predicted impacts of climate change.

Restoration Day Strategy



24. The outdated Restoration Day strategy has been reviewed. The review was collaborative with Mauri Tūhono and partner agencies, using workshops and feedback analysis to shape a new vision, principles, and relationship model aligned

with the implementation of Kaipupuri taonga ki te ao Whānui (the Mauri Tūhono framework which means 'the taonga we stand for everywhere with everyone').

25. This marks Greater Wellington's first on-the-ground application of the framework, following an iterative approach. Insights from the review have informed a new strategy focus, set for draft completion in Q3, with a trial event in Q4. The trial event's outcomes will refine the strategy, measuring success through increased collective knowledge of te taiao, greater sharing of diverse perspectives, stronger community leadership, and deeper relationships with mana whenua.

Te Awarua-o-Porirua

Te Wai Ora o Porirua/Porirua Harbour Accord



26. Regular Accord hui with partners continued through December-January as we finalised the Accord document and agreed on the logistics for a 6 February 2025 signing date. Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira hosted the last hui of 2024.
27. An initial half day Catchment planning hui was hosted by Greater Wellington at Battle Hill Farm Park with all Accord partners in late January 2025. The workshop included discussions around “how” we will work together and “what” the work programme for 2025 might look like. The Accord partners are working towards a Draft Catchment Action Plan by December 2025.



Figure 1. Accord partners at Battle Hill Farm Park

28. Greater Wellington Catchment and Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement teams coordinated a visit for Accord members to the Porirua Wastewater Treatment Plant and outfall, to gain a better understanding of its operation.



Figure 2. Accord partners at Porirua Wastewater Treatment Plant and outfall


29. Porirua Stream gravel extraction was started on 17 January and was completed by 3 February. A total volume of 4483 cubic meters of gravel was removed between the upstream and downstream Station Rd bridges. The reason for extracting the gravel was to maintain the channel capacity to carry the flow from a 1 in 100-year flood event. This work involved working with Porirua City Council, Iwi and many teams within Greater Wellington, including planners, ecologists and flood operation staff. The gravel that was removed was processed by the contractor to be used for civil construction rather than being taken to landfill. This had a significant cost saving and avoided filling the landfill with clean fill.



Figure 3. Porirua Stream during extraction




Figure 4. Porirua Stream after extraction

Recreational boating safety 

30. Two “No Excuses” days were held over summer with mixed results, while we are seeing many safety compliant boats, this summer we have found more vessels without communications, speeding and not carrying sufficient lifejackets. Through our Maritime NZ funded work we are able to provide some lifejackets on the water to keep people safe. Several incidents are being followed up with infringements and warnings. We continue to work with Communications to push safety messages.

Wairarapa Coast

Environment Restoration mahi on private land 

31. Greater Wellington is working with a sheep and beef farmer located in the Huangarua catchment near Martinborough to fence off and plant 22.5ha of highly erodible land. This is part of a programme of work that retires many hundreds of hectares of erosion prone land each year. The project targets the outlet of the farm’s main tributary to the Huangarua river, which is identified as a high priority sediment catchment in the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Implementation Plan. The project aims to reduce sediment and nutrient loss, while improving biodiversity through the planting of 17.5ha of highly sloped erosion-prone land with timber grade eucalypts (as an alternate to radiata pine), complimented by 2.5ha of native riparian planting along an 850m section of stream and the reversion of 2.5ha of native regrowth. The project will be managed by Greater Wellington and funded at

50% through the Wellington Region Erosion Control Initiative programme which is also supported by Ministry of Primary Industries.



Figure 5. Erosion prone gully on private land that will be retired from grazing and planted this winter.

Crown Infrastructure Partners (CIP) Funding



32. Following on learnings from cyclone Garielle, CIP has provided funding to improve Greater Wellington's infrastructure for flood forecasting in the eastern hills. This funding has been used to:
 - a Develop plans for a large flow monitoring slackline. Greater Wellington will now engage with landowners to formalise the future site, as well as work with engineers to confirm the detailed technical design.
 - b Undertake initial discussions with Masterton District Council (MDC) regarding installing smart signage to advise motorists of flooding on specific routes. Conversations are going well and spending CIP funding, while co-designing with MDC, on the signs is on track to be delivered within CIP required timelines.
 - c Commence building a fail-over link via satellite with ICT. This is to mitigate the risk of a break in the connection between our remote stations and the Masterton office during a large flood event.

- d Procure various equipment for measuring flow and monitoring the river levels.
- e Hire a fixed term contractor to oversee the above initiatives.

Recreational boating safety

- 33. On Waitangi Day one of the Harbour Rangers spent time at Castlepoint talking to boat owners and beach goers about boating safety and basic safety requirements. They were well received and as well as this work also made contacts with locals and discussed ways to improve safety information and making it more available and obvious to visitors to the area.

Ruamāhanga

Wairarapa Moana

- 34. Governance oversight of the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project is being formally transferred to the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board. The project is also in transition from a Jobs for Nature funding agreement which ends this year.
- 35. Decisions about Environment Group's total planned investment are being discussed with the wider coordination group which includes mana whenua, DOC and South Wairarapa District Council representatives. The proposed investment will then go to the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board as part of their annual planning cycle.
- 36. Environment Group is working under a catchment approach to provide the Statutory Board with an overview of all relevant work being planned for the next three years. This means that all work occurring in and around the in the Wairarapa Moana reserves is in scope including flood operations, environment restoration, monitoring etc.
- 37. Over 40 people gathered at Lake Domain for the annual Kākahi count on a calm sunny day in January. This citizen science event has been running for over 10 years and has helped identify issues with protecting these taonga species of freshwater mussel. This year a small group of juveniles was found as well as good numbers of the less common Echyridella Aucklandica. This is a positive result and provides an area of research to focus on going forward. The full report will be out later this year.

Implications of SkyTEM for Whaitua and Wairarapa Water Resilience implementation

- 38. In December representatives from mana whenua, local authorities and community were shown how data from the SkyTEM aerial survey will be presented. The final model and online map viewer is due for release in June of this year. This will provide more accurate information about aquifer potential and the hydrogeology of the Ruamāhanga valley down to 400m below ground level.
- 39. Implications of the new information for resource management will take time to work through. Further investigations and studies may be commissioned to answer questions arising from the whaitua implementation programme and Wairarapa Water Resilience Strategy, such as the level of interaction between ground and surface water, areas where aquifer recharge may be occurring, and where large bodies of groundwater may exist.

Flood Protection Work Tranche One update 

40. Work has commenced on the Flood Protection Work Tranche 1 programme. This programme is co-funded by the Crown and will construct flood protection and erosion control infrastructure at 16 sites across the region. Two sites have already been completed.

Flood risk management – community engagement 

41. As noted above, community engagement with the Masterton and Featherston communities on flood risk management is occurring soon.
42. The Te Kauru Floodplain Management Plan identifies the need for enhanced protection of urban Masterton. Options to address this are being made public in February following an extensive modelling and options development process done in conjunction with a community-led team over the last few years.
43. New modelling of the flood hazard in Featherston will be informed by community engagement in March. This will test whether what the model matches well with the community's experience of the 2018 flooding in the town. A second stage of engagement in May will occur prior to finalisation of flood hazard maps for the combined district plan.

District Planning 

44. Greater Wellington officers attended hearing stream 6 on Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Natural Landscapes, Coastal Environment, Character and Access for the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan (PDP) on the 17 December 2024.
45. Greater Wellington's evidence focused on the need for the Ecosystem and Indigenous Biodiversity provisions in the PDP to give effect to the Operative RPS and NPS-IB and have regard to RPS Change 1. Legal evidence to support this position was provided.
46. Greater Wellington sought specific relief that the proposed new objective for tangata whenua relationships and traditions with indigenous biodiversity is strengthened to support a partnership approach in decision-making.
47. Greater Wellington reiterated our position that indigenous biodiversity must be maintained within areas of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna. Consequently, we sought amendments to ECO-P5 which require that any maintenance activities within a significant natural area (SNA) must be allowed only when absolutely necessary and must be confined to the existing scale and nature that maintains the indigenous biodiversity values, rather than simply minimising the adverse effects of those activities.
48. Greater Wellington supported the amendments made by the S42A author in response to our submission to implement the effects management hierarchy within SNAs. However, Greater Wellington requested that the effects management hierarchy be applied to the management of significant adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity outside of SNAs as required under the NPS-IB. Greater Wellington proposed that a less stringent management hierarchy could be applied to manage adverse effects of minor upgrades to the national grid and renewable

energy generation activities to align with other national direction and the RPS Change 1. The right of reply statement following the hearing is yet to be released.

Kāpiti

Working with Ngā Hapū



49. The Wānanga with Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki will be held on 21 March 2025. Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) and Greater Wellington will be presenting information on past and present mahi occurring in the rohe.
50. Summer monitoring – The summer monitoring project recommenced in early November 2024 with dissolved oxygen (DO) loggers being deployed at the same sites as last year (noting that three years of monitoring is required to get a formal baseline state for this NOF attribute). Due to lack of kaimahi/staff Ngā Hapu were monitoring the sites in Te Atiawa’s rohe, but with Te Atiawa onboarding new kaimahi at the start of this year they will now take over their sites and play a more active role in the project. A hui is planned for Tuesday 4 February to discuss plans for potential monitoring activities to undertake Feb-Apr (particularly tuna condition/abundance) to start building a consistent approach for how the mahinga kai attribute (as per the Kapiti WIP) might be monitored and assessed.

Waikanae River instream works



51. Greater Wellington officers have scoped works to recontour the gravel island within the Waikanae Estuary. This scoping document has been shared with Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai and the DOC for input. There is general agreement to the proposed scope.
52. DOC confirmed in a meeting that to undertake the proposed gravel recontouring within the Waikanae Estuary, a concession from the Minister of Conservation is required. Obtaining this concession is unlikely to be a quick process. Greater Wellington officers are in the process of preparing this concession application, however they are still awaiting a meeting with the DOC Statutory Approvals team.

Notified consent application



53. The KCDC resource consent application (WGN220191) to continue the discharge of treated wastewater into the Marzengarb Stream and the discharge of contaminants to air from the Paraparaumu Wastewater Treatment Plant is progressing. The applicant is currently engaging with submitters to clarify their concerns. A hearing date is yet to be confirmed.

Oil spill response



54. In mid-December Harbours received a report from a private aircraft pilot of an oil spill north of Kapiti Island. The pilot was able to provide a good description and photos that appeared to confirm oil on the water, later estimations out it around 200 litres, some thick but mostly spread.
55. We made notifications to relevant local organisations including mana whenua, Kapiti island DOC staff and KCDC advising that it may come ashore at some point.
56. In consultation with Maritime NZ we sought assistance from the Kapiti Aero Club and Kapiti Coastguard and had one staff in the air looking for the slick and directing

the Coastguard vessel towards the area to obtain samples. Thankfully the slick appeared to have fully dispersed by the time both of these staff were on site (about 4 hours after it was initially observed)

57. All previously notified parties were informed, some of the commercial vessels in the area were spoken to but without any sample nothing could be progressed. A cost recovery claim is being submitted to the Oil Pollution Fund for unsourced spills.


Te Whanganui-a-Tara

Working with Taranaki Whānui 


58. Greater Wellington's work programme with Taranaki Whānui for 2025 has been confirmed through Kaupapa agreement.
59. Rōpū Tiaki are looking at options for broadening their scope beyond co-management of the Parangārahu Lakes.

Radio upgrade 

60. The aging radios on the A-band radio network for the western region have been replaced. Mt Climie repeater has been supporting the western flood warning radio network for the last 38 years utilising an A-band frequency. This has been a reliable system but was becoming vulnerable as the technology aged. Over the last 8 months the Environment Group, with support from ICT, have been upgrading and testing the new network and are now working to close the old A-Band support.

Designations 

61. Greater Wellington provided Hutt City Council (HCC) on 17 January 2025 four Notices of Requirement to designate the Belmont, Wainuiomata, East Harbour Regional Parks and Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River in the proposed Hutt District Plan. The proposed Hutt District Plan will be publicly notified on 7 February 2025.

District Planning 

62. On 12 November 2024, Greater Wellington, Kiwi Rail and Wellington City Council (WCC) attended court facilitated mediation in relation to KiwiRail's appeal point on rail setback areas in the Proposed Wellington District Plan.
63. Greater Wellington attended the appeal as a s274 party in support of KiwiRail who sought a larger setback distance between property boundaries or structures and the rail corridor boundary to enable safe maintenance works.
64. All parties agreed to a satisfactory resolution to increase setback areas.
65. Officers are preparing feedback on the draft Lower Hutt Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025-2055 (previously "Spatial Plan"). Feedback is due 7 March 2025 and HCC intends to adopt the Strategy in May 2025.
66. Officers are also preparing a submission on Lower Hutt's Proposed District Plan which is due 4 April 2025.

Regional Parks 

67. Following a dog bite impacting one of our staff members at Kaitoke campground, and other dog-related complaints, parks staff are working on a pamphlet for dog owners that will help them understand their responsibilities and the consequences of breaches. Staff are also meeting with dog control officers to discuss our interactions with dogs in parks.
68. Staff are monitoring the parks on a weekly basis for escalating fire threat. Due to a wet start to the summer, we are only just beginning to see closures and restrictions in parks. Closures are currently in place at Parangarahu Lakes where visitor entrapment in the event of fire is high risk.
69. Management options for destocking of Belmont Regional Park are being reviewed at a wānanga in February, following significant investigations and information gathering. Officers are confident that this will lead to a preferred strategy for long-term restoration of farmed land and expect to report findings to the next Environment Committee meeting. The data gathering has highlighted that the lifetime cost of most options is higher than current funding allows, however the preferred strategy will consider multiple criteria such as planting alternatives, fire-risk, recreational access and commercial opportunities, as well as cost effectiveness.

Mākara/Ōhāriu Community



70. A councillor and Catchment team member attended the Mākara/Ōhāriu Community Board (MOCB) December hui. Topics included Plan Change 1 community perspectives and Mākara Stream management. After subsequent internal meetings, Catchment is now coordinating the Greater Wellington response and following up with various teams actions across Policy, Delivery and K&I aiming to update the MOCB at their 1 May 2025 hui.

Oil spill response



71. Harbours team responded to reports of oil (diesel) in Seaview marina, we provided support and Maritime NZ equipment to the marina team who managed the response and clean up. The volume was quite low but it did spread so was obvious in the calm marina. The fuel storage and bowser system has been changed to prevent a similar occurrence. Our costs were covered by the operator.

Recreational boating safety



72. We have received several complaints about Personal Water Craft (jet skis) speeding. Our staff have encountered aggressive behaviour when responding to the complaints, particularly along the eastern side of the harbour (Eastbourne coast). As a result, we will be sending two staff to respond to similar calls and we are also talking to Police about support. This is not normal for our callouts, nor for jet ski operators as a whole. It is likely due to a specific groups of vessel owners.
73. On Waitangi Day, there was a diving fatality near the harbour entrance. This was not regarded as a boating issue, however it did happen on the harbour. We worked with Te Atiawa to share the details of the resulting rāhui.

Ngā āpitihanga

Attachments

Number	Title
1	Action items from previous Environment Committee meetings
2	Rōpū Taiao Strategic Framework

Ngā kaiwaitohu

Signatories

Approver	Lian Butcher – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Taiao Group Manager Environment
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He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> The Environment Committee has responsibility to consider all matters across the development and implementation of the work programmes of Greater Wellington's Environment Group
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> Development and implementation of related work programmes fall under the core activities of the 2024-34 Long Term Plan
<i>Internal consultation</i> Internal consultation was limited to officers of Greater Wellington's Environment Group
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> This report covers the full breadth of work programmes, and equally a broad range of environmental, reputational, legal, financial and health, safety and wellbeing risks and associated implications.

Action items from previous Environment Committee Meetings

Date	Action item	Status and comment
8 August 2024	<p>Te Rōpū Taiao Environment Group Update – August 2024 – Report 24.375 [For Information]</p> <p>Noted: Officers to include more graphs and diagrams in future update reports, particularly showing trends over time in environmental regulation.</p>	<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>Comment: Regarding trends in Regulation, we are currently looking into a format and product to supply this information, linking in with the timing we are required to provide such information through national monitoring systems and internal reporting. In the meantime, it would be helpful to understand from the Committee if there are any particular regulation related trends that they want to be regularly informed on.</p>
17 October 2024	<p>Public Participation – Papa Taiao Earthcare</p> <p>Noted: The Committee requested: the Council Chair write a letter in support of the installation of the mural</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Comment: Letter of support sent 18 November 2024</p>

Rōpū Taiao Strategic Framework

The environment and people flourishing in the Wellington region

RŌPŪ TAIAO OUTCOMES

Improved outcomes for mana whenua and Māori

Proactively engage mana whenua in decision making, and incorporate te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori perspectives, so we can achieve the best outcomes for Māori across all aspects of our region.

Te taiao is enabled to thrive

Te taiao is enabled to thrive to support the capacity of air, land, freshwater and coastal marine ecosystems to sustain all life and future generations.

The people of the region can flourish

Our region is welcoming, with access to our natural environment that is safe and people friendly, offering unique and diverse experiences to support our communities and the broader regional economy. We support people to live in ways that value, restore, and enhance our environment.

Regional resilience and sustainability

The Wellington region is a low-emission and climate-resilient region, for both people and the natural environment, with climate mitigation and adaptation being an integral part of our decision making. We work to protect our communities from the consequences of drought, flooding and sea level rise.

10-YEAR OUTCOMES



Safeguarding and restoring ecosystems and natural environments across our rohe

Air, land, ecosystems, freshwater bodies, the coastal marine area and the indigenous species that live in these environments throughout catchments are enabled to thrive in an integrated and connected way.

- Our policies and regulatory settings, supported by on-the-ground actions, ensure that our environment does not degrade and is enabled to thrive.
- Indigenous ecosystems and habitats are protected from the impacts of human activities and invasive species that are harmful.
- The quality of freshwater bodies and the coastal marine area is increased, leading to improvements across all areas throughout catchments.
- Soils are protected and retain their ecosystem function and range of uses.
- Air quality is improved to benefit community health and our climate.



Fostering connection to nature, recreation and safe harbour navigation

Mana whenua and communities across the region are connected to te taiao and know the stories of their home. Everyone can safely access and connect to nature across our regional parks network, river corridors and harbours.

- More communities access high quality, safe recreation experiences across our parks network, river corridors and harbours.
- Connections across our rohe with te taiao and people are strengthened, working together to remove boundaries and develop solutions together.
- Vessels in the coastal marine area that carry people and goods and provide services can navigate safely and efficiently.



Strengthening regional resilience and supporting our communities

Mana whenua and communities are becoming more resilient to the effects drought, flooding and sea level rise in ways that support a thriving environment. Net greenhouse gas emissions in the Wellington region are reduced.

- Communities and the natural environment are more resilient to the impacts of climate change
- Our policy and environmental restoration work contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gases.
- The community and emergency services are supported to plan effectively for hazard events.
- Our flood management assets are maintained to support agreed levels of service as part of integrated catchment approaches that ensure holistic environmental and people outcomes are achieved.
- Improved water supply and demand systems reduce the amount of water stress on rivers and aquifers, and communities are becoming more resilient to effects of worsening drought risk amplified by climate change

RŌPŪ TAIAO STRATEGIC SHIFTS



Te Whāriki in action

Improve outcomes for mana whenua and Māori



Catchment approach

Deliver integrated catchment approaches that lead to holistic local outcomes



Engage, collaborate and partner

Think collectively and work collaboratively to maximise impact for the environment and people



Nature-based approaches

Increase the balance of nature-based approaches in our work