



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Pane Matua Taiao

If calling please ask for: Democratic Services

21 June 2018

Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee

Order Paper for meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt on:

Tuesday, 26 June 2018 at 4.30pm

Membership of the Subcommittee

Wellington Regional Council

Cr Lamason (Chair)	Cr Laban (Deputy)	Cr Kedgley
Cr Laidlaw	Cr Ogden	Cr Swain

Hutt City Council

Mayor Wallace	Deputy Mayor Bassett	Cr Milne
---------------	----------------------	----------

Upper Hutt City Council

Mayor Guppy	Cr Swales	Cr Taylor
-------------	-----------	-----------

Kara Puketapu-Dentice

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

Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee

Order Paper for meeting to be held on Tuesday, 26 June 2018 in the Council Chamber, Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt at 4.30pm

Public Business

		Page No
1. Apologies		
2. Declarations of conflict of interest		
3. Public participation		
4. Confirmation of the minutes of 28 May 2018	Report 18.214	3
5. Action items from previous meetings	Report 18.274	6

General

6. Projects Report	Report 18.251	8
------------------------------------	----------------------	----------

RiverLink

7. RiverLink - Preliminary Design	Report 18.250	13
---	----------------------	-----------



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Please note that these minutes remain unconfirmed until the meeting of the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee on 26 June 2018.

Report 18.214

28/5/2018

File: CCAB 14-407

Minutes of the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee meeting held in the Council Chamber, Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt on Monday, 28 May 2018 at 4:44pm

Present

Councillors Lamason (Chair), Laban (Deputy Chair), Ogden, and Swain (Greater Wellington Regional Council); Mayor Wallace and Deputy Mayor Bassett (Hutt City Council); Mayor Guppy and Councillor Taylor (Upper Hutt City Council); Kara Puketapu-Dentice.

Public Business

1 Apologies

Moved

(Cr Taylor /Mayor Wallace)

That the Subcommittee accepts the apologies for absence from Councillors Kedgley, Laidlaw, Milne and Swales.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

2 Declarations of conflict of interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

4 **Confirmation of the minutes of 15 February 2018**

Moved (Cr Taylor/ Deputy Mayor Bassett)

That the Subcommittee confirms the minutes of 15 Feburary 2018, Report 18.31.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

5 **Action items from previous meetings**

Report 18.169

File: CCAB-14-398

Moved (Deputy Mayor Bassett/ Cr Taylor)

That the Subcommittee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

General

6 **Hutt Valley Projects - Project Manager's report**

Report 18.187

File: CCAB-14-401

Moved (Deputy Mayor Bassett/ Cr Laban)

That the Subcommittee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

7 **Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan**

Report 18.170

File: CCAB-14-400

Amanda Death, Environmental Planner, Investigations, Strategy and Planning, spoke to the report.

Moved (Mayor Wallace/ Cr Taylor)

That the Subcommittee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Adopts the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan as set out in Attachment 1 to this Report for implementation, including incorporation of a mihi and iwi aspirations for Te Awa Kairangi as agreed with the Chair and Kara Puketapu-Dentice.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

RiverLink

8 RiverLink Project Manager's Report

Alistair Allan, Team Leader, Floodplain Management Plan Implementation, spoke to the report.

Report 18.212

File: CCAB-14-402

Moved

(Mayor Wallace/ Cr Taylor)

That the Subcommittee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

The motion was **CARRIED**.

The meeting closed at 5:30pm.

Cr P Lamason
(Chair)

Date:



Report 18.274
Date 21 June 2018
File CCAB-14-425

Committee Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee
Author Wayne O'Donnell, General Manager, Catchment Management

Action items from previous meetings

Attachment 1 lists items raised at Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee meetings that require actions or follow-ups from officers. All action items include an outline of current status and a brief comment. Once the items have been completed and reported to the Subcommittee they will be removed from the list.

No decision is being sought in this report. This report is for the Subcommittee's information only.

Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager, Catchment
Management

Attachment 1: Action items from previous meetings

Attachment 1 to Report 18.274

Action points from previous Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee meetings

Meeting date	Action point	Status and comment
15 February 2018	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Subcommittee requested officers include an outline works programme schedule for RiverLink as part of the Preliminary Design report, indicating years during which parts of the project would be delivered together with anticipated budgets</p>	<p>Status: <i>Completed</i></p> <p>Comments:</p> <p><i>The final version of this programme is attached as part of Report 18.250, presented at this meeting.</i></p>



Report 2018.251
Date 13 June 2018
File CCAB-14-414

Committee Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee
Author Alistair J N Allan, Team Leader, Floodplain Management Plan Implementation

Projects Report

1. Purpose

To update the Subcommittee on progress made with general Hutt Valley Flood Management (HVFM) projects.

2. Background

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) has ongoing projects within the Hutt Valley and its wider catchment. Major projects are further detailed in separate reports. This report tracks and reports on progress of all projects and provides references to major project reports.

The projects are included in, or guided by, the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan 2001.

3. Pinehaven Stream Floodplain Management Plan

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

4. Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan

On the 28 May 2018, the Subcommittee endorsed the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan for implementation, pending an amendment to the mihi and inclusion of Iwi in the documents vision. Work is currently underway to incorporate the revised mihi and highlight Iwi's role in developing and delivering the strategy and action plan. Work is also underway to provide a suitable location for the Strategy on the GWRC's website.

Once the revisions to the document are complete and it has been uploaded to the website, a media release will be issued promoting the review, and that the new revised 2018 Strategy is now being implemented. Social media posts will also be issued promoting the 2018 Strategy. The 2018 Strategy will be printed and hard copies will be made available at local libraries and council offices.

The development of a 'pocket version' of the document is underway. Options are being looked into to determine the best method to make the larger document into a smaller, more user-friendly version.

5. Waiwhetu Stream Walkover

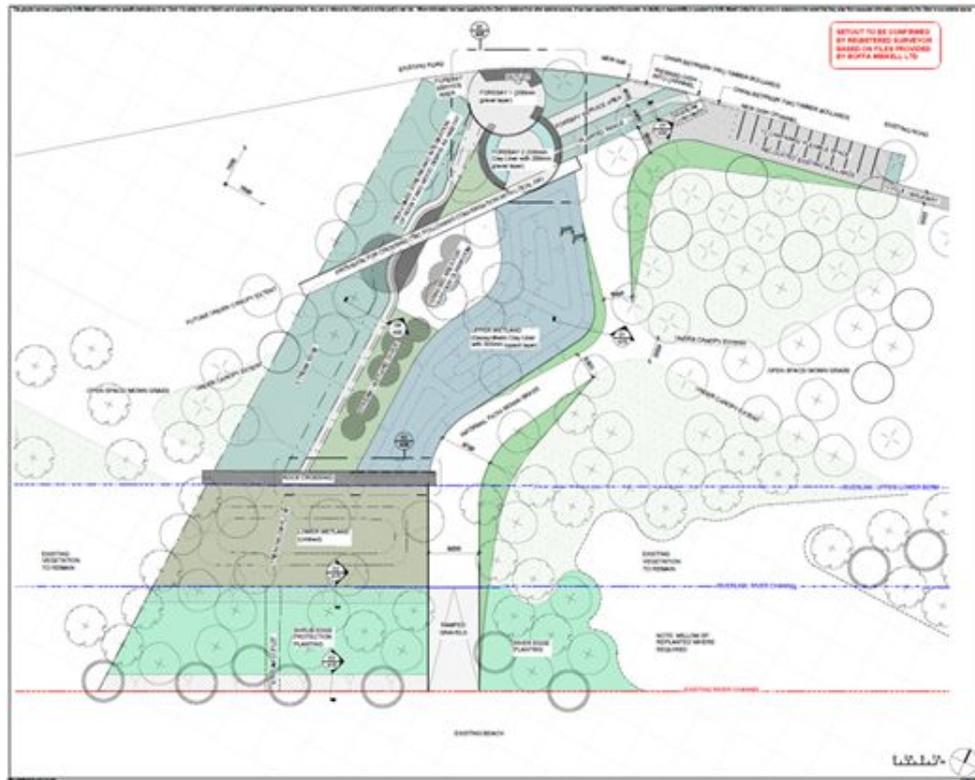
The annual walkover of the Waiwhetu Stream is to be held on Wednesday, 27 June 2018. This is a public walkover that will involve local Iwi, Friends of the Waiwhetu Stream members, Hutt City Council Officers, GWRC Flood Protection Officers, Naenae Nature Trust members, and Seaview Business Association members.

The walkover will provide community groups an opportunity to talk through with council officers various issues or concerns they have along the Waiwhetu Stream, and also a chance to identify any possible opportunities. Stops will include the Port Road erosion protection work site, the concrete channel at Naenae, and a look at the fish ramp on the weir near St Ronans Avenue. Part of the day will also include an unveiling of the mosaic that has been constructed next to the weir by a local artist. Lunch will be provided to attendees, giving everyone an opportunity to network and develop relationships.

6. Belmont Wetland Trial

Freshwater Quality and Biodiversity is one of the key outcomes sought by the next Long Term Plan. Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River is the recipient of many stormwater discharges from both Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, making stormwater quality improvement within the river a challenge. This challenge has been picked up within the environmental objectives of RiverLink and the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy, which aims to work with the local authorities and their service provider, Wellington Water, to create, maintain and use wetlands to filter the water before it reaches the river. This approach within the river corridor has been taken, and as part of this initiative, opportunities for stormwater treatment within urban areas in the Hutt Valley are being encouraged.

A proposed trial of this river corridor wetland has been designed for the Belmont berms, just south of the Kennedy Good Bridge on the western side of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River. A small, modified stream section (approximately 120m) extends across the berm before exiting into the river. The catchment which feeds this stream is approximately 45 hectares, with areas of forest, housing and State Highway. The water quality of this catchment is comparatively good, when compared with other stormwater discharges along the river. However, the other sites within RiverLink are more complicated to design, due to archaeological discovery risks which might delay the trial being completed.



Design concept for Belmont Wetland

The trial project will test the feasibility of constructed wetlands within the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River corridor, with a particular focus on understanding shared maintenance and monitoring, buildability and vulnerability to large flood events in the river. The wetland trial will incorporate both treatment wetland and native biodiversity enhancement components to support a range of outcomes. The wetland and associated plantings are being designed in conjunction with Belmont School and the local community who have been involved with the stream for many years. Several meetings and discussions have been held with the school to develop the design and involve the students in ongoing monitoring.

Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust has supported the design development for the wetland through its Subcommittee Appointee, supports coordinating discussions on the appropriate Iwi involvement, and the wetland and development of a heritage trail.

7. “Taita Park” Trail upgrade

As reported last month, a new 2 kilometre NZ Transport Agency and Hutt City Council jointly funded 3 metre wide sealed walkway/cycleway, currently being installed, is now nearing completion. Due to the recent wet weather, some of the topsoiling and clean-up work may be delayed.



A temporary barrier preventing traffic driving through on the service road has been in place during construction, providing an opportunity to monitor how the public feel about it being closed. While there has been some negative feedback about the closure, the response has been overwhelmingly in favour of permanently closing the through-access road to motorised traffic, and retaining it for service-access only (except when the space is used for overflow car parking to support major events in Fraser Park). A decision about whether to make the closure more permanent will be later this year.

A landscape planting plan is currently being drawn up, identifying locations and species to plant, including areas for community plantings, some gentle mounding to provide ground definition, seats, picnic tables and areas for parking.

An area has been identified at the southern end in the vicinity of the Robin Maud Totara Grove for Eastern Hutt Rotary to plant 500 trees and shrubs this winter.

8. The decision-making process and significance

No communication is required.

9. Consideration of Climate Change

The matters addressed in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

9.1 Mitigation assessment

Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the

atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.

HVFM projects are subject to GWRC's initiatives designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and enhance sequestration capacity where possible. These include the proposed Code of Practice (which guides all river management activities undertaken by GWRC for the purposes of flood and erosion protection across the Wellington Region), the GWRC corporate sustainability programme, and GWRC's procurement process and will encourage suppliers and contractors to minimise emissions.

9.2 Adaptation assessment

Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.

GWRC plans for climate change in assessing the degree of future flood hazard and in determining an appropriate response GWRC applies the following allowances for climate change predicted to occur over the next 100 years in the design criteria for flood hazard investigations:

- Increases in rainfall intensity – 20%
- Sea level rise – 0.8m

10. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

10.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

11. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Alistair J N Allan
Team Leader, FMP
Implementation

Report approved by:

Graeme Campbell
Manager, Flood Protection

Report approved by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager, Catchment
Management



Report 2018.250
Date 13 June 2018
File CCAB-14-417

Committee Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee
Author Alistair J N Allan, Team Leader, Floodplain Management Plan Implementation

RiverLink - Preliminary Design

1. Purpose

To seek Subcommittee endorsement of the flood protection components of the RiverLink Preliminary Design, the RiverLink implementation programme, and to communicate support for the completion of decision-making processes of the RiverLink partner organisations, Hutt City Council, and the New Zealand Transport Agency.

2. Background

RiverLink is a transformational project for Lower Hutt City. The RiverLink preliminary design has been created through a collaborative partnership between Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Hutt City Council (HCC), and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZ Transport Agency).

RiverLink brings together these partner agencies to support the aspirations of the communities of Lower Hutt to increase the vibrancy and liveability of Hutt City. RiverLink focuses around the heart of Hutt City, extending from State Highway 2 across to High Street in the CBD, and between Ewen Bridge and Kennedy Good Bridge and along a 3km length of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River.

Each organisation's focus in RiverLink ties back to their overarching roles, strategies and plans; for GWRC, the flood protection upgrades support the delivery of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (2001) and protect Lower Hutt City's CBD by connecting the recently completed works between Ewen Bridge and Ava Rail Bridge (completed 2009) and the Boulcott Stopbank (completed 2011). At a broader level, RiverLink also delivers, to varying degrees, across three of the priority outcomes for GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-2028 of regional resilience, public transport, fresh water quality and biodiversity.

3. Preliminary Design

The preliminary design is outlined in the Preliminary Design Summary Report contained in [Attachment 1](#) to this report. More detail on the individual elements is also contained in:

- Attachment 2:** River Works Peer Review
- Attachment 3:** The Making Places Story
- Attachment 4:** Riverlink Communication Strategy
- Attachment 5:** Riverlink Consenting pathways
- Attachment 6:** Consent Legal Advice
- Attachment 7:** Riverlink Outline Programme

The Flood Protection components, for which approval to proceed to design and consenting is being sought in this report, are outlined in section 2.1 of Attachment 1, and comprise of a range of flood management tools to deliver the target level of flood protection for Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River of 0.23% Annual Exceedance Probability (1-in-440 year return period flood event). These include:

- Widening the space available for the river and flooding, including channel widening between Kennedy Good Bridge to Ewen Bridge
- Stopbank strengthening and raising from Mills Street to Ewen Bridge, on the true left bank of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River
- Stopbank retreat, strengthening and raising from Ewen Bridge to just north of Melling Bridge, on the true right back of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River
- Integration of the flood protection structures with associated components of Making Places, in particular the connection between the Hutt City Centre and the river between Margaret Street and Andrews Avenue, along Daly Street
- Integration with the associated components of the Melling Transport Improvements
- Associated berm, riparian margin and in stream improvements to facilitate the environmental, ecological and recreational enhancements guided by Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan 2018.

4. Budget

GWRC and HCC have committed budgets in their respective draft Long Term Plans to enable implementation of RiverLink. NZ Transport Agency has committed to completing the Detailed Business Case for the Melling Transport Improvements project, and through their board decision, will confirm future intent regarding the project.

GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-28 will be adopted on 26 June 2018, and thereby confirm funding for implementation of the RiverLink project.

Project delivery budgets will continue to be refined throughout the next stages of the design process.

5. Programme

The RiverLink Programme has been developed in draft format based on available information from, and pending the decisions of, the partner agencies. The Programme will be refined throughout the next design stages and updated accordingly. The outline programme is contained in **Attachment 7** to this report.

A key component of the Programme to implement RiverLink is progression with obtaining necessary statutory approvals to complete the work. It is estimated that this process, including hearings, will take up to two years to complete. The current decision Programme means that the earliest point that consenting can commence is in 2019. Therefore, any works requiring resource consent will not be able to commence prior to 2021.

NZ Transport Agency, at this stage, has not identified a Programme for delivery of the Melling Transport Improvements.

6. Communication

The RiverLink project has taken an open approach to community engagement throughout the development of the Preliminary Design. This has taken a range of forms, to ensure a high level of awareness of the project within the community, and frequent opportunities are created to input and influence the design development. This process has continuously showed strong levels of support for project delivery that have been communicated to the partner organisations at all levels.

Endorsement of the Preliminary Design establishes a commitment by GWRC to the collaborative design outcomes, and the opportunities and dependencies arising from this approach. Decisions will be made by HCC in July 2018, and NZ Transport Agency at the end of 2018, to confirm the partner agencies' commitment to RiverLink outcomes. At each of these decision points, an update will be reported to the Subcommittee, and the decisions that have been made will be shared with the community, to keep the community informed of the decision-making outcomes.

7. Consideration of climate change

The matters addressed in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

7.1 Mitigation assessment

Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the

atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.

The GWRC components of the RiverLink Project are subject to GWRC's initiatives designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and enhance sequestration capacity. We will work with our project partners to develop a joint procurement approach that supports GWRC's mitigation objectives once we have entered that stage of the design process. The current basis that will be referred to for the mitigation objectives include the proposed Code of Practice (which guides all river management activities undertaken by GWRC for the purposes of flood and erosion protection across the Wellington Region), the GWRC corporate sustainability programme, and GWRC's procurement process, and will encourage suppliers and contractors to minimise emissions.

7.2 Adaptation assessment

Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.

The design development for RiverLink acknowledges the need to adapt to a changing climate, and aims to address these predicted impacts. GWRC has included allowances for climate change impacts and these are being finalised for the purposes of completing RiverLink Preliminary Design.

8. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

8.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance. The decision to proceed with the RiverLink project was made by Council in December 2015. The recommendations contained in this report relate more specifically to completing the next stage of this project, which is to proceed with detailed design and the lodging of the necessary statutory approvals to allow construction work to proceed.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

8.2 Engagement

Engagement on the matters contained in this report aligns with the level of significance assessed. The following engagement processes have been followed:

- Use of the RiverLink info container to share preliminary design development with the community. The container has been sited at locations of high community-use including HCC Riverbank carpark, HCC Highlight Festival, Melling Station, and Avalon Park.
- Newsletter updates, advising of design development and promotion of workshop-type events, distributed by mailing list, email, and available at the information hubs and at council office locations.
- Reported through the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee meetings
- Making reports, plans and information about the preliminary design available through www.riverlink.co.nz
- Media releases to advise of design updates and workshops
- Static displays at Queensgate Shopping Centre, Lower Hutt
- Attendance by invitation to meet with leaders of community and business interest groups including Rotary, Probus, and the Chamber of Commerce
- Recording community opinions and aspirations through interactive workshop sessions and online resources.

9. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Fully supports*** NZ Transport Agency completing its Detailed Business Case for the Melling Transport Improvements that form part of RiverLink in collaboration with Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council, and the recommendation of this Detailed Business Case to the NZ Transport Agency board at the end of 2018.
4. ***Fully supports*** Hutt City Council in completing its preliminary design for the urban design, city infrastructure and local road components that form part of RiverLink, and approving its funding and programme in July 2018.
5. ***Recommends*** to Council, following consideration by the Environment Committee, that:

- a. *Approval be given to proceed with the detailed design and the obtaining of resource consents for the flood protection components and associated works contained within the RiverLink preliminary design, as outlined in the RiverLink Preliminary Design Summary Report and in section 3 of this report, jointly with GWRC's project partners, Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency.*
- b. *Proceeding on the basis of the outline programme for implementing RiverLink including consenting and construction included in the RiverLink Preliminary Design Summary Report [Attachment 1].*
- c. *Notes that programming is subject to decisions to be made by Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency.*

Report prepared by:

Alistair J N Allan
Team Leader, FMP
Implementation

Report approved by:

Graeme Campbell
Manager, Flood Protection

Report approved by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager,
Catchment Management

- Attachment 1:** Preliminary Design Summary Report
Attachment 2: Executive Summary of River Works Peer Review
Attachment 3: The Making Places Story
Attachment 4: Riverlink Communication Strategy
Attachment 5: Riverlink Consenting pathways
Attachment 6: Consent Legal Advice
Attachment 7: Riverlink Outline Programme



RiverLink

Preliminary Design Summary Report

Prepared for the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee

Issue No.	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved for Issue
1 DRAFT	15 Mar 2018	R. Polvere A. Allan	R. Burra K. Kelly	
2 DRAFT	11 Apr 2018	R. Polvere P. Maaka	R. Burra	
3 DRAFT	13 Jun 2018	A Allan	G Campbell R Polvere	
4 DRAFT	14 June	A Allan	R Polvere K Kelly R Burra E Anand	G Campbell

For more information, contact the Greater Wellington Regional Council:

www.gw.govt.nz
info@gw.govt.nz

Contents

RiverLink	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Conceptual design phase process	1
1.2 Preliminary design phase process	2
2. RiverLink Preliminary Design	3
2.1 Flood Protection	3
2.1.1 Melling Bridge	4
2.1.2 Ecology, Amenity and recreation	4
2.2 Making Places and City Infrastructure	4
2.3 Melling Transport Improvements	5
2.3.1 Melling Train Station Relocation	5
2.3.2 Melling Bridge	5
2.3.3 Intersections Upgrade	6
3. Implementation Budgets and Programme	6
3.1 Implementation Budget	6
3.2 Projects after RiverLink 2018-2028	9
3.3 Implementation Programme	9
3.3.1 Detailed Design and Approvals 2018 – 2020	11
3.3.2 Implementation concurrent with detail design and consents	11
3.3.3 Implementation 2021 -2028	11
3.3.4 Melling Transport Improvements 2026 and beyond	12
3.4 RiverLink beyond 2028	12
3.4.1 Promenade Stage 2 and Stage 3 extension	12
3.4.2 Bus Hub	13
4. Supporting information	13
4.1 Preliminary Design Report	13
4.2 Independent Peer Review of Flood Protection Design	14
5. Consenting Pathways	14
6. Communication and Engagement Strategy	15
7. Delivery Structure Considerations	16
8. Reference Documents	16
9. Attachments	17
Appendix A: Hutt River City Centre Project Design Objectives 2014	18
Appendix B Scope for Detailed Design and Consents 2018 -2020	20

1. Introduction

RiverLink is a transformational project for Hutt City. Its preliminary design has been created through an informal collaborative partnership between Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Hutt City Council (HCC), and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZ Transport Agency).

RiverLink brings together these partner agencies to support the aspirations of the communities of Lower Hutt to increase the vibrancy and liveability of Hutt City. RiverLink focuses around the heart of Hutt City, extending from State Highway 2 across to High Street in the CBD, and between Ewen Bridge and Kennedy Good Bridge and along a 3km length of Te Awa Kairangi/the Hutt River.

Each organisations focus in RiverLink ties back to their overarching roles, strategies and plans; for GWRC the flood protection upgrades support the delivery of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (2001) and protect Hutt City's CBD by connecting the recently completed works between Ewen Bridge and Ava Rail Bridge (completed 2009) and the Boulcott Stopbank (completed 2011). At a broader level RiverLink also delivers, to varying degrees, across three of the priority outcomes for GWRC's Long Term Plan 2018-2028 of regional resilience, public transport, fresh water quality and biodiversity; for Hutt City Council, RiverLink delivers key parts of the vision of the Making Places Strategy for the CBD, and upgrades sought by the Hutt City Infrastructure Strategy and Environmental Sustainability Strategy; for NZTA the Melling Transport Improvements are part of the Regional Land Transport Plan, State Highway 2 Programme Business Case, and thereby support delivery of its primary purpose to provide an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system.

GWRC and HCC have committed substantial budgets in their respective Long Term Plans to implement RiverLink. NZTA have committed to completing the Detailed Business Case (DBC) for the Melling Transport Improvements project and through their board decision at the end of 2018 will confirm future intent regarding the project.

1.1 Conceptual design phase process

In 2012 conceptual design for RiverLink commenced between the three organisations. At this stage each organisation had identified work that they intended to complete that overlapped with the interests of the other agencies. A memorandum of understanding focusing on the Melling Intersection Investigations was developed between the agencies that outlined the overlapping interests and the intent to work together to pursue these with a focus on the areas immediately adjacent to Melling Bridge. The three projects that fell into this area were; GWRC's Hutt River City Centre Upgrade Project (HRCCUP) that sought to improve the flood capacity of the flood protection system protecting Hutt City Centre; HCC's Making Places Strategy; and NZTA's Melling Intersection Investigations.

In 2014 design objectives for the RiverLink project were confirmed by the Hutt River Management Subcommittee. These objectives are detailed in Appendix A.

In 2015 GWRC made its decision to proceed to Preliminary design phase for the flood protection works, including a decision to enter into property acquisition of land required to deliver the conceptual design. This decision was strongly supported by the community of Hutt City to “do it once, and do it right” through their endorsement of ‘Option A’, that would provide a 90m wide river channel with 25m berms and supporting the acquisition of 118 properties required to achieve these outcomes.

In 2016 NZTA completed its indicative business case (IBC) and shortly afterwards committed funding to complete a detailed business case (DBC) for the Melling Transport Improvements.

In January 2017 Hutt City Council completed its Riverside Promenade Business Case and allocated funding towards that project through its Annual Plan process during the same year, to support delivery of the riverside components of the Making Places Strategy envisioned in 2009.

These key design steps and decisions brought the three organisations into a closer working relationship and strengthened the appetite to continue development of each organisations design focus under a RiverLink umbrella.

1.2 Preliminary design phase process

The development of a closer working relationship between the organisations to support completion of a RiverLink Preliminary Design commenced in 2016. This was facilitated by establishment of a cross organisation working group, a cross organisation management group, and the scheduling of regular meetings between the CE’s of GWRC, HCC and the Regional Relationship Director at NZTA. The existing decision making structures within each organisation remained in place, meaning decisions regarding project commitment and resources at each organisation needed to be made by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee (GWRC), Hutt City Council, and the New Zealand Transport Agency board (or its appropriate committees). Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc. who represent iwi with statutory acknowledgement over Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River have positions on the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee and within the RiverLink Management Group.

Given relevant approvals, from each partner organisation, the Preliminary design for the flood protection and associated elements of Making Places will be recommended for approval in June and July 2018 respectively. The design process for RiverLink has involved collaborative design development between the three organisations. The recommendation to each organisation will primarily relate to their respective areas of responsibility and recognise the links, synergies and dependencies across RiverLink.

This report provides a summary of the RiverLink Preliminary Design with a focus on the delivery of the flood protection outcomes.

2. RiverLink Preliminary Design

The RiverLink Preliminary design has resulted in a strong overlap, support and dependency between the outcomes each organisation is trying to achieve. This also means that the current design requires decisions and support from each organisation in order to deliver the full benefits sought by RiverLink, and to confirm and agree budget allocation, programme and approach to implementation.

The design can be roughly broken down into consideration of Flood Protection (largely delivered by GWRC), Making Places and City Infrastructure (largely delivered by HCC) and the Melling Transport Improvements (largely delivered by NZTA).

Each organisation has led the design components that align best with its primary focus, however the design teams for this have drawn on the expertise across the organisations required to deliver outcomes that support each organisations primary goals. The preliminary design process established the following three primary goals;

1. Improve the flood protection system between Kennedy-Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge to meet the design flood as set out in the Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan
2. Promote growth through urban development and connecting the city to the Hutt River
3. Improvements to transport options at the interface between the State Highway and the local community.

The preliminary design delivery against these goals is summarised within this report, further information is available within the full preliminary design report and the supporting technical reports developed to create each part of the preliminary design. These reports are available to read in hardcopy at GWRC and HCC offices, or online at www.riverlink.co.nz.

2.1 Flood Protection

The flood protection outcomes, delivering on providing regional resilience, are set out in the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan 2001. The plan establishes a safe and agreed flood conveyance protection level (including predicted climate change effects) of 0.23% Annual Exceedance Probability (1-in-440 year return period flood). This translates to a flood conveyance capacity of 2800 cumecs (cubic metres per second) which allows for climate change impacts and uncertainties associated with flood risk, and thereby set the design flood for development of the flood protection designs.

The flood protection designs combine improvements to the river channel that aim to target the majority of general maintenance activities outside of areas that

would be more sensitive to these, considering impacts on cultural, ecological and amenity values within the river system.

The flood protection designs work as a combination of channel improvements, soft and hard bank edge erosion protection, maximising width of river berms and upgrading stopbanks to allow for increased flood conveyance and flood security.

The flood protection works will protect against an estimated \$1.1B of direct damages from the design flood event, and prevent the flooding of up to 3200 homes, 730 businesses and 5 schools.

2.1.1 Melling Bridge

Melling Bridge is a key constriction point on the Hutt River, and without replacement only a 0.5% annual exceedance probability (1-in-200 year return period) level of service can be achieved. The bridge is owned by the Hutt City Council. As part of its detailed business case for the Melling Transport Improvements the NZTA has identified that any future grade separated interchange would need to be integrated with a replacement bridge. The NZTA has identified three alternative locations for a replacement for Melling Bridge. If built, any of these three designs could be engineered to achieve the target level of service for flood protection of 0.23%AEP (1-in-440 year return period flood) and assist delivery of the flood security goals of RiverLink. The DBC will recommend one of the three options to the NZTA board at the end of 2018.

2.1.2 Ecology, Amenity and recreation

The Hutt River Floodplain management plan is supported by the Hutt River Environmental Strategy that guides the delivery of community aspirations for ecological, amenity and recreational outcomes for the river and contributes to the Biodiversity and Freshwater Quality Outcomes sought by GWRC's 2018-2028 LTP.

The RiverLink project has been developed alongside the recently endorsed Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy and Action Plan. The RiverLink design makes space available for inclusion of stormwater treatment wetlands on the river berms, outlines areas of landscaped native and exotic plantings, placement of habitat boulders and natural vegetation features within the river, and spaces for a mix of recreation types recognising the diverse uses of the river park and combining design approaches to create a variety of experiences along the riverside. The designs also include improvements to the very popular River Trail by widening the space available to cyclists and pedestrians on the mix of pathways through the area and exploration of creation of a cultural trail telling the story of the river from mountains to sea.

2.2 Making Places and City Infrastructure

The Making Places and Hutt City infrastructure components of RiverLink seek to reinvigorate Hutt City, with a focus on attracting people to live, work and invest in the CBD. The key components of this are the riverfront promenade and associated private investor development of new apartment and office

buildings along Daly St, a pedestrian and cycling bridge connecting Margaret St to Pharazyn St and a relocated Melling Train Station, upgraded stormwater infrastructure to support the desired additional CBD population and improvements to the local road network and streetscapes in the areas bounded by Melling Bridge, Ewen Bridge, Cornwall St and the river.

The combined urban design and infrastructure improvement works are forecast to add \$2.5B to the local economy, support development of 1300 new homes, and create up to 2700 new jobs.

2.3 Melling Transport Improvements

Melling Transport Improvements Investigations (2016) work programme is considering a range of options that seek to deliver:

1. Safer journeys for all road users
2. More reliable and efficient journeys
3. Better access to travel choices at Melling
4. Better security and availability of the transport system at Melling

It is considering the accessibility of the city by a range of modes including public transport, walking and cycling.

The DBC has refined these transport options down to three combinations of grade separated interchange and bridge. These options all aim to support delivery of the Flood Protection and Making Places outcomes and therefore strive to achieve a preferred Preliminary Design across RiverLink.

The transport improvements DBC will be recommended to the NZTA board at the end of 2018.

Investigations looking into the options for Transport Improvements at Melling seek to maximise the synergies between Transport, Flood Protection and Making Places. The major synergies incorporate:

2.3.1 Melling Train Station Relocation

For all proposed upgrade options, the train station will need to be relocated minimum 250m south to provide sufficient space to construct an interchange. Locating the train station opposite Margaret St (~500m south) with the pedestrian cycle bridge connection over the Hutt River, enables a direct public transport connection between the Lower Hutt CBD and Wellington CBD.

2.3.2 Melling Bridge

The investigations to date have identified that the options which best address transport issues at Melling all involve a grade-separated interchange. All the proposed options work best with a new Melling Bridge. Depending on the

option selected a new bridge may be beside the existing bridge landing on the city side of the river at Melling Link or a bridge further south landing on the city side at Queens Drive.

2.3.3 Intersections Upgrade

The intersections upgrade at Melling (new interchange) and local roads on Queens Drive and Melling Link (up to High Street) maintains all connections to the state highway and improves transport conditions for all modes including walking and cycling. With input from the RiverLink team, NZ Transport Agency have refined their longlist of ideas to identify a shortlist of three options which are being developed in more detail and have been the subject of community engagement. It is anticipated that a preferred option is identified in July 2018. The local road intersection improvements will be co-designed with the RiverLink team.

3. Implementation Budgets and Programme

The preliminary design has sought to identify and secure budget required for project delivery from each of the organisations. Both GWRC and HCC have committed funding for the project components that fall fully within their respective role responsibilities within their respective LTP's. NZTA will make a decision regarding the future programme and budget for the Melling Transport Improvements at its board meeting at the end of 2018.

Below is a summary of the RiverLink implementation costs. This has been provided for the 2020 – 2028 period and the work currently proposed following 2028.

The RiverLink implementation cost estimate for 2018 to 2028 is included in Table 2.1. The cost estimate includes the flood protection works, river ecology and amenity, the river promenade, pedestrian cycle bridge, city infrastructure, Melling Train station relocation, and the construction and design costs. It currently excludes the yet to be confirmed costs of the Melling Grade Separated Interchange part of the Melling Transport Improvements.

Total funding commitments to the project from GWRC and HCC are shown in Table 2.1. Unfunded items are in relation to those where a shared responsibility may exist and include the new Melling Bridge (\$34M), Melling Train Station relocation (\$23). It is not possible to resolve these until NZTA has completed its DBC process, however the process itself assists with refining a cost share model.

3.1 Implementation Budget

The budgets allocated by each of the agencies to implement RiverLink is summarised in Table 2.1.

HCC have approved funding as set out in the Hutt City Council Long Term Plan 2018-2028. GWRC will endorse its proposed Long Term Plan (LTP) 2018 on 26 June 2018. This includes the implementation costs for flood protection and river ecology parts of RiverLink.

The current NZTA budgets include no allowance for major highways improvements to the SH2 corridor between Masterton and Ngauranga in the ten year period 2016/17 to 2026/27. NZTA is currently exploring the case for accelerating funding for Transport Improvements at Melling. The Melling transport improvements project is currently being reassessed against the draft GPS 2018-21 priorities to determine alignment with the Government's new strategic direction which would see a land transport system that:

- is a safe system, free of death and serious injury;
- provides increased access to economic and social opportunities;
- enables transport choice and access is resilient;
- reduces the adverse effects on the climate, local environment and public health; and
- delivers the right infrastructure and services to the right level at the best cost.

NZTA notes that funding for state highway improvements is increasingly under pressure and that this could influence the priority afforded to the Melling transport improvements project by the Transport Agency and within the Regional Land Transport Plan.

Table 2.1: RiverLink Budget and Forecast

Item	Current Allocated Budget \$M	Current Estimated Forecast \$M	Variance \$M	Notes
Flood Protection Property	\$82	\$76	\$6	Figures exclude residual property value of \$15M Property acquisition is currently in progress
Urban Design Property	\$7	\$7	0	Figures exclude residual property value of \$3M Property acquisition is currently in progress
Flood Protection upgrades	\$43	\$43	\$0	Includes river channel, edge protection, and stopbanks. Includes allowance of \$5 for design, consent and delivery
River ecology and amenity	\$2	\$3	(\$1)	Includes instream and riparian ecology, habitat and biodiversity
Urban Design Upgrades	\$26.3	\$28.6	(\$2.3)	Making Places Components, Promenade, pedestrian cycle bridge
Pedestrian Cycle Bridge	\$6.5	\$7	(\$0.5)	Design and length will influence final cost
Stormwater	\$2.1	\$6	(\$3.9)	Includes wetland treatment infrastructure
Sub-total	\$168.9	\$170.6		
New Melling Bridge	\$6.5	\$34	(\$27.5)	Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision
Melling Transport Improvements	\$TBC	\$TBC		Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision
Melling Station Relocation	TBC	\$23	(\$23)	Any NZTA contribution is subject to completion of DBC and subsequent board decision

Note:

1. *Detail design, consenting and construction supervision costs are estimated to be up to \$15M. Apportionment of costs will be confirmed following NZTA board decision at end of 2018.*
2. *The Melling Train Station, Melling Bridge and Bus Hub are yet to be fully defined and apportionment of costs will be confirmed following NZTA board decision at end of 2018. The budget provided is an order of magnitude cost and has been provided to understand the potential budget required for the entire programme.*
3. *The budget has been split into two tables to identify those projects that are part of RiverLink and those projects HCC has forecast in its infrastructure strategy outside of the next LTP.*
4. *A margin has not been applied to property costs*

Negotiations on how allocation of the implementation budgets from each agency will fund the construction of RiverLink will be undertaken in the next phase of work and are contingent on the decisions to be made by each organisation to commit to the Preliminary Design.

3.2 Projects after RiverLink 2018-2028

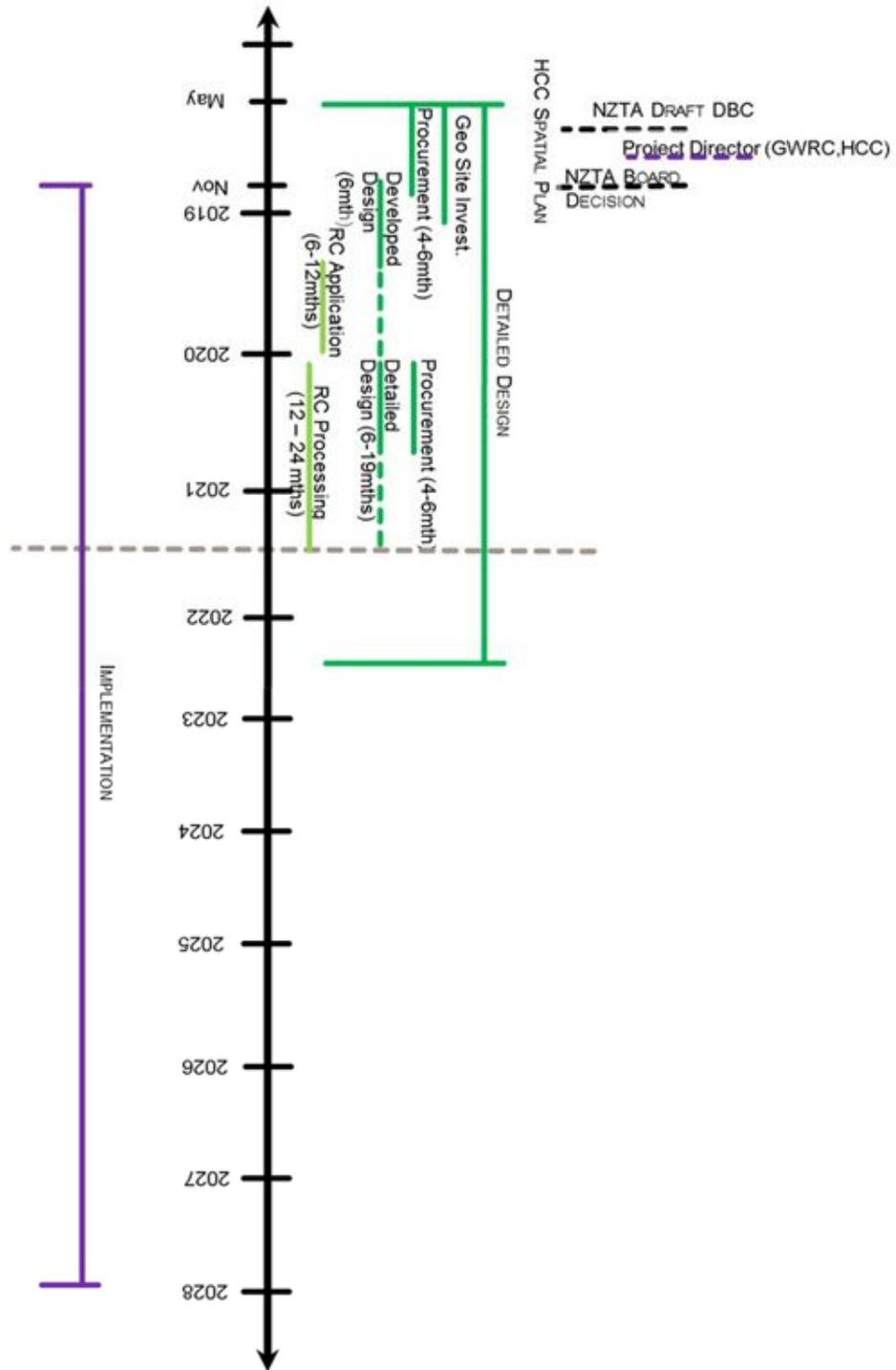
A number of design concepts were explored as part of the development of Preliminary Design. These projects have been developed to a conceptual level of detail but due to programming and funding decisions have been programmed to be delivered after RiverLink within the 2018-2028 LTP is completed. These have been identified within infrastructure strategies for each organisation. These projects and their current forecast estimates are tabled below.

Projects	Project Est. \$M
Making Places Future Projects	\$ 18
Water and wastewater – growth related covered by Development Contributions (2031 -)	\$ 11
Bus Hub	\$ 6
Design, consenting, construction delivery	\$ 2
Residual Property Value Recover	(\$15)

3.3 Implementation Programme

The implementation sequencing proposed is based on current best estimates for construction timing and past experience. It is anticipated and expected that once the Construction Contractor is appointed that the implementation programme will be refined. The programme is subject to decisions yet to be made by each organisation.

Figure 1: RiverLink Proposed Programme



The proposed integrated RiverLink programme has been developed to achieve the RiverLink outcomes before 2028, the duration of the next LTP. The programme dashboard [Attachment 7] includes programming estimates based on current designs for the flood protection improvements, Making Places components and Melling transport improvements. This programme includes some assumptions regarding timing of works and has been developed with respect to budget allocations made in both councils LTPs, and the investment decisions already in place for NZTA regarding State Highway 2. The RiverLink implementation programme is currently based on the assumption that NZTA funded works will occur 2026 - 2036. The implementation programme will be updated at the end of 2018 based on the decisions made by the NZ Transport Agency board.

The scope of the programme to deliver RiverLink has been broken down into:

3.3.1 Detailed Design and Approvals 2018 – 2020

This phase will see the completion of detail design sufficient to lodge joint Notice of Requirements (NoRs) and resource consent applications for the necessary statutory approvals to complete all components of work.

To be able to apply for NoRs and resource consents parts of the design will be required to be developed in more detail to understand the form of major structures, how they interface with each other while maintaining the hydraulic capacity and security of the proposed river channel.

Once the Consent is underway and preliminary findings are known, the design can be further developed to incorporate the statutory approval requirements and create the Construction documentation.

For further detail of what is entailed in this stage see Appendix B.

3.3.2 Implementation concurrent with detail design and consents

Discrete work packages, such as a the Belmont Wetland, streetscape upgrades and some services improvements have been identified from within RiverLink which can be implemented and delivered outside of the complexity of the overall project Resource Consent and statutory approval process.

3.3.3 Implementation 2021 -2028

Major construction will be undertaken during this period.

The implementation programme recommends an approach that starts at the Mills St stopbank as soon as consents to carry out the works have been granted, followed by works in the City Centre section, followed by the Marsden St section, and the Pharazyn/Belmont section of works will be implemented at the same time as the Melling Transport Improvement works.

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency
Mills Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial	New Melling Bridge location

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency
	ecological habitat.	
CBD Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Community facilities Promenade Andrews Ave to Margaret St Pedestrian Bridge City Connections	Stopbank, MSE retaining wall, promenade, pedestrian bridge, Melling Train Station,
Marsden Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Local road changes and street scape	Wellington to Normandale bike path
Pharazyn/Belmont Section	Flood protection works, services relocation, in stream and terrestrial ecological habitat. Channel improvements Local road changes and street scape.	Recommended option for Melling highways interchange ,new bridge location, Melling train station relocation

Current budget decisions mean that Melling Transport Improvements will not happen prior to 2026

3.3.4 Melling Transport Improvements 2026 and beyond

The organisations will continue to collaborate on the design and continue to strengthen the interfaces between RiverLink implementation components and develop a project structure, commercial and management arrangements. The Transport Agency are also looking at options for staging investment as a potential way of providing early benefit to the Councils sought outcomes if the board decision recommends a later implementation of the Melling Transport Improvements parts of RiverLink .

The information will be presented to the NZ Transport Agency board at the end of 2018 for a decision on the preferred budget, timeline and involvement from the NZ Transport Agency.

3.4 RiverLink beyond 2028

RiverLink has been defined as a package of projects up to 2028 across the interests of all organisations. There are however future aspirations outlined in the Making Places strategy and Hutt City Spatial Plans that bear particular mention in relation to RiverLink design decisions that have steered the design to leave opportunity for the delivery of these outcomes beyond RiverLink.

3.4.1 Promenade Stage 2 and Stage 3 extension

The promenade could extend beyond the existing promenade between Margret St and Andrews Ave built during the RiverLink implementation phase, south from Andrews Ave. to Ewen Bridge and extend the promenade north from Margaret St. towards Melling Bridge. The aim of this project is to improve the social amenity and sense of place for all Hutt City residents, and promote the

CBD as a vibrant, attractive and liveable area, particularly for young and educated people in addition to its environmental and health benefits.

3.4.2 Bus Hub

Opportunity exists to master plan and future proof bus services into a dedicated central city interchange that better integrates with rail services, walking, cycling, and future growth. RiverLink triggers a once in a life time opportunities to obtain land, control land-use, influence key development, and to design and reconfigure the multi-modal central city transport network.

The existing bus situation does not match the quality of lifestyle or the transport choices being made. Research (Transport Outlook: Future State Report, Nov 2017 - Ministry of Transport) shows growing numbers of younger people are choosing not to own cars and instead are choosing to use other modes including public transport. HCC/GWRC research (Colmar Brunton 2016) shows bus users, pedestrians, and cyclists are significant contributors to the Lower Hutt CBD economy.

The optimum location for a bus interchange is expected to shift over time from its current location at Queensgate to somewhere toward the growth centred around the Promenade and pedestrian bridge connection to the relocated Melling train station. HCC and GWRC officers are now considering options that take into account the latest thinking and developments made through RiverLink and 2018 Review of the Making Places Strategy by HCC.

4. Supporting information

To assist decision makers regarding the RiverLink project a number of independent experts have been engaged to review and scrutinise the project. These reviews and opinions are included as an attachment to this report and include;

- Riverworks Peer Review Report Executive Summary, HR Wallingford, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Making Places Story
- RiverLink Communication and Engagement Strategy, Crestani, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways, Boffa Miskell, Mar 2018
- RiverLink Consent Legal Advice, Buddle Findlay, 21 Mar 2018

4.1 Preliminary Design Report

The full Preliminary Design report and full technical reports are available to view on www.riverlink.co.nz. The Preliminary Design Reports presents a composite description of the design process, influences and elements for the project. The full technical reports detail each design component that makes up the preliminary design and the information fed into the design process.

The preliminary design phase has produced an integrated design incorporating the three partners' overlapping work programmes and optimising the benefits and opportunities created from the linkages between the programme elements.

4.2 Independent Peer Review of Flood Protection Design

An independent peer review was completed, Nov 2017 – Apr 2018, to provide confidence to decision makers that the preliminary design work completed will, based on its current state and consideration of design assumptions, be able to deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by RiverLink.

The peer review excluded the structural perspectives of the various retaining walls, the design of the pedestrian bridge, cost estimate, constructability of the design, recreational values, ecological and biodiversity design, Iwi relationship and emergency management. The review also excluded design standards, these were reviewed and set through the process of developing the Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan 2001.

The peer review was undertaken by HR Wallingford (Oxfordshire, United Kingdom). HR Wallingford is a leading international specialist company in flood management and the water environment. The specialist areas of expertise covered by the HR Wallingford staff members who carried out this peer review includes flood management, hydraulic modelling, sediment modelling, geomorphology, flood protection banks (stopbanks), geotechnical and structural design and links with other projects. For instance Jonathan Simm (reviewer of the stopbank design) was the Project technical lead and part of the Technical Editorial Team, which set the international good practice on stopbanks through the creation of the International Levee (stopbank) Handbook, 2013.

The peer review concluded that a robust Preliminary Design has been prepared that will deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project. The design is considered to be pragmatic and realistic taking account of the constraints of the river corridor and the need to pass a large flood without failure of the stopbanks.

A number of detailed comments have been made which have been discussed with the design team. The conclusion is based on the understanding that the issues will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the project. They include comments on the design of the MSE wall that supports the promenade along the Lower Hutt CBD frontage and the rock protection on the river channel.

Some elements of associated projects including the replacement for Melling Bridge and the Making Places proposals have not yet been integrated into the flood protection design. These will affect the detail of the design but not the overall concept.

5. Consenting Pathways

Undertaking the proposed improvements being sought through RiverLink, will require authorisation under the Resource Management Act 1991 through the designation of the land required for public works, and obtaining the necessary resource consents. Longer term changes to the City of Lower Hutt District Plan will also need to make provision for the consequential changes in land use

and to encourage forms of development that support the vision for the City Centre.

Achieving many of the project elements will be dependent on other elements occurring first – therefore there is a strong interrelationship between all the project’s components. The full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners.

In order to assist the participating organisations to decide on the preferred consenting approaches. ‘consenting pathways’ have been developed and are being considered. Once the pathway has been confirmed, a consenting strategy will be developed to map in detail the way forward and address particular designation and resource consent issues.

A range of recommendations were assessed for obtaining the RMA authorisations, with the key recommendation being that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a pathway that involves, as much as possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- Separate Notices of Requirement and resource consents applications prepared together as a single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

The development of the Notices of Requirement and applications will take between 6-12 months, the application processing 1-2 years, depending on appeals, and a decision is therefore forecast for 2021 at this stage.

6. Communication and Engagement Strategy

Crestani were engaged to assist with the development of a Communication and Engagement Strategy to take the project through its entire life (for the full report see Attachment 3).

They have clearly articulated the needs of the project and provided a blueprint for which all communication and engagement plans at each phase of project will evolve.

For the project to be a success it requires all partner agencies, elected officials, the Hutt City business community and other stakeholders to support the vision and commit to working together to make it a reality. For the broader public, particularly the communities living in and around Hutt City, success lies in maintaining the strong public mandate for the outcomes RiverLink seeks to

achieve and in ratepayers supporting the investment required to complete the project.

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative and project ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and liveable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

Through interviews with stakeholders it has provided an opportunity to RiverLink by providing a strong steer on where future external and internal engagement and communications efforts should be focused. RiverLink engagement and communications blueprint must achieve two outcomes:

1. **Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in:** an aspirational and joined-up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's wider communities of interest
2. **Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project.** An engagement process that is inclusive and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the long-term success of Hutt City.

With the next steps outlined and recommended actions defined by key success factors, RiverLink will develop a Communication and Engagement framework for the next phase around this strategy. The framework will include addressing the recommendations, developing a plan and creating the right team to implement.

7. Delivery Structure Considerations

It has been identified through the technical Peer Review, Consent Strategy and the Communication and Engagement Strategy that objectives for RiverLink are best achieved through collaboration and co-ordination, (integrated), across the three projects (Flood Protection improvements, Making Places and Melling Transport Improvements).

The potential delivery models are currently being investigated by the NZ Transport Agency in collaboration with GWRC and HCC. By July 2018 an understanding of potential delivery models and commercial approach will have been developed.

8. Reference Documents

Hutt River Flood Plain Management Plan. *For the Hutt River and its Environment*. Flood Protection Group. Wellington Regional Council. October 2001

Hutt River City Centre Upgrade Project River Corridor Options Report. Wellington Regional Council July 2015

Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee Report. Greater Wellington Regional Council. 20 Mar 2014 (File N/03/18/21)

9. Attachments

- There is no [Attachment 1]
- RiverLink Riverworks Peer Review Report Executive Summary, HR Wallingford, Mar 2018 [Attachment 2]
- Making Places Story [Attachment 3]
- RiverLink Communication and Engagement Strategy, Crestani, Mar 2018 [Attachment 4]
- RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways, Boffa Miskell, Mar 2018 [Attachment 5]
- RiverLink Consent Legal Advice, Buddle Findlay, 21 Mar 2018 [Attachment 6]
- RiverLink Programme Overview Dashboard [Attachment 7]

Appendix A: Hutt River City Centre Project Design Objectives 2014

The design objectives for the Hutt River City Centre Project were confirmed by the decision of the Hutt River Flood Management Subcommittee in 2014 and are repeated below:

Flood Risk

1. Improve the Hutt Valley's resilience to flood hazard by a river channel, structures clearance, and corridor design that provides for a 2800m³/s flood flow.
2. Improve the Hutt Valley's resilience to flood hazard by managing development and infrastructure elements within the corridor (eg SH2 and any widening of it, stormwater and other pipe networks, or integrated building edges in the town centre) that can reduce the effective floodway, or affect stopbank integrity.
3. Plan for future increases in floodplain resilience by considering now the future options (such as the broadening of the corridor and increasing the height of the new stopbanks) to ensure that these are not precluded by the currently planned upgrades.
4. Improve the river channel edge protection so as to minimise the risk of failure of flood defences from erosion during a flood.

Linking and Development

5. Improve the walking, cycling and other active mode linkages to and along the river corridor from the city centre, public transport nodes, and wider Hutt Valley urban area.
6. Facilitate development opportunities for sites that front to the river corridor in the city centre.
7. Create a direct frontage between river front sites in the city centre and a new river promenade.

Traffic Movement

8. Identify and provide for the modifications to the wider transport network as required to accommodate Linking and Development objectives.
9. Improve the functioning, safety and accessibility of the intersection between SH2 and local road network and off road paths including residential areas on the hills.

10. Understand and recognise the need for car parking in strategic locations, including for recreational, commuter and shopper use

Community, Amenity and Ecology

11. Recognise and provide for the viability and amenity of public and private properties adjacent to or adjoining the river corridor and stopbanks.
12. Generate spaces and places along the river corridor that reflect Hutt River Environmental Strategy (Linear Park) and Making Places initiatives that that are reflective of user's needs, cultural and landscape values.
13. Improve the ecological performance and biodiversity of the river corridor in respect of stormwater management, riparian and terrestrial habitat values recognising the needs for flood protection works.
14. Engage with iwi with mana whenua of the river in regard to cultural values and those values' representation in the project outcomes.

Implementation, Strategy and Economic Sustainability

15. Enable a staged implementation process such that developments can occur over time as practicable.
16. Ensure the design outcome is affordable in terms of its ability to be implemented and maintained.
17. Engage with communities of interest and seek their feedback as to the design options and costs of implementation.
18. Recognise that any design options developed will require consideration relative to existing statutes, strategies and plans.

Appendix B Scope for Detailed Design and Consents 2018 - 2020

Table: Major Items of the Detailed Design and Consents 2018-2020

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency	Owner
Geotechnical Investigations	Detailed investigations to determine ground conditions, aquifer depth, construction material conditions.	Making Places (MSE wall and pedestrian bridge), Melling Transport Improvements	NZTA, GWRC, HCC
Melling bridge design	Melling Bridge is owned by HCC. Melling Intersection improvements will require a new bridge. Flood Protection designs require a new bridge.	Transport Improvements, Making Places Strategy	HCC (being designed by NZTA)
Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge design	HCC Making Places Pedestrian cycle bridge design	Project is part of making places strategy and design lead is HCC	HCC
Detail design – MSE Retaining Wall	Refinement of design for MSE Wall (Daly St) and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer Review report. Inclusion of findings of geotechnical investigations	Geotechnical investigations, Stopbank design, Making Places Design	HCC
Detail design - Promenade			HCC
Detail design – Hydraulic Model Update	Inclusion of bridges designs in hydraulic model and adjustments	Melling bridge design, Pedestrian cycle bridge design, Landscape design	GWRC
Detail Design – Sediment transport model	Inclusion of bridges designs in sediment transport model and adjustments.	Melling Bridge design, Pedestrian cycle bridge design, Landscape design	GWRC
Detail design – Stopbanks	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of Hydraulic model	Landscape and ecology detail design, Making Places Strategy, Transport Improvements	GWRC

Item	Summary Description	Major Interdependency	Owner
	update		
Detail design – Channel and Berms	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of Sediment Transport Model.	Landscape detail design, Making Places Strategy, Transport Improvements	GWRC
Detail design – Landscape	Refinement of preliminary design and recommendations of Preliminary Design Peer review report. Inclusion of findings of hydraulic model update and sediment transport model	Stopbank design, Channel and Berms designs, Hutt River Environment Strategy, Making Places Strategy	GWRC, HCC
Notice of requirement	Statutory requirements to facilitate designating required in order to undertake physical works		GWRC, HCC, NZTA
Consent preparation	Statutory requirements required in order to undertake physical works		GWRC, HCC, NZTA

1. Summary

1.1. Background

An independent Peer Review of the RiverLink project Preliminary Design has been requested by the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). As per HR Wallingford proposal (our reference P18512-GRE001-R03), the scope included an Initial Review (which was completed on 30 November 2017) and a Peer Review. The purpose of this document is to present the findings from the Peer Review.

The intention of the Peer Review is to provide confidence to decision makers that the preliminary design work completed will, based on its current state and consideration of design assumptions, be able to deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project.

Prior to this, an Initial Review was undertaken to clarify any additional information requirements or knowledge gaps and to request further information which we believed were necessary to undertake the Peer Review (our reference Memo 2 dated 28 November 2017). The memo also comprises the agreed scope for the Peer Review (also included as Appendix to the Initial Review summary, our reference MCR5863-RT001-R01-00).

1.2. Peer Review scope

The Peer Review covered the following aspects of the RiverLink Project:

- Flood management and hydraulic design;
- River morphology, sediment transport and rock protection;
- Hydraulic and sediment modelling;
- Geotechnics and stopbank design including retaining walls;
- Links with other projects.

The Peer Review did not cover the following aspects of the RiverLink Project:

- The design standard (in terms of peak flood flow);
- Consideration of Iwi rights and their involvement with the project;
- Project costs and financial sustainability;
- Cost-benefit and socio-economic evaluations;
- Constructability;
- Ecological impact assessments.

The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan recommended the design standard for the City Centre section and review of the design standard was outside the scope of the Peer Review. The design of the RiverLink project aims to upgrade the system to maintain a high design standard over a long period of time taking projected increases in rainfall and river flow due to climate change into account.

With regard to the Mechanically Stabilised Earth MSE (retaining) wall design, the Peer Review was not undertaken from a standalone structural perspective on how this will hold up the promenade. Since this wall

is the largest flood wall the stopbanks will interact with, the Peer Review included the wall design as part of the proposed flood protection system along Daly Street between Melling Bridge and Ewen Bridge (East side).

1.3. Peer Review procedure

Following the Initial Review, additional information was obtained from the GWRC. The Peer Review examined the information provided which included about 50 reports and other documents. Detailed checks were undertaken on some specific elements which were considered of key importance. During the review, contact was maintained with GWRC so that questions and matters of clarification could be discussed as the work proceeded. A limited review of the hydraulic modelling was undertaken in which spot checks were made on selected river cross-sections. The sediment model and the drawdown models were not available and therefore were not reviewed.

A draft Peer Review Report was issued to GWRC and a workshop with the RiverLink design team was held in Lower Hutt on 7 March 2018 to discuss the draft report. This final version of the report takes account of the workshop discussions which are included in Appendix C (GWRC reference Minutes - 7 Mar 2018 RiverLink Riverworks Peer Review Workshop) together with other comments on the report provided by GWRC.

1.4. Main conclusions of the Peer Review

It is concluded that a robust Preliminary Design has been prepared that will deliver the flood protection outcomes sought by the RiverLink project. The design is considered to be pragmatic and realistic taking account of the constraints of the river corridor and the need to pass a large flood without failure of the stopbanks.

A number of detailed comments have been made which have been discussed with the design team. The conclusion is based on the understanding that these issues will be addressed in the detailed design phase of the project. They include comments on the design of the MSE wall that supports the promenade along the Lower Hutt CBD frontage and the rock protection on the river channel.

Some elements of associated projects including the replacement for Melling Bridge and the Making Places proposals have not yet been integrated into the Preliminary Design. These will affect the detail of the design but not the overall concept.

The Preliminary Design does not include detail of some of the structural elements, particularly the new bridge foundations and the MSE wall. The reason for this is that geotechnical information was not available for these structures. It is proposed that a two-stage approach is adopted for the detailed design of these elements where stage 1 would consist of a preliminary design to confirm the structural arrangements once the geotechnical data are available followed by a detailed final design stage.

1.5. The Peer Review Team

The Peer Review was carried out by HR Wallingford, a leading international specialist company in flood management and the water environment. The specialist areas of expertise covered by the HR Wallingford staff members who carried out both the Initial Review and the Peer Review includes flood management, hydraulic modelling, sediment modelling, geomorphology, flood protection banks, geotechnical and structural



design, and links with other projects. Background information on HR Wallingford together with CVs of the team that undertook the Peer Review is given in Appendix B.

The Making Places Story

Making Places has been progressing for more than a decade and its story has been well shared between Council, Stakeholders, and Community. Apart from the most recent work to update Making Places through a central city spatial plan everything that follows in this text should be well known within Council.

Making Places is the fourth development strategy adopted by Hutt City Council over the last thirty years for its central business district (CBD). All four strategies share the central theme of connecting the city with the river. For most of this thirty years little progress was made to understand how a meaningful connection could be achieved. In 2009 Making Places was fortunate to discover synergies with the flood protection upgrade project of Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Melling Interchange Upgrade project of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

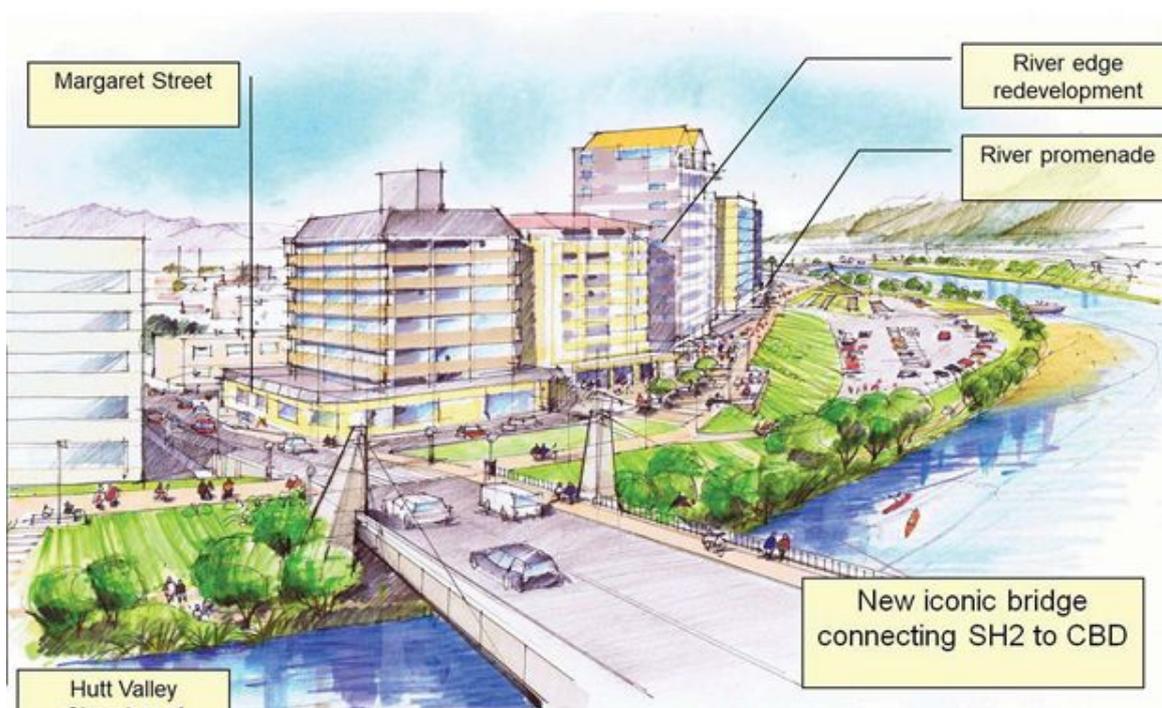


Image 1: 2009 Making Places drawing showing promenade & new road bridge.

It would be fair to say that the Lower Hutt CBD has been visibly under-performing over many years and that its main street High Street has fallen out of favour as the place to be seen doing business or to be seen socially.

The changing nature of retail including the development of malls has played a significant role in the demise of High Street but in many respects the fortunes of High Street have not been helped by an inability to adapt and complement the product offered by the Queensgate mall.

Though having lost its way the community is determined for the CBD to find itself again. The community continues to tell us (through annual surveys) that the river is very important to the

future of the CBD and that we need to connect with it, enjoy it, and take care of it. It seems that people increasingly want authenticity and they want to be surrounded by environments that reflect who they are and who they aspire to be.

Sense of place and self-identity done well are important factors to memorable and liveable cities. Liveable cities capitalise upon what makes them different from other cities. This can be through the built environment, for example heritage and quality of architecture and landscapes. This can be through creative and cultural industries such as science and technology, arts and culture, design, theatre, dance, music, and film making etc. In most cases what makes places inherently special are their natural features and local culture.

The Hutt Valley has a beautiful and diverse natural landscape and prominent amongst this is The Hutt River - Te Awakairangi or 'the river that eats the sky'.



Image 2: Te Awakairangi – Hutt River

Cities around the world are finding their rivers and seafronts for example Auckland, Wellington, New Plymouth, and Hamilton are reinventing themselves around their waterfronts and in doing so this reinforces who they are as communities of people.

For a number of decades Lower Hutt has had the slowest population growth of all cities in the Wellington Region. Though this has improved in recent years it is expected that growth will tail off and attracting and retaining working age population will be continue to be problematic.

Though Lower Hutt has access to a diverse landscape (hills, rivers, sea), flat land, good sunshine, good housing, good schools, employment, and Petone is admired as a desirable destination and place to live - Lower Hutt continues to lose people through internal migration to places like Wellington, Upper Hutt, and Auckland.

Through its Urban Growth Strategy council has identified that a lack of housing stock constrains growth and plays a significant role in population migration where we are literally 'losing' young people. New housing can be built through greenfield, infill, and brownfield development however greenfield land is limited and infill is difficult to orchestrate to scale and there are

conflicts where existing character built up over many decades may be considered too valuable to risk given loss of mature trees and inevitable shift in house type and reduced lot sizing.

Brownfield development through the conversion of existing or the construction of new buildings as mixed use apartment buildings is underplayed across the city with the exception of Petone. The CBD has latent potential to accommodate a significant residential population – arguably a new urban suburb of several thousand people. Council’s Promenade Economic Business Case modestly estimates 2,600 people to be living in the CBD within 20 years.

There are currently only 200 to 300 people living in the core CBD. Let’s Get Wellington Moving forecasts 100,000 population growth in the Wellington Region over the next 28 years. 50,000 of these will be in Wellington and mostly in Wellington Central. Wellington City Council indicates there are significant challenges to constructing multi-level apartment buildings in downtown Wellington due to availability of suitable sites, natural hazards, and sea level rise. Hutt City Council sees a growing role for Lower Hutt CBD to accommodate a greater share of regional population growth and to provide resilient locations for commerce and social activity.

A range of Wellington based property developers say that the Lower Hutt CBD is not currently seen as a good option for good quality apartment development and that the market needs to shift to attract their interest. The same developers did agree that Riverlink is encouraging and that the promenade was a likely catalyst to shift the market in the right direction. However developers indicated that interim actions would need to be implemented to nudge confidence and the market continually toward the quality of development being sought by the people of Lower Hutt.



Image 3: 2018 Riverlink image of the riverside promenade.

It has become evident that the Hutt CBD is under pressure to deliver on a number of opportunities at least including; regional population growth, local housing growth, resilient local and regional commercial activity, social vibrancy, sense of place, city wide self-identity, and contributing more to the regional economy and reputation.

Riverlink is viewed as the big ‘switch’ that will flip the Hutt CBD from what it is today and into the future downtown area that will house significant population growth, lasting economic growth, social vibrancy, better connect people with the river, and project a strengthened sense of self belief for the city.

The following diagram shows the Making Places components proposed under Riverlink that are funded by and supported by the people of Lower Hutt.

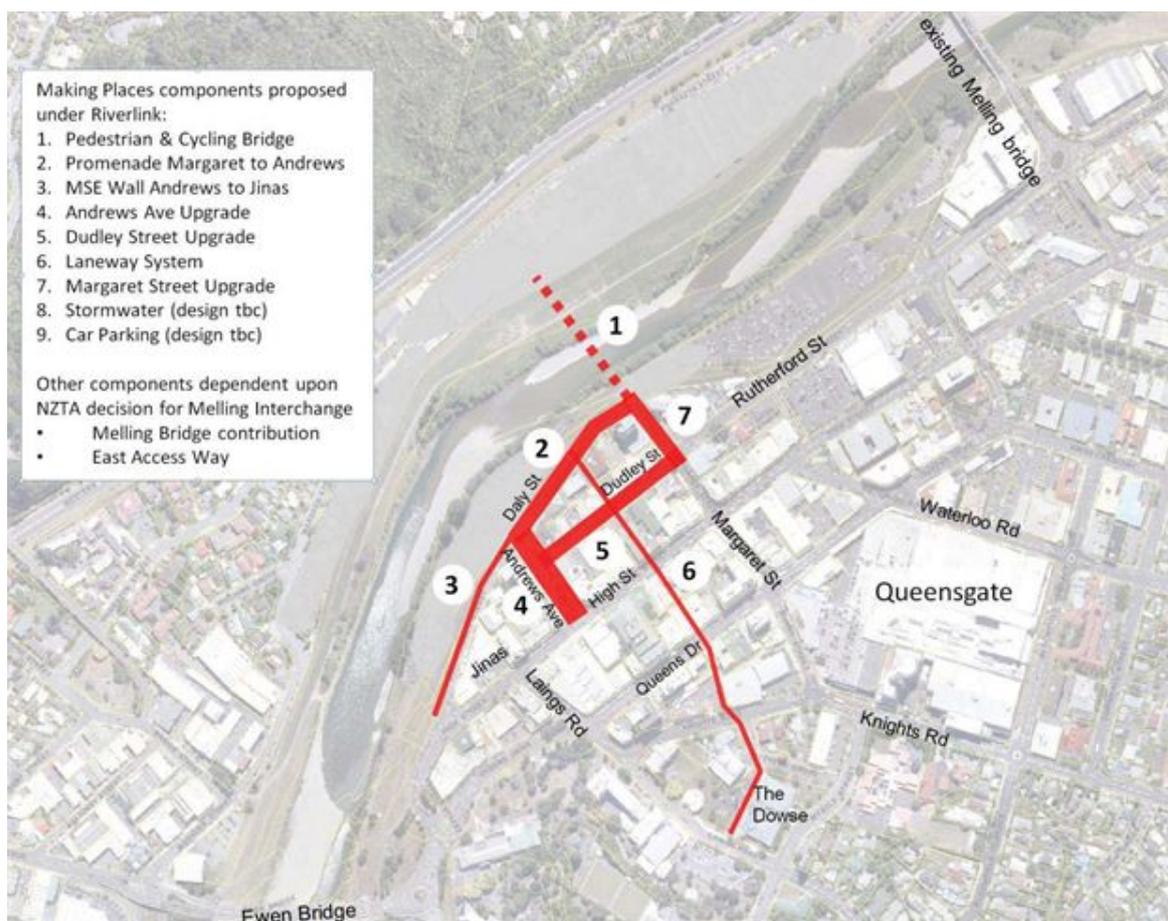


Image 4: Proposed Making Places components of Riverlink.

Making Places components proposed under Riverlink include:

1. Pedestrian & Cycling Bridge
2. Promenade Margaret Street to Andrews Ave – see section 2. Includes city access to the Promenade.
3. MSE (retaining wall to support promenade) from Andrews Ave to Jinas – see section 3.

4. Andrews Ave Upgrade – includes reconfiguration as shared space & city access to the Promenade.
5. Dudley Street Upgrade – includes reconfiguration for two way traffic.
6. Laneway System – includes upgrades that may have synergies for new development between Knights Road and access to the Promenade.
7. Margaret Street Upgrade – includes pedestrian & cycling access from the city to the pedestrian bridge.
8. Stormwater – design tbc.
9. Car parking – design tbc.
10. Melling Bridge contribution – dependent upon NZTA decision Nov 2018.
11. East Access Route – dependent upon NZTA decision Nov 2018.

Projects not funded include:

- Stages of Promenade additional to #2 above.
- Train Station
- Bus Interchange
- Community facilities in river plain.

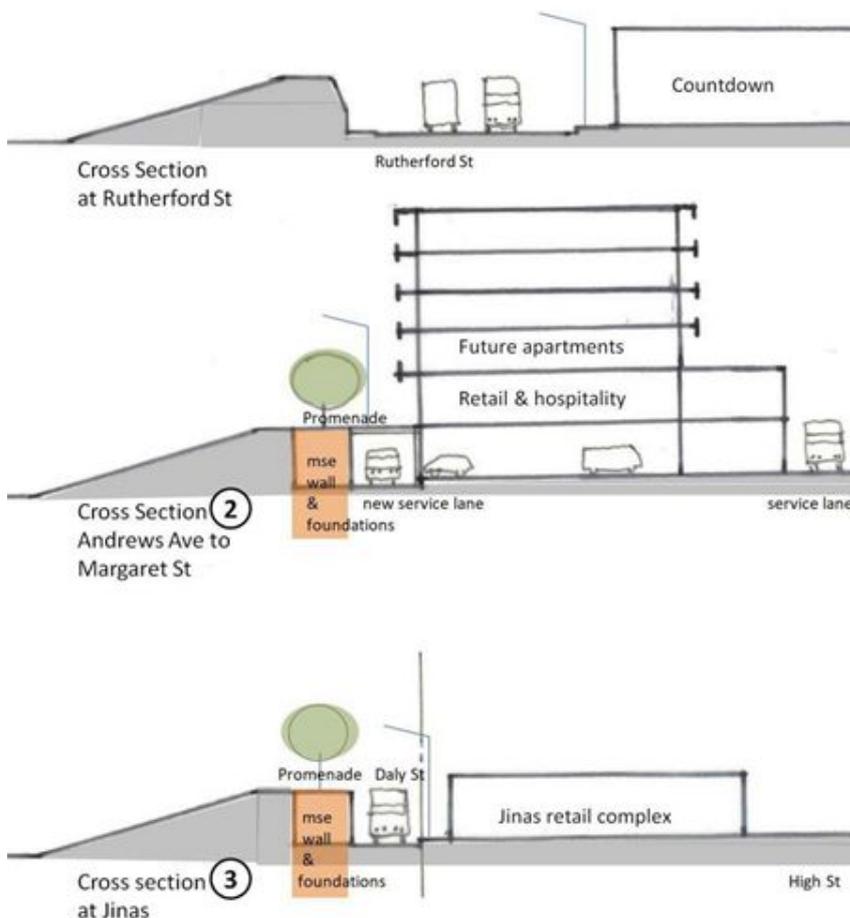


Image 5: Cross Sections through Promenade.

The Promenade will achieve a meaningful connection to the river by providing a generous and landscaped walkway that is level with the new stop banks and providing a platform into which mixed use property development can be directly integrated. This connection is expected to turn the future CBD around to face and engage directly with the river. This developed edge is expected to be vibrant with social and commercial activity lined with café's, restaurants, boutique shops, offices, and apartments juxtaposed to drive a more vibrant inner city lifestyle.

Council has allocated funding for the implementation of the Making Places components of Riverlink.

The Promenade will be made possible by the construction of a secondary structure MSE (mechanically stabilised earth) wall shown in orange of Sections 2 & 3 of Image 5 above. It is expected that the MSE wall will require significant foundations and drilling work will start in July 2018 to ascertain the geotechnical capability of the site along Daly Street.

Council understands that we cannot simply build the promenade and expect the right sort of development to happen under current market conditions and within timeframes compatible with the Riverlink and also to meet with the community's expectations of quality. Therefore Council approved the purchase of key properties on Daly Street essential for the development of the Promenade, and officers are progressing this. There are additional measures that may need to be considered such as partnering with appropriate partners to develop, potentially occupy, and activate the promenade and future CBD.

Council's Business Case for the Promenade shows very favourable outcomes for investing in Riverlink. \$2.5B is forecast to be added to the economy as well as 1300 new housing units (2600 people), and 2700 new jobs.

Surveys for the Business Case and those done annually under Riverlink and the CBD Spatial Plan continue to show high levels of community support for; the Promenade, residential development in the CBD, and connecting the CBD with the River. Business Case surveys indicated high levels of willingness by community to pay for this.

2018 Making Places Update

During 2018 officers have been developing a Central City Spatial Plan as an update of the 2009 Making Places Strategy. A refresh is required partly as a stocktake of progress in the CBD and partly to capture shifts in expectations, and new opportunities and risks (political, social, economic, climatic, natural hazards etc).

Projects completed under Making Places include; Plan Change 14, Dowse Square, Redevelopment of the Civic Precinct (largely complete), Investigations of Margaret Street Bridge, Traffic Model, Stepping Stones Projects, Bus Interchange Investigations, Night Market, appointment of a CBD Manager, and various improvements to public safety, public art, public space, walkability, and of course progressing the Promenade through Riverlink.

Some Making Places projects did not go ahead such as the zoning of the central city into various employment and activity precincts and environmental factors came into play such as; global financial crisis, Christchurch and Kaikoura earthquakes, stronger awareness of climate change and other natural hazards, and significant changes to policy - especially from the new Labour government towards transport and urban development. The new government policy for land transport sees significant shift away from state highway projects towards walking, cycling, public transport, resilience, and regional growth. Council also saw changes in political leadership and the development of key policies/strategies particularly for Urban Growth, Sustainability, Infrastructure, Leisure and Wellbeing, and addressing deprivation etc.

Council has become more aware of the demographic challenges that face the city and that there are opportunities that can be best realised by aligning effort/resourcing with third parties toward mutual goals – though Riverlink is the best example of this it may be conceivable for the Cross Valley Link to be progressed upon the same objectives of flood protection, transport, and city growth.

The Central City Spatial Plan considers the whole land area of the central city from Market Grove in the south to VIC corner at the north, and from the western foothills of Harbour View/Tirohanga and eastward toward Waterloo Station.

Riverlink is a big factor for the Central City Spatial Plan but there are wider issues regarding latent growth and this includes how to balance housing intensification with the established character of central city suburbs eg. Woburn. Also to consider is how to treat the entire central city in order to best enable and leverage off the projected benefits of the Promenade and Riverlink.

Draft Central City Spatial Plan.

The following are the key findings of the work done to date for the Central City Spatial Plan – also refer Image 6.

1. The future central city is more likely to be about doing or experiencing stuff rather than buying stuff.
2. Retail (outside Queensgate) should consolidate between the Promenade and Queensgate.
3. Land freed up can be re-purposed to non-retail uses such as good quality med/high density housing.
4. Queens Drive will be the most legible transport route & needs to reinforce 'sense of arrival'.
5. New road bridge at Queens Drive will better define land-use & consolidate the city core.
6. Walking & cycling is very important & will contribute to amenity & liveability.
7. Margaret St will become a major walking/cycling connector.
8. Pedestrian bridge is crucial & needs to be built at earliest opportunity.
9. Riverlink is the only lever of scale to sufficiently overhaul the way the central city works.
10. Amenity of the river will play a major role in shifting perceptions of the core central city.
11. Quality is critical & the first developments need to set the tone for future growth & should build off the high quality housing stock of nearby central city suburbs.
12. A good activation strategy is very important to ensure a vibrant promenade.

13. Council needs to find partners to lead development and activate the future central city.
14. Council needs to carefully programme the roll out of implementation to build confidence, change perceptions, and shift the market.

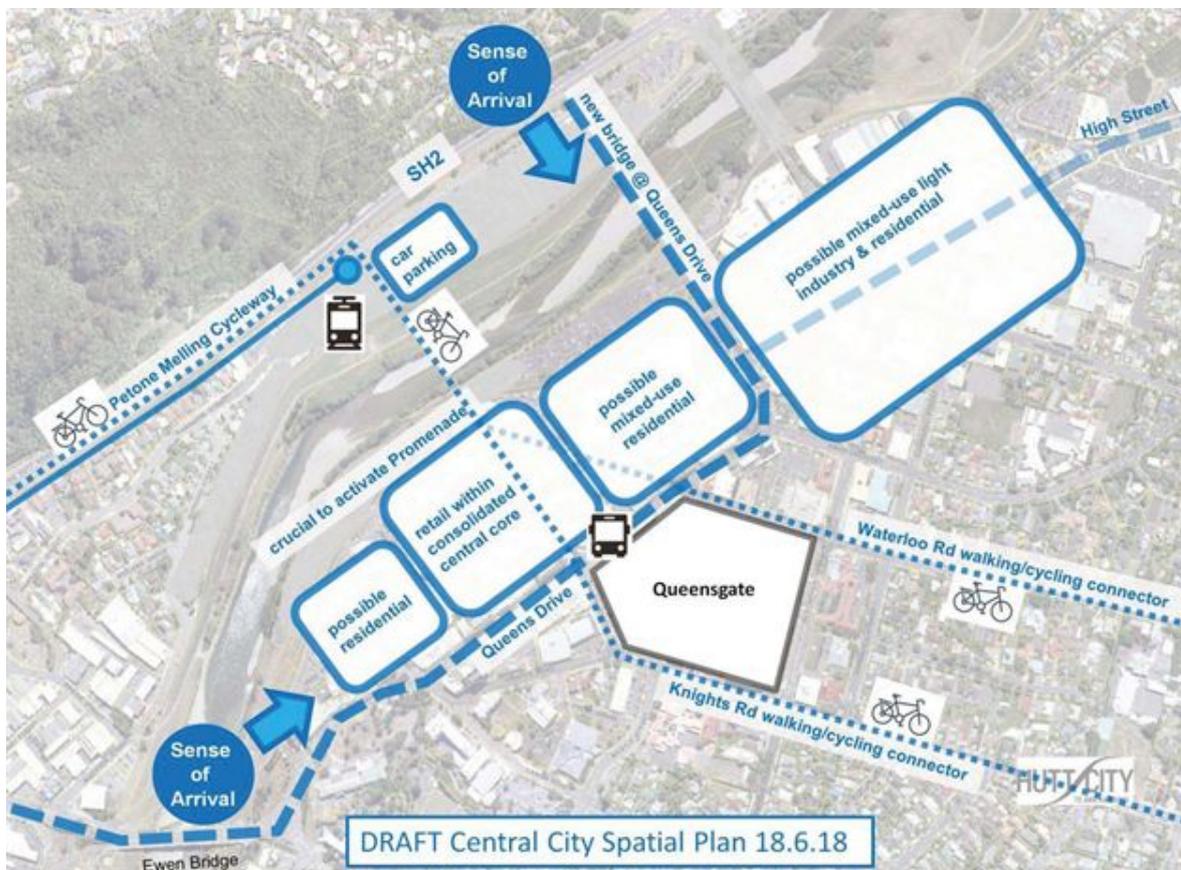


Image 6: Partial Draft for Central City Spatial Plan.

Next Steps

During June 2018 the Draft Central City Spatial Plan will help to inform NZTA’s Melling Interchange Detailed Business Case process for narrowing down from the three options currently being considered to one preferred option. The preferred option will be recommended to the NZTA Board for approval in November 2018.

The Central City Spatial Plan confirms Riverlink as the game changer for the central city and reinforces Riverlink’s compatibility with the perceived goals of the government’s policy statement for land transport. If approved by NZTA, a new Melling Interchange will enable full flood protection and all the additional benefits to optimise the rejuvenation and growth of the Lower Hutt central city.



Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
2. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS BLUEPRINT: Winning and keeping the support RiverLink deserves.....	6
Introduction	6
Purpose	6
The engagement opportunity	6
The engagement challenge.....	7
Where are we at, where to next?	7
What stakeholders told us.....	8
Doing things differently.....	10
The engagement and communication task.....	11
The golden rules for RiverLink engagement.....	11
Four strategic engagement priorities	11
What does engagement success look like?	12
Steps in the engagement process for project success	13
The engagement strategy - key success factors	14
3. APPENDICES	20
Risk and mitigations table	20
RiverLink interviewee list	21
Stakeholder interview questions.....	22

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The brief

The RiverLink project team is responsible for developing an overarching approach to guide engagement and communications efforts, for the lifetime of the development and implementation of the RiverLink project. The approach needs to be the blueprint from which all communication and engagement plans at each phase of the project will evolve.

The opportunity

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and livable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

What started as a very practical exercise in flood protection has evolved into an opportunity to revitalise the CBD of Hutt City into a vital contributor to greater Wellington's social and economic prosperity.

Multi-agency projects are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks, but the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort. RiverLink is also a unique and exciting opportunity for three agencies, all with mandates vital to the vision, to show what can be achieved when they constructively collaborate and authentically engage their communities of interest for visionary outcomes.

In the words of key stakeholders, this is the once in a lifetime opportunity to shape Hutt City's future.

The RiverLink engagement and communications blueprint must achieve two outcomes:

- 1 Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in: an aspirational and joined-up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's wider communities of interest.
- 2 Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project. An engagement process that is inclusive and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the long-term success of Hutt City.

Engagement principles to guide our approach

- Telling a joined-up, consistent story that transcends individual projects to champion a bold vision for Hutt City’s future. The story needs to elevate the vision above the functional components (the ordinary) to the aspirational (the extraordinary).
- Engagement that inspires everyone with an interest in Hutt City’s prosperity to back RiverLink and throw their efforts behind it to achieve meaningful outcomes. Engagement is not for ‘consultation’s sake’ and must be more than a tick box exercise.
- Engagement that is sustained and comprehensive. This means connecting with stakeholders and the community in a meaningful and authentic way to drive outcomes together over the entire life of the project. It’s a marathon, not a sprint.
- Keep one step ahead. The blueprint should stay constant, but the time-specific communications plans should stay highly receptive and responsive to the political, social and economic landscape. Agility is crucial.

The litmus test for engagement activities

This	Not This
One vision, one story	Random and disjointed activities
Gravitas and longevity	Business as usual
Inspiring, listening	Informing, telling
Authentic and meaningful	A tick box exercise to meet short term goals
Co-creating outcomes with the community	Imposing a fait accompli
Confident	Apologetic
Exciting and different	Typical
Finger on the pulse	Rigid and out of touch

What engagement success will look like

- Stakeholders and community hear and understand one joined up ‘value story’ from each of the project partners, regardless of what agency they represent or what part of the project they are engaging on at the time.
- Strong public mandate and awareness throughout the lifetime of the RiverLink project – people know why the project is vital to Hutt City and are active advocates for it. They believe the outcomes are value for money and they’re prepared to invest.
- Stakeholders have the opportunity to collaborate and, where appropriate, co-create to positively influence the project design, implementation process and outcomes.
- All agency partners have visibility of and can influence technical and engagement work being undertaken by each other – creating a shared ownership approach and ensuring consistent engagement, aligned with this blueprint.

How we will achieve engagement success – 4 priorities

1. Having a plan with the right success measures for the right time. Being clear what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole, and being clear about specific shorter term milestones at each step along the way. Success measures support and enable collaboration between project partners – each is clear about their and each other’s contributions to the engagement effort and each takes responsibility for making it happen.
2. Establishing the right systems and processes. Ensuring systems and processes support and enable the multi-agency team to deliver consistently high-quality and aligned engagement and consultation – ensuring each agency has access to the right information at the right time to inform engagement and technical work.
3. Picking winners. Prioritising stakeholders and partnerships, both internal and external, based on the current milestones and emerging issues or opportunities as the project evolves over time; and defining specifically the appropriate engagement outcomes at each point in time.
4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities. For a project of this magnitude and duration, success depends on engagement effort and expertise matching technical effort and expertise. Technical experts cannot and should not be expected to be experts in engagement too. Investing in the right capability and resources to deliver the right engagement outcomes is essential.

2. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS BLUEPRINT: Winning and keeping the support RiverLink deserves

Introduction

RiverLink is a project partnered between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and the NZ Transport Agency designed to deliver greater flood protection, improve transport links and make the Lower Hutt city centre a more vibrant and livable city.

For the project to be a success it requires all partner agencies, elected officials, the Hutt City business community and other stakeholders to support the vision and commit to working together to make it a reality. For the broader public, particularly the communities living in and around Hutt City, success lies in maintaining the strong public mandate for the outcomes RiverLink seeks to achieve and in ratepayers supporting the investment required to complete the project.

Purpose

This document sets out an overarching strategy to guide engagement and communications efforts, for the lifetime of the development and implementation of the RiverLink project.

It sets out the blueprint from which all subsequent communication and engagement plans will evolve.

This document explores what, why and how. What areas we need to focus on; why these areas are important to the success of the project; and how to ‘activate’ the strategic priorities.

It’s about building and maintaining excitement and support for the transformational benefits RiverLink will deliver and to achieve community participation in making the RiverLink vision a reality.

The engagement opportunity

Quite simply, RiverLink is the most significant initiative ever embarked on for Hutt City. It aspires to deliver a more resilient, accessible and livable city that will make Hutt City an unbeatable place to live, work and play.

What started as a very practical exercise in flood protection has evolved into an opportunity to revitalise the CBD of Hutt City into a vital contributor to greater Wellington’s social and economic prosperity.

RiverLink is also a unique and exciting opportunity for three agencies, all with mandates vital to the vision, to show what can be achieved when they constructively collaborate and authentically engage their communities of interest for visionary outcomes.

In the words of key stakeholders, this is the once in a lifetime opportunity to shape Hutt City's future.

The integrated benefits of the individual elements of the RiverLink project will deliver an outcome far greater than their individual parts. Therein lies the opportunity for the project partners - to show residents, ratepayers and businesses how RiverLink is creating a vibrant, livable accessible and resilient city worth investing, working and living in.

That said, multi-agency projects and relationship dynamics are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks. There are many different processes, timeframes and cultures to align, and often divergent political expectations to take account of. But the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort.

The engagement challenge

A project of this magnitude and duration needs a strong public mandate to succeed and the mandate needs to be sustained over many years and numerous election cycles. People need to be reminded about why the project is vital to the future of Hutt City, so they actively advocate for it and the project enjoys support over the long term.

To earn that mandate, RiverLink needs to stay in the spotlight. We will not be the only infrastructure project competing for public attention during RiverLink's lifetime.

Losing the public mandate is one of the most significant threats to the success of RiverLink. Stakeholder support is where project and engagement success merge.

Where are we at, where to next?

To date, the RiverLink interagency project team has made positive progress in engaging stakeholders and building awareness of the project's scope and aims. However, the team agrees there are opportunities to:

- refine the value proposition into a single integrated and compelling story
- address stakeholder misconceptions that may have developed over the life of the project so far
- step up the way stakeholders are engaged with, now and throughout the project

- take a more joined-up approach to engagement, while maintaining the flexibility to accommodate each partner's distinct planning, consultation and decision-making processes.

You have asked us to develop an engagement and communications strategy for RiverLink that supports the project team to achieve:

- better internal alignment on community engagement, consultation and communication so that RiverLink is seen to 'speak and engage with one voice'
- a single, compelling narrative in which all project communication, engagement and consultation activities can be anchored so that the vision and value proposition are well understood and supported
- an exemplar of multi-agency collaboration delivering high value outcomes for Hutt City.

To inform the development of the strategy, Crestani completed an intelligence-gathering exercise comprising in-depth interviews with 14 key project and community stakeholders involved in or with an interest in the project. Participants were asked their view of the issues and opportunities associated with engaging all the organisations and communities essential to the success of RiverLink (e.g. business, commercial, residents, local and central government). The interview questions are set out in the appendices on page 22.

What stakeholders told us

Feedback indicated there is a strong level of support for the project and respect for what the project team has achieved to date. In fact, stakeholders were consistent in asserting RiverLink is a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' for Hutt City and the single most important initiative they will see implemented in their lifetimes. There is consensus that without full commitment to RiverLink, Hutt City will struggle to thrive.

However, stakeholders also consistently told us they are yet to be convinced that RiverLink will deliver the revitalisation that Hutt City needs, and there are a number of challenges to overcome to allow RiverLink to achieve its stated goals. Stakeholders' concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. RiverLink is not aspirational enough to capture and deliver all possible benefits
2. Greater political and leadership 'buy in' is needed
3. Funding uncertainty is a barrier to progress
4. Lack of pace threatens engagement and support

Stakeholders interviewed made the following comments:

“

“There’s a complexity with having three agencies and one is that there’s a lack of overall leadership. The politics of partnerships need to be managed well.”

“Nobody disputes we need it to happen, but people are asking what does this mean for me, and am I getting value for \$300 million?”

“The story needs to be told better. Communications are a good investment and need to go beyond what’s needed for consent processes.”

“It’s taking too long. People will only stay interested and supportive if they can see progress and see what’s changed.”

“The biggest barrier to success is the roading piece and the Melling Bridge, and who pays for it.”

“There needs to be more awareness and buy-in from politicians.”

“I think the economics are dubious and the benefits are pretty woolly, being polite.”

“There’s a lack of urgency. In fact, the pace is glacial.”

”

Some of these challenges can be addressed through more innovative, purposeful, timely and consistent communications and stakeholder engagement. Others are more fundamental to the scope of the project itself and require the focus of the project team and management group to address.

In this communication and engagement strategy, we suggest how a different and more deliberate approach to community engagement and communication can better support progress and help ensure project success.

Doing things differently

“They’re not being innovative enough and I worry that all sorts of opportunities might be missed. They need to think outside the box. The business community is skeptical that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity that’ll be missed and there’ll be intergenerational debt left to our kids.”

RiverLink is the single biggest opportunity for Hutt City to become a more vibrant and high performing part of the greater Wellington region.

The feedback stakeholders have given offers a great opportunity to the RiverLink project team and their respective partner agencies by providing a strong steer on where future external and internal engagement and communications efforts should focus so that RiverLink delivers for Hutt City.

This is an opportunity for Greater Wellington Regional Council, NZ Transport Agency and Hutt City Council to set the standard for the delivery of multi-agency projects; and to show how exemplar community engagement is a pre-requisite to the success of projects of this magnitude and impact.

This is a change in behaviour for the organisations involved in leading and developing the work. This necessitates moving beyond institutional silos and ‘talking amongst ourselves’ to a much more inclusive engagement process that lifts the vision above flood protection, transport links and turning the CBD to face the river to considering ‘the art of the possible’.

Taking a fresh approach to collaborative engagement doesn’t mean ignoring the statutory obligations each individual agency needs to meet. Quite the opposite, in fact. But it does mean being agile and innovative in the way statutory processes are executed and it means being open to combining the strengths of all three project partners into a cohesive and transparent engagement approach where your shared goal of a more vibrant, resilient and livable Hutt City is plain for everyone to see.

RiverLink is engaging for action with one voice - this begins with all partners being aligned in your engagement efforts, reflecting shared responsibility for achieving the best outcomes for Hutt City.

The engagement and communication task

The RiverLink engagement and communications strategy needs to achieve two outcomes:

- 1 Deliver a powerful vision that draws people in: an aspirational and joined up vision for Hutt City that is shared by the three partner agencies and all the project's communities of interest.
- 2 Create a movement that gains and maintains momentum over the entire life of the project. An engagement process that is inclusive of and captures the imagination of all those who have a stake in the success of Hutt City.

The golden rules for RiverLink engagement

RiverLink must adopt the overarching engagement and communication principles of:

- Telling a joined-up, consistent story that transcends individual projects to champion a bold vision for Hutt City's future. The story needs to elevate the vision above the functional components (the ordinary) to the aspirational (the extraordinary).
- Engagement that inspires everyone with an interest in Hutt City's prosperity to back RiverLink and throw their efforts behind it to achieve meaningful outcomes. Engagement is not for 'consultation's sake' and must be more than a tick box exercise.
- Engagement that is sustained and comprehensive. This means connecting with stakeholders and the community in a meaningful and authentic way to drive outcomes together over the entire life of the project. It's a marathon, not a sprint.
- Keep one step ahead. The blueprint should stay constant, but the time-specific communications plans should stay highly receptive and responsive to the political, social and economic landscape. Agility is crucial.

Four strategic engagement priorities

1. Having a plan with the right success measures for the right time. Being clear what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole, and being clear about specific shorter term milestones at each step along the way. Success measures support and enable collaboration between project partners - each is clear about their and each other's contributions to the engagement effort and each takes responsibility for making it happen.

2. Establishing the right systems and processes. Ensuring systems and processes support and enable the multi-agency team to deliver consistently high-quality and aligned engagement and consultation – ensuring each agency has access to the right information at the right time to inform engagement and technical work.
3. Picking winners. Prioritising stakeholders and partnerships, both internal and external, based on the current milestones and emerging issues or opportunities as the project evolves over time; and defining specifically the appropriate engagement outcomes at each point in time.
4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities. For a project of this magnitude and duration, success depends on engagement effort and expertise matching technical effort and expertise. Technical experts cannot and should not be expected to be experts in engagement too. Investing in the right capability and resources to deliver the right engagement results is essential.

What does engagement success look like?

The RiverLink team have identified engagement success measures based on the question:

“What would good look like as a result of engaging effectively on the RiverLink project?”

Stakeholders interviewed had a number of their own suggestions:

“ *“People – ratepayers, residents and businesses – would have certainty. They’ve told us do it once, do it right for the long term. We have an obligation to deliver on that for them.”*

“People will know things are happening.”

“The business community are well informed and people need to feel confident to invest in the city. “

“People want to see more than pretty pictures and chat fests.”

”

Engagement success factors

- Stakeholders and community hear and understand one joined up ‘value story’ from each of the project partners, regardless of what agency they represent or what part of the project they are engaging on
- Strong public mandate and awareness throughout the RiverLink project – people know why the project is vital to Hutt City and are active advocates for it. They believe the outcomes are value for money and they’re prepared to invest
- Key stakeholders have the opportunity to collaborate and, where appropriate, co-create to positively influence the project design, implementation process and outcomes
- Each agency has visibility of and can influence technical and engagement work being undertaken by each agency – creating a shared ownership approach and phased and complementary engagement

Engagement objectives

- Project team work collaboratively with the RiverLink Management Group on a joined up internal engagement approach, encouraging openness and leveraging key people and relationships to ensure high internal visibility and buy-in at the right level from each agency
- Shared development and ownership of engagement and communications plans supporting each phase of the project, and aligned with this overarching communication and engagement strategy; throughout the life of the project
- Develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders based on ‘mutual value’ to build understanding of the project and develop opportunities for involvement and for value to be added – particularly from the private sector
- Develop culture of openness to engaging in new and different ways

Steps in the engagement process for project success

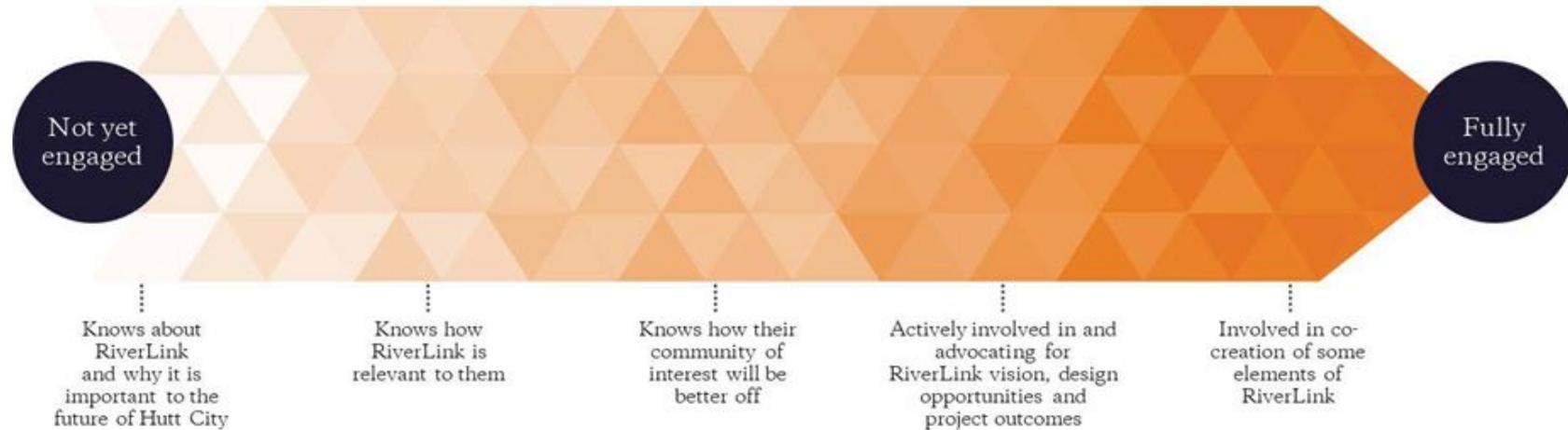
If the engagement objectives were reflected in an image the ‘*Steps in RiverLink’s engagement success continuum*’ below demonstrates how each engagement needs to have a defined purpose.

Whether it’s establishing a new relationship right from the beginning, or working in the co-creation space, every member of the project team, Management Group and others who support the RiverLink project should use these ‘markers’ to guide their efforts and keep them focused on outcomes-based engagement.

The goal is not to move all stakeholders completely along the continuum at the same time, but rather to recognise where the project needs particular stakeholders to be in order for that project phase to be successful.

For example: getting the media to understand how their community of interest will be better off as a result of RiverLink would be a successful outcome for that group, whereas the engagement success for some key people/organisations, such as Hutt businesses, councilors, MPs and community representatives would be to see them working alongside you in co-creation of the design and implementation.

Steps in RiverLink's engagement success continuum



The engagement strategy - key success factors

1. Having a plan with the right success measures

RiverLink's success will, in large part, rely on engagement that is focused on telling a simple, lined up story between the three partner agencies and running a process that is highly coordinated and complementary of each agency's work programme.

For the project team (and the key people in each agency supporting them), and the Management Group this means agreeing collectively what engagement success looks like for the project as a whole (alongside specific shorter term milestones), working towards a shared vision and developing and implementing actions together that will deliver on the engagement objectives.

As stated earlier in this document RiverLink is engaging for action with one joint voice - this begins with all parties being clear on an aligned 'big picture' engagement effort, pitched at the right level to achieve shared ownership and the right outcomes.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining the shared commitment of the project team, management and governance to the ambition of the plan. One of the first actions with this group needs to be buy-in to the engagement approach you want to take. The engagement principles in this strategy are the project’s ‘north star’ and must be front and centre for decision makers at every phase of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team present engagement strategy to management and governance groups Workshop to agree the vision/ambition/value proposition that forms the basis of the joint story - focusing on the vision that the investment will deliver, rather than apologizing for the investment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring engagement objectives are understood and agreed by everyone. Being clear about the influence others can have on the process, ensuring the right measures of success for your engagement activities over the right timeframes, and having them understood and agreed by all in the project and management teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make engagement principles visible to all those working on the RiverLink project, including at management and governance level to ensure engagement accountability. All engagement activities need to take the litmus test (e.g. is this a joined-up story? Is this authentic? Is this co-creating?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing behaviour to ensure ‘joint engagement’ is reflected in each part and phase of the project. Beginning with open and pragmatic conversations about the compromises each agency needs to make around information sharing, timelines, and engagement planning in order to progress the one vision, one story approach to develop a culture within the team of co-creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a stock take of previous and planned engagement across all projects to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree what has worked well and what could be done better from a ‘lessons learned’ perspective Gain greater visibility of cross-agency engagement planning and timelines Develop an overarching engagement and communications plan encompassing all parts of the project from which project specific ‘mini-plans’ can cascade from - always taking account of the overarching plan or blueprint Ensure interagency feedback is a key component of all engagement planning in the spirit of collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting engagement at the top table. The successful joint engagement approach relies in equal parts on technical and engagement expertise. Engagement representation must sit on the RiverLink Management Group to ensure engagement risks and opportunities are given the same attention as technical aspects of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/ recruit an ‘engagement champion’ who sits on/can sit on the management group

2. Establishing the right systems and processes

A key risk that has been identified is that cross agency/internal silos lead to divergence of views, timelines that don't align or engagement that can be counterproductive to the overarching goals of the RiverLink project. Multi-agency projects are inevitably more complex than single agency tasks, but the prize for effective collaboration is undoubtedly worth the effort. This is why a large part of the engagement effort should be internally focused to ensure rigorous processes enable high-quality engagement.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the right mix of people and skills are involved in RiverLink. At the governance, management and technical levels - consider ability to communicate effectively and wide networks within their area of expertise/interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review make up of RiverLink Management Group to ensure representation is senior enough to translate into appropriate visibility and buy-in within each agency and demonstrate to stakeholders each agency sees RiverLink as a priority project Consider broader representation on management group to include a Hutt City business stakeholder role with direct links back into the private sector Consider creating a role to advocate on behalf of the RiverLink project to keep the various 'voices' on track, bring people together and be the 'go to' person for telling the RiverLink story Set up a RiverLink community board to ensure more consistent community representation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a strong focus on internal communications between agencies, so the project team has visibility of and can influence other related work sitting under the RiverLink umbrella. This also extend to creating visibility beyond those working on the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a 'home' base for the project team so people from various agencies can sit together regularly rather than on an ad-hoc basis and ensure each agency's engagement and communications team members are included as part of this Consider using secondments from each agency to foster understanding of different organisational processes and culture and to take advantage of reputation and technical expertise Develop an overarching RiverLink engagement calendar (for internal use) so all planned engagement is visible across the 3 agencies, and busy periods, workload pressures, and competing priorities can be identified and resolved early Regular project team meetings including engagement leads from each agency

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring engagement techniques and channels used are fit for purpose for the overarching engagement task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a digital hub so that all people can access and share information As part of engagement stock take - conduct a review of all engagement and communications channels currently used and evaluate for effectiveness, effort and reach to help focus future engagement efforts and investment

3. Picking winners - prioritising stakeholders and partnerships

Achieving the support and active engagement of a wider cross-section of stakeholders requires that they see value to them and they understand the benefits of participating. This means each and every engagement needs to focus on achieving relevance and purpose.

Not all stakeholders are created equal. What’s more, over a project of this scale and timeframe the definition of priority stakeholders will change depending on the intended outcomes at each phase. RiverLink needs to be nimble to ensure it remains relevant in both messaging and approach and alert to changes in stakeholder sentiment.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and regularly reviewing RiverLink’s key stakeholders, to make sure you are focusing on the right people at the right time with the right purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map RiverLink’s stakeholders to build understanding across the project team of who is important to each organisation and look for shared interest and opportunities to leverage relationships and engagement opportunities Regularly review the stakeholder map to ensure the project is engaging the right people at the right time Consider how RiverLink can bring more advocates for the success of Hutt City into the tent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on an engagement approach that works for stakeholders. Look for opportunities to make it as easy as possible for stakeholders to contribute, piggy back off existing events, reach out to them and make it worth their while to attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of stakeholder mapping also focus on what stakeholders need to think/feel/do as a result of engagement - this will help focus the type of engagement efforts, the most appropriate channels used, and the right call-to-action Use engagement calendar to plan and undertake engagement with these people/groups in a coordinated way

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan public engagement that hits the mark. Start investigating and planning now to identify the scope of the work and audience reach you want to have. Consider the strength of the interagency team and each organisation’s engagement networks and channels for support and learnings. At every point, be clear about the influence you want and the influence others can have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use engagement calendar to plan and undertake aligned public engagement/consultation As part of engagement stock take - conduct a review of all public engagement and communications channels currently used and evaluate for effectiveness, effort and reach to help focus future engagement efforts and investment and investigate potential new public engagement techniques as part of this process. Are we using social media to full effect? Review and redevelop all key messaging and storylines to ensure it reflects a simple, joined up, one story approach, with people at the centre (for example - shows the life/benefits to a range of different personas: an inner-city dweller, someone from a Hutt suburb, a train commuter, a driver, pedestrian/cyclist) Establish a school competition to design the new ‘gateway to the city’ bridge Look for 3rd party endorsement of RiverLink work to provide a different public angle or channel Consider a name change/rebrand of ‘RiverLink’ that better communicates the wow factor Look for opportunities to communicate regularly and show transparency - a joint engagement approach needs to have a strong focus on identifying milestones and communicating regularly, rather than going silent. This will be particularly important when it comes to socialising detailed plans with a broader set of stakeholders and the public. Warming the environment so people are aware of where things are moving is an important step Be proactive in the media - there will be many points of interest and eureka moments that can be shared so the story is kept alive in the public consciousness Create a more permanent physical presence for RiverLink in the city than the current container as a symbol of the project’s importance and value to Hutt City and so stakeholders have a ‘place’ to exercise their support for and contribution to the RiverLink vision. This may also be the ‘home base’ for the project team, as recommended above

4. Investing in the right resources and capabilities – to lead and execute the internal and external engagement effort required.

RiverLink has been described by stakeholders as the single biggest opportunity for Hutt City to become a more vibrant and high performing part of the greater Wellington region. Stakeholders and the community therefore deserve an engagement effort that is adequately resourced with engagement and communications specialists and allow for a range of engagement approaches to be used.

This can be achieved by:

Approach	Recommended actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment of an experienced, senior engagement lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider creating a dedicated RiverLink engagement and communications role jointly funded by the partner agencies to lead implementation efforts and work with the project team and to potentially provide a consistent public ‘face’ for the project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing for a range of engagement approaches and channels. Workshops, websites, media, advertising, social research. Ensuring a budget is available up-front will avoid the need to ‘look down the back of the couch’ mid-project. Good engagement takes time and tends to be resource-heavy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include possible budget requirements as part of engagement and communications stock take and planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing for the right content to support the engagement approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include budget requirements for the development of content to populate the engagement approaches and channels - for example the use of augmented reality to show the vision for the land
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising when external expertise is required to create and maintain engagement momentum. An engagement project of this scale will be challenging for the project team. Being aware of and open to bringing in independent advice and support when required (over and above creating a dedicated role) will give the project team the confidence they need to get the job done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify where there are key engagement/consultation tasks to be completed or milestones where specialist advice and guidance is required (for example workshop facilitation, research, website development)



3. APPENDICES

Risk and mitigations table

Risk	Mitigations
Lose public mandate due to lack of compelling story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner agencies agree joint vision and story, and commitment to speak as one voice
Delays to project due to funding uncertainty or engagement issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the right people at governance level to reflect importance of project to the regional economy and allow for a more streamlined decision-making process Develop overarching engagement calendar
Project not agile to new government direction or structural changes within partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the RiverLink ‘story’ reflects back the ambitions and direction of the the government of the day Invest in internal engagement and communications within each partner organisation to ensure the ‘value proposition’ is clear and regularly heard by the right people
Criticism from a key stakeholder/group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to work with broad range of stakeholders, map and regularly review key stakeholder list for project as a whole as well as individual work programmes Look for ways to be more inclusive of stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle
Project team works in silos without awareness of other work programme plans and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop project team culture that allows for more co-working, sharing of information and joint project planning and engagement processes

RiverLink interviewee list

1. Prue Lamason Councillor GWRC (Chair HVFMS)
2. Ray Wallace Mayor HCC (HVFMS)
3. Chris Milne Councillor HCC (HVFMS)
4. Kim Kelly HCC (RiverLink GM Group)
5. Graeme Campbell Manager Flood Protection GWRC (RiverLink GM Group)
6. Kesh Keshaboina NZ Transport Agency (RiverLink GM Group)
7. Wayne Hastie GWRC (RiverLink GM Group)
8. Ginny Anderson Labour MP
9. Chris Bishop National MP
10. Sue Kedgley Councillor GWRC (HVFMS & Green Party)
11. Mark Futter CE Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce
12. John Bank Banks Shoes
13. Paul Swain Councillor GWRC
14. Tony Stallinger Chief Executive HCC
15. Greg Campbell Chief Executive GWRC

Stakeholder interview questions

1. Tell me about your interest in the RiverLink project and why
2. What do you think success will look like for Riverlink? How would you like Hutt residents and business, or someone from outside the region, to describe what's different because of RiverLink three years from now?
3. How do you think Hutt residents/businesses would describe RiverLink right now in terms of vision and progress? Do you think they know enough to be able to describe the benefits it will deliver for them?
4. Do you think there are other benefits RiverLink could deliver for the Hutt besides flood protection, transport links, and CBD regeneration? What might they be?
5. Riverlink is a collaboration between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and NZ Transport Agency. What's your experience of how effectively the three organisations have been working together to progress the initiative? Think about governance and working group, and at a business-as-usual level?
6. Do you think the project represents value for money for rate payers and taxpayers? Why/why not?
7. In your view, what's the biggest barrier to RiverLink being a success?
8. Are there are some areas where you think the RiverLink project has already been successful and could build on?
9. Who are the most important groups/communities/people you think need to support the RiverLink project vision? How well do you think they've been engaged with to date?
10. Any other comments you would like to make that haven't been addressed as part of this interview?



SCOPING PAPER: CONSENTING PATHWAYS



18 April 2018

<p>Bibliographic reference for citation:</p> <p>Boffa Miskell Ltd 2018. <i>RiverLink, Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways</i> prepared by Boffa Miskell Ltd for Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council and NZ Transport Agency</p>		
Prepared by:	Robert Schofield Senior Planner Boffa Miskell Ltd	
Reviewed by:	Pauline Whitney Senior Planner Boffa Miskell Limited	
Status: [Status]	Revision / version: Draft	Issue date: 12 February 2018
Reviewed by	GWRC + HCC + NZTA	13 February 2018
Status	Revision 1: Draft	Issue date: 28 February 2018
Reviewed by	GWRC + HCC + NZTA	5 March 2018
Status	Revision 2: Draft	Issue date: 13 March 2018
Reviewed by	NZTA Legal	9 April 2018
Status	Revision 3: Final	Issue Date 18 April
<p>Use and Reliance</p> <p>This report has been prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited on the specific instructions of our Client. It is solely for our Client's use for the purpose for which it is intended in accordance with the agreed scope of work. Boffa Miskell does not accept any liability or responsibility in relation to the use of this report contrary to the above, or to any person other than the Client. Any use or reliance by a third party is at that party's own risk. Where information has been supplied by the Client or obtained from other external sources, it has been assumed that it is accurate, without independent verification, unless otherwise indicated. No liability or responsibility is accepted by Boffa Miskell Limited for any errors or omissions to the extent that they arise from inaccurate information provided by the Client or any external source.</p>		

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
1 Introduction	3
1.1 Project Purpose.....	3
1.2 Project Elements.....	3
1.3 Time Frames.....	5
1.4 Integrated approach	6
2 Project Objectives + Risks	8
2.1 Project Objectives for Designations.....	8
2.2 Project Risks	8
3 Consenting Pathways	10
3.1 Consenting Principles.....	10
3.2 Options for Statutory RMA Authorisations.....	10
3.3 Options for Applications	16
3.4 Alternative Consenting Pathways	20
Appendix 1: Assessment of Options for Integrated Consenting Pathways	

Executive Summary

RiverLink is a partnership project between Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council, and the NZ Transport Agency. The project area is a 3 kilometre section of the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River between Kennedy Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge and the immediate urban environs on either side, including part of Lower Hutt's Central Business District.

RiverLink's objectives are for better flood protection, transport and lifestyle for Lower Hutt, entailing a range of overlapping and integrated initiatives that will require ongoing and enduring collaboration to achieve its objectives. The full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners.

The proposed works include widening the river channel and river berms, raising the height of the stopbanks, improved access from the CBD to and alongside the River, a new riverside promenade on the eastern stopbank, improvements to the SH2 Melling intersection, enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes to and through Melling, and better public transport integration at Melling Railway Station. Achieving many of the project elements will be precedent on other elements occurring first – therefore there is a strong interrelationship between all the project's components.

Undertaking these improvements will require authorisation under the Resource Management Act 1991 through the designation of the land required for public works, and obtaining the necessary resource consents. Longer term changes to the City of Lower Hutt District Plan will also need to make provision for the consequential changes in land use and to encourage forms of development that support the vision for the City Centre.

This report presents a summary of the principal options for obtaining the authorisations required to implement the RiverLink Project, in order to assist the participating organisations to decide in on the preferred consenting approach: for brevity, the options are referred to as 'consenting pathways'. Once the pathway has been confirmed, a consenting strategy will be developed to map in detail the way forward and address particular designation and resource consent issues.

This report sets a range of recommendations for applying and obtaining the RMA authorisations, with the key recommendation being that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a pathway that involves, as much possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- The Notices of Requirement and applications prepared together as single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

The development of the Notices of Requirement and applications will take between 6-12 months, the application processing 1-2 years, depending on appeals and currently anticipate a decision by early to mid-2021.



1 Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

RiverLink (the "**Project**") is a partnership project between Greater Wellington Regional Council ("**GWRC**"), Hutt City Council ("**HCC**") and the NZ Transport Agency ("**NZTA**"), together the "**Project Partners**". The project area is a 3 kilometre section of Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River ("**River**") between Kennedy Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge and the immediate urban environs on either side, including part of Lower Hutt's Central Business District ("**CBD**").

RiverLink is a collaborative initiative that seeks to provide –

- Better flood protection for Lower Hutt's CBD and residential areas;
- Enhanced connections to and along the River, contributing to a more vibrant city centre; and
- Improved access and safety and reduced congestion on State Highway 2 ("**SH2**") and connecting roads at Melling.

The Project Partners recognises the strong interrelationships between the various elements of the project, and the full benefits of the project will only be realised through a strongly integrated approach, entailing a high degree of cooperation and joint endeavour between the Project Partners. This will require strong coordination in the planning and sequencing of the works associated within the Project: i.e., the sum will be greater than the individual elements themselves.

1.2 Project Elements

The Project comprises the following key elements:

- Flood protection works, including –
 - ▶ Upgrades to the flood protection defences to safely pass the design flood which includes but limited to, increasing the height of the stopbanks widening the river channel and edge protection improvements;
 - ▶ Where required, construct retaining walls on the stopbank (such as to limit impact of stopbank footprint on existing roads);
 - ▶ The acquisition of properties on the west side of the river on Pharazyn Street and part of Marsden Street to provide the area required for widening the river corridor;
 - ▶ The current constriction created by the existing Melling Bridge will be reduced by its proposed replacement (see transport improvements below); and
- New connections and recreational facilities to and along the River, including –

- ▶ Between Ewen and Melling Bridge, the riversides will be developed as a 'river park' that provides quality places for people to spend time by the river and enjoy its amenity: new river edges formed to facilitate safe and secure public access;
- ▶ Formation of beaches within the River, with connections from pathways and steps to enable access to swimming spots and fishing points;
- ▶ By the City Centre, steps and ramps to extend up to the stopbank and connect directly to the river to enhance connectivity and accessibility;
- ▶ Replacement of existing pathways within the river corridor to provide a hierarchy of path types along the stopbank top, berms and river edge, to enable walking and cycle movements, and creation of areas for passive recreation including dog exercise areas;
- ▶ Upstream of Melling Bridge, the river corridor will be more natural, with broader open spaces and tree groups to provide better space character definition, with some wetlands formed for stormwater filtering and to provide habitat; and
- Central City enhancements, including –
 - ▶ Daly Street will become a service lane, to allow for a direct and adjacent relationship between the new stopbank and new development in the City Centre: this will be achieved by the development of an 11-metre-wide promenade, part of which will be a deck over Daly Street below, that, ultimately, will be connected to new mixed use buildings developed to take advantage of the enhanced connections and riverside amenities;
 - ▶ Andrews Avenue and Margaret Street will be reconfigured to provide a shared street space to encourage walking and cycling and enhance connectivity to the river from the city centre;
 - ▶ Various stormwater, water supply and waste water network infrastructure will need to be replaced or relocated and this creates opportunities for upgrading and future proofing to contemporary standards; and
- Transport improvements, including –
 - ▶ The redevelopment of the SH2 intersection with Melling Link, Block Road, Pharazyn Street, and Harbour View Road to reduce congestion and improve safety, travel reliability and multi-modal accessibility: the exact form and extent of these improvements are under investigation currently;
 - ▶ In conjunction with the SH2 Melling improvements, the current Melling Bridge will be replaced, its exact location and form to be decided as part of the decision for the SH2 improvements;
 - ▶ The Melling Railway Station would need to be relocated when the Melling intersection is upgraded, and be better aligned with the City Centre (nominally opposite Margaret Street), and enable potential to create a better public transport 'hub' with bus transport; and

- ▶ A new pedestrian cycle bridge (nominally opposite Margaret Street) is proposed to connect across the river between the City Centre and western side of the River, and possibly the relocated Melling Railway Station.

There are a number of Project elements that have yet to be confirmed, and enhancements that would assist the Project Partners to further satisfy their strategies and policies. There are interdependencies between these elements. The enhancements include:

- Other possible pedestrian and cycle connections to enhance connectivity and greater transport choice;
- Possible raising of the ground level of the Pharazyn Street area to reduce the surplus fill and to allow for a realigned street to enable better utilisation of residual land and avoid developments within the seismic (faultline) zone;
- Additional parking on the Pharazyn Street side, including park and ride facilities, to offset reduced parking on the City-side river banks;
- Residual land on the realigned Pharazyn Street could be repurposed for new land uses, a potential that could be optimised by making changes to the District Plan to enable appropriate development in this area;
- Enhanced terrestrial biodiversity through additional native tree planting; and
- Additional recreation opportunities.

1.3 Time Frames

The Preliminary Design process began in February 2016 and the technical aspects were completed mid-2017. Design review and value engineering continued into the third and fourth quarter of 2017.

The next phase of the Project will be to seek approvals through statutory processes. For the GWRC and HCC components of the Project, the decision to proceed to seeking those approvals will be made by the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee, GWRC and HCC following the documentation of the Preliminary Design, which is to occur early-mid-2018. From that point, the Assessment of Environmental Effects can commence for those aspects of the project other than the NZTA elements.

For the NZTA components of the Project, an Indicative Business Case for options at Melling was concluded in 2017, and the final scheme will be confirmed through a Detailed Business Case following public consultation on the shortlisted options coming out of the Indicative Business Case. A decision on the final scheme for Melling is anticipated to go to the NZTA Board in late 2018, following which, approval would enable funding for the consenting phase, starting in 2019.

It is anticipated that the draft applications for the entire project will be completed by the end of 2019, after which a draft application would be circulated to key stakeholders for input. It is then expected that the finalised full suite of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications would be lodged with the two councils in Q2 2020.

It is anticipated that the process of notifying and assessing the applications, as well as the hearing of submissions would occur over the following twelve months, with a public hearing process likely to occur in late 2020. This allows time for engagement with submitters and stakeholders to address any outstanding issues prior to the formal hearing.

If a decision is released in early-mid 2021, construction can commence immediately, if no appeals are lodged or any can be resolved promptly. Any appeal could extend the timeline by 1-2 years, but it may be possible to have any appeal ring-fenced to specific matters, to allow progress to occur on other aspects.

1.4 Integrated approach

The success of the RiverLink project depends on a strongly integrated approach being followed, with the Project Partners working together with an integrated design to address overlapping interests in what would otherwise be separate work programmes. The management of the project has been provided by a Management Group comprising members of the senior executive teams from the three partner agencies. Governance for the flood protection and city centre aspects is provided by the extant Hutt River Flood Management Subcommittee. The NZTA Board provides governance for its aspects of the Project.

The name “RiverLink” was coined at the outset of the concept design phase to provide an accessible and recognisable project descriptor that represents the interests of the three Project Partners.

As noted in Section 1.2, not only are the Project works occurring within the same area, there are strong interrelationships between the elements: some elements can only occur if other elements occur first. Further, the benefits of some elements will only be fully realised with the completion of others. The diagram below (refer [Figure 1](#)) graphically shows which elements are connected to each other. In considering these interrelationships, it can be seen that some of these elements are strategic and others represent opportunities discovered through preliminary design.

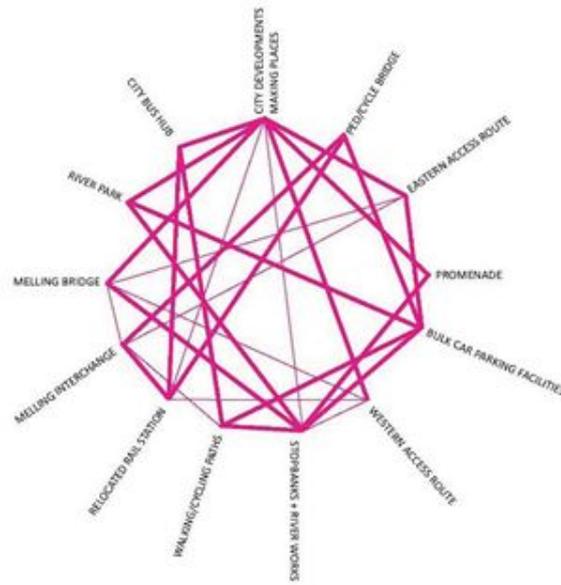


FIGURE 1: INTERRELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM

2 Project Objectives + Risks

2.1 Project Objectives for Designations

Any designation sought under a Notice of Requirement ('**NoR**') must specify the objectives for which the work and designation is sought. This is because, under the RMA one of the considerations for deciding on confirming a Notice of Requirement is “whether the work and designation are reasonably necessary for achieving the objectives of the requiring authority for which the designation is sought” (s168A(3)(c) and s171(1)(c)).

One of the tasks necessary for preparing the NoR for the Project therefore will be to specify the objectives for the designations and the works that they are authorising. It is likely that there may be some overarching objectives that can apply to all or most proposed designations, such as ones for resilience and integration; however, as the Project will have various designations for different purposes (such as flood protection, reserves, roading), each relating to the specific statutory functions and responsibility of each Project Partner, each Notice of Requirement will be required to have its own specific project objectives.

The consenting strategy (to be prepared in the next phase) will set out a preliminary set of designation objectives which are likely to be refined as part of the process of preparing the NoR and resource consent applications.

The original Design Objectives for the Project were very comprehensive: these may form the basis for the development of the project objectives, although in much more precise manner.

2.2 Project Risks

There remain a number of assumptions and risks within the Project that will continue to be addressed as Project design proceeds. These risks are in summary:

- That one or other of the Project Partners departs from the Project and it thus loses the opportunities to remain coordinated and mutually beneficial;
- That elements of the Project to be provided for by private development stakeholders are not delivered in a form that matches with the design intent, or not provided at all;
- That consents under the RMA and other statutes are not able to be acquired and the Project cannot proceed;
- That the current planning framework (i.e., district plan, regional policy statement, regional plans, national policy statements and national environmental standards) may present significant consenting risks;
- That funding for all of the elements of the design is unable to be secured;

- That due to the time required to take the Project through the design and consenting processes Project knowledge is lost from key people leaving either of the three agencies;
- That due to the time required for implementation there is a significant flood event;
- That community support for the project is unable to be maintained due to the time taken for design and consenting, the project costs, or for other reasons;
- That project support from the three agencies is usurped by changing political landscape or alternative priorities;
- That the agreement and/or participation by other key stakeholders such as KiwiRail is delayed or not forthcoming;
- That technical issues that could not be foreseen in concept design arise in detailed design that change the project design or delivery costs; and
- Changing market conditions increase the costs of implementation.

When the final consenting pathway is determined, a consenting strategy will be developed that will include a register of risks and methods to mitigate such risks.

A further key element of the consenting strategy will be to identify Project elements which can be best addressed through the designation or resource consent process.

3 Consenting Pathways

The next phase of the Project will be to obtain the statutory authorisations required under the RMA that are necessary to allow the work to occur. These could include designations, resource consents or, potentially, changes to the District Plan. Due to the large-scale integrated nature of the Project, there are a number of different ways to obtain these authorisations. For brevity sake, these options are referred to in this report as ‘consenting pathways’, with the term ‘applications’ including NoRs as well as resource consent applications.

This section –

- Sets out the principles used to guide the process for assessing the appropriateness of the various options under the RMA;
- Outlines the different statutory authorisations available under the RMA, their relative advantages and disadvantages, and the recommendations for proceeding;
- Outlines the options for preparing applications for those authorisations, the alternative processes for getting the applications heard and decided, and the recommendations for proceeding;
- Outlines the alternative ways that the Project Partners can work together to obtain and implement RMA authorisations, and the recommendations for proceeding, and
- Identifies a number of outstanding questions that have yet to be resolved.

Once decisions on the recommendations in this report are made, a consenting strategy will be prepared to map out the route ahead.

3.1 Consenting Principles

In determining the most appropriate consenting pathway, the following principles have been used to guide the decision-making process:

1. **Accessibility** – keep the process local, ensuring opportunities for involvement by landowners, stakeholders and the community;
2. **Integration** – obtain consents in a way that support each agency’s desired outcomes: i.e., maintain an integrated approach;
3. **Transparency** – ensure the community is able to identify and understand what each agency is doing to benefit the overall outcome of the Project; and
4. **Flexibility** – ability to be able to adapt to meet the requirements of the Project Partners.

3.2 Options for Statutory RMA Authorisations

The next phase of the Project will be to proceed to obtain the necessary statutory authorisations to enable the work to commence. An earlier Planning and Consenting Strategy Technical Report

(GWRC ref T-17/20) provided an initial overview of the options available for obtaining the statutory authorisations. Now that the configuration of the Project has been confirmed, these options are examined in greater detail below, with accompanying recommendations.

3.2.1 Designations

The three Project Partners are all *requiring authorities* under s 166 of the RMA, and are thereby enabled to lodge a NoR to designate land for public works under Part 8 of the RMA. A designation not only provides the necessary authorisation under the RMA, but it also enables land to be acquired under the Public Works Act 1981.

The Project comprises a range of public works for the purpose of flood protection, transport improvements, urban revitalisation and public space development. While designations may not be needed for every element of the Project (for example, street improvements on local roads may be undertaken by HCC under its road controlling authority powers under the Local Government Act 2002), designating all or most of the land needed for the Project would not only provide the necessary RMA authorisation, but also provide a single overarching integrated land use framework. Where needed, designating land would also allow land to be acquired where it is not already under the control of the Project Partners. For example, it is anticipated that GWRC will need to acquire the largest area of land for Project, primarily on the west side of the River to enable the river corridor to be widened.

Designations have a number of advantages over resource consents for public works, including –

- Once notified, a NoR has immediate effect, in that no person may, without prior written consent of that requiring authority, do anything in relation to the land subject to the designation that would prevent or hinder a public work, project, or work to which the designation relates, including undertaking any use of the land, subdividing the land, or changing the character, intensity, or scale of the use of the land;
- Designations generally provide for longer-term and more flexible protection than a resource consent or plan change – a designation cannot be altered by anyone else, unlike provisions of a plan (anyone is able to apply for a private plan change);
- NoR are normally publicly notified, allowing a transparent process that provides opportunities for any person or organisation to lodge submissions and be heard at a hearing, whether in support or opposition;
- Conditions can still be imposed to ensure the effects on the environment can be adequately managed;
- Designations are provisions in a District Plan, and are shown on planning maps – they thus have much greater transparency than resource consents
- Once given effect (i.e., constructed), designations provide an enduring authorisation for the ongoing operation of the work, and can be ‘rolled over’ into new revisions of district plans to maintain that provision;
- The level of design for a NoR need not be at detailed level, provided there is sufficient detail to establish the spatial extent of the designation and to enable the effects of the proposed

work to be adequately assessed; this provide some flexibility to make design improvements before construction starts, provided the changes are within the scope of the project and comply with any conditions;

- Future additional work in designations can be introduced through the Outline Plan process; and
- Allowing the requiring authorities to compulsorily acquire the land needed for the work under the Public Works Act (1981) if the land cannot be purchased on a willing buyer/willing seller basis.

There will be some technical issues in having three separate requiring authorities designate land in the Project area, such as:

- The potential for overlapping designations and the demarcation of responsibility for any work undertaken within such overlaps;
- There will be a need to spatially delineate the various elements of the Project and the responsible agency, not only for construction purposes but for ongoing operation and maintenance;
- One party's designation could be appealed and hold up another party's programme if there were interdependencies with the proposed works;
- There is the risk of one designation not being confirmed, resulting in "a hole" in the project;
- The need to obtain the support and involvement of any other requiring authorities with designations in the Project area which might either be affected by the Project or that might be needed to be altered to align with the project objectives – in particular, KiwiRail in relation to any changes to the Melling branch line and railway station; and
- The Project Partners could be forced to purchase land well in advance of being needed if designations are in place for the whole project (under s 185 RMA the Environment Court may order the taking of land) from the same time.

These issues and risks will be addressed in greater detail in the consenting strategy, once the consenting pathway has been decided.

There is an existing KiwiRail designation within the Project Area that covers the Melling Branch line and railway station. The potential relocation of the railway station and possible closure of the end section of line will require the involvement and agreement of KiwiRail, and discussions with that organisation have already occurred, and will be ongoing. While it is unlikely that KiwiRail would become a Project Partner, the organisation has been part of similar situations, such as the realignment of the NIMT railway line through Ōtaki to provide for the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway. The critical outcome will be to ensure the organisation's agreement to and support for the changes.

It is likely that many of the complexities involved with the overlapping works and sequencing matters can be resolved with side agreements between the Project partners. This is commonly undertaken in other similar situations, and can reduce the need for designation conditions to cover

the same matters. Furthermore, side agreements would be more readily amended than designation conditions which would need a s 181 alteration.

While an integrated approach to lodging the Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications is recommended, components of the Project could be delivered as separate outputs outside the Project if necessary, without adversely impacting on the overall Project framework and benefits. For example, some aspects of the flood protection work could proceed separately as discrete consenting workstreams,

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners seek to designate the necessary land (which includes the river corridor) for the purpose of authorising the works associated with the Project where control of the land is critical for constructing and operating the Project.

3.2.2 Resource Consents

A designation does not exempt a requiring authority from abiding by any restrictions on land use under s 9 of the RMA (other than district plan rules) or in relation to air, water and the coastal marine area (ss 12–15 of the RMA). Consequently, resource consents under a regional plan or a national environment standard ("NES") may also be needed to construct or conduct the work.

To undertake any works in the river or on land, resource consents are likely to be required under the Regional Plan(s). The consents are likely to be numerous, given the complexity of the work required to construct the Project, and will include but not be limited to discharges, diverting and bridging the river, and building of structures. The full suite of consents required will be determined when the final design is approved and the suite of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications is prepared. For example, any works affecting the railway corridor could require consents under the National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health ("NESCS").

Given the intention to commence construction in 2021-22, applications for any necessary resource consents should be made at the same time the designations are sought. It should be noted, however, that it is likely that the detailed design and construction process following the confirmation of the designations may trigger the need for further resource consents or changes to existing consents. This is normal for large and/or complex projects.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the resource consents that are required to implement the Project are sought at the same time as the designations to provide a single 'package' of applications and supporting information.

3.2.3 Changes to the Planning Framework

One of the preliminary tasks in developing the consenting strategy will be to comprehensively assess the current planning framework, not only to determine the types of resource consents that will be needed to authorise the Project works outside designations, but to assess whether there are any particular consenting risks present by the current regulatory and policy framework.

A key matter will be whether there are any "effects' avoidance" policies which may set very high thresholds to pass in order to obtain resource consent, particularly if the related resource consent categories for the particular activities is non-complying¹. Under the 'bundling' principle, a whole suite of resource consent applications may be bundled together and determined collectively as non-complying if at least one of the consents being sought is as a non-complying activity. If such a risk is considered significant, then consideration may be required to seeking a plan change to accommodate the project.

This process occurred at the preliminary stage of the Transmission Gully Project, in which a change to one of the Regional Plans was requested (and accepted) prior to the lodgement of the Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications. While the consenting strategy will address this aspect, it will not be until the assessment is undertaken when it can be determined whether the current planning framework does present any significant consenting risks to the Project.

It should be highlighted that requesting changes to a regional policy statement or national policy statement would be more problematic. While any Minister of the Crown or any territorial authority in the region may request a change to a regional policy statement, such requests can only be made if the policy statement has been operative for at least three years. No requests can be made to change a National Policy Statement.

In terms of the District Plan, currently most of the work required for the Project would require a range of land use resource consents under the District Plan. While the District Plan could be changed to make such activities permitted (and thereby not require resource consent), given the scale and potential effects of the work, it could be difficult to develop a case under s 32 of the RMA to support making all such activities permitted. Such changes to the District Plan could also have consequences for the operation of the District Plan elsewhere in the City with the same zoning. Such changes would not alter the need to obtain RMA approvals under the Regional Plans or possibly a NES. For these reasons, it is not advisable that the work be authorised by changing the District Plan, but to seek designations to authorise the majority of the works entailed with the Project.

¹ Such thresholds may occur if a policy requires *avoidance* of a particular effect or activity, rather than *avoidance, mitigation or remediation*, following recent Court decisions

The Project will necessitate an alteration in the current property and land use patterns between Ewen and Melling Bridges: in some areas, this alteration will represent a considerable change in the existing pattern of land use and property ownership. At some point following the implementation of the Project, the District Plan will need to change to alter the zoning and any other spatial provisions that may be affected by the changes. For example, a large extent of the land which is river corridor is zoned “River Recreation” under the District Plan. The additional land that is to be included within the widened river corridor will have to be rezoned to River Recreation from its current commercial or residential zoning.

However, the necessity to make these changes provides an opportunity to review other plan provisions to support the Project objectives. For example, specific policies to support the Project could be introduced into the District Plan. Additionally, any residual land along the realigned Pharazyn Street could be rezoned to provide for more intensive mixed use multi-unit development that would support the enhanced transport, recreational and amenities of the area.

Furthermore, it is noted that the District Plan provisions for the CBD (zoned ‘Central Area Activity Area’) were reviewed and became operative in May 2011, and therefore will be due for review from May 2021. The zoning for the river corridor (‘River Recreation Activity Area’) is due to be reviewed as part of HCC’s rolling review process. These reviews will also provide an opportunity to make such changes as necessary to reflect and/or support the Project.

Recommendation

It is recommended that, an early stage of the consenting process, a proactive review of the current planning framework is undertaken to identify whether there are any potential consenting risks for the Project, and if there are significant risks, develop a specific strategy to address these risks, such as via a plan change.

It is recommended that HCC programme a review of relevant District Plan provisions to support the Project outcomes, as part of any rezoning required, to occur following the implementation of the Project at an appropriate stage.

3.2.4 Other Approvals

There are expected to be approvals required under other statutes and these will require further detailed scoping once the design is confirmed. Commonly, for example, archaeological authorities are required under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 for work where there are pre-1900 places being changed (such as sections of Marsden and Pharazyn Streets where houses are to be removed). There are also processes under the Local Government Act 2002 for any street changes/road stoppings. Consent from the Department of Conservation under the Wildlife Act 1953 may also be required for any relocation of indigenous fauna.

These approvals have their own notification, assessment and processing requirements, noting though that road stopping proposals and archaeological authority decisions may be appealed to the Environment Court.

It will be critical that obtaining any other non-RMA approvals do not hold up giving effect to the Project, and therefore where such approvals are critical to implementation, their procurement should be aligned with the overall RMA consenting strategy. Therefore, part of the consenting strategy will be to determine which, if any, other approvals would be required to be sought in alignment with the designations and resource consents.

Where such approvals have no potential impact on the timeline, non-RMA approvals can be sought separately by the agency responsible for the works that trigger the need for the approval.

Recommendation

It is recommended that, as part of developing the consenting strategy, an assessment be undertaken of likely non-RMA approvals for the Project, and where such approvals are critical to implementation, to align their procurement with the overall RMA consenting strategy.

3.3 Options for Applications

3.3.1 Engagement with Iwi and Key Stakeholders

To date, the Project Partners have engaged with Ngāti Toa and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust over the course of the development of the Project objectives and its design. Ongoing engagement with iwi will ensure their full involvement in the continued progression of design and in addressing the consenting requirements, including in relation to cultural impact assessments, the formulation of mitigation measures and in the management of construction effects, particularly on the River.

Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders with an interest in the Project will also be requisite to addressing any concerns early and proactively, and to maintaining the level of support the Project has been receiving. A critical aspect will be to work closely with KiwiRail on the possible changes to the Melling Branch line, which will likely need alterations to its designation.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners continue with their ongoing engagement with Ngāti Toa and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, as well as key stakeholders with an active interest in the Project (particularly KiwiRail, whose designation will need altering) through the development of Notices of Requirement and resource consent applications.

3.3.2 Integrated Assessments

As part of preparing the notices/applications for the necessary RMA authorisations, supporting documentation will be needed to support the applications. In particular, an assessment of effects on the environment ("AEE") will need to be prepared to address the actual or potential effects of the

Project. In addition, information will need to be supplied that will, among other matters, address the assessment of alternatives undertaken, the consultation conducted, and the proposed measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment.

The assessments will need to be prepared by experts in a range of fields. Some of those assessments may require additional investigations to be undertaken to provide a sufficient depth of information. Because of the overlapping and integrated nature of the Project elements, many of the same technical assessments will apply across all designations and some resource consents, such as noise, air quality, freshwater ecology, and urban design. It would therefore more efficient to have the same experts assess the same matters across all Project elements, providing consistent advice on an integrated basis. An integrated approach will reduce duplication and also decrease risks and maximise the potential benefits of a collective endeavour.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the technical and environmental assessments undertaken in support of the NoR and resource consent applications are integrated and consistent.

3.3.3 Public Process

Given the scale of the Project and its likely effects, the NoR for the Project will be subject to a public process through full public notification and a public hearing process.

As outlined, a range of resource consents are also likely to be required, primarily from GWRC. On their own, many of these resource consent applications could likely be decided on a non-notified basis. However, because of the overlapping nature of the various approvals required and to limit as far as practicable the potentially confusing or drawn out situation of each of these approvals being sought separately, it would be expected that the NoR and the resource consents applications would be lodged together. This would enable submitters to see all aspects of the Project together and attend one hearing should they wish to have their submission heard. This approach will also limit the costs to all parties in time and resources.

Under the RMA, an applicant or requiring authority can specifically request that its application and/or NoR be publicly notified. This request would avoid the need for the consenting authority to address the question of notification.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the agencies specifically seek the public notification of the NoR and resource consent applications to ensure the opportunity for full participation by potentially affected persons and interested members of the community.

3.3.4 Processing Consent Applications + Notices of Requirement

Under the RMA, where applications for resource consents in relation to the same proposal have been made to two or more consent authorities, and a hearing is required, the consent authorities must jointly hear and consider those applications. Joint hearings can also apply to situations where a Notice of Requirement to designate land has been lodged at the same time as the resource consent applications relating to the same proposal and involving two or more consenting authorities.

For RiverLink, it is anticipated that several NoR will be lodged with Hutt City Council at the same time as applications to the Regional Council for resource consent (for example, for work in the bed of a river). Thus, a joint hearing is anticipated to be required to hear submissions and make decisions on the Project applications.

Under s 102(2) RMA:

When a joint hearing is to be held, the regional council for the area concerned shall be responsible for notifying the hearing, setting the procedure, and providing administrative services, unless the consent authorities involved in the hearing agree that another authority should be so responsible.

Given that the principal authorities being sought will be for the designations for the public works, which will cover relatively extensive areas of land, it appears beneficial to have the HCC be the lead agency for providing the administrative services for processing and hearing the NoR and resource consent applications: HCC has agreed in principle to undertaking that role. It is important to highlight that this role would not affect the regulatory role of GWRC in processing the applications for resource consent under its Regional Plans.

In respect of the processing of the applications and notices, it is not unusual for a Council as an applicant and/or requiring authority to apply to itself as the regulatory authority: for example, GWRC's Flood Protection Group will occasionally seek regional resource consents for works in rivers. A Council will often have internal expertise and/or knowledge that is drawn upon to assess applications, and to make recommendations, such as about conditions of consent to manage construction effects. Where it is important, external expertise may be contracted to assist in processing applications, such as for peer review purposes, or to provide specialist expertise unavailable in-house, or where the Council does not have sufficient resources. For example, because of the scale of the Project, it is likely that HCC will outsource the processing of the NoR. A peer review process would be beneficial to address any potential perception issues of bias of the Councils processing their own consents/designations.

Due to the scale of the overall Project and the complex interrelationship between its various elements, it will be important to ensure that those assessing the resource consent applications and

NoR work closely together, whether they are in-house Council advisers or external contracted experts.

The other matter to consider is the level of independence required in the decision-making process for the applications. An essential principle of natural justice is that no person can judge a case in which they have an interest. The rule is very strictly applied to any appearance of a possible bias, even if there is actually none.

Thus, while it is reasonable that some degree of in-house expertise may be used to assess the applications, for a publicly notified proposal of any scale, such as RiverLink, it is advisable to have a visible degree of separation between the applicant or requiring authority and those hearing submissions and making the decision, to prevent any appearance of the councils being a 'judge in their own cause'. This can be achieved by appointing independent decision-makers to a hearing panel, who would have an appropriate delegation of decision-making function and powers. This could be achieved by appointing a panel of independent hearing commissioners, or by applying to the Environmental Protection Authority to have the applications heard and determined by a Board of Inquiry, or by directly referring the applications to the Environment Court for determination: the advantages and disadvantages of these three decision-making options are addressed in section 3.3.5 below.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly seek to have –

- the NoR and resource consent applications processed by a single independent processing team with appropriate qualifications and experience, with due delegation of appropriate authorities; and
- the hearing of submissions and decision-making by an independent hearing panel, hearing and determining all applications collectively.

3.3.5 Hearing and Decision-making Routes

There are several decision-making routes that could be pursued by the Project Partners, as follows:

- Hear and determine the applications at a council hearing (via delegated authority to an independent hearing panel); or
- Directly refer NoR and resource consent applications to the Environment Court for determination (termed 'direct referral'); or
- Refer NoR and resource consent applications to the Environmental Protection Authority for determination by a Board of Inquiry via the proposals of national significance provisions of the RMA.

Without addressing all of the advantages and disadvantages of each decision-making route in detail (which will be provided in the Consenting Strategy), the key disadvantage of the first pathway is that

it leaves open the potential for any decision to be appealed to the Environment Court and thereby create additional costs and potential delays to the programme.

However, the key advantage of the first pathway is that the two latter options are more formalised and daunting processes than Council-level hearings (recognising that any hearing can be intimidating to most lay people). Council level hearings can provide a greater level of informality than a Court or Board setting, through the choice of hearing venue and a more informal management of the hearing by the Commissioners (for example, no cross-examination is undertaken at Council hearings).

A two-step decision-making process allows for the flushing out of all issues and all parties with an interest in the project, with a better ability to proactively resolve matters: even if appeals were lodged, there will be opportunity to resolve outstanding issues without recourse to a hearing.

For this reason, to promote a user-friendly environment for potential submitters, a Council-level hearing is recommended. The principal means to reduce the risks of appeals would be to continue the level of community and stakeholder engagement and information delivery that has already occurred, including through the hearing process. If appeals do appear likely, then the agencies could consider resorting to a direct referral to the Environment Court at a later stage in the process.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a Council level hearing, supported by an appropriate communications and consultation strategy to maintain community positivity through information-sharing and feedback opportunities.

3.4 Alternative Consenting Pathways

Drawing from the consenting principles, three alternative consenting pathways have been identified that would provide for an integrated approach to the preparation and support of the resource consent applications and NoR through the consenting process:

1. **Coordinative Pathway** – separately prepare assessments but lodge the applications together at the same time, which are then heard and decided on by an independent hearing panel at the same time. The applications would be supported by each of the three agencies separately through the consenting process – for example, the Project Partners would contract their own experts who may or may not be contracted by the other Project Partners; the experts would undertake their own separate assessments, but would coordinate with the other experts to promote consistent approaches, information and advice, but ultimately may differ in the separate interests of their organisations. Separate designations and consents would be issued, and subsequently implemented by the respective agencies.
2. **Collaborative Pathway** – prepare and support applications collaboratively, lodged together, with a single AEE supported by a single team of technical experts and advisers who cover all elements of the Project. While prepared and lodged collectively, separate designations and resource

consents would be issued, and post-decision, implemented and governed by the respective agencies, but working closely together in a similar relationship as to date.

3. **Hybrid Pathway** – this pathway seeks to promote a collaborative approach as much as possible, but would allow for a coordinative approach if necessary, if all NoR and resource consent applications could not be lodged together (for example, if GWRC needed to proceed with flood protection works earlier, or if there is a significant delay in a project partner’s decision-making process).

It should be highlighted that the option of the three Project Partners forming a new purpose-built entity for the purpose of obtaining the necessary authorisations was not considered any further because of the legal, financial, resourcing and timing issues associated with pursuing this pathway.

An assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these pathways is provided in the table in **Appendix 1**. From this assessment, it is recommended that the third option, a hybrid of the Collaborative and Coordinative Pathways, is pursued for the following reasons:

1. An integrated approach can be achieved without the financial and legal uncertainties of forming a single agency with requiring authority status;
2. The integrated nature of the Project maintained through a single team of expert advisers, preparing a single package of applications and one overarching AEE;
3. A collaborative approach effectively continues the current successful arrangements, and could be continued through the implementation stages of the Project; and
4. Alternatively, this approach would not prevent a special delivery entity being formed to design and construct the Project.

In terms of designations, it is not unusual for a large-scale project to involve a number of requiring authorities and different designations sought for different elements. For example, the Transmission Gully Motorway project involved designations for both the State Highway component (the Transmission Gully Motorway itself as well as the Kenepuru Link Road, with the NZTA being the requiring authority), and the local road components (the Whitby and Waitangirua Link Roads, with Porirua City Council being the requiring authority). The project also required the relocation of part of a Transpower transmission line, requiring separate resource consents (with Transpower being the consent holder). In respect of the Transpower component of Transmission Gully, Transpower produced its own AEE but shared some witnesses with the Transport Agency (who produced their own statements of evidence). The Board of Inquiry dealt with the Transpower project in a separate chapter of its decision. This example shows that a coordinated consenting approach amongst a number of agencies can work well in practice.

What is unusual with the RiverLink project is the degree of overlapping interests and component elements, and the need for sequential programming of work undertaken by the three organisations. One option that could be considered is whether the three Project Partners could jointly designate land within the Project area, particularly where there may be a great degree of overlap or sequence of work from one party to another. This approach has not been used to date elsewhere in New Zealand, and would have to be investigated further if considered a potentially viable option.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Project Partners jointly agree to pursue a hybrid pathway involving, as much possible, a collaborative approach, entailing

- The Notices of Requirement and applications prepared together as single package of documents
- The supporting environmental and technical input provided by a single team of experts, contributing to one overarching Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, and
- The designations and resource consents being issued under each responsible requiring authority, and implemented by the respective agencies in a coordinated approach.

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS FOR INTEGRATED CONSENTING PATHWAYS

Pathway Options	Advantages/Benefits	Disadvantages / Risks	Comments
<p>OPTION 1: COORDINATIVE PATHWAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate but coordinated approach – separate NoRs and applications but lodged and processed at the same time Separate technical expert assessments and evidence, but coordination between experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of an integrated project, but good systems needed to achieve consistency Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions, and different conditions Risk of inconsistent messaging in communications and stakeholder engagement Arrangements for area of overlapping interest would have to be reached Risk of increased overall costs: for example, with duplication in expert and technical input Inconsistencies with conditions for similar works causing problems during construction Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would be the best for maintaining independence for each of the agencies, while being part of an integrated project. However, relies on commitment from all parties to follow the same approaches to NoRs and resource consent applications, and work hard to ensure integrated and consistent approach Relies on ongoing commitment from all parties to meet agreed timelines Importance of managing land and land owners subject to the designation where works are not required in the short to medium term
<p>OPTION 2: COLLABORATIVE PATHWAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare NoR and applications together as single package of documents, but with separate NoRs and consent components Single team of experts to undertake assessments, contributing to one overarching AEE, and providing one set of evidence Designations and consents implemented on an individual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of an integrated project, but need to put good systems in place to achieve this and to achieve consistency Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions and recommendations, levels of information, conditions Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately Leading partner required for contractual arrangements with consultants, requiring funding agreements between Project partners: need good financial systems for transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each partner would separately designate that part of the Project area for which it has responsibility over works If overlapping designations not preferred, other arrangement needed for any works undertaken by one partner in area designated by another partner
<p>OPTION 3: HYBRID PATHWAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively together towards preparing NoR and applications as a single package, although, if necessary, have a separate but coordinated process for one part of the Project – for example, if the Melling Intersection upgrade is delayed As far as possible, a single team of experts would undertake the necessary assessments; alternatively have strong coordination between experts Designations and consents implemented on an individual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit of having flexibility to adapt if circumstances prevent a fully collaborative approach from being pursued Benefits of an integrated project, provided there was not too much but need to put good systems in place to achieve this and to achieve consistency Integrated consultation and engagement process would remain unchanged Councils can process NoRs and applications together and have same hearings panel to determine all matters Could achieve common conditions and/or similar approaches to conditions (such as management plans), but conditions could ultimately vary according to the interests of each agency All designations would have immediate interim effect, providing all partners with control over the use and changes to the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of parties adopting different/inconsistent approaches: such as project objectives, differing assessments, differing expert opinions and recommendations, levels of information, conditions Risk that one organisation cannot meet timetable, and therefore either delay progress or pursue its designation separately Risk that a lack of detail for a critical part of the Project could delay or frustrate a full assessment of the overall project and an integrated approach Leading partner required for contractual arrangements with consultants, requiring funding agreements between Project partners: need good financial systems for transparency Risk that separate experts could take differing views or advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each partner would separately designate that part of the Project area for which it has responsibility over works If overlapping designations not preferred, other arrangement needed for any works undertaken by one partner in area designated by another partner



21 March 2018

To
Rebecca Polvere
Project Manager
Greater Wellington Regional Council

From
David Allen
Libby Cowper

By Email
rebecca.polvere@gw.govt.nz

Dear Rebecca

RiverLink Project – Determining a preferred consenting approach

1. Thank you for your email of 15 March 2018, which followed from our meeting on 22 February at Boffa Miskell where we discussed a draft version of *RiverLink Scoping Paper: Consenting Pathways* (the "**Report**").
2. You have sought further advice to accompany the final Report and support the RiverLink Management Group and the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee to decide on a preferred consenting approach for the RiverLink Project ("**Project**").
3. You asked us to build on our advice of 20 January 2017, in which we assessed the viability of the Notice of Requirement¹ ("**NOR**") process under the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**") to deliver the Project and concluded that:²

"Overall, on the information provided and at the high level requested for this advice, we consider that a NOR is a viable option to deliver the vision of the Project. Robust investigations are required to ensure all the statutory requirements for a NOR are achieved and that the public work elements of the Project are clearly identified. Also, the Project Partners must be committed to the control and delivery of their parts of the Project. While the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, the Project as a whole with its integrated nature is, in our opinion, greater than the sum of its parts."

4. We set out our further advice below. In essence, our advice is that advancing the Project as one integrated package is likely to have considerable benefits, in RMA process terms and substantively, over the Project Partners³ advancing their parts of the Project separately. We consider that although the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, it provides opportunities to demonstrate that the Project as a whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.

¹ A 'Notice of Requirement' under Part 8 of the RMA which, if confirmed, leads to the creation of a designation in a district plan authorising a project or work.

² At paragraph 4.

³ NZ Transport Agency, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council.

Integrated nature of the Project

5. As you know, the Project is a collaborative initiative that seeks to provide:
 - (a) Better flood protection for the Lower Hutt CBD and residential areas;
 - (b) Enhanced connections to and along Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River, contributing to a more vibrant city centre; and
 - (c) Improved access, safety and reduced congestion along State Highway 2 and connecting roads at Melling.
6. The Project includes a range of overlapping and integrated initiatives within the same Project area. We understand that strong interrelationships between each of the Project components means the benefits of some elements will only be fully realised following the completion of others, while other elements will be reliant on others occurring first.

Benefits of an integrated consenting framework

7. Due to the integrated nature of the Project, we support the 'hybrid' consenting pathway recommended in the Report and consider that advancing the Project as an integrated package will have considerable benefits, in RMA process terms and substantially, over each Project Partner advancing its part of the Project as an individual project.
8. Integrating the consenting pathways will result in considerable cost savings and timing efficiencies, requiring a single team of experts across all Project components to develop one over-arching application, Assessment of Environmental Effects and evidence set, as well as integrated public consultation and joint hearings.
9. Another key benefit of the hybrid approach is that the same decision-maker⁴ is likely to consider all applications collectively. This is important as it enables the decision-maker to assess the benefits of the Project as a whole, rather than in a piecemeal manner.
10. A useful illustration of the potential benefits of integration (or rather, the potential pitfalls in seeking approvals for one component of a wider scheme separately) is the Board of Inquiry decision of *Basin Bridge*.⁵
11. *Basin Bridge* involved an application for a NOR and related resource consents to construct, operate, and maintain a two lane one-way bridge on the north side of the Basin Reserve in Wellington City. The proposal formed one part of the inner city component of the Wellington Northern Corridor Road of National Significance, but was lodged separately to applications for other, related aspects of the wider project.

⁴ In the case of designations, the territorial authority will make a recommendation under section 171 of the RMA to each of the requiring authorities. The requiring authorities may accept or reject the recommendations in whole or in part (Section 172(1)).

⁵ Final Decision and Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Basin Bridge Proposal, 29 August 2014; *NZ Transport Agency v Architectural Centre Inc.* [2015] NZHC 1991.

12. The stand-alone nature of the Basin Bridge proposal gave rise to significant debate throughout the hearing about which benefits and effects could be attributed to that project. In particular, the Board considered the issue of contingent benefits (benefits flowing from related projects, which are intended but not consented) and enabling effects and determined that these could not be attributed to the Basin Bridge proposal.
13. On appeal, the High Court confirmed that a project's enabling benefits could constitute an effect to be taken into account under section 171(1) and/or section 5 of the RMA, but that the Board had not erred in deciding that:

"We cannot place any significant weight on a supposed (but not quantified) Project benefit which is not real – in that we have no certainty or assurance it would actually materialise".⁶

14. This example highlights the importance of ensuring that linkages to the different parts of a project are clear to the decision-maker and illustrates the challenges in seeking approvals for one element of a wider scheme in isolation of its other components.

Development of Project objectives

15. That said, as we have discussed with you, one feature of the hybrid consenting pathway is that despite seeking to promote a collaborative approach and the development of a single consent package, it also provides sufficient flexibility to enable NOR and associated applications to be lodged separately – for example, in the event that one component of the Project is delayed.
16. In order to ensure each individual part of the Project is able to stand on its own, we consider that each individual Project component and related NOR should be required to have its own specific project objectives, in addition to the over-arching Project objectives.
17. In addition to this, it will be important to ensure that the demarcation of responsibility is clear and that all Project Partners are committed to the control and delivery of their parts of the Project. This will include ensuring that even if lodged together, each agency is issued its own package of designations and consents for which it has responsibility.
18. These steps will help to ensure that both individual and common Project objectives are achieved.

Conclusion

19. Overall, we support the hybrid consenting pathway recommended in the Report and consider that while the integrated nature of the Project adds complexity, it also provides opportunities to demonstrate that the Project as a whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.
20. We consider that following the approval of a consenting pathway, the Project Partners will require time to undertake robust investigations to ensure that all statutory requirements are achieved and that the public work elements relevant to each part of the Project are clearly identified. This will require strong coordination in the planning and sequencing of the works associated with the Project

⁶ Above n5, at [513].

BUDDLE FINDLAY
NEW ZEALAND LAWYERS

and ongoing collaboration between the Project Partners to develop a consenting strategy that can deliver achieve the objectives of the Project, both collectively and individually.

Yours sincerely



David Allen
Partner

Direct: 64 4 462 0423
Mobile: 64 21 955 744
Email: david.allen@buddlefindlay.com



Libby Cowper
Solicitor

Direct: 64 4 462 0926
Email: libby.cowper@buddlefindlay.com

Reimagine Hutt City living.

You've got all the ingredients of an unbeatable lifestyle right here on your doorstep. We're working together to help make that future a reality.



MORE VIBRANT

We're encouraging development and recreational opportunities that will embrace the riverbank and draw people to the area, and make Hutt River a central part of our city's lifestyle and identity.

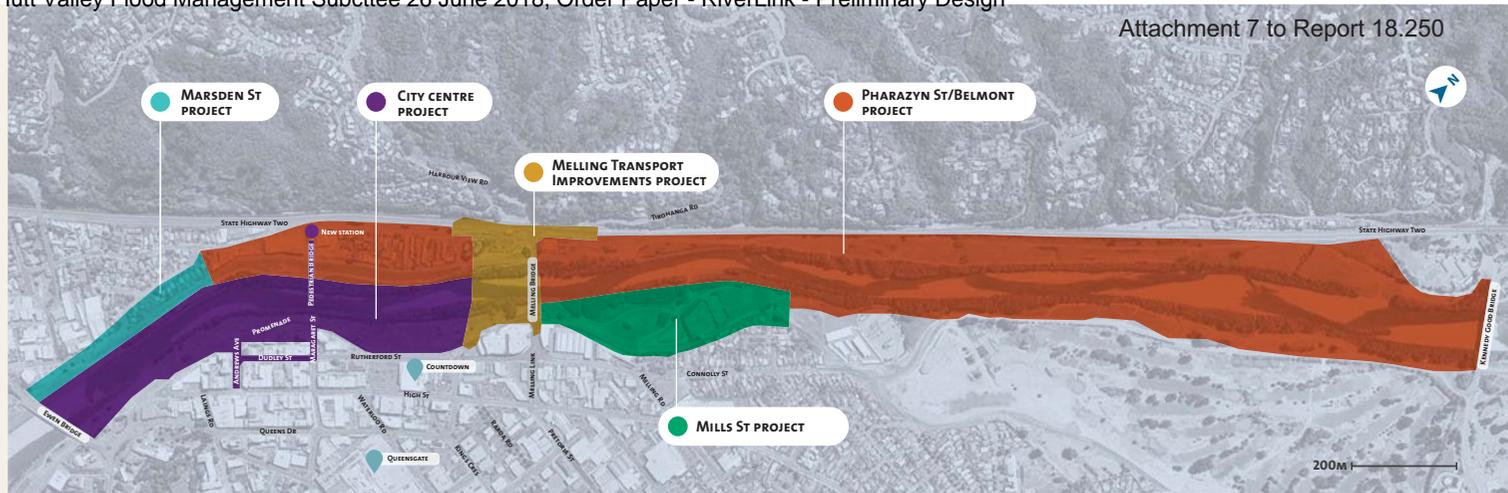
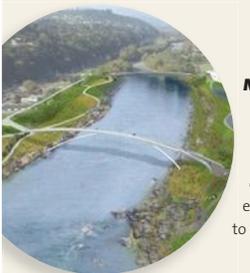
MORE RESILIENT

We're taking big steps to protect lives and Lower Hutt's \$1 billion worth of assets from the impacts of climate change, finding better ways to manage our environment and provide flood protection.

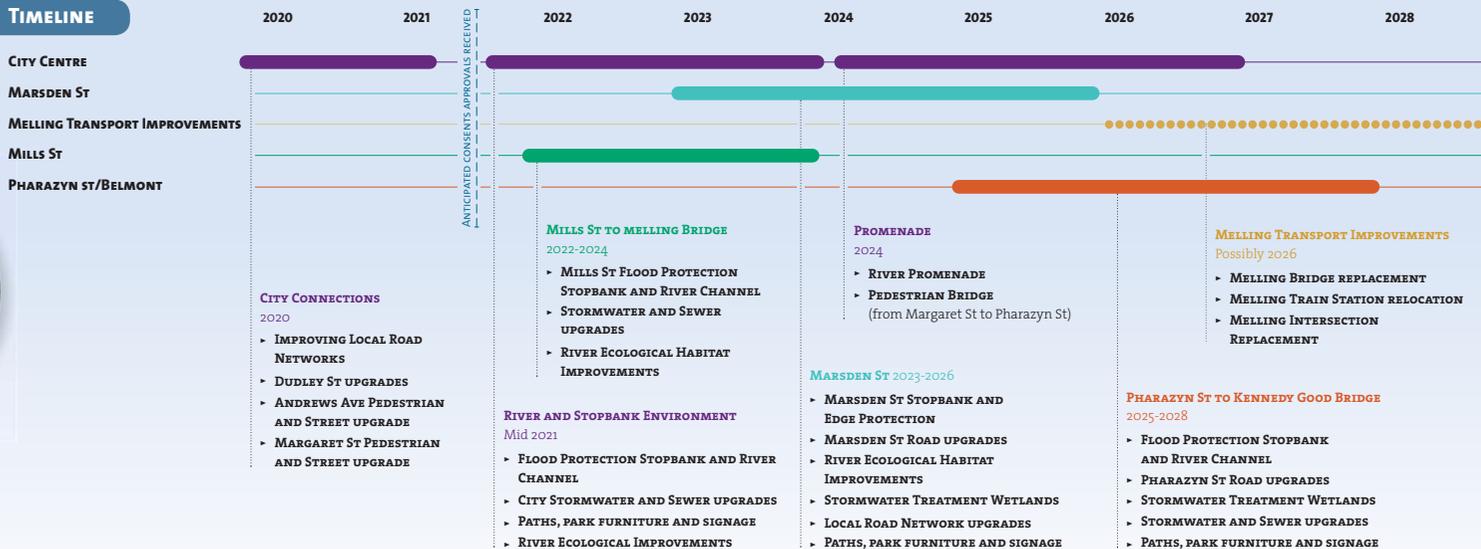


MORE CONNECTED

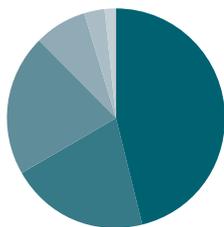
Replacing Melling Bridge, moving Melling Station, and creating a pedestrian bridge over the river are all being explored as ways to make it easier to access and get around our city.



TIMELINE

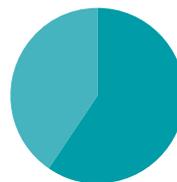


PROJECT ESTIMATES



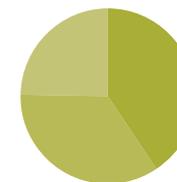
COMBINED FUNDING 2020-2028 (LONG TERM PLANS)

- PROPERTY REQUIRED TO BUILD - \$89M
- RIVER PROMENADE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - \$40M
- FLOOD PROTECTION STOPBANK AND RIVER CHANNEL - \$38M
- PROJECT DELIVERY COSTS - \$15M
- CITY STORMWATER AND INFRASTRUCTURE - \$6M
- RIVER ECOLOGY AND AMENITY - \$3M



FUNDING STILL TO BE AGREED

- NEW MELLING BRIDGE - \$34M
- NEW MELLING STATION AND PARK & RIDE - \$23M
- MELLING INTERCHANGE - \$TBC (OPTIONS BEING CONSIDERED)



BEYOND 2028

- EXTENDED PROMENADE - \$20M
- CITY STORMWATER AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES - \$17M
- CITY BUS HUB - \$12M

RiverLink

