IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Submissions and Further Submissions on the Proposed Hutt City District Plan

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Minute 24

Proposed District Plan – Hearing Stream 5 – Directions for modelling

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23 November 2026

Introduction

1. In Minute 20, we sought clarification from experts for Hutt City Council (HCC), Tiaki Wai and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) regarding preliminary advice they provided us on re-modelling the proposed flood hazard overlays in the proposed district plan.

2. The two primary matters we sought clarification on related to:

   i. the approach for addressing expert flood evidence provided by submitters in relation to 30 Benmore Crescent; and

   ii. the sea level rise assumption used in the modelling for the Waiwhetū Stream catchment.

3. The panel has now considered the subsequent memoranda provided by the experts to address our requests.

4. The purpose of this minute is to address the responses received and issue directions on the re-running of the flood models.

Approach for 30 Benmore Crescent

5. At the heart of the issue here, the Panel sought for site-specific flood modelling for 30 Benmore Crescent provided by submitters[1] to be incorporated into the model re-run if possible. This was to acknowledge that the model used by the submitters has been informed by updated elevation data following the completion of substantial bulk earthworks on the site.

6. In response, Mr Davis[2] and Mr Osborne[3] noted that using the updated elevation data would provide for a more accurate model; however, they added that it would involve re-building the model rather than simply re-running it with different parameters. This would be a costly and lengthy process in their view.

[1] Being Te Kārearea Ltd and Rosco Ice Cream Ltd
[2] Planner for Hutt City Council
[3] Principal Stormwater Modeller for Tiaki Wai

7. Mr Davis and Mr Osborne also expressed concerns that this approach would result in increases and decreases in model severity on surrounding areas – and in turn, introduce scope and natural justice issues.

8. As an alternative, Mr Davis and Mr Osborne considered it more reasonable to adopt the approach recommended by Mr Osborne in his evidence to simply remove the flood hazard overlays from the site, except for the retention of the high hazard overlay within the stream corridor.

9. The Panel accepts that recommendation noting that the submitters represented by Mr David Gibson on this matter at the hearing will be able to review the updated model output before the Panel makes any final decisions on the natural hazard provisions.

10. The Panel accordingly **directs** the updated draft maps to be confined to the high hazard overlay within the stream channel bisecting the site.

Assumptions for the Waiwhetū Stream catchment

11. For this other key issue, we noted in Minute 20 that the conferencing experts for HCC, Tiaki Wai and GWRC did not explain why a sea level rise parameter of 1.59m was retained for the Waiwhetū Stream catchment, when the balance of the updated models were to use a 1.0m parameter.

12. It is clear from the memoranda provided by the parties in response that there is a difference in opinion about the most appropriate way to proceed. In summary:

    i. Mr Davis and Mr Osborne prefer a 1.0m assumption to be applied across all of the models for the sake of consistency, though they consider that the 1.59m parameter would also be a reasonable option;

    ii. Ms Arnesen and Dr Dawe for GWRC prefer the 1.59m assumption because of the strong hydraulic connection at the stream mouth estuary between the sea and the stream, and the corresponding influence of coastal processes on flood behaviour in the lower catchment – they further noted that this catchment is distinguishable from the Hutt

River, where existing and planned flood protection structures are designed to withstand much larger flood events that in the Waiwhetū.

13. The GWRC experts have opined that a decision to prefer one parameter over the other will make little actual difference to the resulting flood hazard classifications. While Mr Davis and Mr Osborne signalled that they have no reason to disagree with that assumption, they rightly note that it is speculative unless both model scenarios are run and the results compared.

14. This is the course of action that the Panel ultimately prefers in this case. Running both scenarios will allow the Panel to be duly informed about the relative implications of sea level rise on flood behaviour in the Waiwhetū within the range of reliable assumptions recommended to us by the experts. We will then be able to consider those two model outputs in the context of evidence and submissions we have received from submitters, and to weigh other relevant factors (such as using consistent assumptions for all models underpinning the flood hazard overlays).

15. The Panel appreciates this will require more time and cost than running a single scenario; however, given the breadth of submissions on this matter and the differing preferences between the HCC, Tiaki Wai and GWRC experts on this matter, we consider it is justified.

16. We accordingly **direct** the models to be re-run as originally recommended in the Joint Witness Statement, albeit with two scenarios being separately run for the 1.0m and 1.59m sea level rise assumptions in the Waiwhetū catchment.

From here

17. The Panel requests that HCC liaise with GWRC and Tiaki Wai to set out a timetable for completing the model re-run and corresponding updates to the flood hazard maps. This should be reported back to the Panel no later than Thursday 3 December 2026.

18. The Panel will subsequently issue directions regarding the circulation of the updated maps for comments by parties with submissions in scope.



DJ McMahon

Independent Commissioner

Deputy Chair Hutt City Proposed District Plan Hearing Panel

23 November 2026