

WORKSHOP NOTES

SUBJECT	Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara workshop notes
WHEN	Monday 8 March 2021, 9am-5pm
WHERE	GWRC Council Chambers (100 Cuba St, Wellington)
ATTENDEES	Louise, Sam, Wayne, Pete, Pat, Roger, Jonny, Anya, Tui, Ros (from 12pm), Hikitia (from 12.30pm)
APOLOGIES	Zoe, Kara, Gabriel, Sean, Naomi
PROJECT TEAM	Tim, Phill, Kat, Richard, Emily, Hamish, James, Mark, Matt, Helen, Vanessa, Mike, Glen, Angela, Arpan, David

Agreements in principle and actions

KEY

D = decision.

A = action.

PT = project team.

R = idea for drafting a recommendation.

Meeting opening

A: Amend 1 February workshop notes about toxic algae on p.7:

- Remove wording that says we cannot directly control algal blooms to “the frequency of algal blooms is something we can reduce”.
- Remove wording that says toxic algae blooms are natural.

D: Change language in the WIP referring to toxic algae as natural in the same way that we don't refer to E.coli as naturally occurring.

A: Include toxic algae as a topic for discussion at a future workshop, based on the paper prepared by the small group.

A: PT to ask TAs to provide a situation report on their district plans and draft provisions for WSD; and their LTPs re. three waters infrastructure.

D: Agreed to extend project timeline for final draft WIP to be tested with GW council at their meeting on 24 June. The completed WIP will be received by GW council on 19 August.

D: Committee to review the project timeline at a workshop in late April to check if they are still on track for the proposed extension.

A: PT to update the Gantt chart/project timeline with updated dates, including decision-making topic areas.

Urban recommendations

D: Need a set of purposeful statements of what we want to achieve, i.e., outcomes.

D: Narrative needs to be more succinct; maybe bullets.

D: Recommendations need to be more succinct, precise and consistently structured.

D: Recommendations to be numbered in the next version of the draft WIP.

D: There needs to be a clear distinction between actions for short and medium term recommendations.

D: Important to include actors responsible for implementation in recommendations.

D: Mechanism for funding may not need to be included as recommendations should not be constrained by the current funding regime.

A: PT to consider how to communicate the cost of doing nothing or maintaining the status quo.

A: PT to restructure urban recommendations under the following headings:

- Appropriate management of waste – cross-connections
- Reducing wastage of waters – freshwater, greywater
- Minimise disruption of natural cycles – permeability, flooding, habitat
- Supporting urban growth through efficient use of existing infrastructure – inflow & infiltration, WSUD
- Improving community connection – naming and opening up streams, community responsibility, mapping, daylighting
- Living with water – flooding

Additional cross-cutting themes:

- Knowing our impacts – metering, information, knowledge
- Duty of care for water and each other – WoF idea
- Supporting people to improve – incentivising
- Professional practice – developers, plumbers, codes of practice

R: Warrant of Fitness for private laterals at point of sale, or when plumbing work being undertaken, or establish a consent period. Advice needed on appropriate time period for a consent.

R: Recommendation needs to target worst I&I first as it is not evenly spread across the region; should the focus be on the biggest risk to the environment or human health? Current approach is to focus on human health risk because wastewater is primarily a human health risk rather than environmental – this approach is supported by the community through surveys undertaken by Wellington Water. Question about how this aligns with NPSFM requirement for health of waterways and ecosystems first. Also query about the less ambitious focus on wastewater overflows to stormwater (50% repair) compared to I&I (90%).

A: PT to circulate priorities memo regarding above recommendation.

R: Can we name specific places for mitigations, e.g., for wetlands and daylighting?

R: GWRC to establish group to continue oversight of WIP implementation.

A: PT to report back on urban earthworks provisions in PNRP.

A: PT to correct where mana whenua are named as stakeholders to mana whenua as partners.

Source protection

R: PNRP protection provisions are inadequate. Extend protection of surface water intake site to include catchment and further upstream. Aligns with TKT focus on mātāpuna and headwater sources to restore wai ora working down the catchment.

A: PT to investigate Mātauranga Māori around aquifers.

R: Data needed from aquifers in Lower and Upper Hutt. Protections that apply to Lower Hutt aquifer should also apply to Upper Hutt for the mauri of the waterbody. Needs to give effect to Ngāti Toa settlement regarding rights on UH streams.

Te Kāhui Taiao update

A: TKT to provide draft content to Committee before 22 March workshop (Kara is working on it).

Discussion

Meeting opening

Mike opened with a karakia.

Co-chairs update:

- Welcome to Hamish Smith from GW Flood Protection, who is stepping into Sharyn's role on the project team.
- From the 1 February workshop notes, need to change wording about not being able to directly control toxic algae. Understand that we can reduce algal blooms by controlling nutrients, e.g., using fertiliser on greenspaces.
- E.coli is naturally occurring but we put a lot of effort into reducing it, whereas we don't make the same effort for toxic algae because it's considered natural. Need to change this language in the WIP.
- Continue discussion about recommendations for toxic algae at a future workshop.

Whaitua workshop with UHCC:

- Positive interaction, councillors were engaged and asked good questions.
- At a high level, covered topics such as enforcement, differences in urban and rural behaviour (e.g., septic tanks and flooding, attitudes to water use), the need for WSD, attenuation of sewage, use of greywater, etc.
- Councillors were supportive of the ideas presented but were less clear of their role in the district plan and how to ensure that new builds guarantee WSD.

- Opportunity for Emily Thomson to talk to councillors about her experience with water meters and rain tanks in Kāpiti at a future workshop. There might be some regulations that would be relevant for UHCC.
- WSD will be included in the UHCC revised district plan and engineering code of practice.
- All TAs to provide a situation report on their district plans and draft provisions for WSD.

Timeline extension:

- In response to the request from Committee members at the previous workshop to extend the deadline for GW Council to receive the WIP, the date has been shifted for final content to be presented at the 24 June Council workshop and the WIP to be received at the 19 August workshop. This provides a two month extension from the original date.
- This will provide another opportunity for workshops with TA Councils to test recommendations before the WIP is completed.
- More Waitua Committee workshops will be needed for deliberations and decision-making. Need to discuss whether full day, half day, virtual workshops or some combination would be preferred.
- Timeline to be reviewed by the Committee in late April to check whether they are on track to complete the WIP.
- Draft WIP to be provided to the Committee one week prior to workshops to allow sufficient time to review and add comments in SharePoint for discussion in the workshop.
- Updated version of the Gantt chart/project timeline to include dates and topics to be covered in each workshop.

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Riverlink engagement session

Presentation by Martin White (HCC RiverLink director), Tom Biggin (HCC project manager), Tracy Berghan (GW RiverLink lead), Will Wallace (Waka Kotahi lead), Sarah Bishop (Isthmus) and Allen Ingles (GHD):

- Key themes to achieve: vibrant CBD, transition to residential development, resilience to flooding, connectivity and improved access/safety to the CBD.
- Work progressing on a challenging programme with commitment from funding partners and agencies involved.
- There's a \$500 million programme of works. Anticipating consent applications to be lodged by mid-2021, construction to begin in 2022 and operational in 2026.
- Vision to lift the mana of the river, acknowledge the vitality of water, put the river first as much as possible and make Te Awa Kairangi the centre of Hutt City. Considering how to reflect the river's character and respect the river environment within a large, complex project.
- New development and rail station proposed. Different management methods for reaches of river upstream and downstream from substation. Downstream design includes rock linings and native vegetation on riverbanks. Upstream has a more flexible approach with willow planting to transition to natives.
- Include amenity to invite the community to recreate along the river.
- Proposed carparks to include stormwater treatment, including swales and rain gardens.
- Increased height of stopbanks for flood protection presents a challenge to integrate in the existing city context and creates a physical barrier to access.
- Upgrade of large culvert structures that run from hill catchments and under stopbanks. Opportunity to treat stormwater discharges through Waka Kotahi and Kiwirail works, runoff from carparks and new Melling bridge. Spatial constraints are a major factor on the State Highway 2 side of the river.
- Considering adaptations for climate change to 2120, four new pump stations to accommodate increased flows and sea level rise.
- Working with landscape experts to naturalise outlets of streams into the river to reduce sedimentation and treat stormwater.

Q&A:

- What does out of bank flow mean? During flooding events, when river flows exceed the existing channel and flow out onto the berms on either side of the channel.
- What is the level of effectiveness of the stormwater treatment being proposed? The type of system has not been specified yet but will have an efficiency of about 75%, including 40-60% removal of metals and 80% removal of hydrocarbons. A proprietary system would be adopted as a last resort due to the level of maintenance involved; swales and rain gardens are better suited to the landscape.
- Is there pretreatment of existing stormwater before it goes into the river? Some treatment by the railway station and between the bridges. Outlets from hill catchments are not currently being treated.
- Most streams are culverted – could some of them be daylighted? Difficult with stopbanks but they are being upgraded to allow for fish passage. Request to change language from culverts to streams and name them on maps.
- How do you clean out sediment from the tree pit rain gardens? Rain gardens treat water through a filtration system that filter out sediment and metals over time and can be easily excavated and maintained.
- Removing sediment is an important objective, why not use wetlands to achieve this? Wetlands take 1-2 years to develop after planting and receive high sediment loads, then require excavating and replanting. Swales are less susceptible to sediments building.

- How is the RiverLink project responding to Te Mana o te Wai? Mana whenua are project partners, involved in the steering group. Turning city toward the river, looking for space to widen the channel.
- Are the upgrades adding or removing fish barriers? Improving fish passage in the Tirohanga stream.
- Is RiverLink increasing or decreasing the percentage of piped streams? Not changing current situation, will need to compensate for any sections that are being lost, unable to daylight streams.
- Why do stopbanks need to be grass, could they be planted with natives? Grass is the most effective for flood protection to maintain the structural integrity of the stopbanks.
- If swales are inundated in a flooding event, will the trapped sediment be released? Likely to have low velocities that won't remobilise sediment trapped by vegetation.

Urban recommendations

- Need to reconsider recommendations that mention educational campaigns. These only become effective when part of systemic structural change and when reinforced by penalties for transgressions.
- Education more about fostering connection and support understanding of what needs to be complied with to protect the health of wai. Education needs to sit alongside regulation. Need to make it easier for people to do the right thing.
- Narrative and recommendations need to be to the point and capture the intent to create a shift, they should be implementation focussed.
- The main WIP document will be for councils to receive but there may be other products for different audiences.
- Don't need to specify the funding mechanism for councils (such as LTPs) as there may be other opportunities for councils to get resourcing to implement recommendations in a shorter timeframe. Suggestion to refer to LTP but not be limited to this option.
- Councils commit to costs over timeframes after the WIP is received, recommendations should take feasibility into account but not be constrained by the current funding regime. Significant costs will undergo a Section 32 analysis and require consultation through the LTP.
- Challenge to calculate the cost of doing nothing, quantifying values such as mauri is discouraged. Consider social and environmental benefits beyond monetary value.
- Important to highlight national requirements and ongoing costs if recommendations are not undertaken. Status quo will lead to further decline. Many actions simply have to be done to meet targets.
- Urban recommendations to be restructured under the headings listed in the action below.

Discussion with Ben Fountain and Steve Hutchison, stormwater and wastewater advisors at Wellington Water:

- Important for GW to report annually on progress on fixing inflow and infiltration (I & I) issues across the network. Communities need to help hold councils accountable.
- I & I is not spread evenly across urban areas of the whaitua. The receiving environment is a big factor, e.g., Owhiro Stream flows to a beach/swimming location, where it becomes a public health issue and there is strong community connection. There are major issues in Karori and Wainuiomata that have large populations and a small pipe capacity.
- Funding and the willingness of ratepayers to pay is a key challenge if it's not a priority for communities. Willingness to invest is related to their connection to wai, swimmability is a strong value.

- Wellington Water wants to know which areas to prioritise from the Committee based on Te Mana o te Wai.
- There are statutory obligations for monitoring that could result in court action if councils don't comply with them. There could be a carrot and stick approach to incentivise councils and ratepayers to support funding for fixing public and private laterals.
- Potential to prioritise based on the number of overflow occurrences and grading of pipes. Target to get all pipes to grade 3 over a specified time period.
- Add recommendation about WOF at point of sale, or when plumbing or consented works are undertaken. Private laterals should be inspected every X years to ensure leakage isn't occurring (number of years TBD).
- The Mayoral Taskforce report includes a recommendation for private laterals to be checked as part of LIM report at point of sale.
- Roving crews may not be the best way to deal with private drainage issues, i.e., a better way may come up in the future and don't want to lock Councils into roving crews. Leave the methodology up to Councils.
- Recommendation to daylight a stream in the next 10 years for the purpose of community connection. TAs to identify potential sites.
- If streams are daylighted, they need to be restored to good water quality. Daylighting is hugely expensive. Councils have to lead opportunities for daylighting and making WSD gains where redevelopment is needed beyond a property scale.
- WSD is about integrated outcomes and is not funded by councils in most cases. Instead, developers are required to do WSD and pay for it.
- Support and reinforce WSD recommendations in the Mayoral Taskforce report, apply to all three TAs.
- There is no simple blueprint for WSD in district plans from other councils across NZ.
- Include mana whenua in all governance and collaboration recommendations, correct stakeholder to partner.
- Mana whenua should be involved in all major infrastructure projects. Need to bring the right people together to get integrated outcomes and maximise the environmental benefits.
- TKT to consider opportunity to continue beyond the completion of the WIP to support implementation of governance recommendations, recognising capacity constraints.
- Do we want more funding for compliance in an urban setting? Are we managing construction well, e.g., earthworks compliance?
- Large construction projects require offsetting. Check Porirua bylaw on managing sediment at construction sites, which could be relevant to this whaitua.
- Focus should not be just compliance but restorative and proactive approaches too.

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Source protection

Discussion with Barry Loe (GWRC) and Geoff Williams (Wellington Water):

- Small group discussed protecting all sources of water, beyond surface water intake sites.
- The current provisions in the PNRP include minimal protection of water upstream of surface water intake site. Increased protection would prevent these areas from being opened up for other uses in the future.
- Understanding of risk has evolved since the Havelock North incident. Prevention is better than trying to fix water supply that has been contaminated.
- Need to check if further protections would impact on activities such as pest control. There is unlikely to be community pushback on further protection.

- Groundwater is a more complex issue, Havelock North sparked investigations into the way water moves underground, discovered that the confining layer is more vulnerable than we previously thought. Groundwater is shallow and pumping pulls water toward bores.
- Suggested a three zone approach that mandates stricter rules with increased proximity to the borefield, which is the area with the highest vulnerability to chemical contamination.
- Need greater visibility of activities like piling and drilling, and managing these activities or shutting them down during construction to mitigate risks. No longer permitted activities, but require consents.
- Possible to do development in a way that is better for protecting the aquifer, especially considering the Waiwhetu aquifer is a drinking water source for Hutt City.
- Support for a multi-barrier approach in the PNRP to manage risks.
- The Upper Hutt aquifer is not a drinking water source but the same protections should apply according to kawa and Te Mana o te Wai. Ngāti Toa have rights over the Upper Hutt aquifer.
- Investigate the role of organisms living in aquifers.

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Te Kāhui Taiao update

- TKT has been following the NOF process in the NPS-FM to identify FMUs, values and environmental outcomes, using Te Mana o te Wai as the framework. Currently working on developing attributes to outcomes. TKT document will be place-based.
- Preparing draft material to share with the Committee. Open to how TKT work will integrate with the WIP, potential for there to be multiple products.
- Drafting recommendations for mana whenua involvement at governance level.
- Setting target attribute states will help determine alignment between TKT and the Committee.
- TKT work is focussed on values and outcomes, adding value to the work the Committee has done on issues.

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Kara closed the workshop with a karakia.