



MATATA UPDATE

WEEKLY MATATA PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the weekly project newsletter.

Question

I have been asked how we intend to design the Waitepuru bunds to ensure that the bunds are not affected by any future erosion of the cliff face.

Answer

The debris bunds will be built against the face of the escarpment.

The preparation of the ground surface will involve removal of vegetation, and some excavation to ensure competent material is exposed for the bund foundation.

The slopes of the bunds, and as necessary the adjoining escarpment, will be constructed at stable angles. The bunds will be reinforced as necessary using for instance geotextiles or treatment during construction.

Information from the geotechnical investigations carried out in July 2006, from specific geological mapping of the area since 2005 was used for the stable slope design.

These design measures will ensure that the bunds are effectively "part of the landscape", and integral with the existing ground and escarpment.

Other features to ensure long term stability and sustainability will include:

1. Drainage to collect and convey rainfall and runoff in a controlled manner so as not to damage the bunds, and reduce the risk of surface erosion and/or slippage.
2. Protection of slopes exposed to stream flows, so as to withstand erosion and damage from both future water and debris discharge from the catchment.

Question

In the resource consent process (ie, the submission process) how does council make the decision to undertake mitigation works or not? Is it majority rules?

Answer

Resource Management decisions are made taking into account information and evidence submitted with an application and issues and evidence raised by submitters, this information is assessed against the relevant District and Regional Plans. The number of submissions made is not directly

relevant to decision making, although a large number of submissions can be an indication that an issue is of particular importance to a community.

Question

If the majority of people who put in submissions indicate that they don't want mitigation to go ahead does the Council have the power to overrule based on community safety?

Answer

In this case the Council has two roles: one as the applicant and one as the consent authority.

The consultation and decisions of the Council made thus far in relation to the Matata works have been undertaken by the Council in their role of the applicant. In putting together its proposals, the Council has carried out detailed investigations of works that are needed to ensure the safety of current and future residents in Matata, including a consideration of options, financial implications and community views. The applications for resource consent have addressed all of the potential effects the works may have on the environment.

As the Whakatane District Council is also the consent authority, Independent Commissioners will represent the Whakatane District Council on the Hearings Committee, and Regional Councillors will represent Environment Bay of Plenty on the Hearings Committee.

The Hearings Committee will consider the application, and the submitters views and make decisions based on the Resource Management Act 1991 and the relevant District and Regional Plans. The Hearing Committee will make a decision to either approve or decline the application, and will consider appropriate conditions based on the relevant plans and submissions.

It is not the Hearings Committee's role to decide whether or not the Council (the applicant) should do the work. The Hearings Committee will treat the applicant (the Council) as they would any other private applicant.

The dual role the Council has as both applicant and consent authority is a complicated relationship, if anyone would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

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