

Pākōwhai Flood Resilience Project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

These FAQs cover key details about the project, including its timeline, purpose, and how it may affect landowners and the community. If you have a question that's not answered here, or if there's something you think would be helpful to include, please let us know.

Project overview and purpose

What is the purpose of the project?

The flood resilience project's purpose is to provide flood mitigation to the 2C land category area in Pākōwhai to enable a recategorisation to Category 1.

How does the project propose to increase flood resilience?

The project proposes two major stopbank works.

- The re-establishing of a stopbank around 5.5km in length along the true left bank of the Tūtaekurī-Waimate Stream east of SH2. This also includes some areas of sheet piling where space is limited.
- The creation of a 3km stopbank from Links Road along the Tūtaekurī-Waimate Stream to SH2.

You can see more on our project hub: www.hbrc.govt.nz/hawkes-bay/projects/restoring-flood-resilience/pakowhai

Is this proposed solution going to change much, or is this what we can expect to see built?

We have now confirmed the proposed concept design and are working to refine this to allow construction to start in summer 2025/2026. Small changes may occur depending on the results of site investigations and conversations with landowners, but the engineering solution (stopbanks and sheet piling) will remain the same.

What is the Order in Council (OIC) and what does it do?

The Order in Council is a temporary law change to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) that streamlines and shortens the consent process to allow for the faster delivery of the flood protection works in Hawke's Bay. While the OIC allows for faster delivery by streamlining processes and replacing public notifications with a process for affected parties' written comments, it still requires similar information as the RMA.

What is the timeline to get 2C recategorised to 1?

To be able to move properties to Category 1, the project must have a consenting pathway, land agreements, and funding released from Central Government.

2C will move to Category 1, on confirmation that there is:		
A sound concept that has a consenting pathway;	A legal interest in favour of HBRC in the relevant land;	Available funding.

We are working towards a possible Category move in spring 2025 after the funding has been released, consents are in progress or approved, and land agreements have occurred. We will continue to progress the proposed solution design to enable construction to begin as soon as consent is approved, and land agreements are finalised.

When will construction begin?

There are two construction phases that may affect the wider community.

Enabling works

This is the work that prepares sites and material for the main construction. This includes the establishment of temporary access roads and stockpile sites, fencing and removing vegetation. The enabling works could start as early as this summer.

Construction

Stopbank construction is planned to start in October/November 2025, subject to consents, land agreements, surveying and other preparatory work.

The proposed solution

What level of safety will the proposed solution provide? Will it protect against another Cyclone Gabrielle level event?

The proposed flood solution is designed for a 1-in-100-year flood event for the Tūtaekurī-Waimate stream. In events larger than 1-in-100, it will provide more time for residents to evacuate safely.

So, while the stopbank will provide increased flood resilience, it would not provide full protection from an event the size and scale of Cyclone Gabrielle. The engineering solution to provide resilience for an event of this magnitude would need to be significantly larger. The cost would be enormous.

What does 1-in-100-year annual recurrence interval (ARI) or 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) mean?

A 1-in-100-year flood is a flood event that has on average a one in 100 chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. On average, a flood of this magnitude is expected to occur once every 100 years. However, since these are probabilities and not certainties: it is possible for two 1-in-100-year floods to happen within 100 years, or even within the same year.

What is sheet piling and why are you using it in some places and not others?

Sheet piling uses steel sheets with interlocking edges to create a type of retaining wall. We are proposing to use it in areas where space is tight as it requires less land.

Did you consider straightening the stopbank?

We looked at a wide range of options. The cost, ecological impacts, and the time it would take to straighten the stream to allow for a straight stopbank is prohibitive. The money from Central Government is to specifically move Category 2C properties to Category 1 as fast as possible.

Land access**How will the proposed stopbank affect properties?**

Any impact of the stopbank design on individual properties is being discussed in one-on-one conversations with the landowners.

If HBRC needs access to private land to build the stopbank, will those landowners be compensated?

The acquisition of land for public works in New Zealand follows the Public Works Act 1981, which provides private landowners a clear process and ensures they are fairly compensated, including reimbursement of reasonable costs.

Compensation is calculated based on several factors and varies for each property, with agreements negotiated once the specific scope and extent of land access is confirmed.

If you would like to know more about this process, please see the Land Information New Zealand website: www.linz.govt.nz/resources/guide/guide-landowners-what-expect-when-your-land-acquired-under-public-works-act-1981

What happens if landowners are not interested in negotiation purchase or access?

There are not a lot of options to provide flood resilience to the Pākōwhai 2C area and we believe this is the best solution to allow for a Category 1 move. The move to Category 1 is based on having a community flood resilience solution.

The ability to build the solution to enable the move to Category 1 is wholly dependent on being able to secure the land to build on.

Impacts on landowners and community**What will happen to the people on the opposite side of the proposed stopbank?**

Once the design of the proposed stopbank is confirmed, we can consider any possible secondary effects to neighboring properties and investigate mitigation options. These could include improved drainage or additional earth bunds and other measures. This work will also involve reviewing flood modelling of different weather events with and without the stopbank.

Are you building a spillway?

The Hawke's Bay Independent Flood Review contains recommendations to include secondary systems like spillways to attempt to direct floodwater to identified areas with the lowest consequences to

communities. In Pākōwhai, we have identified a position in the stopbank where we can direct water to the Category 3 area away from the current Category 2C properties.

What is a spillway and why do we need one?

A spillway is a secondary safety feature in flood protection schemes. Think of it as an overflow drain for a stopbank, similar to the overflow in a sink or bath. It's an engineered low point along a stopbank that allows floodwater to flow over in a controlled way, reducing the risk of a full breach and directing water to areas where it causes the least harm.

In Pākōwhai, a spillway would provide extra protection and give residents more time to respond during a flood.

What impact would a spillway have on the Pākōwhai community?

We're still in the concept design phase and continuing our investigations. Early flood modelling and analysis has identified an optimal location for the spillway and a preferred flow path. We're working closely with Hastings District Council and local landowners to understand and minimise any potential impacts. These will inform the next phase of design.

The proposed spillway is designed to direct water away from people's homes and towards the Ngaruroro River as quickly and safely as possible.

What impact does the spillway have on properties in line with it?

When the water levels reach a point where the spillway is activated, the design will ensure the water is directed onto Category 3 land as quickly as possible ensuring reduced risk to life. We are conducting flood models with the spillway in different overdesign events to understand the water flow and possible impacts on properties around the spillway.

What impact will a spillway have on Pākōwhai Road?

We are modelling flood impacts with the spillway to guide conversations with Hastings District Council around any impacts on the road and how these could be mitigated (culverts, drainage).

Are you moving the Pākōwhai Hall?

We have worked to find an engineering solution which can allow the Hall to remain in place. We are proposing the use of sheet piling rather than stopbanks as the space is restrained. This will require a portion of the Hall to be temporarily removed during construction to allow access for machinery.

We've shared this with the Hall board and the Shooting Club and are working closely with them on the options and logistics.

Is there any impact from the other flood resilience projects in Hawke's Bay on Pākōwhai?

HBRC is working on six flood resilience projects, including nearby Waiohiki. We have included the Waiohiki project in some of the flood modelling for Pākōwhai to ensure we understand how the two may affect and/or complement each other.

What communication can directly affected landowners (footprint), 2C landowners, and the wider community expect over the course of this project?

Our primary priority over the past six months has been to connect with affected landowners where we may need to access land for the proposed flood solution and have needed access for site investigations.

This is a key piece of work to progress the design and begin the conversations around potential impacts on land.

We will continue updating all affected landowners, 2C landowners, and the wider community through our monthly newsletters and website updates.

For community engagements moving forward, we are planning drop-ins, where the community can come chat with our project team. We find that these one-on-one or small group engagements offer a two-way dialogue between us and the community and helps all voices to be heard.

We will continue to meet as needed with affected landowners around land access and negotiations.

We also have a dedicated mailbox for any enquiries for all our projects – project.enquiries@hbrc.govt.nz

Will there be public access allowed on the stopbank?

No, the proposed stopbank runs along many private properties including homes and businesses. We are considering fencing to ensure access is not available.

Can landowners graze animals and/or plant on the stopbank?

In short, no. Grazing and planting can compromise the integrity of the stopbank leading to extra maintenance and repair, and possibly breaches in severe weather events.

- Animals grazing and stock tracking can reduce grass cover and damage the soil.
- Grass cover binds the soil surface of a stopbank to help prevent breaches. However, trees and larger shrubs are unsuitable as they can limit grass cover, and their roots can weaken the stopbank.
- HBRC is responsible for the maintenance of the grass on the stopbank.

Land categorisation

With this proposed concept, will properties in Category 1 and/or 3 remain there?

The proposed concept is focused on moving Category 2C properties to Category 1. The purpose of this project is to be able to recategorise 2C properties, where we have identified that there is a community level solution possible.

The NZ Government's categorisation framework can be found here: [Land categorisation general information | Hastings District Council \(hastingsdc.govt.nz\)](#). For properties in Category 1 and Category 3, the property assessment process has been completed but if you have any questions about categorisation of your property or wish to apply for recategorisation, please contact us at project.enquiries@hbrc.govt.nz. You'll need to submit any material that you consider has not been previously available to our technical experts, for whatever reason. That material will determine whether a reassessment is conducted in accordance with the government's Land Categorisation Process and Framework.

Funding and rates

How is the work to be undertaken in Pākōwhai funded?

Central Government is contributing 75% of the \$50m funding, with HBRC contributing 25%, which is rated across the Heretaunga Flood Control Scheme. To find out more about the potential impact on your rates please see the Rates 101 document.

Can we get financial assistance or remission for rates?

Under specific circumstances, you can apply full or partial reductions (remissions) or delay the requirement to pay rates for a set timeframe. This includes remissions for properties affected by climate events.

- See the full list of policies and apply online at: [Financial Assistance, Rates Remissions and Postponements | Hawke's Bay Regional Council](#).
- The New Zealand Government also has a rate rebate scheme for low income households: www.govt.nz/browse/housing-and-property/getting-help-with-housing/getting-a-rates-rebate/#who-can-apply
- HDC also offers rate remissions under specific circumstances – you can find out more on their website: www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/services/properties-and-rates/rates/rates-remission/

Other considerations

Where is the Heretaunga Plains Scheme review at?

The Hawke's Bay Independent Flood Review and the 'Reimagining Flood Resilience' papers are being presented to Council in late December, and while the reviews are complete, a final report for Heretaunga is still to come. When we have more information, we will update you.

Are the rivers being cleared?

Yes, we have a gravel extraction plan that is part of the Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme. Gravel extraction is one piece that can help to increase river capacity and reduce some flood risks, but it will not stop the flooding of rivers during extreme weather events.

Have all the breaches from Cyclone Gabrielle been repaired?

Flood schemes are designed to 1-in-100-year level for each river. All breaches post-cyclone have been repaired to this level.

What about the Chesterhope or Brookfield bridges?

Hastings District Council manages and maintains the bridges and stormwater system so they will be able to answer any questions you have.

How will being recategorised to Category 1 impact Section 72s and building consents?

Hastings District Council is the Building Authority that manages building consents, so they will be able to answer consent-related questions.

