

the Kapiti Coast District Council believes that priority **should** be given to those works that will maximise the area of land to be removed from flood threat. A **greater** level of investment in this area is supported by the Kapiti Coast District Council provided there is a defined programme and certainty in funding arrangements.

In my Council's discussions with Wellington Regional Council officers and Councillor Turver, the prospect of advancing works on the Otaki River was raised.

What is needed in our view is to complete sufficient capital works to remove the planning blight that is perceived to exist over land in Otaki that could otherwise be developed.

We understand that the critical area is the section of the Otaki River from Crystal's Bend to the rail bridge. Stopbanking work costing approximately \$1 million, we are advised, would render a large part of the area flood free.

Our advocacy is quite firm. This work should proceed now. Until this section is complete, the earlier work is ineffective in that it has not relieved the planning threat in any significant way.

However, having said that, some variation from the 50/50 funding regime could be negotiated as a special case. Obviously moving to 100% of the costs being borne locally would be totally unacceptable to the people of the Kapiti Coast.

If there are concerns from other parts of the regional community that these costs should be predominantly borne by the affected community, we would point out that both rivers are regional assets of some significance, providing a recreational amenity akin to those of regional parks. We would also argue that the vital State Hi&way transport links would be put at risk from floods that fail to await the completion of protection works. Our experience has been that only moderate flooding events quickly isolate the District and block State Highway One.