

## **Flooding Response 2: SUMMARY**

**This is the second summary of the progress the WRA stormwater working group (SWG) since the public meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**This summary continues discussion about flooding and inundation concerns of low-lying land in Whangamata**

### **1. Regulatory Matters in respect to flooding RMA**

Refer to summary report dated 8 April 2023. No changes. We now have the 2005 Opus report following the 2003 flooding which clearly pointed out TCDC's responsibilities under RMA. We see no point in continuing this discussion. TCDC will at some stage be required to complete the RMA certificate.

Meetings were requested to present to TCDC officials our concerns over RMA requirements. TCDC has not agreed to this. In respect to the Williamson pond our sources say the pond was formed around 1985 when the discharge pipes off Williamson Road were cut back to this location to prevent scouring of the beach and sand dunes. Originally the pond was merely a hollow to allow stormwater to filter through the sand. Over the years more pipes have been added increasing the discharge volumes which caused the sand dunes to erode so a solid weir was constructed to allow water to filter through. A second higher weir was built in 2017/8 however the quantity of stormwater and lack of maintenance means water no longer filters through. TCDC state the pond is not part of the stormwater assets nor does it serve any function. TCDC has agreed it will be drained. Ongoing.

### **2. Regulatory Matters in respect to flooding – The Building Act**

Refer to summary report dated 8 April 2023. No changes. We now have the 2005 Opus report following the 2003 flooding and the 2009 MBIE technical review of TCDC. Both these reports clearly point out TCDC's responsibilities under the Building Act. We see no point in continuing this discussion. If TCDC were prepared to comply with the Building Act they would be.

This legislation is not optional.

### **3. Compliance Matters in respect to flooding**

Refer to summary report dated 8 April 2023. No changes. We now have the 2005 Opus report following the 2003 flooding which included detailed recommendations to about 25 roads to form overland flow paths and remove stormwater by way of pipes and soak pits. The report was critical of lack of maintenance to soak and cesspits.

Members of the SWG met with TCDC officials and experts on 27 April 2023. TCDC will be using these meetings as its community engagement. It is important that any person that has something to add, or has a contrary view, to read the latest flood report and communicate that to WRA promptly so the SWG can share those views at the next scheduled meeting on 15 June 2023. Thank you.

The SWG has received some useful solutions from affected residents. These have been included in report 2 now available on the WRA website. These are a few of the highlights:

- (i) We are yet to find any property with ponding that lasted a day or so caused by rainfall onto that property. NB: if sea levels do rise this may change for properties closer to the sea and along waterways.

- (ii) Every long-term ponding or flooding we have investigated involved trespass water from either a neighbouring property or off a road or a nearby impervious surface. NB: When we trace the sources of flooding across multiple properties it always leads us to either a road or impervious surface.
- (iii) Under RFS TCDC has cleaned (maintained) several key cesspits and soak pits. Once cleaned surface water dissipated. The most notable one is the service lane into Super Liquor. NB: what this proves is irrespective of the level of rainfall and the height of the water table it still has capacity to drain, even if that is to flood nearby low-lying land.
- (iv) TCDC has undertaken coastal erosion modelling, inundation modelling and flood modelling but has not as yet implemented these into general knowledge or RMA, the Building Act or the building code requirements.
- (v) TCDC has undertaken extensive water table monitoring since 2008 to measure rainfall effect on water table levels. Opus has reported on this. SWG believes none of this information has been made available to the Whangamata Golf Course or to builders or Architects that are affected by water table levels.
- (vi) TCDC has received an extensive report from Opus on the pond. SWG can find no actions undertaken by TCDC following this report except increase pipe diameters which will cause further overwhelming and flooding
- (vii) SWG has investigated the 2019 Kiwi roading upgrade. This upgrade was one of the 2005 Opus recommendations. TCDC has omitted the Opus recommended 375mm diameter storm water pipe and substituted 4 soak pits to manage the road water. The properties beside the soak pits have become flooded. NB: It is the SWG opinion this work has made flooding worse because the nib and channel is diverting all the water to just a few locations where the sand cannot soak that much water.
- (viii) The Williamson 9 hole Golf Course. SWG investigations has discovered this land is designated (but not written) as an overland flood plain. What is actually happening is several parts of the golf course have the lowest lying land within the boundaries of Otahu Rd, Port road, Sylvia Rd and along Linton Crescent. With the amount of rain falling the water table has come close to the surface to much of this block of land. The result is the water table level has breached the low surfaces in the golf course forming ponds and lakes. This water will only abate once the general water table lowers. More rain makes it worse or delays the water table from dropping. The Williamson pond is causing an artificial water table restriction along one exit route to the Ocean. The pipes feeding the pond remain full of water and according to records have no rubber seals which causes recharging of the water table from the pond water. The flow rate out to sea of the water table has unknown obstructions created over the thousands of years like eruptions depositing impervious iron sediments, organic compost from dead vegetation and multiple layers of river sediments. Without pumping we will just have to wait?

**Further investigations are ongoing:**

No change since the 8 April 2023 summary report. We are slowly gathering official information responses and answers at meetings.

End