

Perspective on Stormwater

Presented by Ian Holyoake of the Whangamata Stormwater Action Group

Williamson Park Works Have Begun 1

Defenders to remove solids along Ocean Rd



Williamson Park Works Have Begun 2

Pipe through spillway to lower pond level to clear road network pipes



Williamson Park Works Have Begun 3

Backfilling pond basin into a drybasin with a central channel YTB clarified



Will it work

No: Beach will now have a permanent channel of erosion



Will it work

At least council is doing something

No: Defenders not justified. Money wasted

Yes: Removes safety concern of old pond

Yes: Allows pipes to discharge stormwater

No: Council still not interested in maintaining catchpits

No: DryBasin needs a concrete spillway otherwise will be messy

No: Money must be spent in priority to risk of flooding and damage it may cause

What should have been done

- Council had a duty to engage with community to explain why stormwater pipes were directed to Williamson Park in 2019
- Council had a duty to comply with the Williamson Family Deed of Gift
- Council has taken the cheap option of increasing pipes to Williamson Park knowing infiltration could never cope
- Council has failed to maintain the catchpits allowing contaminants into the pond
- Council should have tested pipe discharge water quality to support any decisions it has made

Perspective

- Opus report 2005 made 30 odd recommendations to improve stormwater – none were followed
- NZ Auditor General 2018 stated TCDC response to storm events is get a report and then do nothing
- TCDC has many reports it says are too contentious for the community – why when we paid for them
- TCDC set up a working group but that has fallen over

Perspective

- 186 submitters to the 2023 Annual Plan – not one change as a result
- We are waiting for the 2024-2034 LTP – will submitters be heard
- One submitter sought \$20 per night contribution for Theatre rehearsal hall hire and was refused
- The playground behind the Fire Station has been closed for years. Money available but not done now lost as not rolled over
- The experts costs since 2023 storms is over \$153,000
- The costs of the defenders is unknown but likely \$350,000
- The costs of upgrading the pipes into Williamson Park in 2019 likely \$300,000
- Council has engaged 5 full time personal for stormwater
- Whangamata Ratepayers Association survey results stormwater number one priority. Council response they have more reliable surveys

History

Before development we didn't care

As we develop we change the behaviour of rainwater

WRC state we get 4 times the surface water runoff with 50% of our subdivided sections having impervious surfaces

Being on sand we have relied on water soaking in not flowing somewhere

Roads are also impervious so that water has to go somewhere

Port Rd has hardly any pervious ground left. The runoff is more than 4 times

History

We started with shingle roads with swales and berns – all pervious
Beach batches started on sticks without gutters but those that did
dug soak pits

Central roads got formed and tarsealed.

These were built as cut to fill so stranded many properties below
the road

Some had curb and channel with catchpits and pipes – this water
had to go somewhere.

Williamson Park, Port Rd wharf, Otahu, Hetherington and Lindsay
were piped and became the main discharge points

History

The sewer system was upgraded

What followed was subdivision as land was not needed for septic tanks

Batches became targets for developers – stick foundations allowing soakage became two houses per site many on concrete floors and mostly well over 50% impermeable.

3 bedroom homes on half sites have height to boundary issues so floor levels were lowered below road levels

Large land parcels are changing into multiple building sites like the campsite

Water Table

It takes 200mm of sand to absorb 100mm of rain

The water table is normally around 1.5m – 2.5m below the surface.

The water table infiltrates to the Ocean and rivers at a rate of about 200mm per month

That means if we get more than 100mm of rain every month the water table rises (unless we pipe it away).

In 2023 we got 6m of rain.

Is this normal and do we need to change our thinking to handle this amount of rain

This will be why previous councils may not have acted. Once only 150 year storm events now seem to happen every 2-5 years

Stormwater Thoughts

Our thinking must change

We also have to deal with possible inundation from rising sea levels if it happens

Beach Rd around through Casement Rd are already experiencing tidal inundation.

The Titoki Golf Course claimed to be on a flood plane is also affected by sedimentation of Moanu Anu Anu

WRC don't care, TCDC don't care, MfE don't care.

We do. It's our rates and taxes

Stormwater Basics

Back to basics

Infill must pay for new infrastructure

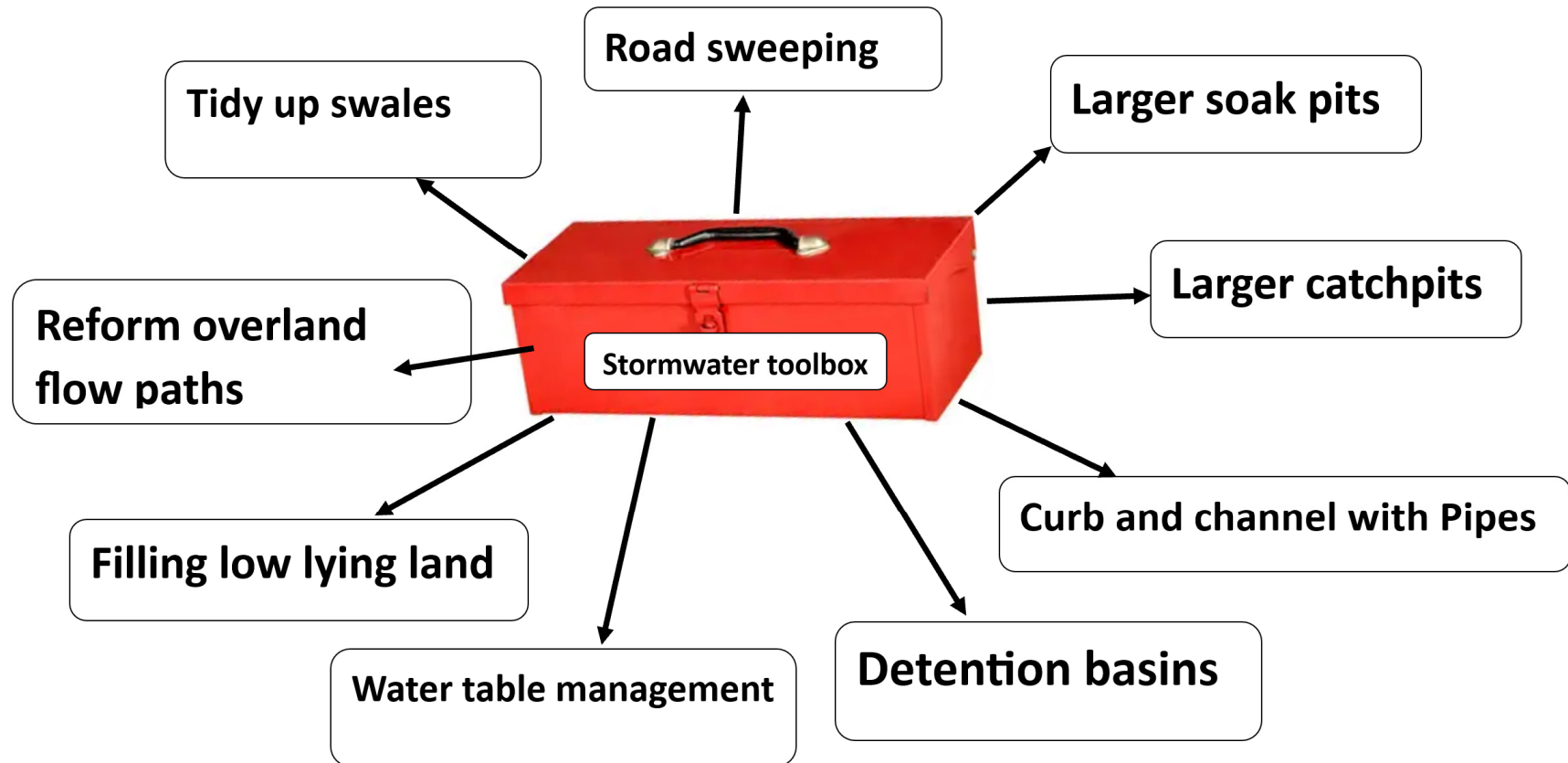
Infill must not adversely affect existing properties

Swales along roads are the most efficient treatment especially on sand bases – more required

Soakpits can only be used on properties that can demonstrate the water table won't flood them



Stormwater Toolbox



Stormwater Actions

Oops forgot the maintenance

Not the only one to do that

Statement of the Stormwater

How will this be done?

It hasn't for the last 25 years so something must change

You are the change element.

It's your voice that must be heard

The squeaky wheel gets the oil

The Community Board has agreed to be the central point for stormwater information

Whangamata has been split into 10 segments each with its own set of issues. You can help by getting involved in these discussions