



Wairoa In Focus

Your Community, Your Future

List protects notable trees for future generations

Cultural, historic, stature and scientific values are the selection criteria being used by WDC staff tasked with compiling a list of 'notable trees'. Under the Resource Management Act, WDC has a responsibility to take care of natural resources and features within the boundaries of the district, including notable trees. The current District Plan touches on this, and the time has now come to note down and make official all the trees that are important to Wairoa's heritage.

District Planner Linda Cook says there was already information held at council, but it was in need of an update. "We're working on putting together a current list of our significant trees so that we have a fresh perspective

on where we need to focus protection efforts," she said. Sue Dick, from Eastern Earth Landscape Architects, is working closely with Mrs Cook, and has already identified around 30 to 40 individual and stands of trees that were suitable for consideration. Not just any tree can be considered 'notable'. A list of criteria is being used to ensure only the most significant make it on to the list. This might include a tree with particular historic or cultural value, such as the cabbage tree on the Wairoa River bank marking the birthplace of Sir James Carroll, or trees of significant stature, as is the case of the karaka tree at Ohuka, which is one of the largest in New Zealand. Trees of scientific value include endangered and rare species.

A stand of trees can also be considered notable. An example of this are the trees at War Memorial Park, representing soldiers lost on the battlefield. The public will have an opportunity to participate in the list compilation by nominating trees they believe should feature. An official nomination form will be available during March to allow people to present a case for a particular tree or stand of trees. Public trees in places such as cemeteries, parks and reserves can be nominated by anyone, but trees on private property can only be nominated by the landowner. Once public nominations close, the trees will be assessed through a formal process to identify a final list to be included in the District Plan.



District Planner Linda Cook with the Sir James Carroll cabbage tree.

Council says farewell to building control stalwart

A well-known personality will hang up his hard hat and retire from Wairoa District Council next month. Building Control Officer Garth Duley has decided to swap site visits and paperwork for a more relaxing pace of life after over 24 years of service. The qualified plumber and drainlayer began his local government career



Garth Duley

2004 saw Garth move into full time Building Control work due to the new demands of the job.

"I was always comfortable to do two jobs, but the Building Act brought in a lot of changes. It has been good in that it got rid of the cowboys in the trade," he said. "Informing people that their building is not up to scratch is definitely one of the more unpleasant parts of an otherwise enjoyable job."

Looking back, Cyclone Bola is an event that stands out in his memory. "I was one of only a handful of staff on the North Clyde side and one of the last to go over the old bridge before it came down. "We evacuated around 210 people to Affco. While it was a terrible event,

it was a great example of how the community could work together and just get on with what needed to be done."

Described by work-mates as loyal and hardworking, Garth will be missed by staff and clients alike. He plans to catch up on a few jobs at home and eventually head off on a road trip to explore the South Island with his wife, Nida.

On yer bike for the 2011 Mayoral Challenge!

Wairoa Community Centre Saturday, March 5

Registrations from 10am

Plans in place to improve sewer system

Most of us don't give a second thought to what happens after the flush, but for a select few at Wairoa District Council, the town's sewer reticulation system is at the top of the daily task list to make sure the 35km of underground pipe performs to the best of its ability.

For some background information, effluent drains by gravity into three main pump stations at North Clyde, Alexandra Park and Kopu Road, as well as a smaller one at Rutherford Street. It is then transferred along a main sewer pipe under McLean Street to a final station at Fitzroy Street, then onto the Waste Water Treatment Plant near Pilot Hill. The plant consists of a forced aeration pond and a retention oxidation pond where the wastewater goes through the treatment process. The final stage is discharging of the fully treated waste water to the river estuary on an outgoing evening tide. Maintaining the town sewer is not without its challenges. Sewer levels

can elevate to the point where the system becomes overloaded, for reasons including pump failures and blockages caused by things such as tree roots, clothing or animal remains.

However, the main reason for elevated sewer levels is abnormally high inflow levels during heavy rain. On an average day, around 1.3 to 1.5 million litres flows through the sewers. During the last heavy rain period in January, this rose to 7 million litres a day within a few hours and stayed at that level for about 72 hours.

Utilities Engineer Don Smith says the main reason for this rapid increase is that stormwater is draining into the sewer system when and where it shouldn't be.

"It's relatively clear that the major problem lies with stormwater inflows into the sewer system, and all consumers who are identified as operating stormwater systems that direct or allow stormwater to drain in the sewers will be required

to modify their systems to prevent this," he said.

Another factor is due to the age of the pipe and Wairoa's very high water table. This tends to force water into the sewers and these 'infiltration flows' can take weeks to return to normal.

Council are in the process of fitting flow monitors on the discharge side of the major pump stations to get a better idea of where the elevated flows are coming from, as well as engaging specialist services to measure flows at critical points in the system.

Pumping capability at the Kopu Road station may be improved, and a survey will be carried out to determine which properties are discharging stormwater into sewers. Repairs or replacement of underground sewers is a difficult and expensive exercise, but some sections will be replaced or lined to seal cracks and limit infiltration during the heavy rain periods that cause the problems to occur.

Phillip Bridge

Fully-laden trucks will have to take an alternative route until the Phillip Bridge on Awamate Road can be strengthened.

The small bridge on the gravel section of the road, just over 9km from the SH2 intersection, has been closed to weights exceeding 20 tonne as a precautionary measure due to a structural capacity review. Truck and logging companies have been advised of the weight limit, and residents of the road were also in the process of being notified. Large signs have also been erected at either end of Awamate Road and at the bridge itself.

A strengthening scheme will take place in the future, but time frames cannot be advised at this stage due to the complicated nature of the problem.

For the diary:

Council meetings:

March 8
April 12
May 10
June 14
July 12
August 9
September 13
October 11
November 8
December 13

Forum dates:

March 22
April 26
May 24
June 28
July 26
August 23
September 27
October 25
November 22

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers in the Queen Street offices and are open to the public, unless otherwise specified.

For more information phone 838 7309 or visit www.wairoadc.govt.nz