

26 FEBRUARY 2013

Meeting Status: Public

Purpose of Report: For Decision

HERITAGE FUND ALLOCATIONS 2012-2013

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This report summarises applications for grants from the Heritage Fund and makes recommendations on funding allocations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION

- 2 The Council's Significance Policy is not triggered by this report.

BACKGROUND

- 3 The Heritage Fund was established in 2001 with the intention of assisting and actively encouraging landowners and members of the Kāpiti Coast community to manage, protect and enhance natural features throughout the district including ecological, geological, historical and cultural areas and sites.
- 4 To be eligible for funding, projects must meet the criteria set out in the Heritage Fund Application Criteria and Guidelines, attached as Attachment 3, or be a contribution to the establishment of a QEII Trust covenant.
- 5 A total of 12 applications for funding in 2012-2013 have been received requesting a total of \$38,184, considerably more than the \$28,947 available for allocation this year. All the projects meet the funding criteria, making it necessary to prioritise allocations based on careful consideration of project needs and priorities set out in the fund criteria. The amounts recommended should enable all of the projects to proceed.
- 6 The range of applications includes management projects in the natural heritage category and a management project in the built heritage category. The following section will cover the details of each project and provide reasoning for the recommendations made. The location of projects is shown on a map (Attachment 1), and there are photographs of project sites (Attachment 2).

CONSIDERATIONS

234 TE HAPUA RD, TE HORO

- 7 This is a natural heritage management project located within a wetland registered as an ecological site on the District Plan Heritage Register (site number KO55). The wetland comprises 4.1ha placed under Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Open Space Covenant in 2004. The wetland is part of the regionally significant Te Hapua complex, which is highly representative of a formerly extensive swamp and is considered one of the best and largest remaining examples on the Kāpiti Coast. The area provides habitat for endangered species such as spotless crane, *Ranunculus macropus*, *Carex dipsacea*, *Potentilla anserinioides*, and other species becoming uncommon in the Wellington Region including *Gratiola sexdenta*, kapungawha and *Baumea articulata*.
- 8 The landowners are highly committed to the restoration of the wetland and have followed a management plan by ecologist John Preece. With advice and support from Kāpiti Coast District Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation, the owners have undertaken extensive pest plant and animal control, including the successful eradication of pampas grass, grey willow, and blackberry. Large areas dominated by exotic weeds and grasses have been planted with eco-sourced native species as part of an ongoing programme to protect and enhance the wetland. The plantings need intensive maintenance for five years to ensure their survival in what is an extremely harsh coastal environment.
- 9 The project's purpose is to follow the management plan's requirement to maintain plantings by frequent releasing to prevent smothering by exotic weeds and grasses. The application is for financial assistance (**\$2419** out of a project cost of **\$4838**) to employ a labourer to work with the landowners for three hours per week for 26 weeks, enabling the landowners to cope with the work required.
- 10 This project meets the Heritage Fund criteria as this wetland has the highest priority for Natural Heritage Protection. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise allocations. A slight reduction in the number of hours worked by the labourer should not have a significant effect on this project. It is recommended that \$2,000 is granted.

32 Park Avenue, Waikanae

- 11 This is a natural heritage management project to control environmental weeds around the Kawakahia wetland, part of the Te Harakeke wetland complex (120ha) including the Council-owned Pharazyn Reserve and a wetland owned by the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust north of the Reserve.

- 12 Te Harakeke wetland is the largest dune swale wetland remnant on the coastal plain of the Foxton Ecological District. It is part of Greater Wellington Regional Council's Key Native Ecosystems programme and identified by the Department of Conservation as a Wetland of Ecological and Representative Importance and as a site of Special Wildlife Importance. These classifications are due to large areas of the complex being in their natural state and in good condition, and providing habitat for endangered and vulnerable native birds (Australasian bittern, North Island fernbird, grey duck, New Zealand falcon), vulnerable native fish (Giant kokopu, short-jawed kokopu) and rare native plants (*Nertera scapanioides*, *Korhasella salicornioides*).
- 13 Kawakahia comprises the 40 hectare southern portion of the wetland complex. It is under Queen Elizabeth II National Trust covenant and is identified as Ecological Site KO66 in the District Plan.
- 14 While the body of Kawakahia wetland is in good condition, its margins are severely infested with a range of environmental weeds that are preventing the regeneration of native vegetation that would provide a buffer, improve connectivity and restore swamp forest and dry dune ecosystems. In this financial year Greater Wellington has spent \$5,000 on a long-term weed control project that Kāpiti Coast District Council and the Department of Conservation have supported in previous years. The landowner is contributing labour and machinery costs.
- 15 The application is for a **\$5,000** contribution to a follow-up project this autumn, concentrating on weed infestations not included in the Greater Wellington operation in spring and early summer. Large scale weed control has already proved effective at Kawakahia, and is the key to an enhancement strategy to which the landowner is committed. The proximity to the Pharazyn Reserve means there will be benefits to future weed management on Council-owned land.
- 16 The application meets all the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise applications. A smaller grant would enable the most important work at Kawakahia to proceed without compromising this long-term restoration project. It is recommended that \$3,500 is granted.

91 Main Highway, Ōtaki

- 17 This is a Built Heritage Management project for an historic Ōtaki house built in 1880. The owners are committed to restoring the house and plan to turn it into a museum and café. During staged restoration over several years the building will be tenanted and maintained by a family trust.
- 18 The project entails repairing a structural wooden beam in the building's roof and repainting the western side of the building. The application is for **\$5,000** out of a project cost of **\$10,000**.
- 19 The project meets the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise applications. Granting a lesser amount will enable the most urgent part of this project, the repair of the wooden beam, to proceed. The application states that the repainting can proceed in stages, depending on the funding available. It is recommended that \$3,750 is granted.

64 The Esplanade, Raumati South

- 20 This is a natural heritage management project to maintain a notable *Macrocarpa* tree listed as T112 on the District Plan Heritage Register.
- 21 In March 2012 the tree suffered storm damage that left large branches hanging. An arborist was needed to remove the damaged limbs and protect the health of the tree.
- 22 The landowner has applied for **\$1,735** out of a project cost of **\$3,467** and has supplied a quotation from a certified arborist.
- 23 This project meets the Heritage Fund criteria for natural heritage management. The full amount is required to repair the tree; it is recommended that funds be approved as requested.

66 Smithfield Road, Waikanae

- 24 This is a natural heritage management project to protect and enhance a 4ha remnant of wetland, swamp forest and dry forest of high quality and diverse species representation listed as ecological site K133 on the District Plan Heritage Register. Located within 300m of Nga Manu Nature Reserve, the remnant forms part of an important ecological link between Kāpiti Island, the Hemi Matenga Reserve and the Tararua Ranges. The remnant is protected by a QE II Trust covenant and the landowners are committed to improving its values through good management.
- 25 The applicants seek **\$2,000** out of a project cost of **\$4,000** for pest animal and weed control products and native plants for buffer planting on forest margins.
- 26 This project meets all the Heritage Fund criteria. The site's significance makes it a priority for enhancement, the landowners' contributions far outweigh the costs listed in the application, and reducing the amount allocated would compromise the project. Therefore it is recommended that funds be approved as requested.

95 Panorama Drive, Paraparaumu

- 27 This large Panorama Drive property (5.35 ha) includes edges of a much larger Ecological Site (KO95, 72 ha) encompassing the top and eastern flanks of the north end of the Paraparaumu Escarpment. The property adjoins the Council's Kaitawa Reserve and includes riparian margins of the Wharemauku Stream. The applicant proposes a natural heritage management project to control pest animals and weeds, and to enrich regenerating native bush within the ecological site by planting appropriate native species.
- 28 Ecological Site KO95 is regarded as regionally significant because it comprises under-represented kohekohe-titoki coastal forest and a large area of regenerating kanuka-mahoe forest. It also provides an ecological link between the Council-owned Raumati Escarpment (Matai Huka) and Kaitawa Reserve, both of which are undergoing restoration.

- 29 The owners of this property are dedicated conservationists who are committed to restoring the values of their ecological site. They have constructed predator fences along three sides of the property and for three years have attempted to control pest plants and animals. They have applied for **\$5,000** out of a project cost of **\$10,000** to expand a network of bait stations and kill traps, and to fund the purchase of native plants to aid regeneration.
- 30 00 is granted.

152 Te Hapua Road, Te Horo

- 31 The owners of the wetland that is the subject of this application have spent the last 13 years restoring its degraded values. The 11.6ha wetland is part of the regionally significant Te Hapua wetland complex listed on the Heritage Register of the District Plan as ecological site KO55. Council biodiversity staff have worked with Te Hapua Road landowners for ten years to encourage the protection and sustainable management of their wetlands. The wetland at 152 Te Hapua Road is one of 10 in the complex protected by QE II Trust covenants, the highest density of covenants in one area in the Wellington region.
- 32 Because of its large size and the former severity of weed infestations, the owners face ongoing challenges in keeping weeds under control and continuing their restoration efforts. They are part of a dedicated group of Te Hapua Road wetland owners who are following a weed control programme co-ordinated by Kāpiti Coast District Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council, and supported by the QE II Trust and the Department of Conservation.
- 33 The owners have applied for **\$4535** out of a project cost of **\$9,070** for access track maintenance and pest plant and animal control. Most of the project cost is to pay specialist contractors.
- 34 This project meets all the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise applications. Slightly reducing the amount granted will not compromise this project. Therefore it is recommended that \$4,000 is granted.

96 Mill Road, Ōtaki

- 35 This is a natural heritage management project to maintain a 90-year-old pohutakawa tree located behind the Ōtaki Fire Station. The tree is listed as T64 on the District Plan Heritage Register.
- 36 The tree has multiple trunks and large spreading branches typical of old pohutakawa. In 2012 Fire Station staff became concerned about overhanging branches posing a threat to an outbuilding and an accessway.
- 37 The New Zealand Fire Service obtained a report from a certified arborist stating that lower branches and deadwood needed to be removed to make the tree safe. The report recommended that some trunks should be braced because of weaknesses at the base of the tree.

- 38 The report said that the proposed work would have no detrimental effects on the tree's health.
- 39 The New Zealand Fire Service has applied for **\$941** out of a project cost of **\$1,883** and has supplied a quote for the work.
- 40 This project meets the Heritage Fund criteria for natural heritage management. The threat posed by the overhanging branches made it necessary to proceed with the work, and the Fire Service has paid the full cost in expectation that Council would continue following its policy of contributing 50% to the cost of maintaining trees listed on the Heritage Register. It is recommended that funds be approved as requested.

516 SH 1, Waikanae

- 41 This property was once the home of Henry Elder, a prominent early Waikanae settler, and one of the district's biggest colonial era landowners. Elder was unusual for his time in that he saw value in preserving areas of native bush. He preserved bush on the banks of the Waikanae River, on steep slopes and in gullies, and around the big house he built above the State Highway on the south side of the Waikanae bridge.
- 42 Some of what Elder preserved still exists, including a 6.7ha block of bush around the house site. This block of kohekohe-titoki-tawa forest is protected by QE II covenant and is listed on the District Plan Heritage Register as ecological site KO71. It adjoins Council owned reserve land on the south bank of the Waikanae River upstream from the main trunk rail bridge.
- 43 Since buying the property 16 years ago the landowners have made efforts to enhance the bush through plant and animal pest control and extensive planting. Weeds have continued to be a problem, however, partly because of severe infestations on adjacent land owned by Kāpiti Coast District Council, Kiwirail, and the New Zealand Transport Agency.
- 44 In collaboration with Greater Wellington Regional Council, Kāpiti District Council has started a long-term programme to control weeds on the banks of the Waikanae River. As part of this programme weeds are being controlled on Council land adjacent to the protected bush at 516 SH1.
- 45 The landowner has applied for **\$5,000** out of a project cost of **\$10,000** for weed control targeting vine weeds and *Tradescantia fluminensis* (wandering jew) within the covenant to dovetail with the control programme on adjacent public land. This would also benefit the councils' programme, as it would help prevent reinvasion of public land by weeds from the covenant.
- 46 The application meets the criteria for a natural heritage management project.

- 47 The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise applications. Following discussions with Greater Wellington, the contractor, and the landowner, the scope of the work has been reduced in a way that will not have a serious effect on what is a long-term project. It is recommended that \$3,750 is granted.

1400 Ōtaki Gorge Road, Ōtaki

- 48 This is a Natural Heritage Management Project to assist the control of pest animals and weeds on a 125 ha block on the edge of Tararua Forest Park. The block is part of Ecological Site KO17 and is almost entirely covered with native bush, including patches of primary forest on steep faces that escaped logging. As such it is a valuable part of an evolving 'mountains to the sea' ecological corridor that has the potential to link the wilderness of the Tararua Ranges to Kapiti Island via the Ōtaki River. The block provides habitat for keystone species such as kereru, and has resident populations of many native forest bird species including tomtit, whitehead, rifleman and bellbird.
- 49 Pest animal control on this block complements intensive control on adjacent Department of Conservation land conducted as part of 'Project Kaka', an innovative ecological management initiative designed to improve biodiversity in selected areas of the Tararua Forest Park.
- 50 The applicants are dedicated conservationists who have already spent large amounts of time and money on restoring and maintaining the ecological values of their land. They are seeking **\$1,654** out of a project cost of **\$3,308** to pay for traps, bait, and herbicide, and will undertake much of the work themselves.
- 51 The project meets the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise allocations. A slight reduction in the amount granted will have little effect on this project. It is recommended that \$1,500 is granted.

168 Taylors Road, Ōtaki

- 52 This is a Natural Heritage Management Project to assist the buffering of Pukehou Swamp, a 24.7 hectare wetland north of Ōtaki identified as Ecological Site KO13 on the District Plan's Heritage Register.
- 53 Pukehou Swamp is the best and largest representative example of wetland-swamp forest associations in the Manawatu Plains Ecological District. These associations once dominated the landscape between Paekākāriki and Foxton, but have been reduced to small and scattered remnants. Pukehou is considered regionally significant and is therefore a priority for biodiversity protection. In addition to providing habitat for native birds it is noted for containing rare plant species (*Korthalsella salicorniodes*, *Hypolepsis distans* and *Doodia australis*).
- 54 The landowner has started planting native plants on the wetland edges of his property, which is in the south-western corner of Pukehou. The project is to reinforce and extend this planting to provide a buffer and additional habitat for native fauna. The landowner was instrumental in ensuring that most of the

wetland, divided among several private properties, was placed under Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Covenant, and he is committed to its protection and enhancement.

- 55 The applicant is seeking **\$500** out of a project cost of **\$1,000**. The Council funds will pay for eco-sourced native plants, with the landowner's contribution being preparation, planting and ongoing maintenance of the planted area.
- 56 The project meets the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise allocations. A slight reduction in the amount granted will have little effect on this project. It is recommended that \$471 is granted.

176 Te Hapua Road, Te Horo

- 57 This is a Natural Heritage Management project to enhance parts of the regionally significant Te Hapua wetland (see '9.' above), which is registered as an ecological site (KO57) in the District Plan Heritage Register. The parts of the wetland complex on this property are protected by a QE II covenant.
- 58 The owner is following a management plan for restoration of the wetland prepared by ecologist John Preece, and has received advice and support from Kāpiti Coast District Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation. The restoration sites have been fenced to exclude stock, pine and willow trees and other pest plants that were degrading the wetland have been removed, and the owner is replacing them with ecosourced native plants, some grown in her own nursery. Pest animals such as possums and stoats are being controlled using traps. The owner keeps a restoration diary, and has recorded spending more than 200 hours a year on the project.
- 59 The owner helped establish a residents' care group for the greater Te Hapua wetland which has been active in promoting restoration and sustainable management.
- 60 The application is for **\$2,000** out of a project cost of **\$4,000**, to cover plant purchase, nursery expenses, and the employment of a labourer to help with heavy work too onerous for the applicant. The project meets the Heritage Fund criteria. The amount requested in Heritage Fund applications exceeds the funding available, making it necessary to prioritise allocations. A slight reduction in the amount granted will have little effect on this project. It is recommended that \$1,800 is granted.

Financial Considerations

- 61 If funding is approved as recommended, the 2012-2013 Heritage Fund budget will be entirely allocated. There are no other financial considerations.

Legal Considerations

- 62 There are no legal considerations.

Delegation

- 63 The Subcommittee may make a decision under the following delegation in Section C.1. of the Governance Structure:

“The Subcommittee will have the authority to assess all applications and allocate funds for the following grant programmes: Heritage Fund Allocations”.

Policy Implications

- 64 The popularity of the Heritage Fund indicates that it is achieving its objective of providing an incentive to landowners to protect and maintain heritage features. Allocations to the Fund continue to exceed the budget for each funding round.

Publicity Considerations

- 65 The opportunity exists for positive publicity associated with these projects. A press release will be prepared about the funding allocations.

SUMMARY

- 66 Applications for the Heritage Fund received this year are all considered eligible. Should the recommended funds be approved, conservation projects estimated to cost more than \$83,000 will be enabled. The funds would support protective management of 144.7ha of native forest and 83.4ha of wetland. In addition, support would be provided for the maintenance of notable trees on two properties in accordance with Council policy.
- 67 Much of Kāpiti’s threatened indigenous biodiversity survives in scattered remnants on private land. Protecting such remnants is one of the foremost objectives of national, regional and local government biodiversity policies. This year’s Heritage Fund allocations will support the achievement of that objective by encouraging private landowners to protect and enhance significant natural heritage features, thereby fulfilling the intent of the Fund’s creation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

68 That the Environment and Community Development Committee approve funding to applicants from the Heritage Fund as set out in the following table.

Project	Total Project Cost	Requested Assistance	Recommended Assistance
234 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	\$4,838	\$2,419	\$2,000
32 Park Avenue, Waikanae	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$3,500
9 Taiata Street, Waikanae	\$2,577	\$1,289	\$1,289
69 Valley Road, Paraparaumu	\$39,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
418 Ōtaki Gorge Road, Ōtaki	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
8 Jacks Bush Road, Waikanae	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
152 Te Hapua Road, Te Horo	\$9,554	\$4,727	\$4,000
141 Main Road North, Paraparaumu	\$2,130	\$1065	\$1065
516 SH1, Waikanae	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
516 SH1, Waikanae	\$2,655	\$1,328	\$1,328
140 Taylors Road, Ōtaki	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$471
176 Te Hapua Road, Te Horo	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$1,800
Total	\$126,754	\$38,828	\$28,947

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ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Map showing project locations.

Attachment 2 – Photographs of project sites.

Attachment 3 – Heritage Fund Criteria and Guidelines