



Media Release
16 March 2020

Public information campaign on flooding and coastal hazards in Selwyn starts

Selwyn District Council has started informing landowners of the latest findings on flooding and coastal hazard risks, and how it's proposing to manage them in the new District Plan.

This work is part of the current District Plan Review. All Councils are legally required to assess and manage natural hazards risk, such as flooding, coastal erosion and inundation (flooding by the sea), and to consider them in the District Plan. This now includes that Councils assess the risks from more extreme weather events and how climate change effects over the next 100 years could affect them.

The Council, with the help of Environment Canterbury, has carried out computer-based flood modelling to predict the extent and depth of flooding that could happen during a one-in-200 year and a one-in-500-year flood, says Tim Harris, Council's Group Manager Environmental and Regulatory Services.

As a result of having to assess the risk from flooding in a 200-year flood event, a much larger area of the district has now been identified as being susceptible to flooding.

"While the biggest change from the current District Plan is the size of the district that is affected in some way, we are proposing to manage flood risks with similar restrictions to what's in the current District Plan," says Mr Harris.

The main change the Council is proposing is that any new dwellings built on affected areas would be required to have a higher minimum floor height.

"For the majority of properties the increase is likely to be only a few centimetres," Mr Harris says.

The changes would only affect new projects, and only on areas of a property that are at risk from flooding.

In the meantime, any new Land Information Memoranda (LIM) reports for an affected property will contain a note indicating that the property may be susceptible to flooding and/or coastal erosion and/or inundation under certain circumstances. The note will also identify the latest technical information held by the Council. It is a legal requirement that councils have to include all relevant information they hold about a property in relation to natural hazards in a LIM.

While such floods aren't a common event, careful planning for natural hazards is necessary.

"A one-in-200-year flood has a 0.5 percent chance of happening in any given year. However, it's important we let all affected landowners know of an existing natural hazard and how we propose to manage it in the new District Plan. Keeping our communities safe and protecting our environment is part of our job, so it's important we do this work. We want to help minimise any negative impact such a hazard might have for them and their assets," says Mr Harris.

“It’s important to note that any proposed rules for the potentially affected areas are a few years away before having any effect.”

The Council is expecting to notify the Proposed District Plan for formal public consultation by the middle of this year, when people will have the opportunity to make a submission on any of the proposed provisions, including how the flood and coastal hazard areas are mapped.

It’s expected that the new Proposed District Plan will be fully in place by mid-2022, subject to any Environment Court appeals. Until then, the current rules for building and resource consents continue to apply.

For more information, including map with affected areas and all the technical reports, check out the Council’s engagement hub Your Say Selwyn at www.selwyn.govt.nz/districtplanreview.

We also invite affected landowners to come to one of a number of public drop-in sessions around the district where they will be able to talk to a planner about their property and how the proposed changes may affect them. Please check our website closer to the time for any changes to the schedule.

ENDS

Selwyn District Council media

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Notes to editor

Key facts:

- Around 23,500 properties in Selwyn are affected in some way by flood hazard - have areas of land on their property that might be at least 5cm under water in a 200-year flood.
- Close to 130 properties are affected by coastal hazards.

We will be making a technical expert available for one on one interviews, or to answer any further questions you might have. Please contact our media advisor Robin Raymond on media@selwyn.govt.nz or 027 556 8298 with your questions, to arrange this.

Details of public drop-in sessions are set out in the table below.

| When | Where |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday 24 March 2020, 6-7.30pm | Darfield Recreation and Community Centre, Lounge Room, 92 North Terrace, Darfield |
| Thursday 26 March 2020, 6-7.30pm | Lincoln Event Centre, Baylis Lounge, 15 Meijer Drive, Lincoln |
| Monday 30 March 2020, 6-7.30pm | Rolleston Community Centre, 95 Rolleston Drive, Rolleston |
| Tuesday 31 March 2020, 6-7.30pm | Lakeside Soldiers Memorial Hall, Lakeside Road, Leeston |