Proposed Plan Variation 1 - Frequently Asked Questions

Coastal Flood Hazards

1. What does Proposed Plan Variation 1 propose to do with 'coastal flood hazard areas'?

Plan Variation 1 proposes to add the Coastal Flood Hazard Layers to certain areas that were inadvertently omitted from the notified Proposed District Plan (Te Werahi Beach, Kokota, Rangaunu Harbour and surrounding areas, Karikari Peninsula, Ngārui-o-te-Marangai Beach, areas of Te Puna Inlet, Kerikeri Inlet, east of Cape Brett to Owhai Bay, Rangiora to Motukaraka Point, Rāwene, Waima River and Waipoua River).

2. What are the 'coastal flood hazard areas' and how have they been identified?

Coastal Flood Hazard Zones

There are three types of Coastal Flood Hazard Zones, which help us understand how different areas may be affected by flooding in the future. These zones are based on predictions for sea-level rise and flood risks:

a. **Coastal Flood Hazard Zone 1 (CFHZ1) –** extent of the 50-year ARI static water level at 2080 including 0.6 m sea level rise (RCP8.5M)).
b. **Coastal Flood Hazard Zone 2 (CFHZ2) –** extent of the 100-year ARI static water level at 2080 including 1.2 m sea level rise (RCP8.5M).
c. **Coastal Flood Hazard Zone 3 (CFHZ3) –** extent of the 100-year ARI static water level at 2080 including 1.5 m sea level rise (RCP8.5H+).

Key Terms Explained

- **Annual Recurrence Interval (ARI):** This is a way of describing how likely a flood is to happen in any given year. For example, a "50-year ARI" means there's a 2% chance of that level of flooding happening in any year (or it could happen once every 50 years, on average).
- **RCP (Representative Concentration Pathway):** These are scenarios used in climate models to predict how greenhouse gas emissions will affect future conditions.
    - **RCP8.5:** This is a scenario where emissions continue to rise throughout the century, leading to a higher risk of sea-level rise and other climate impacts.

Data Sources

The information used for these Coastal Flood Hazard Zones comes from the Northland Regional Council (NRC) and is based on several detailed reports:

- **Coastal Flood Hazard Assessment for Northland Region (2019-2020)** by Tonkin & Taylor (2021).
- **Inundation Modelling of the Rangaunu Harbour** (eCoast 2020)

You can find these reports and other relevant information on the NRC's website: https://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/natural-hazards-portal/coastal-hazards/consultant-reports/

3. Why does council identify 'coastal flood hazards' on the planning maps?

The council identifies coastal flood hazards on planning maps to help manage risks and ensure the safety of people, property, and the environment. These maps provide important information about areas that may be affected by future flooding due to rising sea levels and storm surges.

By identifying these hazards, we can make more informed decisions about building and development. This helps in two key ways:

1. **Building Consent Applications:** When people apply for building consent, the flood hazard maps allow us to assess whether the proposed building site is at risk of coastal flooding. This helps ensure that buildings are designed and located in ways that reduce the risk of flood damage.

2. **Appropriateness of Activities:** The maps and associated planning rules help determine whether certain activities or developments are suitable for the area. In high-risk flood zones, some activities may not be appropriate due to the potential impact of flooding. By considering these hazards early in the planning process, the risks can be better managed to protect both people and property.

4. What does having a 'coastal flood hazard area' identified across a property mean for landowners?

If your property is in a coastal flood hazard area, certain activities will require a **resource consent** from the council. This is to help ensure any new developments are safe and won't increase flood risks. Based on the Proposed District Plan (as notified), the below summarises what you need to know:

- **Building and Extensions:** If you want to build a new structure or extend an existing building, you'll need resource consent if the building increases the floor area (GFA). However, some smaller projects don't need consent, such as:
    - New buildings or structures with a footprint of 10m² or less, as long as they aren't used for vulnerable activities.
    - Decks less than 30m² in size and less than 1 meter in height.
    - Buildings related to farming activities with a footprint less than 100m², provided they are not in high-risk flood areas (this includes Coastal Flood Hazard Zone 1

(CFHZ1) and Coastal Erosion Hazard Zone 1 (CEHZ1)), don't contain vulnerable activities, and won't increase flooding on other properties.

- **Vulnerable Activities:** If you're planning to change the use of a building to something considered a "vulnerable activity" (residential activities, care facilities (including day care centres), retirement villages, visitor accommodation, marae and medical facilities with overnight stays), this will also require resource consent.
- **New Structures and Infrastructure:** Other projects, like new structures (excluding buildings), infrastructure, hazardous facilities or any other activities not specifically mentioned in the coastal hazard area provisions will require a resource consent in coastal flood hazard areas as well.

When applying for resource consent, you'll need to address the specified minimum finished floor levels and provide a report from a qualified engineer addressing various important factors, including:

- The risk and likelihood of flooding.
- How the building or infrastructure will handle flood events.
- Ensuring there is safe access during a flood.
- Whether the structure can be relocated or adapted in the future due to flooding.
- Whether the project might increase flood risks for neighbouring properties.
- For infrastructure projects, the council will also consider if there's a functional or operational need to build within the flood hazard area.

It is important to note, that there are no changes to the rules for coastal flood hazards proposed as part of Plan Variation 1, although there have been several submissions on the rules of the Natural Hazards chapter which will be considered by Council as part of the overall Proposed District Plan hearings and decisions process.

Heritage Areas

1. What does removing the catch-all rule from the Heritage Area Overlay mean?

Currently, if an activity isn't specifically mentioned in the Heritage Overlay rules, a resource consent is needed by default. By deleting this rule, the need for resource consent would only apply to activities that are clearly outlined in the rules, reducing unnecessary restrictions. For example, removing the catch-all rule means that everyday activities like planting a tree or shrub within the Heritage Area Overlay will no longer automatically require a resource consent.

2. What does adding the Kohukohu Heritage Area to rule HA-R9 mean for developing new buildings or structures in this area?

Adding the Kohukohu Heritage Area to rule HA-R9 means that if you want to build a new building or structure in the Kohukohu Heritage Area, you will now need to apply

for a discretionary resource consent. This gives the council the ability to carefully assess the impact of the development on the heritage values of the area before granting approval.