

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

13 DECEMBER 2017

AGENDA ITEM C4

PROPOSED LAKE FERRY WALKING TRACK AND VISITOR LOOKOUT

Purpose of Report

To inform Councillors of the proposed walking track and visitor lookout for Lake Ferry.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receives the Proposed Lake Ferry Walking Track and Visitor Lookout Report;*
2. *Approves the proposed walking track and visitor lookout.*

1. Executive Summary

A public walking track and visitor lookout are proposed for Council land at Lake Ferry. This land is above the township and is used for waste water treatment and disposal, while also leased out as farmland. The South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group's proposal for a walking track within the greywater gully is enhanced by the Wairarapa Moana's proposal for a visitor lookout at the cliff edge. Funding is available for the establishment of both track and lookout, along with necessary signage and stiles.

2. Background

The South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group has proposed the development of a public walking track on the Council land above Lake Ferry. This land is used for the dispersal of greywater from the Lake Ferry waste water treatment and includes a shallow gully of wetland plantings. The Group would like to engage visitors to the area by offering the opportunity to walk through the planted area and then along the cliff face to enjoy the views of Palliser Bay. The Group has funding to pay for the development of the gully track and seeks approval to go ahead and carry out the work.

The Interpretation and Visitor Facilities workstream of Wairarapa Moana Wetlands has proposed a public lookout on the southern cliff-edge near the end of the proposed gully track. Wairarapa Moana has funding for the lookout and associated signage and stiles.

3. Discussion

3.1 South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group

The South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group (SWBG) was formed in October 2011. It is a rural community-led initiative which works to empower the local community so that the ecology of the area is enhanced with specific focus on potential educational, recreational, cultural and tourism opportunities available at Lake Onoke. The Biodiversity Group has worked with council since 2013 on improving the quality of the greywater by creating the native wetland in the greywater gully on the land.

3.2 Wairarapa Moana Wetlands

The Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project began in 2008 as a partnership between the Department of Conservation, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Rangitāne o Wairarapa, South Wairarapa District Council and Papawai and Kohunui marae. The project is to enhance the native ecology, recreational and cultural opportunities on public land in the area. The Wairarapa Moana area covers Lakes Wairarapa and Onoke, their surrounding wetlands, the Western Lake Scenic Reserve and Onoke Spit.

3.3 The land

The land proposed for the walking track and lookout is part lot 45 DP 12843, which is situated above and behind the Lake Ferry hotel and houses.



It is used by Council for waste water treatment, and is leased for grazing sheep by the neighbouring farmer, who also leases the Council land immediately to the north of the property. The land is owned by Council and is not a reserve. SWDC and its contractors access the property via the paper road between numbers 28 and 32 lake Ferry Road. This road is a steep and narrow track, and is also marked as the evacuation/high ground route for possible tsunami evacuations.

3.4 The proposals

The SWBG proposes the creation of a public walking track running through the plantings along the east side of the greywater gully. This section of the land is enclosed by fencing to keep stock out. The gully is not

particularly steep, but it is recommended that the guidelines of the Standards NZ Handbook *8630:2004 Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures* are followed in the preparation of the track.

From the south end of the gully, walkers would then walk from west to east along the fenced edge of the cliff to the look-out shelter, and return either via the gully or straight back up the paddock. Access to the walking track is proposed to be from Lake Ferry Road via the paper road and across the farmland, subject to suitable controls to protect the farming operation.

An aerial photo of the track route, and a view of the greywater gully, are attached as Appendix 1.

3.5 Consultation

The SWBG's proposal was first made late in 2015. Council and Department of Conservation officers spent some time exploring possibilities for alternate access routes and stock security, including consideration of a track from council land adjacent to the Lake Ferry Hotel and additional stock fencing. However, these were ruled out for cost and logistical reasons.

The Lake Ferry Residents and Ratepayers group has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal.

The lessee has been consulted about his concerns with having the public walking across farmland. Major concerns were about the possible disturbance to the sheep during lambing, and from having additional vehicles on the access track. These concerns can be addressed by having a "closed" season for the track during lambing, and by making access to the site pedestrian only.

3.6 Financial Considerations

The installation costs for the greywater gully track will be covered by the Biodiversity Group. The installation costs for the lookout, stiles and signage will be covered by the Department of Conservation on behalf of Wairarapa Moana. There will be relatively minor ongoing maintenance costs, and Council needs to consider whether these will be covered by the parks and reserves operating budget.

3.7 Conditions

- 3.7.1 There will be a closed season – no visitors allowed – immediately prior to and during lambing. Confirmation of closed dates will need to be provided every year by the lessee, and signage at Lake Ferry Rd entrance updated with this information.
- 3.7.2 No dogs will be permitted on the property except those used by the lessee for farm work.
- 3.7.3 Access to the greywater site will be pedestrian-only from Lake Ferry Road – the northern paddock is not separately fenced from the vehicle track and frequently has sheep on it. The track itself is steep and basic, and needs to be limited to farm and SWDC/City Care vehicles only. The gates at the bottom of the track and at the

entrance to the greywater paddock will need to be kept locked to ensure stock remain secure.

4. Conclusion

The proposed track and lookout will provide visitors to Lake Ferry with an opportunity to enjoy the views of Palliser Bay from the cliff top, and also to appreciate the planting of the greywater wetland. Establishment costs will be met by the South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group and Wairarapa Moana. Ongoing maintenance costs are expected to be relatively minor. A Memorandum of Understanding between Council and SWBG is recommended to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clarified.

5. Appendices

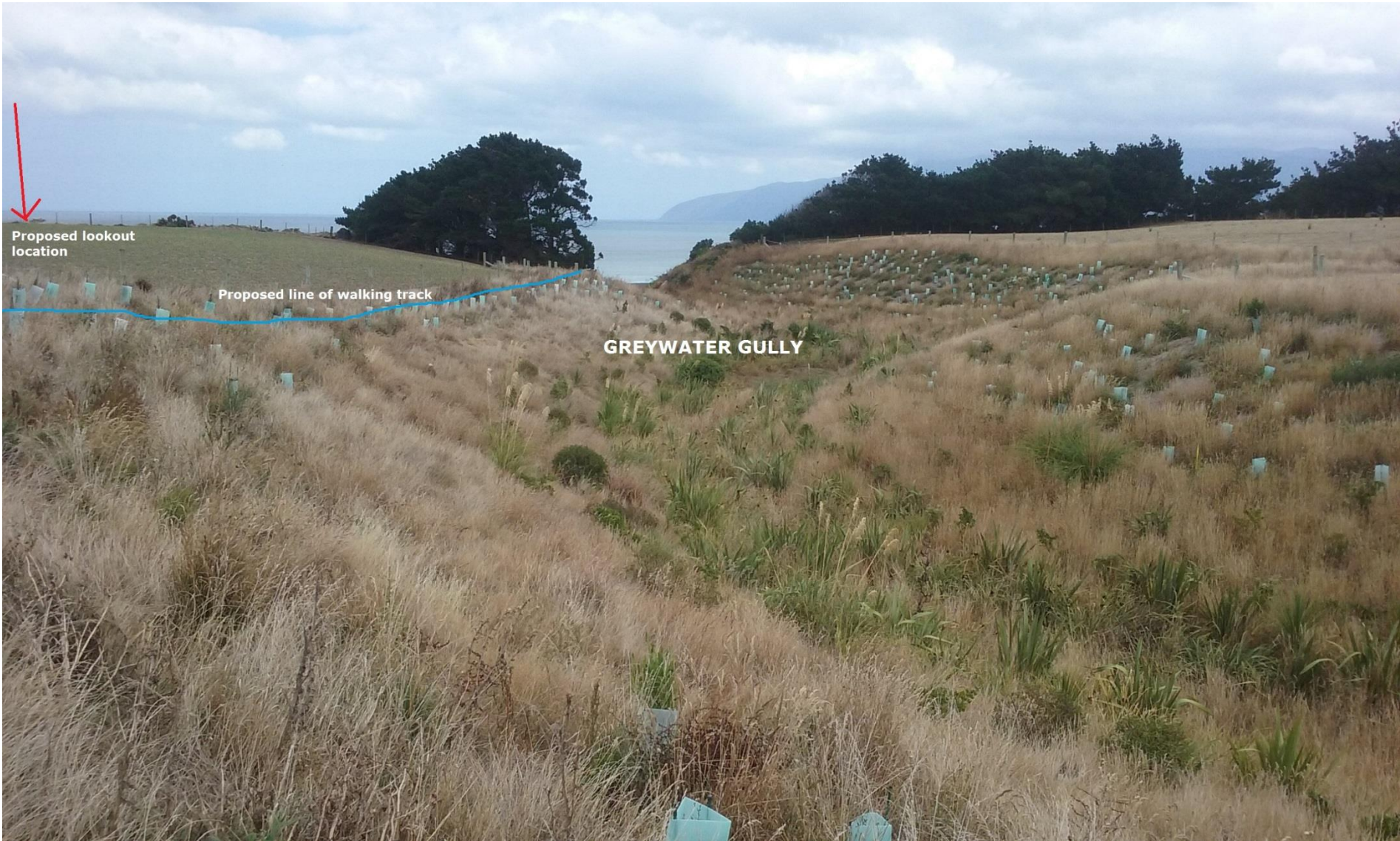
Appendix 1 – Aerial and view images of proposal

Contact Officer: Helen McNaught, Amenities Manager

Reviewed By: Mark Allingham, Group Manager Infrastructure Services

Appendix 1 – Aerial and view images of proposal





Proposed lookout location

Proposed line of walking track

GREYWATER GULLY