

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

22 APRIL 2015

AGENDA ITEM E4

FEATHERSTON 2033

Purpose of Report

To update Council (and community board) on the status of the Featherston 2033 Development Strategy and Implementation Plan consequent to the presentations to the Infrastructure and Planning Working Party in February.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*

1. Executive Summary

Council and the Featherston Community Board previously assisted a group of Victoria University landscape architecture students to undertake a landscape architecture study of Featherston.

The process followed and issues arising from the students work was fully outlined in the report by the Group Manager, Planning and Environment in Agenda Item D1 at Council's 19th November 2014 meeting.

At the November meeting Council resolved to refer the study projects to the Infrastructure and Planning Working Party for further discussion and evaluation in early 2015.

A report (prepared by staff) and PowerPoint based discussion (prepared by Mr Kerry Geange) was presented to the working group at the 25 February 2015 meeting.

In consequence the working party resolved that officers should proceed with further work (based on the findings of Mr Geange who had identified 4 key themes to follow and develop).

It was proposed that the further work in formulating a strategy and development plan be reported back on the April Council meeting.

In essence this report back was to enable recommendations to be reported back to Council and the Featherston Community Board, on which aspects should be further investigated and possibly developed into a strategic plan of works for Featherston.

2. Discussion

In order to further facilitate this process, Council officers again engaged Mr Kerry Geange, to undertake in close liaison with officers, a strategic level review and analysis of similar projects in other towns and cities about New Zealand.

He was also to assist with the formulation of a project structure and consequent strategy for the long term development of Featherston, notionally titled Featherston 2033.

Unfortunately a series of events have intervened which has meant that only some components have been able to be completed by this time.

This is because Mr Geange has been heavily committed to the preparation of evidence in support of Council's wastewater resource consent applications for Martinborough, Featherston and Greytown.

At the same time, staff in the planning department have faced a requirement to process an unusually heavy workload for resource consent applications (up 40% Feb-March).

Given that both these work streams (for Mr Geange and staff) are subject to statutory deadlines, they have had to take precedence.

While Mr Geange has prepared a further PowerPoint presentation to go through the work able to be done to date, due to the overall incomplete nature of what could be presented to Council, it is considered that it is better to defer formally reporting on this work until the next Council meeting.

While this delay may not be desirable in the eyes of some, it could not be avoided if Council was to consider a properly developed Featherston 2033 strategy while meeting its other statutory obligations.

As previously advised to Council, any decisions to move ahead with more detailed analysis on potential Featherston Development projects, will likely entail a significant investment in time and resources by Council, and so should only be made with a reasonable degree of information and understanding.

This is because Council needs to formulate a comprehensive and well founded series of technically based physical initiatives which Council can then implement through the LTP and other processes over time, if it is to make a real difference to Featherston.

3. Conclusion

Delays have occurred which have meant that staff and Council's consultant, have not been able to complete a report on the Featherston 2033 proposal for the April Council meeting, as had been originally hoped.

It is now proposed that this work be presented to the next Council meeting in May. This assumes that workloads will enable staff and the consultant to complete a proper and comprehensive report for that meeting.

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