

Infrastructure Committee  
13 February 2020

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take: 1

Department: Property & Infrastructure

Title | Taitara Options to address large cracks in Meads Road which are currently preventing access into Hunter Valley beyond 'the Homestead'

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

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- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the recommended option to reinstate access to Hunter Valley following damage to Meads Road in the flooding event in December 2019.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

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- 2 That the Infrastructure Committee:
  1. **Note** the contents of this report;
  2. **Authorise** staff to commence work on the recommended option including design, legalisation and construction of a new road alignment to reinstate access to Hunter Valley.

Prepared by:



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23/01/2020

Reviewed and Authorised by:



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30/01/2020

## CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

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- 3 Meads Road in Hāwea is closed due to cracking between ‘the Homestead’ and Terrace Creek. The formation is unstable and there is a risk of a 60m long section falling into Lake Hāwea.
- 4 The condition of the road deteriorated substantially between receipt of RFS/road closure on 13 December 2019 and a QLDC inspection on 19 December 2019, backing up advice from Station managers that this is a new issue that first appeared in early December.
- 5 WSP Consultants have prepared a report (**Attachment A**) advising of options and indicative costs for reinstating access.
- 6 The cracking is located within legal road, approximately 500m before the legal road is stopped after which it continues as a farm track through Crown estate.
- 7 The Crown estate is subject to a pastoral lease held by Orange Lakes (NZ) Ltd which prescribes public access through the lease area. Under this agreement up to six 4WD vehicles per day may be granted access to the farm track between December and April. Mountain bike, foot and horse access is available year-round outside of a closure for lambing between 1 October and 1 December.
- 8 QLDC maintains the road up to ‘the Homestead’ so the damaged section of road is located in an area that has **not** been historically maintained by QLDC. Any works undertaken would be “Emergency Works”. Emergency Works are not specifically provisioned for in the Ten Year/Annual Plan due to their uncertain nature but are completed on an as required basis at the discretion of the Roding Operations & Contracts Manager.
- 9 This subsidence issue is separate (occurring in December 2019) and not specifically linked to the Meads Road legalisation project, approved to proceed in August 2019. The locations of the two projects are shown in **Attachment B**. Meads Road legalisation is detailed in the legend and Meads Road cracking in text boxes on the aerial image.
- 10 The Meads Road legalisation project involves a section of non-legal road between State Highway 6 and Kidds Bush. The remaining stretch of road from Kidds Bush to Terrace Creek, 500m beyond the slip site was legalised in 1972.
- 11 The approval to proceed with the Meads Road legalisation project in August 2019 does however provide important context to the recommended option to realign the road. The main purpose of the legalisation project was to resolve historic access issues and facilitate long term permanent access to the Crown estate. By doing nothing, access to the Crown estate remains cut off.
- 12 There is also the potential to expand the scope of the legalisation project to include realignment of the road away from the unstable section as per recommendation below.

## ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

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### Road Closure

- 13 QLDC was advised of significant cracking in Meads Road through the Request for Service (RFS) system on 13 December 2019. The RFS was raised by Hunter Valley Station. The cracking is believed to have occurred during the district wide flooding that occurred in December 2019.
- 14 QLDC's roading contractor Downer attended the site on 13 December and closed the road at 'the Homestead'.
- 15 In addition to this, following WSP/QLDC/Downer site visit on 19 December, a recommendation was sent to the Department of Conservation (DoC) suggesting they undertake a risk assessment and consider notifying a closure to all forms of access.
- 16 In discussions with the station managers Taff and Digby Cochrane they advise the risk is too high for them to run cattle over this section of road for routine tuberculosis vaccinations.

### Cause of Cracking

- 17 The cracking is at the headscarp of a slip. There is a reduction of the strength of the material and increase in mass at the base of the slope, caused by increased saturation as a result of the increase in lake level.

### Options to Repair

#### 18 Option 1 Do nothing

Advantages:

- 19 No cost to Council
- 20 Consistent with Council's historic approach of not maintaining past the homestead
- 21 Does not put pressure on Emergency Works costs

Disadvantages:

- 22 Road is not passable meaning there is currently no access to Hunter Valley Station past the homestead
- 23 Safety issue for light traffic or pedestrians who may continue to access the track at their own risk
- 24 Risk of the damaged road dropping out and Council losing physical access through to the end of the existing legal road corridor

#### 25 Option 2 Anchored retaining wall

## Advantages:

26 Robust repair for the damaged section of road

## Disadvantages:

27 Cost estimate \$1.8M

28 Significant cost to absorb under Emergency Works

29 The length of Meads Road south of the slip through to Terrace Creek is also at risk of slippage in a similar event and therefore this repair would not necessarily fix the problem given a similar event in the future

30 Option 3 Dig out and replace

## Advantages:

31 Low cost option – cost estimate \$300K

## Disadvantages:

32 Failure surface will not be exposed for further assessment until the slipped body of material is removed which could affect the cost or feasibility of this option

33 As with Option 2 above this repair would not necessarily fix the problem given a similar event in the future

34 Option 4 Realignment of the road

## Advantages:

35 Low cost option – cost estimate \$150K to form a simple gravel track plus \$20K to legalise

## Disadvantages:

36 There are three options for potential routes and they have not been scoped at this stage but are, at a high level, a) an alignment along the beach, b) above the treeline or c) to the north of Peak AA9B. c) appears to follow existing farm tracks but some sections may require bridges or culverts and the resolution of boundary issues.

37 There remains an inherent risk during the design and land swap that the Station owner is not accommodating of the process.

38 This report recommends **Option 4** for addressing the matter because it is likely to be both the lowest cost and most resilient option. Although there will be surveying work and land swap required, initial discussions with the Station managers on site indicate they are likely to be supportive of the work especially if Council is funding or assisting with funding the work.

## CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

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### > SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 39 This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. While this decision relates to transfer or change of ownership of a section of the Roding Network (ref Significance and Engagement Policy, Section B. Strategic Assets), on balance this issue is considered medium significance.
- 40 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are any individuals or groups who may wish to access Hunter Valley Station as per the legal agreement between DoC and Orange Lakes (NZ), along with the Station itself.
- 41 The Council will consult with the affected groups who are Station managers/owners and DoC. The risk of issues arising from this consultation strategy is considered low. There is high community interest in maintaining permanent public access to the DoC conservation area which is what the recommended option seeks to achieve.

### > MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

- 42 The Council has previously consulted with representatives of the Māori Freehold land adjoining a 2018 road legalisation project and they were supportive of that proposal. This section of road has no adjoining Māori Freehold land

## RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

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- 43 This matter relates to the Community & Wellbeing risk category. It is associated with RISK00010 Operational Asset failure results in damage to private property and/or loss of community services within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a moderate inherent risk rating.
- 44 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing us to avoid the risk. This shall be achieved by moving the road further uphill from Lake Hāwea.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

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- 45 \$170K additional to existing approved budgets.

## COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

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- 46 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- Significance & Engagement Policy 2014.
- 47 The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policy/policies.

48 This matter is not specifically budgeted for in the Ten Year Plan/Annual Plan however is consistent with the Council approach that Emergency Works are undertaken as and when required.

49 These works may be eligible for 50% subsidy from the NZTA. A request has been submitted but as yet not approved by the agency.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA**

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50 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by reinstating and future proofing access to Hunter Valley;
- Can be implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

### **ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA**

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A	WSP MEMORANDUM MEADS ROAD
B	LOCATION MAP