

Recovery Update: June 22 2023

Cyclone Gabrielle landed in Aotearoa on 13 February 2023, impacting most of our Northern District

A recovery office has been established, based at Waikato District Council, with workstreams focusing on the economic, social, built and natural environments (buildings, roads, water etc)

Actions have been identified and are being delivered by the recovery team.

The vast majority of their actions are linked to Port Waikato and the north-western roading network.

A geotechnical assessment report has been received that deals with the Port Waikato landslide assessments of the hillside above Maunsell Road. Further details and the report are in the Geo Tech work section below.

Economic

Our Economic Development Team has led a series of promotions to the MBIE Business support grant to ensure that businesses impacted could apply for financial assistance. Details of these can be found [here](#).

The promotion included a direct link to the WDC Economic Development Advisors if support for the application was required.

In addition, the Economic Development team has promoted the MBIE fund through a series of business networks and community groups.

A meeting with the Ministry of Primary Industries was undertaken this week where further understanding of possible ongoing support for the rural businesses could be delivered. Economic Development Team is working across this.

MSD's Enhanced Task Force Green has been active in the North Waikato supporting farmers with clean-up activities.

Social

Rural Support Trust have been proactive in the social wellbeing staff running events and activities for farmers in the Wairamarama area to support wellbeing and social connection.

Community Resilience Planning is under way with a focus on Community Response Plans. These plans are being prioritised based on risk.

The Economic and Community Led Development Team and two members of staff are undertaking case management follow up with all affected Port Waikato homeowners of the red, yellow, and white stickered homes.

The up-to-date analysis of the support required will be completed this week. Many of the residents are grateful for the service that the Council is providing in terms of follow up support.

To ensure a sustainable approach to the predicted ongoing support required, WDC is looking for funding support to help either backfill roles or hire specialists to support the social needs of our affected communities.

Two tranches of Mayoral Relief Funding have now concluded with a total of \$55,000 paid in tranche one (April 2023) and \$35,103 committed in tranche two, with payments pending (May 2023). Council also commissioned a comprehensive report of the stability of the Maunsell Road hill through Tonkin & Taylor. \$30,000 has been committed to funding this report.

Conversation between the Insurance Council and EQC have begun to ensure assessors are providing correct information to claimants around how to have a yellow / red stickers removed from a home.

Buildings

All white stickers placed on 19 properties in Port Waikato expired after 21 days. There are currently 5 red stickers (originally 6) and 14 yellow stickers still in effect.

Homeowners have been informed that once appropriate work has been undertaken, they must notify the Council and request a reassessment. A sticker can be downgraded, from red to yellow for example, or removed all together.

Any designation of an area for building emergency management must be reviewed by the CDEM decision-maker at least every 90 days, and will expire after three years unless terminated sooner or extended.

This will require work and co-ordination between teams over the next 3-4 weeks. Council will begin the process of contacting owners of all stickered properties (including white stickers) to confirm their status and offer advice and support.

Geotech work

We have received the geotechnical assessment report from Tonkin and Taylor entitled Port Waikato Landslide Assessments.

Following the receipt of the report all affected property owners on Maunsell Road and Port Waikato-Tuakau Bridge Road were contacted directly by telephone.

They were also sent an email with a copy of the report, which outlines a summary of damage observed during site walkovers for properties with red or yellow stickers.

The results of the report vary for the property owners. Council is able to remove stickers from some properties without remedial work being done.

A number of stickers on properties will also be able to be removed once there are minor site works undertaken.

And there are a number of properties that still need more extensive works before their sticker classifications can be considered.

All affected property owners were reminded that Council may be able to assist with funding for remediation work through the Mayoral Disaster Relief Fund.

They were also offered help in applying for that fund should they need it.

Affected property owners were also offered the opportunity of a face-to face discussion of the report if they wanted to.

The report is available below - parts of it have been redacted to protect the privacy of individual property owners.

Roading

The Waikato District Alliance is still awaiting design, costings, and timings for more permanent / resilient solutions to roading damage in the north-western Waikato area.

Community feedback is being sought to gain an understanding on what/where they believe is a priority for future works.

While all roads are open, roading damage is causing psychosocial issues and real concern that it will damage the rural economy.

The assessment of the roading repairs required for the Waikato District Council roading network has come in at \$18 million.

Due to the sheer volume and cost of damage, WDC will require additional support and funding from Waka Kotahi and the government to initiate repairs that are required to maintain the roading network to ensure rural residents have sustainable access to healthcare, education, and supplies.

Port Waikato stormwater network

Watercare and contractors continue their work to assess and repair stormwater drains at Port Waikato.

A desktop analysis has been conducted to understand the current network capacity in relation to the extent of water run-off that occurs in Port Waikato.

Work is currently focused on clearing debris and sediment, however this is only a temporary solution.

Watercare recognises that another storm event will again damage the network. Longer term solutions to upgrade sections such as the drain between Maunsell Rd and the hillside are still being investigated.