



Shovel Ready

# Piako River mouth right bank asset rationalisation



**Funded:** \$1.92m by MBIE's Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit

**Total project cost:** \$2.9m

**Project duration:** 3 years

**Jobs expected over project life:** 21

Waikato Regional Council received \$29 million for multiple environmental restoration, biosecurity and climate resilience projects from the Government as part of the economic response to COVID-19. This project is one of them.

The Piako River scheme includes a range of flood protection assets to protect people and property from frequent flooding. These assets include, stopbanks, floodgates and pump stations that provide varying levels of protection depending on location and land use.

Three floodgates on the true right bank near the mouth of the Piako River and the Firth of Thames are nearing the end of their useful life. The three floodgates service a drainage catchment of 850 hectares. This project seeks to rationalise these into one floodgate asset to reduce replacement and ongoing operation and maintenance costs. The current level of service will be maintained, along with options for longevity of flood protection in this area.

The project includes reshaping the current tidal stopbanks, construction of a new floodgate and incorporated flushing mechanism, stormwater storage and, with the support of Hauraki District Council, the reconstruction of localised drains.

This area has significance due to the RAMSAR site at the Firth of Thames, and the link to the RAMSAR site at the Kopuatai Peat Dome via the Piako River. Wetland habitat will be created where stopbanks are set back. This project ties in with the Piako River Green Corridor project.

## Benefits

- Support climate resilience through the inclusion of storage for drainage runoff which will defer the need to include pumps beyond 2100, based on current climate change predictions.
- Rationalisation/streamlining of assets will save ratepayers a significant amount of money in future maintenance and asset costs.
- Peace of mind for both rural and urban communities while protecting existing and future investment in the Hauraki Plains.
- Opportunity to improve environmental performance through enhanced fish passage, shorebird wading habitat and plantings to provide refuge for native fish during drought.

## What does this mean for me as a ratepayer?

This project will reduce the number of floodgates servicing the catchment from three to one, while still maintaining the same level of service for flood protection. The reduced number of assets will mean a reduction in cost to maintain and more easily accommodate changes in sea level and rainfall predicted for climate change.

## What does this mean for my land licence?

This land is not grazed or leased and therefore it will have no impact on council land licence agreements.

## Is there a risk to the Piako River scheme?

No. Flood protection from the stopbank network will be maintained throughout construction and the new floodgate will be constructed prior to decommissioning the existing three floodgates. Hydraulic modelling, which has been externally peer reviewed, shows that the proposed new structure will outperform the existing three structures for flood protection.

With Hauraki District Council, we are assessing the need to reconstruct the road toe drain along Shelly Beach Road to improve drainage from the Campbell catchment.

## How is the council procuring services and materials?

We are following our procurement policy to ensure procurement of services and materials meets local government's requirements for the use of public money. A requirement of the central government funding is a greater emphasis on procuring services that include local persons, local businesses, Māori/Pasifika, women and youth. To date we have procured the services of a range of specialist providers.

## Who is the council engaging with on this project?

We are engaging with stakeholders, including local landowners, the Waihou-Piako Flood Protection Advisory Subcommittee, the Department of Conservation, Hauraki District Council, Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Tamatera, Ngaati Whanaunga and Pūkorokoro Miranda Shorebird Trust, to develop/enhance the overall design.

