

Making our Hutt City more resilient, connected and vibrant

Haere mai, welcome to RiverLink Community Update – a catch up with the community about RiverLink: projects to deliver flood protection, urban development and Melling transport improvements.



Sketches of the new shared pedestrian and cycle bridge – proposed to connect central Lower Hutt to a relocated Melling station and the proposed new Melling bridge.

Indicative Design / Artist's impression

RiverLink is a partnership between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency working together with Mana Whenua partners, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust).



Social Pinpoint: what you told us – what you asked

Thanks to everyone that came along to our two open days and to those who also contributed by having your say about RiverLink on Social Pinpoint – an online engagement tool. We ran this engagement in November 2020 and February 2021, and we asked you what you thought about the proposed RiverLink design.

Here are some of the main questions we received that will help inform the plans we'll use to apply for resource consent.

MAKING IT EASIER TO GET AROUND – AND CYCLE/WALK-WAYS THAT DON'T CLASH

YOU ASKED

What walking and cycling paths will be built? Will they connect to the wider cycling network and other transport modes?

ANSWER

RiverLink involves building a range of walking and cycling paths. Busy, fast biking routes, will have separate paths (clearly marked lanes for walking and for biking) with smooth surfaces. Other areas will have a range of surfaces, including shared paths for walking and cycling.

Here's a snapshot of community feedback received via social pinpoint.

Your top priorities are:

- A walkable, pedestrian-friendly central city with good public transport
- A healthy river that supports recreation and wildlife
- A thriving inner city that's a great place to live and work.

LINKING PETONE TO MELLING CYCLEWAY AND THE CYCLIST BRIDGE

We'll provide a connection from the new train station and the new pedestrian and cycle bridge, to the Petone and Melling cycleway that is part of Te Ara Tupua. We're currently investigating a number of options for this - our aim is to provide a direct, off-road link.

YOU ASKED

How is access to the river and trails being managed during the construction period?

ANSWER

A key consideration during construction will be to minimise the impact of closures (of the riverbank and existing cycle networks) as much as possible. And where possible, temporary alternatives will be provided. Details will be developed as part of the construction delivery management plans and programme of works.

CAR PARKING

YOU ASKED

What car parking will be provided during the construction period?

ANSWER

Hutt City Council recognises the need to provide temporary car parks for current users during the construction period. The Council is currently exploring options and will continue working to minimise impacts, and keep you updated during the construction implementation.

CONSTRUCTION

YOU ASKED

How long will the construction period last?

ANSWER

Following a favourable decision (getting consent/the go-ahead and the construction phase tender award) we anticipate the main construction will take four to five years, commencing late 2022. River works and planting will take longer.

MARKET

YOU ASKED

What is happening to the Market?

ANSWER

We know the Market is important to the community - we're working with the market operator to have it remain in central Lower Hutt during RiverLink construction.

YOU ASKED

How will we know what areas are open or closed during the construction?

ANSWER

There'll be information about this on the RiverLink website. You'll also receive information in mail-outs.

PLANTING

YOU ASKED
Are you planting more natives?

ANSWER
RiverLink plans to cut back on willows and establish more native planting. While willows will be originally planted to establish the new berms (i.e. banks) in the upper reach of the Project (upstream of the Transpower Substation on Harcourt Werry Drive) we're proposing a transition plan to gradually replace these with indigenous plants - including habitats and spaces for a variety of birds.



RIVER METAL (GRAVEL)

YOU ASKED
Will you remove river metal (gravel) on a regular basis?

ANSWER
We anticipate removing gravel below Kennedy-Good Bridge, with the majority of ongoing extraction undertaken in the reach upstream of the new Melling bridge. However, at this stage, volumes of gravel to be removed, and the frequency, are still being determined.

THE RIVER MOUTH

YOU ASKED
What thought has been given to protecting the river mouth and allowing flow into the harbour, particularly in southerly conditions, eg building a groin?

ANSWER
Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) ensures the river mouth is clear to allow floodwaters to flow out to the harbour. A sandbar will block the river mouth, if we stop extraction at the mouth, and increase the risk of flooding in the Hutt Valley floodplain. A groyne to protect against southerly conditions will have an impact, similar to that of a sandbar at the river mouth. GW has resource consent to extract gravel from the river mouth and keep the channel clear.

Note: see below for information about groynes.

STOPBANKS – A VIEW OF THE RIVER

YOU ASKED
With the high stopbanks will we be able to see the river?

ANSWER
The view of the river will depend on your location. If you're standing on the stopbank, you'll be able to see the river, but the view will change from a more open view of the city centre to a more plant-based/green one as you travel north. Over time we anticipate that a mix of developments in the city centre will integrate with the stopbanks that will provide a better view of the river.

SKATE PARK

YOU ASKED
What's happening to the skate park?

ANSWER
We won't be demolishing the old Melling skate park until the new skate park is constructed.

What's next – getting consent

A few people asked the question, 'Why don't you just get on with it?' And fair enough too. But there's a process we have to follow which involves applying for resource consent (permission to do what we've planned).

Building on feedback received, we're continuing to refine the planning application designs and plans for RiverLink:

- the cycle path layout
- anticipated methods of construction
- plans for managing car parking and the market during construction.

These plans and designs will form the basis of our Resource Management Act consent and designation application – due to be lodged this year. We're currently preparing the assessment of environmental effects required in support of the application.

Once the RiverLink application is lodged with the regulator, a copy of the application and supporting information will be available on the RiverLink website.

Keeping you in the loop

As soon as we know what the decision is we'll let everyone know. In the meantime we'll keep updating you about what else is going on, including answering your queries and comments about RiverLink. See details below for how to get in touch.

A new website

We have a new website and we're updating it with a lot more content. The RiverLink website that's currently available is just the start. We'll continue updating community questions on www.riverlink.co.nz

More information

For more information on the RiverLink project visit our website www.riverlink.co.nz or send our team an email at riverlink@gw.govt.nz

Did you know...

The term 'groyne' was first used in the 1580s for referring to a 'strong, low sea wall'. Possibly something to do with the old French word for a pig's snout (groin) because the wall looked like one.

A sturdy barrier

The wall/groyne acts as a sturdy barrier in the water (river or sea) near a bank (or beach). It can be made of rock or concrete.

Groynes act by pushing water away from the bank edge to help prevent erosion and trap silt, which in turn helps build up eroded areas and helps to avoid flooding.

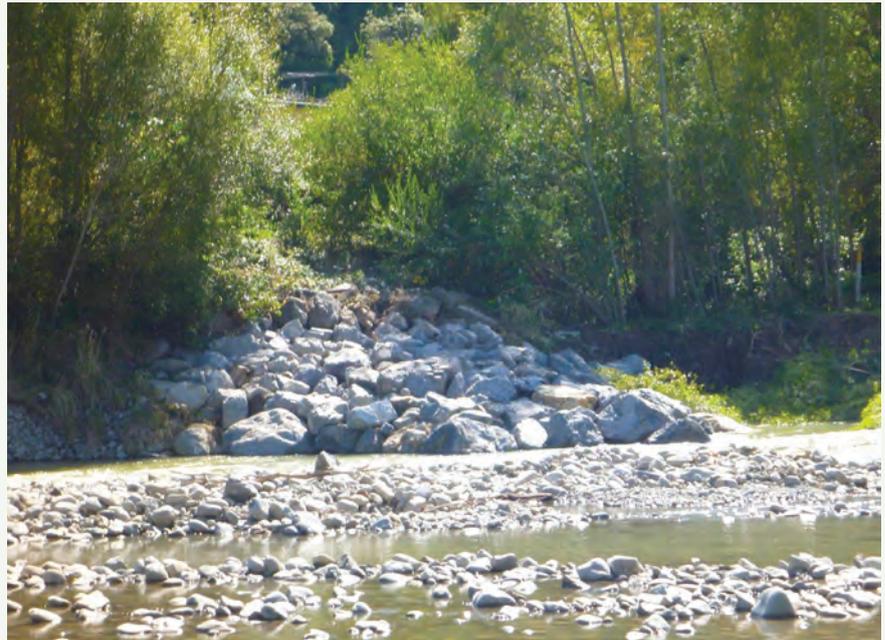


Image of a Charles Street groyne.



Image of a rock groyne at Manor Park.



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Email riverlink@gw.govt.nz your mailing address and we'll take you off the mailing database and add you to the email database.

