

2.30 – Green infrastructure corridor - section 32 evaluation for the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan

1	OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE	2
1.1	Subject Matter of this Section.....	2
1.2	Resource Management Issue to be Addressed	2
1.3	Significance of this Subject	2
1.4	Auckland Plan	3
1.5	Current Objectives, Policies, Rules and Methods	3
1.6	Information and Analysis	4
1.7	Consultation Undertaken.....	4
1.8	Decision-Making.....	4
1.9	Proposed Provisions	5
1.10	Reference to other Evaluations	5
2	OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND RULES	5
2.1	Objective	5
3	ALTERNATIVES	9
4	CONCLUSION	12
5	RECORD OF DEVELOPMENT OF PROVISIONS	12
5.1	Information and Analysis	12
5.2	Consultation Undertaken.....	13
5.3	Decision-Making.....	13

1 Overview and Purpose

This evaluation considers the proposed Green Infrastructure zone, in accordance with Section 32 of the RMA.

1.1 Subject Matter of this Section

The Green Infrastructure zone is a Special Purpose zone that will be principally applied to land in greenfields developments required for stormwater management purposes. Through structure planning requirements, land and facilities needed to mitigate stormwater effects and to avoid flood hazards are often identified. The Green Infrastructure zone provides a means by which this land and associated facilities can be managed in a sustainable manner.

The zone will be applied in the future, as structure planning of greenfields areas is undertaken and Plan Changes are prepared. It is not intended to replace any zones under the current version of the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (the Unitary Plan) with the Green Infrastructure zone.

1.2 Resource Management Issue to be Addressed

The RMA requires the council to avoid risks from flood hazards, where avoidance results in sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The avoidance and mitigation of the adverse effects on streams and receiving environments of stormwater runoff from urban activities is also a matter that the council has to address under the RMA.

Current planning practice is to avoid placing urban development in floodplains; to protect and enhance stream networks and to ensure that space is available on-site and within development areas to mitigate stormwater prior to discharge. Typically, this results in the need to set aside large areas for stormwater management in greenfields growth areas, often forming corridors.

A number of mechanisms are needed to ensure only appropriate activities take place in these stormwater management areas and to protect their functioning into the future. In some cases the stormwater management areas can be located within future lots, and their function protected by riparian margin controls and conditions attached to subdivision, land use and stormwater discharge consents. Overlays such as those associated with areas of native bush protection may also be relevant. In these cases, the zoning of the lot remains a zone that provides for development (such as residential or business), but with that part of the lot utilised for stormwater management protected by Unitary Plan rules, or specific covenants or consent notices.

In cases where the stormwater management areas form continuous corridors and involve large areas of land, a separate mechanism is required that clearly indicates the future use and maintenance of the land.

As per the structure planning provisions in the Unitary Plan, when growth areas are rezoned from Future Urban to relevant urban zones, it is expected that existing Unitary Plan zones / overlays should be used rather than new, unique zones created. There therefore needs to be an appropriate zone which can be applied to those areas set aside from development for floodplain and stormwater management. It is anticipated that the Green Infrastructure zone will be applied to land that will be vested in council.

1.3 Significance of this Subject

This zone does not represent a significant policy shift, as similar zones exist in legacy plans, and the purpose of the zone is consistent with current best practice. However the existing legacy zones take a variety of forms and some are specific to certain growth areas. The Green Infrastructure zone will be a generic zone able to be used across all of Auckland.

1.4 Auckland Plan

The Auckland Plan supports the approach of avoiding development in areas at risk from natural hazards.

Directive 7.15 of the Auckland Plan is to avoid placing communities and critical infrastructure and lifeline utilities in locations at risk from natural hazards, unless the risks are manageable and acceptable. Directive 7.14 is to take account of environmental constraints when considering the location and nature of any future development.

1.5 Current Objectives, Policies, Rules and Methods

Auckland Regional Policy Statement

The Auckland Regional Policy Statement (ARPS) reflects the most up to date region wide statutory approach to flood hazards. The relevant objective is to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of natural hazards on human life, property, infrastructure and the environment. The ARPS policies outline that development should generally not be allowed in the 1 per cent AEP¹ floodplain. The structure plan guide that is part of the ARPS identifies the need to take into account natural hazards when planning new growth areas.

Auckland Council Regional Plan: Air, Land and Water

The regional plan most relevant to stormwater management is the Auckland Council Regional Plan: Air, Land and Water (ALW Plan). Under the ALW Plan, discharge consents need to be obtained. Catchment level planning is expected to identify appropriate mitigation techniques. There has been an increasing focus on water sensitive design approaches as the most appropriate form of mitigation, where stormwater management mimics natural processes. Increasingly this has seen streams and riparian areas protected, and a variety of on-site and off-site stormwater detention and treatment facilities being used.

Legacy District Plans

There are several existing legacy zones with a similar role to that of the Green Infrastructure zone.

The Long Bay Structure Plan in the North Shore section of the Auckland Council District Plan has a **Long Bay 6 Stormwater Management zone**. The zone applies to the lower parts of the Long Bay catchment, including the main floodplain of the Vaughan Stream. The purpose of the zone is to manage development in a way which maintains and enhances water quality and ecological values. The zone only provides for a limited range of activities, involving stormwater treatment facilities and associated access; water and wastewater services; bridges, footpaths and below ground network infrastructure. These are all discretionary activities. Value is placed on the landscape character and visual amenity of the zone. Areas within the Long Bay 6 zone to be used for stormwater management are to be vested in Council at no cost to the Council.

The Manukau section of the Auckland Council District Plan has four different zones / overlays which deal with flooding and stormwater management:

- **Stormwater Management Area**, which generally applies to the 1 per cent AEP floodplain in greenfields areas. This is equivalent to an overlay, as there is also an underlying zone for all Stormwater Management Areas. Upon development, final boundaries are established and the land required for stormwater management is vested in Council, forming part of financial contribution requirements. Most development in Stormwater Management Areas, including the placement of any

¹ AEP stands for Annual Exceedance Probability. A 1% AEP flood event is one that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year.

buildings, gates or fences or other structures, requires consent as a Restricted Discretionary Activity.

- **Public Open Space 5 zone: Esplanade Reserves, Drainage and Water Quality Areas**, used throughout Manukau, includes land subject to flooding and which is required for stormwater management, but also includes land required for public access to water bodies. Allows informal recreation activities, maintenance and farming, and buildings can occur via a restricted discretionary activity consent.
- **Public Open Space 6 - Environmental Corridor zone**, which is specific to the Flat Bush area. Includes land to be set aside for informal recreation and leisure and to mitigate the adverse stormwater-related effects of urban development. Generally applies on either side of streams and floodplains. Allows informal recreation activities, maintenance and farming, and some small scale community activities can occur via restricted discretionary activity consent.
- **Public Open Space 6 overlying area**, applied to land in Flat Bush that Council intends to acquire and vest as public open space, which will then be rezoned Public Open Space 6.

The Waitakere section of the Auckland Council District Plan also uses the approach of setting aside land for stormwater management areas in new growth areas, but the mechanism is different to that used in Long Bay or Flat Bush. For example, the Northern Strategic Growth Area (Massey and Hobsonville) has concept plans for urban development which show suitable land uses. The concept plans include drainage / ecological open space areas which follow stream corridors and provide space for stormwater ponds. However these drainage/ecological open space areas are not zones; they provide guidance for the assessment of the development application. A more stringent consenting path is used if the indicated areas are not set aside through the required comprehensive development consent process

1.6 Information and Analysis

Preparation of the Green Infrastructure zone has involved the following steps:

- Stormwater Unit review of the March 2013 draft version of the Unitary Plan. This concluded that the draft does not adequately deal with management of land required for stormwater and flood hazard mitigation within areas of urban expansion
- Review of latest approaches to stormwater management in new growth areas
- Internal discussions and meetings with Stormwater Unit stormwater and planning experts about issues and options
- Presentation to Unitary Plan lead team
- Drafting of plan provisions for preferred approach.

Further details are given in Section 5.1.

1.7 Consultation Undertaken

No public consultation has been undertaken regarding this zone. This reflects timelines associated with the preparation of the Plan, but also the fact that the zone will be used in future rezoning (no zones in the current versions of the Unitary Plan will be altered to the Green Infrastructure zone).

1.8 Decision-Making

In June and July 2013 internal discussions took place about options, and approval was given from Manager Stormwater Planning to prepare a Green Infrastructure zone.

On 16 July 2013 a presentation was made to the Unitary Plan lead team on the need for a Green Infrastructure zone, and approval was given for the zone.

Further details are given in Section 5.3.

1.9 Proposed Provisions

The zone provides for the long term protection of land required for flood hazard and stormwater mitigation. As such, its primary purpose is to limit future use to those activities that are compatible with this objective namely:

- Stormwater management devices and flood mitigation works are permitted
- Infrastructure that has been approved by way of a structure plan or is 25m² or less in area is permitted. Any other infrastructure requires resource consent.
- Buildings are restricted from establishing, however buildings which accommodate public amenities may be authorised through resource consent.
- The zone permits both informal and organised recreation, allowing walking, cycling and public amenities, as secondary and complementary activities.

1.10 Reference to other Evaluations

The list below identifies the s32 evaluations of most relevance to this report. This section 32 report should be read in conjunction with the following evaluations:

- 2.24 Urban stormwater
- 2.25 Freshwater
- 2.26 Flooding
- 2.27 Intermittent streams and riparian margins.

2 Objectives, Policies and Rules

2.1 Objective

The following objective is proposed:-

- 1. Land and infrastructure needed to avoid flood hazards and to mitigate the adverse effects of stormwater runoff is managed in a way that retains these functions for the long term.*

The Green Infrastructure zone will be a Special Purpose zone. The zone will help give effect to the Regional Policy Statement sections of the Unitary Plan. A relevant objective in the RPS-layer of the Unitary Plan is Objective 6.7.2:

- Protect the natural function of floodplains and overland flow paths from the adverse effects of development and infrastructure.*

Appropriateness of the Objective

Part 2 of the RMA requires the council to avoid risks from flood hazards, where avoidance results in sustainable management of natural and physical resources (i.e. people and businesses can provide for their economic well being, while adverse effects on the environment are avoided). The proposed Unitary Plan approach to floodplains is discussed in the Flooding section 32 report, and involves avoiding placing development in flood plains in greenfields areas so that risks to people and property are not created.

Part 2 of the RMA also requires the adverse effects of stormwater from activities be avoided, remedied or mitigated. Additional stormwater runoff generated by larger scale developments needs to be mitigated by stormwater management devices, e.g. detention and treatment ponds and wetlands. The Unitary Plan places an emphasis on mitigating effects through the application of water sensitive urban design.

It is appropriate to provide for the management and long term functioning of:

- land in flood plains needed to be set aside from development to avoid placing people and activities in flood hazard areas; and
- stormwater infrastructure needed to mitigate the adverse effects of stormwater run off from urban activities.

Stormwater and flood plain management requirements are set out elsewhere in the Unitary Plan, and the Green Infrastructure zone is an appropriate and efficient tool that can be used in the implementation of these requirements.

2.1.1 Policies

There are nine policies for the Green Infrastructure zone.

Policies 1-3

The primary purpose of the zone is for stormwater management and the protection of the natural function of flood plains and stream networks.

The first set of policies therefore deal with the natural environment. They require that:

- the functions of natural freshwater systems be protected.
- soil compaction is minimised and
- riparian margins within the zone are planted in native vegetation.

These policies ensure that the land within the Green Infrastructure zone is able to effectively operate as a floodplain and/or mitigate stormwater. Soil compaction decreases the ability of soil to absorb stormwater and should be avoided, while riparian margin plantings increase stormwater absorption and decrease flow rates along with other beneficial ecological functions, and should be established. Maintaining or restoring the natural properties of natural freshwater systems is an efficient and sustainable approach to managing stormwater.

Policies 4-8

This set of policies address infrastructure and activities.

In terms of development within the zone, infrastructure approved in a structure plan is enabled, as well as below ground and small above ground infrastructure functionally required to locate within the zone. Generally if infrastructure has already been considered and approved through the structure plan process, then it is not to be subject to additional regulations.

Residential and commercial development is to be avoided, but informal and organised recreational opportunities may take place secondary to the stormwater management function of the zone.

Infrastructure and buildings need to avoid adverse effects on ecology and landscape, and be designed to a high standard. The limitations on development ensure that the zone continues to be effective in its primary purpose of managing stormwater, and that it maintains a pleasant amenity.

Policy 9

The final policy requires that land in the zone is vested in council for stormwater purposes following the establishment of stormwater management devices and planting. The vesting will generally be at no cost to council and can be carried out in stages. This is the same

approach taken for Long Bay 6 zone and is the most effective way of ensuring ongoing maintenance of floodplains and stormwater management devices, into the future.

2.1.2 Alternatives and costs and benefits of Policies

In considering the appropriateness of the above policies, consideration was given to a number of alternatives as to how the objective of long term management of land and facilities required for stormwater and flood hazard mitigation could be achieved. Refer discussion in section 3.0 below.

A particular cost issue to be addressed is how the zone is to be applied in situations where final designs of flood plains and stormwater management devices are not known. As highlighted in the review of existing legacy district plans, some plans such as the Manukau Plan, acknowledged that final boundaries of the zone can only be fixed upon subdivision. In other cases, like Long Bay, detailed modelling of flood plains and stormwater management approaches had preceded the structure plan and so boundaries were known with certainty.

It is anticipated that the indicative boundaries of the Green Infrastructure zone will be identified in structure plans, with final boundaries will be set by subdivision. Where the subdivision process results in minor differences between the lot boundaries and the zone boundaries identified during structure planning, then the land that is not required to be in the Green Infrastructure zone will be administered in accordance with the rules for the adjoining zone until the zoning is amended by subsequent omnibus type plan changes. In the interim the appropriate zoning of the land will be identified by consent notices.

2.1.3 Rules and other methods

The proposed rules are summarised in 1.9 above and detailed below:

Infrastructure

The following infrastructure activities are permitted:

- the operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure
- construction of below ground infrastructure
- construction of stormwater management devices or flood mitigation works that are to be vested in the council;
- above ground infrastructure less than 25m² in surface area;
- infrastructure approved by way of a structure plan incorporated in the Unitary Plan or network discharge consent (includes roads).

The activities enabled are similar to those listed in comparable legacy zones, however the rules are more permissive, in particular for infrastructure already assessed as part of a structure plan process. Potential adverse effects are managed by the land use and development controls that permitted activities are subject to, with these focused on ensuring that infrastructure does not compromise the primary stormwater management function of the zone.

Specific controls also apply to stormwater management devices and roads, car parking and associated structures:

- Stormwater management devices are to be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a way that maintains and enhances natural freshwater systems, integrates with adjoining open space and does not cause or exacerbate flooding. This ensures amenity is maintained and the devices contribute to sustainable management.
- If roads cross streams they need to use bridge-type structures, because culverts can get blocked and cause flooding.

Other infrastructure requires consent, as it needs to go through an assessment process to determine whether it is appropriate.

Development

The only new buildings which may establish - through a restricted discretionary activity consent - are those accommodating public amenities. This is a 'middle ground' between the building rules in the Long Bay and Flat Bush zone provisions. Existing buildings may be maintained, altered and demolished as a permitted activity. Other permitted development includes exterior lighting, fences and walls, and recreational trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms, walkways and cycleways; the same as in Long Bay and Flat Bush.

Buildings are subject to development controls, including a 6m height limit, 5m / 6m / 20m / 30m front / side and rear / riparian / lake yard, and a gross floor area of 50m². These controls were selected to enable buildings for a range of public amenities to be provided so that the zone can be used for compatible recreational activities, while ensuring buildings are limited to a scale where they do not interfere with the stormwater management function of the zone, and maintain a spacious character.

There is an impervious area threshold of 10% or 5,000m² applying to the zone.

Mana whenua

Customary use is a permitted activity. This activity is not featured in the Long Bay or Flat Bush provisions but the provision is consistent with other Unitary Plan zones intended to be in public ownership (e.g. Public Open Space).

Community activities

A range of community activities are permitted, including artworks, informal recreation and leisure, information facilities, public amenities and organised sports and recreation (not including clubrooms and accessory offices). These are all subject to the general land use controls to ensure that the activities do not compromise the primary stormwater management function of the zone. The provisions for community activities are more permissive than Long Bay and cover more activities. They are more similar to the Flat Bush provisions. The benefit of being more permissive is that there are more options for the use of the land, which is efficient, while still ensuring the zone purpose is not compromised.

All activities and development

Any activity unable to comply with land use or development controls is specified as a discretionary activity instead of the default restricted discretionary activity status.

2.1.4 Costs and Benefits of Proposed Policies and Rules

Environmental

The Green Infrastructure zone is first and foremost a green corridor. There will be significant ecological benefits from the protection of the stormwater detention and treatment and flood mitigation areas that form the backbone of the corridor. This includes water quality being improved or maintained, and quantities of stormwater generated from adjacent development being mitigated. The riparian planting required will also benefit water quality in freshwater bodies.

Social

The ability to establish complementary passive and organised recreational activities within the zone will benefit community wellbeing, while the provisions controlling design of any buildings and requiring planting are expected to result in a pleasant amenity for recreational users of the zone and for homes and businesses that will overlook the zone.

Cultural

The Green Infrastructure zone allows Mana Whenua customary use and being publicly owned, will protect access for Mana Whenua. The zone will promote the protection of freshwater quality, the mauri of streams and the functioning of natural systems, which is very important to Mana Whenua values and interests. By allowing for public recreation uses near freshwater systems, the relationship of the Mana Whenua with natural resources will be enhanced, in line with the aspirations expressed in the Mana Whenua section 32 report.

Economic

The costs of establishing the zone (setting aside the land, installing stormwater management devices, riparian planting etc) are borne by the applicant / developer and represent the cost of mitigating the adverse effects of development on the environment.

With the land vested in council at no cost, the council will be able to maintain the land and facilities in the zone, in perpetuity. Reserves contribution amounts under the council's development contributions policy will not be affected.

The following benefits flow from this:

- For private landowners, long term maintenance of flood plain land transfers to the council if land is vested
- Where vested, council has control over maintenance and use. No need for monitoring and enforcement
- Reserve contributions are directed at meeting passive and active recreational demands, not mitigating effects of developments.

Economic costs result from the land not being available for any residential or commercial development. These costs are borne by the developer and will likely be passed on to purchasers of properties in adjacent development areas, but this is not considered inefficient as these costs directly relate to mitigating the stormwater and natural hazard effects of the development.

The amenity of the zone is expected to be a positive factor in making the surrounding area a more attractive location for businesses and residents.

There has been no analysis which monetises costs and benefits.

2.1.5 Adequacy of Information and Risk of Not Acting

It is considered that there is sufficient information on which to base the proposed policies and methods.

3 Alternatives

The proposed preferred alternative is discussed in 2.0 above. The status quo alternative is outlined in 1.5 above.

1. Status quo: Based on the March 2013 draft of the Unitary Plan, the most likely choice of zone for stormwater management areas and floodplains would be the Public Open Space - Conservation zone.

2. Preferred - Green Infrastructure Zone (Special Purpose)

3. New Overlay or Precinct: instead of a Green Infrastructure zone, rely on the flooding rules to manage activities in flood plains and use an overlay or precinct over stormwater management areas which modifies the rules of the underlying zone.

4. Use of consent notices and/or consent conditions: upon subdivision, impose consent conditions or require consent notices (legal mechanism on property titles) to be placed over stormwater management devices and flood plains to protect their continued operation over the long term.

The table below discusses each alternative compared to the proposed alternative (alternative 1).

	Status Quo Alternative - Public Open Space Conservation zone or location-specific zones	Alternative 1 - new zone	Alternative 2 - new overlay or precinct	Alternative 3 - consent notices / consent conditions
Appropriateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the existing Public Open Space Conservation zone for stormwater management areas is not appropriate, as the zone is designed to manage natural areas. It does not enable stormwater management functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Green Infrastructure zone is tailored to the issue and enables stormwater mitigation and natural hazard avoidance consistent with Part 2 of the RMA The UP describes zones as 'areas where common land uses and activities are anticipated'. The Green Infrastructure zone meets this test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overlays and precincts apply 'where specific values exist' with rules applying to these values but with the underlying zone still providing for a range of activities. Overlays are not the most appropriate mechanism when needing to control the full range of activities in a defined area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent notices have been used before to ensure ongoing maintenance of stormwater management devices but it may not be appropriate to place a consent notice over an entire floodplain controlling what development can occur
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POS Conservation is ineffective for stormwater management, as stormwater infrastructure is a discretionary activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective at controlling a full range of compatible land use activities, and ongoing maintenance as is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overlay or precinct for stormwater management would often be at odds with the underlying zoning and the conflicting objectives applicable make this option a less effective way of achieving the stormwater management objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent notices on titles and/or conditions of consent upon development can protect stormwater infrastructure and could also be used to specify no development in floodplains; this would be legally effective
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POS Conservation is easily implemented as it is an existing Unitary Plan zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once confirmed an existing zone is easily implemented through Structure Plans across the region The Green Infrastructure zone works efficiently in tandem with the flood plain city wide rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once confirmed, a new overlay or precinct is easily implemented through Structure Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves separate legal processes outside the Unitary Plan and specific, wording for each incidence of a condition or consent notice depending on the decision maker, so lacks efficiency
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood mitigation and stormwater management facilities likely to require consent, including future modification and changes to original designs Debate as to whether the land in the zone should form part of the developments reserve contribution if that land is used to mitigate adverse effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land cannot be used for residential or commercial development and is likely to be vested in council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion over activities allowed in the area likely to lead to costly consent processes A specific green infrastructure overlay would need to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High potential for inconsistency in how stormwater management areas are treated across the region Need to monitor maintenance of stormwater facilities
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitary Plan will continue to have the same zones released to public in the draft. No new zone needs to be drafted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional consistency Public ownership provides long term maintenance and upkeep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land remains in private ownership – council does not need to maintain land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent notices and consent conditions can be tailored to the particular development proposal
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource consents are not granted for new and modified stormwater management facilities reducing the ability to manage stormwater effects of development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting zone boundaries ahead of detailed modelling of flood plains and stormwater management facilities – the zone may be too big or too small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tension between underlying and overlying zoning being used to reduce the extent of land that needs to be provided for mitigation purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the restrictions on land use are not explicit in the Unitary Plan, they are less accessible and people may not realise what they can and cannot do, particularly when land changes hands

4 Conclusion

A Green Infrastructure zone is considered to be a more appropriate method of maintaining land and facilities required to manage stormwater and avoid flood hazards, in new greenfields development areas, compared to other methods. The zone will be applied to larger, continuous land areas that form corridors. Isolated stormwater management facilities and smaller stream reaches and tributaries may remain in an urban zone, and be subject to other forms of protection.

A Special Purpose zone (as opposed to other mechanisms) provides certainty as to what activities are appropriate within stormwater management areas and flood plains and is transparent to users of the Unitary Plan. A dedicated zone is required, as none of the zones in the draft version of the Unitary Plan align with the range of activities that need to be enabled and those that need to be restricted.

A Green Infrastructure zone which can be applied to new growth areas through the Structure Plan processes required by the Unitary Plan will ensure consistency can be achieved across the region.

5 Record of Development of Provisions

5.1 Information and Analysis

The draft Unitary Plan was published for public feedback in March 2013. This was also an opportunity for departments of Council to review the latest version of the plan as a whole and consider how it dealt with their various areas of interest.

The Stormwater Unit of Auckland Council was responsible for the sections of the Unitary Plan dedicated to stormwater issues, however there are many linkages between stormwater and other topics. One of the topics of interest is the process of urban expansion and how stormwater is to be dealt with in areas of growth. The approach taken by the Stormwater Unit to future urban areas is that it is reasonable and necessary to completely avoid buildings and most development within the 1% AEP floodplain.

Part 1.9.3 of the March draft Unitary Plan outlines the area-based planning tools to be used when developing or redeveloping large areas of land. A structure plan is required when land is to change from a Future Urban zone to a zone or zones that allows urban development. The Unitary Plan states that existing Unitary Plan zones and overlays are to be used to implement structure plans, wherever possible. It is expected that standard plan zones be used as opposed to a range of location-specific zones, as was often the case for legacy structure plan areas.

From the review of the March draft, the Stormwater Unit identified that there was no suitable Unitary Plan zone which could be applied to land in the floodplain or land used for stormwater management, and which needs to be set aside from development.

A range of options which could potentially address the issue were discussed, and their effectiveness considered based on experience and practice. This included an examination of approaches taken in legacy district plans in terms of their methods, effectiveness and appropriateness for the Unitary Plan:

- Long Bay Structure Plan (North Shore)
- Manukau District Plan and Flat Bush Structure Plan (Manukau)
- Plan Changes 13-15 (Northern Strategic Growth Area, Waitakere)

The legacy district plan provisions also informed the development and drafting of specific zone provisions for the Green Infrastructure zone. The policy direction and the activities permitted within the zone are similar to legacy zones, but have been adapted to be appropriate across Auckland and fit the Unitary Plan format.

5.2 Consultation Undertaken

General public consultation has been undertaken on the draft Unitary Plan (refer to general consultation part of the s32 report). The approach of avoiding development in the floodplain of new urban areas, and the structure planning process for new urban areas was part of this consultation process.

No external consultation has been undertaken regarding the specific idea of a Green Infrastructure zone. The zone provisions have been prepared after the draft Unitary Plan was published in March 2013. Approval to proceed with the zone provisions was received in July 2013. The internal deadlines for the notification of the Unitary Plan do not allow for any meaningful consultation in this circumstance.

However the Green Infrastructure zone does not directly affect any party, as it does not apply to any land with a current urban zoning. It will be available for use most commonly within areas of urban expansion, currently zoned "Future Urban", where it can be applied to appropriate land through the structure planning process.

5.3 Decision-Making

For the decision making process on the Unitary Plan as a whole refer to the general decision-making process part of the s32 report.

For this topic, the decision-making process has been as follows:

June - July 2013: internal discussions in Stormwater Unit about options, approval given from the Manager Stormwater Planning to pursue a Green Infrastructure zone as the best option.

16 July 2013: presentation was made to the Unitary Plan lead team on the need for a Green Infrastructure zone, and approval was given for the zone at that meeting.

14 August 2013: presentation on stormwater including the utilisation of this zone and provisions to Auckland Plan Committee workshop. Agreement in principle given to incorporating zone and provisions into proposed Unitary Plan.