



## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

**TO:** Environment & Planning Committee

**FROM:** Michael Higgins, Chairperson

**REFERENCE:** S611

**SUBJECT:** **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – EP08/04/11** - Report prepared for 24 April Meeting

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During the last six weeks, public presentation of planning for proposals for Mapua and Richmond East have occurred. They were well attended by interested members of each community and well serviced by TDC staff. I met with the executive of the Mapua Community Association and encouraged them to work within the process to pursue their objectives. Given that it is some years now since the process began, they were of a mind to begin the planning over again.

A TDC workshop meeting has occurred, discussing issues regarding the Motueka River stopbanks and associated risks to Motueka town. It appears to me that all of the options to manage this issue rely on the existing secondary flood path that naturally exists across the plain and out to sea. Even if we build the banks to a 100-year flood capacity, the potential remains for them to be breached. For some decades now Nelson Catchment Board and now TDC staff, have recommended that planning provision be made for the retention of this secondary flood path. Some years ago, Council chose not to identify the flood path on the basis that they had confidence in the banks to prevent flooding of Motueka town, and promoted the case that property values in Motueka would be penalised by identifying the flood path. I must say that as the Chair of this Committee I am not at all comfortable with this position, particularly in the light of the information available to the stopbank workshop. Given that the secondary flood path is a key factor in any flood control option, it is my opinion that identification of the flood path, and protection of it has urgency. Council is working towards zoning changes west of Motueka and the opportunity to include the flood channel identification exists through this process. It is my recommendation that this Committee resolve to request advice from the Policy Manager, and also Engineering Department advice on this matter.

TRMP Plan change hearings have proceeded and I wish to acknowledge the effort of Sonya Luesink-Sladen in working through the Bundle of Five plan changes together, and to the Committee for their commitment to tidy up these issues. The decision to relax design specifications in Richmond South will lead away from the intensive housing development that Council has been pursuing, however it does acknowledge the difficulty in matching the market to planning provisions. While I agree that we have made the correct decision, the objective of encouraging higher density housing remains and we will need to find a way for the market to achieve it.

I also wish to acknowledge the work of Bob Askew in servicing the Resource Consent Hearing Committees. Planning matters come before these committees because they require Council discretion in order to make decisions on them. Bob's willingness to look outside the square and use his extensive experience has been helpful. Another door has opened, and I welcome Jeremy Butler to the role and look forward to his genuine and pragmatic approach to this task.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends under the entire name.

Michael Higgins  
**Chair, Environment & Planning Committee**