

Hawke's Bay Regional Council Staff Responses to questions issued in Minute 2

Proposal for Hawke's Bay Regional Pest Management Plan

Staff have provided responses to the questions provided by the Hearing Panel by way of Minute 2 dated 20 July 2018.

1. *For mothplant, can a Cost Benefit Analysis be prepared for mothplant to be moved from an Organism of Interest to Progressive Containment, particularly for urban areas in the Region?*

The pest plant team undertook a scoping exercise for the development of a Progressive Containment programme for mothplant. The total cost for implementing such a programme is \$340,000 per annum for at least a 10 year period. A high level overview of the programme is provided below.

Mothplant is currently widespread across the major urban areas, including Napier, Hastings, Havelock North and Wairoa. Staff currently focus on controlling mothplant in areas of ecological importance and throughout the rural area to prevent establishment. Progressively containing mothplant within the urban area would require significant public engagement and a robust surveillance programme where staff actively search properties in known mothplant areas. GPS data capture would be an integral component of this programme along with follow up site visits. Learnings from the privet programme can be applied to this programme, such as staff/contractors undertaking the control of the pest plant, not occupiers. This is due to occupiers not adequately controlling the pest, resulting in increased monitoring and compliance costs. Based on the current known distribution of mothplant, staff propose the following:

- Two full time staff would be required to implement a detailed mothplant progressive containment programme, including surveillance at a property level, spatial data capture, manual control, programmed return times and implementing a communication plan. The pest plant team have recommended a suburb by suburb approach.
- A budget of \$40,000 for control products, contractor assistance and in delivering the communications plan e.g. pamphlets.

A cost benefit analysis can be completed for mothplant. This will be undertaken if the hearing panel direct that a Progressive Containment mothplant programme be included in the plan. Staff predict, based on the results of other programmes, that this programme would likely have low comparative benefits for the expenditure required.

2. *Inclusion of feral rabbits in Site-led Programmes (refer to Table 11 of Proposed RPMP).*

Rabbits are currently included in the plan as Sustained Control, region-wide. Occupiers are required to maintain rabbits at or below level 4 on the Modified McLean Scale over any part of their land. This includes areas contained in the Site-led programme. HBRC currently provides a free service to land occupiers who have rabbit issues. A rabbit control expert (contractor) will undertake a site inspection and provide advice on the best tools to be used for controlling rabbits, such as habitat modification, grazing regimes, warren ripping, fumigation, poisoning and shooting. Adding rabbits to the Site led programme would not provide any additional funding or coverage regionally.

3. Goat Coordinated Management Areas policy and rules to be incorporated into the Proposed RPMP.

A feral goat coordinated management area programme including rules has been drafted below. A background on feral goats in Hawke's Bay and RPMP review process has also been drafted to provide a more complete picture.

Background

Goats (*Capra hircus*) were introduced to New Zealand in the 1770s. They were first liberated as a food source and to clear weeds, and later to provide fibre for commercial industries. Goats were easily domesticated, and as a result were moved throughout the country as land was cleared for farming and settlement. Populations of wild goats have largely been a result of escapees from farms and deliberate releases.

Within the Hawke's Bay region, goats are considered an economic resource and a farm management tool. They are also a significant threat to biodiversity values, particularly in sites where conservation values are high.

A regional stakeholder group was established by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) in 2008. The group brings together stakeholders affected by feral goats and includes representatives from Federated Farmers, forestry companies, Transit NZ, Department of Conservation, QE II and other agencies.

In order to ascertain the views of the farming community, where there were known conflicting views on goat control, a survey was conducted in the northern Hawke's Bay region during July and August 2011. The survey area totalled 100,265ha and 61% of landowners responded with properties comprising 72% of the survey area.

Feral goat presence was reported on 78% of respondent's properties. Attitudes were divided towards the status of feral goats in the region. Of those with goats on their property, the majority (57% in land area) consider goats to be a pest, although these only represent 31% of individual respondents. Conversely owners of 27% of the land area (45% of respondents) regard goats as an asset that contribute to their properties' financial performance. The remainder (15% by land area; 23% of respondents) either consider them to be neither a pest nor an asset, both pest and asset, or a recreational asset only.

Additionally there are within region differences in attitudes towards feral goats. Landowners of 70-80% percent of the land area in the Waiau and Tutira zones consider goats to be a pest, compared with only 30% of the landowners by area in the Nuhaka, Wairoa South and Wairoa North zones.

Damage to fences was ranked the most serious impact of feral goats on Hawke's Bay farms. A reduction in the costs of weed control was the most valued benefit. Almost 60% percent of respondents (45% of land area) draft animals to processing plants, and over 50% (33% of land area) use them for weed control. Only 11% of respondents use animal husbandry practices.

Table 1: Feral goat status in the Hawke's Bay Region

(Percentage of respondents with goats on-property)

	% of area	% respondents with goats
Pest	54.3%	28.8%
Neither a pest nor an asset	11.3%	20.7%
Financial or recreational asset	34.4%	50.5%
Total	100.00%	100.00%

Current Management Approach

Feral goats are currently declared a pest under the Site Specific Control section of the Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS). Taking direction from the feral goat regional stakeholder group and the data gathered from the feral goat survey, a non-regulatory goat coordinated management area programme (CMA) was developed on the principal of voluntary co-ordinated management. Two CMAs have been established, Maungaharuru (Boundary Stream) and Mahia Peninsula.

A threat to the current CMA programme is landowners opting out at any stage resulting in significant risk to the success of the programme and safeguarding of ratepayer and stakeholder investment. The current objective to protect high value sites from damage is not being achieved under the current regime due to not all land owners agreeing to sign up to the CMA programme and goats continuing to cause significant damage to native habitat and species across the Hawkes Bay region.

Secondly, there is a significant planned regional investment in planting trees over the next two decades. Feral goat management, particularly in northern Hawke's Bay, will be an essential component to this. There is a need for more effective mechanisms to protect landowner planting investments than the current non-binding CMA model.

Discussion document feedback

It must be noted that there was a mixed response to the discussion document from the community on the management of feral goats:

QUESTION 3: FERAL GOATS

What do you believe is the best method for HBRC to manage feral goats?

<i>Status quo - non-regulatory approach</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>Creating binding Goat Management Areas</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Add a boundary control rule to protect native plantings</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>15%</i>

Current programme included in the Proposed RPMP

The proposed RPMP includes feral goats in the site led programme. This programme contains a feral goat specific good neighbour rule (500m), with the aim of protecting areas of ecological importance and native plantings.

As per the request through hearing panel Minute 2, staff have drafted a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area programme, for potential inclusion in the Hawke's Bay Regional Pest Management Plan. If the following programme was to be included in the plan, staff recommend amending the feral goat good neighbour rule (GNR) to apply to both the Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area programme and the Site-led programme.

Proposed feral goat CMA programme for inclusion in the RPMP

6.5.3 Feral goat

Description

Feral (or wild) goats vary in size and their colour can be white, black, brown or a combination of colours. Both sexes have horns. Adult males stand approximately 70 cm high and weigh 50-60 kg. Females are smaller. Females begin breeding at 6 months and can breed twice a year. Twins are common. Males can mate from 6 months old but are usually excluded by other males until 3-4 years of age. They inhabit and exploit a wide range of rural and forest habitats and favours steep, dry, sunny faces. Their diet is wide-ranging.

Adverse effects

On farmland, feral goats damage fences, graze pasture, transfer animal health issues, damage the structure of exotic plantings, and browse riparian plantings. In indigenous vegetation areas, feral goats alter the composition and structure of the under-storey, inhibit regeneration and often completely removing favoured food plants from an ecosystem. Long-term intensive goat browse can ultimately lead to forest collapse and have a direct impact on fauna species, sediment runoff and water quality.

On the other hand, feral goats do provide some economic benefits to New Zealand. They are used as a management tool of woody weeds, particularly blackberry and gorse, in some hill country areas. Feral goats also have the potential to generate revenue from the production of meat and fibre. Some value is also attached to the opportunities goats provide for recreational hunting and the fact that they can be used as a source of bonus payments for farm staff.

Where a resource, in this case feral goats, is used to derive economic benefit and there is likely to be significant externality effects, management intervention is required. Such management, whereby externalities are internalised, mitigated or minimised is best achieved by including feral goats in the Proposal.

Purpose of Feral Goat Coordinated Management Areas

Taking direction from the feral goat regional stakeholder group and the data gathered from a feral goat survey undertaken in 2011, a non-regulatory feral goat coordinated management area programme (CMA) was developed on the principal of voluntary co-ordinated management. Two CMAs were established, one at Maungaharuru (Boundary Stream) and one at Mahia Peninsula. Although these two programmes have resulted in significant reductions in feral goat numbers, landowners opting out at any stage has resulted in significant risk to the success of the programmes and safeguarding of ratepayer and stakeholder investment. The current objective to protect high value sites from damage is potentially not able to be achieved at some sites under the current regime due to not all land owners agreeing to sign up to the CMA programme. Goats are also continuing to cause significant damage to native habitat and species across the Hawkes Bay region.

In comparison, the Hawkes Bay Regional Council has been controlling possums through its Possum Control Area (PCA) programme since 2000. There has been a very high level of support for the PCA programme, and a strong belief by land occupiers within the programme that it is providing value for

money for programme participants. The programme has grown to over 600,000ha and is exceeding its target with an average residual trap catch (RTC) of 2.3% across all PCA programmes. Two key components that have been attributed to the success of this programme are the sign up process and the supporting regulatory role of the Biosecurity Act. Using this model, through creating binding Feral Goat Coordinated Management Areas, the community decides whether feral goat management is desired and is clear on the regulatory requirements they are committing to. The Biosecurity Act would then underpin the programme, protecting the investment made by Council, funding partners and land occupiers.

Process for forming a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area

A Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area is created once written agreements have been entered into with 75% or more of the total land area. The Council will coordinate initial feral goat control work within the entire Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area. Once feral goats have been reduced to low levels, occupiers within the area are required to maintain feral goats in accordance with this Protocol.

A Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area could be created anywhere in the Hawke's Bay region. Although not limited to, it is likely such an area would be 5,000ha or greater. Initial focus will be placed on protecting large-scale investment in afforestation. All Feral Goat Coordinated Management Areas will be mapped and stored by Council. These can be made available upon request to Hawke's Bay Regional Council. Once the 75% land area threshold has been reached, Council has given notice to all affected land occupiers within the mapped area and initial control work has been completed within the area, Plan Rule 10 then becomes binding to all occupiers within the Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area.

Objective 13

Over the duration of the Plan, sustainably control feral goats on land contained within Feral Goat Coordinated Management Areas to zero density or to levels specified within a Written Management Agreement approved by Hawke's Bay Regional Council, to minimise adverse effects on environmental values and economic well-being within the Hawke's Bay region.

Principal measures to be used

Appropriate measures drawn from **the requirement to act, council inspection, service delivery, advocacy and education** described in section 5.3 of the Proposal will be used to achieve the Objective.

Alternatives considered

Relying on voluntary control is unlikely to result in efficient or effective outcomes. Requiring occupiers to undertake control is not considered equitable because many of the benefits of control accrue to persons other than to the land occupiers upon whose land the sites are located. It is therefore preferable for beneficiaries to fund the Council to undertake the control programmes. There are no alternative measures that provide for satisfactory inspection, education or advocacy measures.

Plan Rule 10

An occupier within a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area, shall maintain feral goat densities on their land to either zero density or to levels specified within a Written Management Agreement approved by Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

A breach of this rule creates an offence under section 154N (19) of the Act.

Explanation of rule

The reason for this rule is to protect significant investment in reducing feral goat densities on their property by ensuring feral goat densities remain at zero density at which economic well-being and environmental values are no longer threatened.

Statutory obligation

Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, which prevent the communication, release, spread, sale and propagation of pests, must be complied with. These sections should be referred to in full in the Biosecurity Act 1993. A breach of these rules creates an offence under section 154(O) of the Act.

Plan Rule 11

Note: This is designated a Good Neighbour Rule

Except where an occupier of land has entered into a Written Management Agreement approved by Hawke's Bay Regional Council, an occupier adjacent to a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area shall, on receipt of a written direction from an Authorised Person destroy all feral goats on the land that they occupy within 500 metres of the adjoining property boundary where the occupier of the adjoining property is managing feral goats across their property as part of a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area.

A breach of this rule creates an offence under section 154N (19) of the Act.

Explanation of rule

The reason for this rule is to manage the spread of feral goats causing unreasonable costs to the adjacent occupier where active feral goat management is being undertaken by that occupier.

Advice Note

Council will only administer the rule upon receiving a written complaint from the adjacent land occupier. This rule only applies when feral goats are spreading to an adjoining property that is actively managing feral goats as part of a Feral Goat Coordinated Management Area. If a land occupier has an agreed feral goat Written Management Agreement with Council and is actively carrying out their requirements under this management agreement, they will not receive a written direction from an Authorised Person.

Statutory obligation

Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, which prevent the communication, release, spread, sale and propagation of pests, must be complied with. These sections should be referred to in full in the Biosecurity Act 1993. A breach of these rules creates an offence under section 154 (O) of the Act.

4. Can staff consider including hornwort as a pest for Site-led Programmes?

Hornwort is currently listed on the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA). Under Section 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 no person can sell, propagate, breed, distribute or otherwise spread any pest in this Plan, or unwanted organism. Not complying with Section 52 or 53 is an offence under the Act, and may result in penalties noted Section 157(1).

Unfortunately hornwort is well established in Hawke's Bay. Council does not currently have the capacity to undertake hornwort control as it is very expensive and requires special equipment. If control was considered the appropriate response, then HBRC would need to substantially increase its resourcing over current levels.

Staff have also been advised by the water science team that careful consideration needs to be given to potential outcomes of hornwort control. There is a risk that the removal (or reduction) of hornwort could lead to adverse deteriorations in ecological structure and function. The worst-case scenario is that a lake could switch from a stable state that is plant dominated to an algae and/or cyanobacteria dominated state. These changes may be difficult to reverse. While hornwort removal could be worthwhile at some lakes, it would require an in-depth study of water quality before and after. In addition, hornwort would need to be removed from all streams, ditches, etc.

Unless rules requiring land occupiers to control hornwort were to be included in the RPMP, staff do not see the value in including it within the Regional Pest Management Plan. Working alongside affected land occupiers outside of the Regional Pest Management Plan is the preferred option. Land occupiers could draft up a funding bid to control hornwort of which HBRC could be a partner alongside other funding partners.

5. As an alternative to Old Man's Beard control along the Ruahine and Kaweka Ranges, what control of other organisms may provide "better value"?

Staff have reanalysed current proposed programmes, considering different options, and worked through potential programmes that could be included in the Plan. Staff have agreed that they see value in creating an old man's beard buffer along the Ruahine and Kaweka Ranges, and support its inclusion in the Plan.

If this programme is included in the Plan, staff recommend undertaking initial surveys in the area to accurately cost the programme. Upon completion, a request for funding would then be made in the 2019/20 annual plan. Staff currently estimate this programme would cost \$25,000 per annum in contractor time and would take 10 staff days to manage (surveillance, land owner liaison, contractor management). It is important to reiterate that this is an estimate based on current known distribution. Sites will need to be actively managed for a minimum of 15 years due to seed source therefore costs are not anticipated to reduce over the first 10 year period.

The following programme has been drafted for consideration of inclusion in the Plan

6.3.7 Old man's beard

Description

Is a deciduous, perennial vine that grows up to 5m per year. Older vines are woody, often brown or grey, although young vines are ribbed and often purple in colour. The leaf is composed of five leaflets. Loosely branched inflorescences of creamy-white flowers (2-3 cm across) are produced from December to May, which then produce conspicuous fluffy greyish white seed heads in autumn, winter and early spring. Each plant produces more than 10,000 seeds per sq m. Seed has an awn that enables it to bury into the soil for germination.

The seeds are dispersed by birds, wind, water or gravel distribution. It can also grow from stem fragments. Old man's beard uses other plants for support and forms a dense canopy that deprives the support plants of sunlight and eventually kills them. Its habitat is typically scrubland, wasteland, riverbanks, hedgerows and native bush margins.

Old man's beard is widespread south of State Highway 5 in Hawke's Bay. Council do not believe that the benefits of control in this area would outweigh the costs imposed on land occupiers in requiring them to control old man's beard. However, Council do see the value in working in a partnership with the Department of Conservation in preventing old man's beard from establishing in the Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges. As shown in Figure 8, a 500m buffer zone has been created along the edge of the Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges of which the good neighbour rule will apply. Council will pay for

control of old man's beard within this buffer area, upon forming an agreed work programme with the Department of Conservation.

North of State Highway 5 in Hawke's Bay, old man's beard is not so widespread. Significant investment in controlling old man's beard has been undertaken in this area and Council believes that it is still worthwhile to require land occupiers to maintain zero density within this area (Figure 8 below). There are a large number of native bush fragments throughout this landscape that would be significantly negatively impacted by Old man's beard if left unmanaged.

The old man's beard Progressive Containment area boundary is defined for this Proposal as being the line defined by State Highway 5 from the region's western boundary to its junction with State Highway 2, then along State Highway 2 from its junction with State Highway 5 to the Esk River, then down the Esk River from the State Highway 2 bridge to the sea as shown in Figure 9.

Adverse effects

Forms dense, heavy, permanent masses that can smother and kill all plants to highest canopy. It also prevents recruitment of replacement plants, particularly native species.

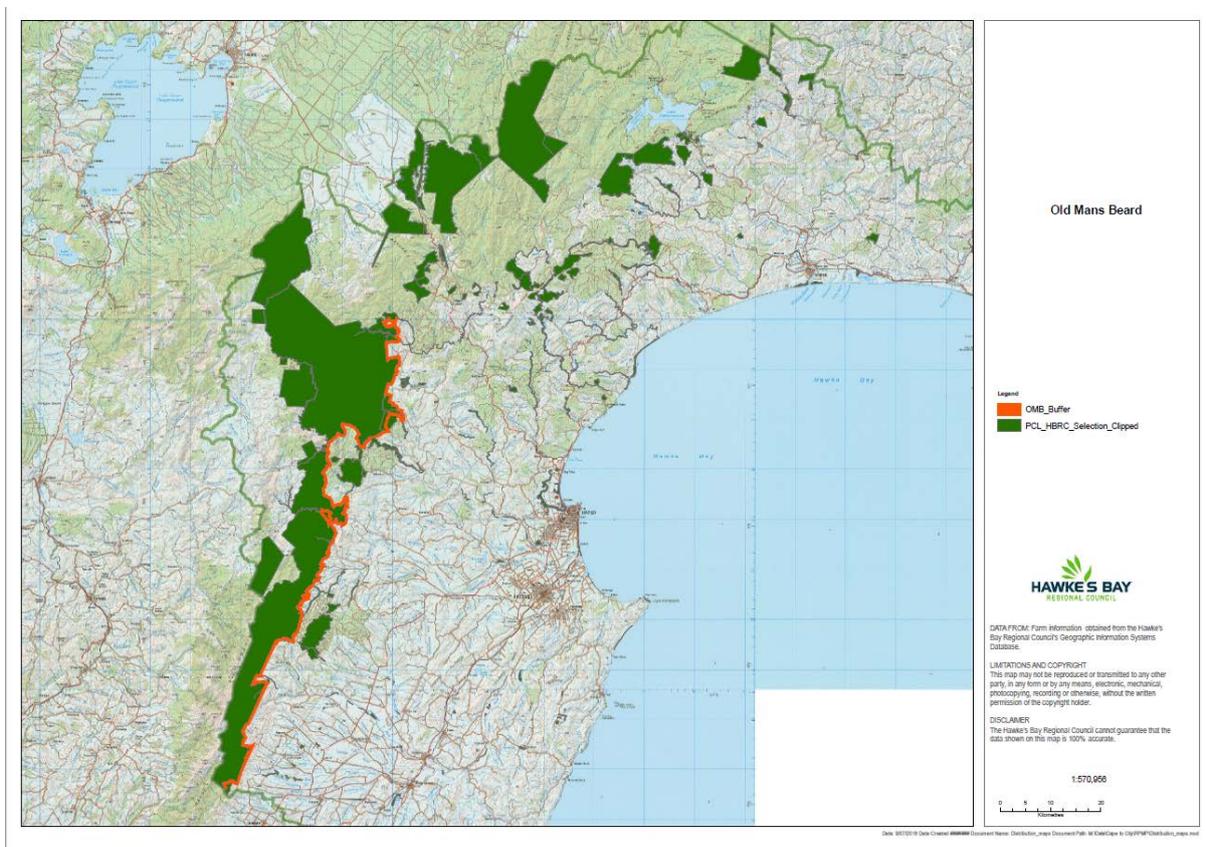


Figure 8: Old man's beard buffer area. *(Please note a better map will be produced for the Plan).*

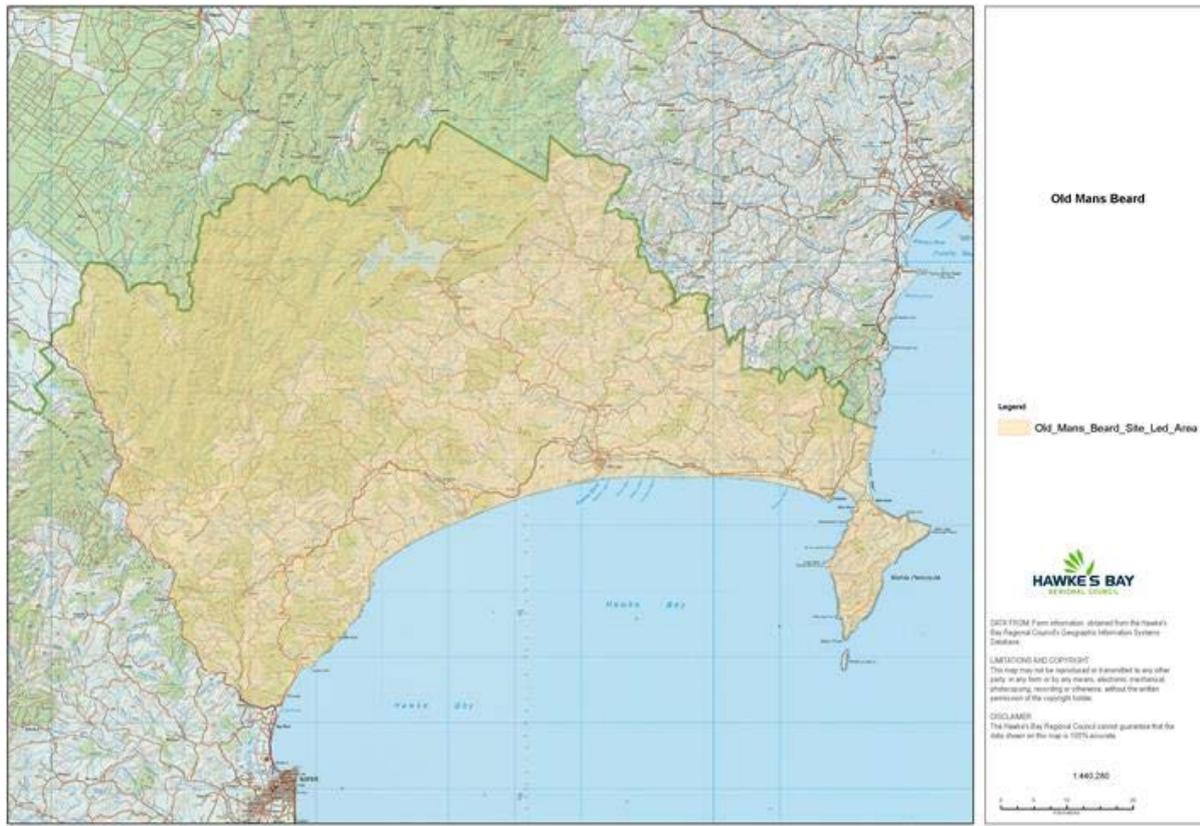


Figure 9: Old man's beard containment area

Objective 5

Over the duration of the Plan, progressively contain and reduce the geographic distribution or extent of Old man's beard within the Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges buffer area (Figure 8) and containment area (Figure 9) to prevent adverse effects on economic well-being and the environment of the Region.

Principal measures to be used

Appropriate measures drawn from **the requirement to act, council inspection, service delivery, advocacy and education** described in section 5.3 of the Proposal will be used to achieve the Objective.

Alternatives considered

Relying on voluntary control (do nothing approach) is unlikely to result in efficient levels of control. It is also beyond the resources of Council to fully undertake control. However, providing partial assistance to willing occupiers is in the interests of the wider beneficiaries and is therefore the preferred approach. There are no alternative measures that provide for satisfactory inspection, education or advocacy measures.

Plan Rule 5

Except where an occupier of land has entered into a Written Management Agreement approved by Hawke's Bay Regional Council, an occupier of land shall destroy all old man's beard plants on their land within the containment area defined in Figure 9.

A breach of this rule creates an offence under section 154N (19) of the Act.

Explanation of rule

The reason for this rule is to prevent the spread of the plants to land that is currently free of infestations and to progressively increase the extent of clear land.

Advice note

Council will pay for control of old man's beard within the Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges buffer area (Figure 8), upon forming an agreed work programme with the Department of Conservation.

Statutory obligation

Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, which prevent the communication, release, spread, sale and propagation of pests, must be complied with. These sections should be referred to in full in the Biosecurity Act 1993. A breach of these rules creates an offence under section 154(O) of the Act.

Plan Rule 6

Note: This is designated a Good Neighbour Rule

Except where an occupier of land has entered into a Written Management Agreement approved by Hawke's Bay Regional Council, an occupier, on receipt of a written direction from an Authorised Person, shall destroy all old man's beard on the land that they occupy within 500 metres of the adjoining property boundary where the occupier of the adjoining property is managing old man's beard across their property.

A breach of this rule creates an offence under section 154N (19) of the Act.

Explanation of rule

The reason for this rule is to manage the spread of old man's beard causing unreasonable costs to the adjacent occupier where active old man's beard management is being undertaken by that occupier.

Advice Note

Council will only administer the rule upon receiving a written complaint from the adjacent land occupier. This rule only applies when old man's beard is spreading to an adjoining property that is actively managing old man's beard. If a land occupier has an agreed old man's beard Written Management Agreement with Council and is actively carrying out their requirements under this management agreement, they will not receive a written direction from an Authorised Person.

Statutory obligation

Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, which prevent the communication, release, spread, sale and propagation of pests, must be complied with. These sections should be referred to in full in the Biosecurity Act 1993. A breach of these rules creates an offence under section 154 (O) of the Act.

6. Can staff review Mana Whakahono a Rohe arrangements and consider whether any aspects are appropriate for Iwi consultation processes in the Proposed RPMP development?

Mana Whakahono ā Rohe provide an opportunity for tangata whenua and local authorities to work together on environmental issues under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

The introduction of the Mana Whakahono ā Rohe provisions in the 2017 amendments to the RMA was designed to provide tangata whenua with more opportunity for meaningful participation in RMA processes and decisions. Mana Whakahono ā Rohe is a tool that tangata whenua and local authorities can use to discuss and agree on how they will work together under the RMA, in a way best suiting their local circumstances. Unfortunately staff were unaware of the existence of this document and had relied on the advice provided by the three Regional Planning Committee

members that sat on the Biosecurity Working Group in guidance on the best method for undertaking Iwi consultation for the Regional Pest Management Plan.

Although staff had not completed reviewing the 70 page document in its entirety, they saw great value in the process the Mana Whakahono ā Rohe outlines in undertaking Iwi engagement. Following the proposed process for the first time in the Biosecurity space would likely take considerable time and would have been outside the timeframe of the current RPMP review process. However, staff see great potential in this document providing the framework for achieving the commitment made in the proposed amendment for Section 2.5 Relationship with Māori. Mana Whakahono provides an opportunity for Council and tangata whenua (through their iwi authority or hapū) to have a meaningful dialogue about their respective visions and objectives for an area. Parties can record in their Mana Whakahono how they could work together to achieve identified outcomes. From this, meaningful programmes could be developed and included in future plans through a partial plan review or during a full plan review process.

Outcome: staff recommend using Mana Whakahono ā Rohe as a template to work closer with Iwi of Hawkes Bay in achieving the proposed following inclusion within the RPMP: *‘Over the duration of this plan, Council will seek to build a stronger relationship with tangata whenua and build on how this plan can better achieve their goals and aspirations for pest management. Māori involvement in biosecurity is an important part of exercising kaitiakitanga. Pest management will play an important role in protecting wāhi tapu and taonga, restoring the mauri of whenua and wai māori, and enhancing the well-being of local communities. Successful pest management is holistic in nature and recognises the interconnectedness of people and the environment. To achieve these outcomes for the rohe, all must work together. Council will seek engagement from tangata whenua in holding conversations on what this will look like. Work programmes to be undertaken that will assist with this relationship building and link to this plan are the development of a cultural framework and survey of taonga sites through the Biodiversity Action Plan, the development of a Predator Free Hawke’s Bay initiative, growing the Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne projects.’*

7. The Panel recommends that Sections 2.1 -2.5 and Figures 2-5 be reviewed to include Iwi initiatives/mauri.

Staff have reviewed Sections 2.1 – 2.5 and have the following recommendations:

- Include a circle in Figure 2 with the following text: “Aspirations of Hapu and Iwi”
- Include reference to the Maori Biosecurity network in Figure 4
- Addition of the following paragraph to Section 2.5 “ With the expansion of the predator Free Hawkes Bay project, hapū and iwi will be more closely engaged into RPMP initiatives including those related to predator control. This is likely to include hapū cadetships, processes that relate to Wahi Taonga site identification and knowledge transfer”.

8. Amend Section 7.1 to include Organisms of Interest for reporting annually.

The below table will be inserted into Section 7.1:

PEST	ANTICIPATED RESULT	INDICATOR	METHOD OF MONITORING	FREQUENCY OF MONITORING	FREQUENCY OF REPORTING
Organisms of Interest					
Argentine ant	Support community in minimising adverse effects of these pests on natural ecosystems.	Number of community projects receiving assistance in managing these pests.	A register is kept containing number of community projects receiving assistance.	Annually	Annually
Australian tubeworm					
Banana passionfruit					
Boneseed					
Broom					
Canada goose					
Chilean flame creeper					
Climbing spindle berry					
Blue Morning Glory/Convolvulus	Minimise the impact of these pests at sites managed through the Ecosystem Prioritisation process.	Number of hectares managed under the Ecosystem Prioritisation process.	Sites are mapped on ArcGis		
Eastern Rosella					
Feral goose					
Feral pigeon					
Hornwort					
Magpie					
Mothplant					
Parrot's feather					
Purple ragwort					
Reed Sweet Grass					
Wasp German and European					
Water celery					
Wild cotoneaster					

9. Nassella tussock appears to be omitted from Plan Rule 5.

Staff thank the hearing panel for picking up this omission. Nassella tussock will be added to Plan Rule 5.

10. Panel suggests an improvement for layout is to include the objective text within the objective heading box. For example:

<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Over the duration of the Plan, where possible, eradicate possums within those areas identified as Possum Eradication Areas in accordance with the Hawke's Bay Regional Possum Control Technical Protocol (PN 4969), to minimise adverse effects on environmental values and economic well-being within the Hawke's Bay region.</p>

Staff agree with this recommendation and will incorporate this in the draft plan

11. Panel recommends that within Section 2.3 commentary is made on biological control research and investigation (e.g. calamint SFF funding announcement, 9 July 2018).

Staff propose that this information is better included in a Biosecurity Strategy, as biocontrol sits outside a Regional Pest Management Plan as one of many tools in controlling pests, both in and outside of a RPMP. A quick search was undertaken of Councils who have Regional Pest Management Plans that are now operative. None of these had reference of biocontrol except for being mentioned as a control option within the text for a particular species.

If the hearing panel feel as though the plan should reference Biocontrol then the following text could be included under Section 2.3:

Council supports the establishment of biocontrol programmes, including sourcing funding, initiating research or coordinating community groups. Where biocontrol agents are already available, Council will support initiatives to maintain self-sustaining populations of biocontrol agents throughout the Region, subject to resources. Council may undertake to release biocontrol agents for these pests where they are available and release is appropriate. A good example of biocontrol initiatives is lesser calamint, which is difficult to control with herbicides and is not palatable to stock. Council has worked closely with Maanaki Whenua and affected land occupiers through the Hawke's Bay Lesser Calamint Control Group which has been successful in securing a \$221,000 sustainable farming fund for phase one of a programme to explore biocontrol.

12. Submitter 20.19 makes reference to illegal releases of pigs/deer. Can staff elaborate on what action Council would take and using what statutory powers?

Feral deer and feral pigs are declared pests under the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan. As stated in the *Statutory obligation* for the Site-led programme (page 81), it is an offence to release, spread, sell and propagate declared pests. The second paragraph specifically states that these pests cannot be released. A breach of these rules creates an offence under section 154 (o) of the Act. A person who commits an offence against any of section 154O(1) to (15) is liable on conviction:

- a) in the case of an individual person, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years, a fine not exceeding \$100,000, or both;
- b) in the case of a corporation, to a fine not exceeding \$200,000.

The difficulty in successfully prosecuting guilty parties is obtaining sufficient evidence. Hawke's Bay Regional Council being the 'management agency' for this plan would be responsible for undertaking prosecution.

13. Submitter 22 refers to Possum Control Areas involving land less than 4 ha. Can staff comment on obligations of properties less than 4 ha within a PCA?

Properties less than four hectares are not bound by the Possum Control Area Programme rules. This is due to two reasons:

1. It is not possible to undertake possum monitoring using the residual trap catch method on a property of this size therefore it is not possible to undertake enforcement action;
2. Given the average home range of possums in farmland is approximately 30ha, possums are unlikely to live solely on properties less than 4ha. Further, there is good evidence that shows possum home ranges increase significantly (more than 3 times) when possum numbers have

been reduced. It is therefore unlikely that these areas are harbouring high possum densities that are then spreading out into farmland area. If adjacent land occupiers have bait stations on the boundary of their properties it is likely they will also be controlling possums on these smaller properties.

Although areas smaller than 4ha are not bound by the PCA programme rules, they have received initial control and informed on how to continue possum control. They are also eligible to purchase possum control products through the subsidy scheme. Chew card monitoring is undertaken in areas where there is a cluster of properties smaller than 4ha and staff will notify land occupiers within those areas if possum densities are above a 5% RTC level. There is also the possum advisory contract available for these smaller or residential properties which includes a free first advice consultation on how to manage the issue.

Staff recommend reading the following OSPRI factsheet on possum home ranges:
<https://www.ospri.co.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/Possum-Home-Ranges.pdf>

14. Submitter 24.12 sought inclusion of mice in Site-led Programmes. Can staff elaborate on reasons why mice are not included?

Mice are not included as a pest under the Site-led programme due to the high cost in undertaking adequate control. Efficient control requires a bait station network of approximately 8 per ha (25m x 25m spacings) that need to be filled at least four times a year. For context, our current possum control programme in the rural landscape is run at 1 bait station per 6ha with one fill annually.

Although mice can have negative impacts on ecosystems by eating seeds and invertebrates, high biodiversity outcomes can still be achieved in their presence. The following article provides a good high-level look at this question with a technical paper reference at the end:

<https://predatorfreenz.org/mice-should-we-be-worried/>

15. Can staff confirm that Council has validated funding proposed in the RPMP via the 2018/2019 Annual Plan?

Yes, the current Proposed RPMP has been funded through the LTP and is included in the 2018/2019 Annual Plan.

Programmes that may be included in the plan post the release of the Proposed RPMP are not funded. If these programmes are included, funding will need to be addressed.

16. With reference to Section 9.5, the Panel recommends that 10 years of anticipated /budgeted expenditure be shown.

Council staff agree with this request and will amend Table 13 to display annual proposed funding over a 10 year period.

17. In relation to programmes for phytosanitary purposes, how many written directions have been served on occupiers in breach of Plan Rule 14 (or equivalent rule under the current Regional Phytosanitary Pest Management Strategy)?

No Notice of Directions have been issued in relation to the Phytosanitary Pest Management Plan. This is partly due to land occupiers understanding the ramifications of inaction and therefore undertake pest control, and partly due to the horticultural sector going through a significant period of growth.

18. Can staff provide the Register of Exemptions to Plan Rules granted under the Regional Pest Management Strategy (HBRC Plan Number 4466)?

Applicant Name	Applicant contact details	Rule	Decision Date	Approved/ Declined	Conditions
Paws Rehab	027 694 6661 paws.rehab@gmail.com	8.1	30/11/2016	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All possums are neutered so they cannot breed;• All possums are contained within the enclosure at all times;• All possums are housed humanely.