



Twyford Community
Community-led Recovery Conversation
Cyclone Gabrielle – 14 February 2023

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**HERETAUNGA
HASTINGS** DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sage | Planning

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1 Twyford community

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to identify the context and key impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle in Twyford based on conversations with the community to better understand how they see recovery looking for their community. A snapshot of these conversations is included in this report along with a series of actions and priorities based on key themes for consideration by the community and Council.

Twyford is a relatively small geographic area located to the west of Hastings city centre and it is fringed by general industrial activity. Its economic base is centered on its highly productive soils, and it is a hub of horticultural activity.

The Twyford community was very willing to start the recovery conversation and share their stories about the place that they call home. Many in this community have lived here for several generations – they are passionate about the land and its productive capacity and love living in this rural area close to town. Cyclone Gabrielle had a significant impact on this community both physically and emotionally and the destruction continues to take its toll on the people who live and work in Twyford. The Twyford community acknowledges that the area is low lying, and a fully functional drainage network, and flood protection is fundamental to their livelihoods.

There was a strong sense from many of the conversations that the Twyford community was largely ignored and not well supported by the agencies during the immediate aftermath of the cyclone.

This report is the beginning of a conversation between the Twyford community and the Hastings District Council.

1.2 Context and Key Impacts

Twyford is bounded by Ōmāhu Road, State Highway 2 and the Ngaruroro River to the northwest of Hastings City. The Twyford area is considered to include Morley Road, the top end of Evenden Road and Oak Avenue (Tōmoana North). The area is well known for its productive soils and has developed to include the infrastructure to support these landuses including a number of RSE accommodation centers, packhouses and coolstores. Twyford is also supported by community infrastructure including a school and the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall (which was moved from a former site in the community to the school site).

During Cyclone Gabrielle the river breached just beyond the Fernhill Bridge, after initially overtopping, and this caused significant damage. In addition, the Curtis Road drains exceeded capacity and caused further surface flooding. The community's view is that the Raupare drain performed well during the event. There was also significant water flowing from Ōmāhu Road General Industrial Area towards the productive areas. It was a combination of the surface water and the river breaching that caused the damage.

Cyclone Gabrielle uprooted many fully grown fruit trees which were almost ready for harvest. Many residents lost their main source of income, along with their homes, and this will cause long term economic impacts on the community.

Despite being a peri-urban area, many of the residents see themselves more aligned with rural communities. There are a number of lifestyle properties in this area often supported by corporate horticulture. The Twyford community consider their place to be the best of both worlds – living in the country but close to town, with a strong sense of community.

The community set up their own community hub at the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall during the immediate aftermath of the event. This was not supported by the Council. There was a feeling from the community that they were left largely to their own devices, without support from agencies, for an extended period of time which caused much anxiety and frustration.

Cyclone Gabrielle was not the first time that Twyford has suffered from inundation and much mention was made of the weather event at Christmas time 1980. This was a different kind of event, but it still had a significant impact.

1.3 Placarded Buildings and Land Categorisation

Many properties suffered silt deposition and inundation from flood waters. There were 77 placarded¹ buildings (70 yellow – 7 white: Total: 77). There were 144 properties preliminarily placed in Category 2C and now that the stop-banks have been repaired these have been moved to Category 1. This has enabled Twyford community to move forwards with its recovery. The Land Categorisation process is to determine the future of the residential activities in impacted areas based on a risk hazard assessment. A separate landowner engagement process is being undertaken with those impacted by the outcomes of these decisions.

¹ Rapid building assessments were completed following Cyclone Gabrielle assigning access as follows: white – access allowed, yellow – access limited, red – access prohibited

Figure 1: Twyford



1.4 How the Twyford community shared with us

Two conversations were held with the Twyford community. The first was with known community contacts to determine what would be an appropriate way to start the conversation with the wider community, and the second was a community barbeque drop-in session at the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall.

- a. Pre-engagement meeting Thursday 25 May at 8:15am
- b. A community barbeque/drop-in session was held on the 30 June from 3 – 6.15pm at the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall

The conversation with known community contacts proved to be very informative and supported many of the conversations at the community drop-in and barbeque.

Whilst this community welcomed the opportunity to start the conversation with Council, they were also very much focused on the Councils (Hastings District and Hawke's Bay Regional Councils) having conversations with each other going forward.

Further community-wide feedback and input to the themes and actions developed in this report is desirable.

1.5 Snapshot of what the Twyford community shared

The following is a snapshot of the key messages the Twyford community shared -

- The Twyford Community is peri-urban but functions in a way that aligns more with rural communities than urban communities.
- The community set up a hub at the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall and supported themselves immediately after the event.
- The community felt that they were largely left on their own during the response and immediately after the event.
- The Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall was moved to its current location some time ago and it is currently used by a Samoan Church group and for a limited number of community events. It is not in great shape. The school are currently using the hall because two of their classrooms got flooded during the Cyclone.
- Communication was challenging and during the event the notifications to evacuate were inconsistent. People were notified at different times or not all. Some members of the community suggested the use of a siren.
- There is a view that if people were warned earlier then they would have been better prepared and may have evacuated earlier.
- There was also some confusion around the Civil Defence hubs –their locations and functions.
- The role of the school as a connector in the community was acknowledged as being important however it was noted that if you are not connected to the school you may not be connected to the community events and may not receive the same level of communication.
- River and drain management were core to many of the discussions. There was a feeling that over time there has been a change in the way that the system is managed to the detriment of its core functions.

- It was acknowledged that there are a number of stakeholders in the drainage system including HDC, HBRC and individuals. However, there no longer seems to be a collective way in which the system is managed and developed. Specific reference was made to culverts that were considered to be undersized.
- The community expressed a strong desire for there to be a review of the drainage and flood protection network to enable a strategic approach to the management of these assets.
- The community know that Hastings District Council and Hawke's Bay Regional Council have different roles in relation to the drainage and flood protection but they want the Councils to work together in both the day to day management and also in relation to developing longer term/strategic priorities. The community are very frustrated by what appears to be a lack of coordination between the Councils.
- The wellbeing of the community is still a very real concern and there is ongoing anxiety in wet weather.
- The community's anxiety is unlikely to dissipate until there is confidence in the flood protection and drainage networks and people are able to move back into their homes.
- Individual relationships with insurance and funding agencies is challenging.
- This community expressed a desire for a more enabling operating environment. They would like to be more in control of their own destiny. These comments were specifically in relation to providing input into physical works (associated with the drainage network) that might affect them. This community has knowledge, and they would like the opportunity to share it with the authorities.
- The management of rubbish and silt removal was appreciated but this needs ongoing support, noting that people would prefer to recycle if they can.
- The communication during and after the event, and ongoing communication is a significant issue and an area where there is room for much improvement.



Figure 2 – Snapshot of what the Twyford community said

2 Key Themes for the Twyford Community

Several key themes have emerged from the conversations with the Twyford community. Relative priority order for this community is shown below and reflects the emphasis that was given to each in the discussions. Under each a series of actions and priorities is established. Ongoing conversations with the Twyford Community are required to refine the actions and to determine when and how these can be supported.



2.1 Resilient Infrastructure

Twyford is heavily reliant on a network of drains and the Ngaruroro River flood protection system to support the economic and residential activities that occur here. There is concern that the drainage network is being managed differently to what it has been in the past and this combined with changes in landuses in the adjacent Ōmāhu Road General Industrial zone was impacting on the effectiveness of the network. There is confusion about the respective roles of the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council and the Hastings District Council in the management and operation of the network and a lack of clarity about who is responsible for which parts of the system. The community considered that the District and Regional Council were not joined up in their approach nor were they clear on each other’s responsibilities or the responsibilities of the people who lived in Twyford and that this was having a negative impact on the system. The community noted there was a lack of clarity about who is responsible for infrastructure, such as bridges that cross over the drainage network. Some are privately owned and some publicly owned, but each inextricably linked to the other.

Management and development of the Ngaruroro Flood Protection Scheme was raised. This related to both the management of the stop-banks, as well as the riverbed and berms.

Key Resilient Infrastructure actions are:

- i. HBRC and HDC undertake a joint review of the drainage network which incorporates community knowledge. The purpose of the review is to determine whether the system is operating as it should be, and whether there should be improvements/enhancements to establish an appropriate level of protection and security for the community.
- ii. HBRC provide the community with information in relation to the management of the Ngaruroro River including how it is managed and why it is managed that way.
- iii. HDC review the impacts of the stormwater management from the Ōmāhu Road General Industrial area to clarify what impact, if any, this is having on drainage in Twyford. The purpose of this is to provide the Twyford community with confidence about the effectiveness of the drainage and stormwater systems that support the Ōmahu General Industrial Area.

2.2 Strategic Focus

The community know that Twyford is a great place to live, it is highly productive, however it is also low lying and vulnerable to wet weather. There is a very strong desire to ensure that the landuse capability is maintained so that the economic vibrancy of the area is continues.

Key Strategic Focus actions are:

- i. The Council supports working together with HBRC to develop a clear understanding of the strategic drainage and flood management issues facing this community. This should focus on the landuse capability and its integration with the immediately surrounding area of the Ōmāhu General Industrial area and policy decisions and frameworks developed to reflect this.

2.3 Community Well-being

The community expressed considerable concern about the well-being of the people who live in Twyford. Many people have been displaced and are now disconnected from family, friends and their land. The community no longer have confidence in the Ngaruroro Flood Protection or the drainage network. Cyclone Gabrielle pushed these systems to their limit and the community considered there were a number of failures. The community no longer feels secure, and they do not have confidence that the infrastructure that has been put in to protect them and their property is able to do this.

It is hard for people to get back to their homes and the systems to support this are hard to navigate and frustrating. The community has felt largely left on their own and unsupported by the agencies which is creating challenges.

There is still significant anxiety in the community and concern for older people who have a different set of skills and need different support through the recovery.

Key Community Wellbeing actions are:

- i. The Council supports working collaboratively with HBRC, agencies and the community to resolve outstanding issues related to insurance and rebuilding as quickly as possible.

- ii. A programme of activities aimed at improving the wellbeing of the community is developed and facilitated by agencies with support from the community.
- iii. That Council works with HBRC to provide the community with regular information around the work that is being done in relation to the Ngaruroro stop banks (repairs and upgrades), and the drainage network. Sharing of this information will be build confidence in the community and reduce anxiety.
- iv. That Council works with HBRC to establish regular communication with the community – accurate and timely about what is happening in their district.
- v. That Council works with HBRC to establish a clear flood warning process which the whole community is familiar with, to provide an additional level of confidence should the river be rising, or the drainage network be compromised due to wet weather.

2.4 Sustainable hubs

The community were largely left on their own and established a hub at the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall during and immediately after the cyclone. The hall provides for a range of regular activities and also provides for community use. As well as the hall the Twyford community is supported by Twyford School which has a roll of approximately 160 students. There is a need in this community for a well-supported and resourced community hub not only for emergency preparedness but also to build resilience and wellbeing within the community.

Key Sustainable Hub actions are:

- i. That the Twyford and Raupare Memorial Hall be established as community hub with a focus on for emergency preparedness and community wellbeing with a sustainable governance structure that supports this.

3 Additional Resources

The following additional resources are also available:

- Hawke's Bay Regional Council Hazards Portal <https://gis.hbrc.govt.nz/Hazards/>
- HDC Cyclone Gabrielle before/after Imagery: <https://hdcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6ef8fe7c8ed643b2b9005bae7ca01162>

