

Waihi Beach Earth Dam

Community consultation feedback summary

Between February and March 2025, we asked for your feedback on the future of the Waihi Beach Earth Dam and surrounding reserve area.

We explained that the dam does not meet new national safety regulations for flood and earthquake resilience. The significant upgrades required would be costly and challenging, without improving the stormwater issues in the community. Instead, we are planning to remove the dam and restore the site, creating an opportunity to improve stormwater management, ecological health, and community amenities.

Thank you to everyone who had their say!

We received feedback from 65 participants.

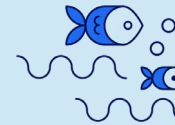
What you told us



The area is highly valued for walking, running, dog exercise, and enjoying nature.



Top features people love include the walking paths, natural scenery, wildlife, ecological plantings, and open spaces.



There was strong support for restoring the area to a more natural wetland, with benefits like:

- Enhanced habitat for native plants and wildlife
- Improved stormwater safety
- New recreation and community opportunities.



You suggested adding new features such as:

- Boardwalks, picnic areas, park benches, shade covers
- Educational signage about wildlife and local history.



Things you asked us to keep in mind

While there was strong overall support for restoring the area, some important points and questions were raised:

Stormwater management clarity

Several participants asked for more detailed information on how stormwater will be managed once the dam is removed, especially in relation to heavy rainfall events and silt control from the upper catchment.

Retention of walking tracks

There was strong support for maintaining the existing walking and biking paths. Many people asked for reassurance that access to popular trails would not be lost - and, if possible, extended and enhanced.

Concerns about flooding and drainage

Some were worried about how removing the dam might affect downstream areas, particularly during major rain events.

Preservation of natural character

People emphasised that new features, while welcomed, should fit sensitively into the environment - enhancing rather than urbanising the reserve.

Dog access

Some supported having designated off-leash spaces, while others raised concerns about potential impacts on wildlife and the natural environment.

Desire for more information

Several respondents asked for further detail about future design options.

What happens next?

Your feedback is helping guide the next steps in planning and design.

Based on what you told us; we are focusing on:

- Improving stormwater management by upgrading One Mile Creek and restoring a healthy natural wetland.
- Protecting and enhancing existing walking tracks, while creating new opportunities for walking, biking, and enjoying the natural surroundings.
- Maintaining the area's natural feel, with a smaller waterway that supports wildlife, recreation, and community connection.
- Providing clear and transparent information about how stormwater, flooding, and sediment will be managed as the project progresses.

In the coming months, we will:

- Prepare a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to respond to queries you raised, including stormwater management improvements, existing walking tracks, and project impacts.
- Develop visual concepts showing the proposed upgrades and enhancements.
- Share draft concept designs later this year for further community feedback before final decisions are made.

We look forward to continuing to work with the community as the project progresses.

Thank you again

Your ideas are helping shape a safer, more sustainable, and more vibrant space for Waihi Beach.

For updates and more information:

- Visit yourplace.westernbay.govt.nz/waihi-beach-earth-dam
- Contact us at info@westernbay.govt.nz or call 0800 926 732.