

Resource Policy Publication 2008/06
ISSN 1175 8546

Ohiwa Harbour Strategy

*Ohiwa - Together we're keeping it special
He taonga tukuiho ke, ko tatau ra nga uri e*



Updated June 2008

*Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council,
Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa, Tuhoë.*

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Why do we value Ohiwa?	3
1.2 How was the Strategy developed?	3
1.3 What's in the Strategy?.....	4
1.4 Who can do what to help the Strategy work?	5
Chapter 2: Setting the scene	7
2.1 Overview of Ohiwa Harbour.....	7
2.2 Tangata Whenua and the Harbour	13
2.3 Definitions.....	13
Chapter 3: The role of agencies and organisations	17
3.1 Whakatane District Council's role	17
3.2 Opotiki District Council's role	18
3.3 Environment Bay of Plenty's role.....	18
3.4 Department of Conservation's role	19
3.5 Ministry of Fisheries' role	19
3.6 Local iwi role.....	19
3.7 Estuary Care Groups	20
3.8 Resource Allocation by Agencies and Organisations	20
3.9 Integrated Management.....	20
Chapter 4: Key issues	23
4.1 Management of Development.....	23
4.2 Kaitiakitanga	24

Chapter 5: Policies for the Harbour	25
Chapter 6: Themes	29
Chapter 7: Health of the Estuary	31
7.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Health of the Estuary	31
7.2 What is being done for the Health of the Estuary?	32
7.3 Actions: Health of the Estuary	33
Chapter 8: Kaimoana	37
8.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Kaimoana	37
8.2 What is being done for Kaimoana?	37
8.3 Actions: Kaimoana	38
Chapter 9: Kaitiakitanga	41
9.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Kaitiakitanga.....	41
9.2 What is being done for Kaitiakitanga?.....	41
9.3 Actions: Kaitiakitanga.....	42
Chapter 10: Recreation Opportunities	47
10.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Recreation Opportunities	47
10.2 What is being done for Recreation Opportunities?.....	48
10.3 Actions: Recreation Opportunities.....	50
Chapter 11: Managing Development Pressure	57
11.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Managing Development Pressure	57
11.2 What is being done for Managing Development Pressure?	58
11.3 Actions: Managing Development Pressure	59

Chapter 12: Natural Areas, Plants and Animals	63
12.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Natural Areas, Plants and Animals.....	63
12.2 What is being done for Natural Areas, Plants and Animals?	64
12.3 Actions: Natural Areas, Plants and Animals	65
Chapter 13: A More Informed Harbour Community	69
13.1 Community Concerns and Issues: A More Informed Harbour Community	69
13.2 What is being done for a More Informed Harbour Community?.....	69
13.3 Actions: A More Informed Harbour Community	70
Appendix 1 – Implementation of Actions (Timeframes and Estimated Costs)	75

Chapter 1: Introduction

This Ohiwa Harbour Strategy covers the Ohiwa Harbour and the land catchment area that feeds into it.

This Strategy has been put together by Environment Bay of Plenty on behalf of the many people and organisations that have helped develop it and will be involved in making it happen. The Strategy was approved by Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty. Earlier, a Hearing Committee, comprising representatives of the three councils and the tangata whenua, heard submissions on a draft Strategy and recommended amendments to it.

The Strategy sets out a vision for the harbour, identifies issues, key community values and aspirations, and recommends actions to achieve those. It is designed to take Ohiwa Harbour and catchment from where it is now, to where people want it to be in the future. The Strategy contains a combination of a framework to assess future planning and management against and a set of detailed actions.

It promotes *integrated* resource management by acknowledging that what happens on the land of the catchment can affect the Ohiwa Harbour.

It promotes integration of the wide variety of plans, processes and practices used by councils, government departments, iwi, hapu and members of the community so that these are used to build on each other.

The Strategy is a non-statutory document. This means it does not contain any rules and cannot require changes to other planning documents. It provides guidance for the management of the harbour and catchment. It may or may not result in changes to planning documents. This is the discretionary responsibility of each individual Council.



Map 1 Ohiwa Harbour

1.1 Why do we value Ohiwa?

Ohiwa Harbour and catchment is a special place to many people for many reasons. People appreciate its landscapes, natural beauty, water quality, customary and recreational activities, heritage places and values, clear air, and productive land. It is a memorable place and widely recognised by past visitors.

People want to be there and use the resources available to them. They want to enjoy life in a place that adds quality to their lives.

Our activities always affect the places we live in or visit in some way so we must consider the impact of our activities on our environment so that they do not diminish the quality of the place. Any development needs to fit in with what it is that is special about Ohiwa.

He Pao mo Ohiwa, te kete kai me te umu taonoa a Tairongo

(A song about Ohiwa, the food basket and generous cooking area of Tairongo)

Koia nei ra Ko Te Kete kai A Tairongo e Rongonui e	Mai ra ano Nga tautohe A nga iwi tau Mai ki konei.	Tenei te wa E ngatahi ai A tatau u Whakaaro e	He taonga Tukuiho ke Ko tatau e Nga uri e
(This place is) (The food basket) (Of Tairongo) (Of great renown)	(From time immemorial) (Disputes raged) (Amongst settlers) (To this place)	(But for now) (Some unity) (Amongst us) (And turn our thoughts)	(To this treasure) (Handed down) (For we are) (The inheritors thereof)

Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment is a place of great significance to Maori, and has been for very many generations. Ohiwa is an important traditional māhinga mataitai (food gathering place) and is therefore a very significant taonga. Sustainable management and enhancement of Ohiwa Harbour ensures the endurance of important indigenous traditions and relationships that Maori have with Ohiwa Harbour. It is through the exercise of kaitiakitanga that tangata whenua contribute to the sustainable management of Ohiwa Harbour and help to keep it special.

Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe have agreed that as tangata whenua they will work co-operatively to exercise kaitiakitanga of the Ohiwa Harbour. They also acknowledge the relationship that distant iwi like Ngaitai, Te Whanau a Apanui, Te Whanau a te Ehutu, Ngati Manawa, Ngati Whare and others, have with Ohiwa Harbour.

1.2 How was the Strategy developed?

A 'communicative' approach was used, to provide for community input and to be in harmony with the purpose of this Strategy, which is one of integrating community ideas and the agencies responsible for putting those ideas into action.

In 2002, Environment Bay of Plenty launched the Strategy by publicly inviting people and organisations to participate in its development. To reach the residents and stakeholders of Ohiwa Harbour and catchment:

- Open Days were held at which members of the public were encouraged to share information directly with the planning team preparing the Strategy.

- Groups, clubs and organisations with interests in the harbour that were unable to attend the open days were approached individually so that a diverse range of views could be taken into account in the Strategy.
- Technical and operations staff from Whakatane and Opotiki District Councils that work closely with members of the Ohiwa catchment community were consulted at regular intervals. Statutory organisations shared information they had on Ohiwa Harbour and catchment. Additional specialist advice was sought from people familiar with the Harbour.
- Whakatohea, Upokorehe, Ngati Awa, Tuhoe and their respective hapu established a team of representatives to work collaboratively on development of processes and protocols that provide for kaitiakitanga.
- A temporary 'Advisory Management Team' with representatives from Whakatane and Opotiki District Councils, the Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Historic Places Trust, Whakatohea, Upokorehe, Ngati Awa, Tuhoe and Environment Bay of Plenty was formed to consider issues and ideas emerging from consultation.

Many people have contributed to the development of this Strategy. These include residents, visitors, youth, the elderly, iwi, hapu, farmers, foresters, Wainui Men's Group, Ohope Community Board, ratepayers associations, Nukuhou Saltmarsh Landcare Group, Forest & Bird Society, Port Ohope Yacht Club, Ohakana Islanders, developers, real estate agents and surveyors.

1.3 What's in the Strategy?

The contributions to the Strategy have identified several main concerns and aspirations that people have for Ohiwa. A background to the Harbour is in the section called "Setting the Scene".

Section 3 outlines the various roles of organisations and section 5 discusses the policies that will guide how decisions are made about the Harbour. Two key issues were identified as part of the Strategy's development – managing development and kaitiakitanga - and these are discussed in section 4.

Section 6 is an introduction to the themes that have been used to divide up the community's concerns and issues. The themes are discussed in section 7 to 13. Each theme has a description of the things that are already being done and the actions that have come from community ideas and that have been developed in response to issues.

The Strategy does not contain any rules. However, it does refer to plans that do have rules for how things occur in and around the Harbour and it makes recommendations on changes to district and regional plans so they can be more consistent with one another and with the vision for the harbour. It also recommends changes in other planning documents.

A significant amount of material and information was collected during the preparation of this Strategy. To keep the Strategy focused the background material has not been included but is available if required.

1.4 Who can do what to help the strategy work?

There are three councils (Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty) and several key government agencies (Ministry of Fisheries and the Department of Conservation) with a range of responsibilities in the Ohiwa Harbour and catchment (see section 3). Although they operate under different legislation, they all aim to achieve sustainable management of the environment.

Likewise, Whakatohea, Upokorehe, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe exercise kaitiakitanga of Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment. The settlement of iwi Treaty of Waitangi claims will also affect the way councils and government departments carry out their responsibilities.

The community wants ecological biodiversity enhanced and public access to reserves. These wants need to be balanced with the privacy, security and amenity desires of adjacent property owners. Landowners, through the management of their land and the choices that they make about development, have the ability to significantly affect the quality of the Ohiwa Harbour. Local authorities and the community need to support landowners where their activities are protecting and enhancing the Harbour.

The community also has a role in working together, supporting projects and in taking individual responsibility for protection of the harbour. To assist this, statutory agencies must inform the community about the harbour and about what activities impact on the qualities that are valued.

Chapter 2: Setting the Scene

2.1 Overview of Ohiwa Harbour

Ohiwa Harbour is situated in the eastern Bay of Plenty in the North Island of New Zealand. The harbour itself is separated from the Pacific Ocean by a six kilometre long sand spit - Ohope Spit - on the western side of the harbour entrance, and a much smaller spit of approximately 900 metres - Ohiwa Spit - to the east.

The urban settlement of Port Ohope is on the Ohope Spit, west of the harbour mouth, and is a popular holiday destination for people who enjoy the attractions of an open coast and harbour, within easy walking distance of each other. The western end of the Ohope Spit is predominantly urban.

The harbour itself covers an area of approximately 26.4 km², and is relatively shallow, exposing 80% of its bed at low tide. The main channels provide adequate depth for fishing and pleasure boats.

There are ten small islands in the harbour but only one, Ohakana Island has permanent residents living on small lifestyle blocks. Four of the islands cover less than 1 hectare each and their names are not widely known. The remaining islands are Whangakopikopiko (Tern Island) (a Government Purpose Wildlife Reserve), Pataua Island (a Scientific Reserve), Uretara Island (a Scenic Reserve), Motuotu Island (a Nature Reserve) and Hokianga Island (a Maori Reserve).

The Ohiwa Harbour catchment drains approximately 171 km² of small valleys, with the largest being the Nukuhou River valley – draining 60% of the Harbour catchment. The catchment generally faces north, and has a diversity of land uses ranging from protection and production forestry, through dry stock and dairy farming, to horticulture and lifestyle blocks.

There are twelve small streams and one small river (the Nukuhou River) feeding into the harbour from the inland hills towards Matahi, and in the Nukuhou valley.

2.1.1 Landscapes

The landscapes of Ohiwa Harbour are widely recognised as outstanding.

Landscape studies have identified the Ohiwa Harbour, the far end of Ohope Spit and the Ohope Spit duneland hillocks as outstanding natural landscapes. There are a number of 'Areas of Significant Conservation Value', including the islands and parts of the harbour foreshore, saltmarsh and wetlands.

Components of the landscape that make Ohiwa outstanding are:

- The harbour and estuarine margins (intact saltmarsh and plant communities that extend from salt water inland to terrestrial indigenous habitat).
- Headlands and peninsulas that extend into the harbour
- Stands of remnant bush, especially in gullies
- The Ohope and Ohiwa spits and dunelands
- The absence of obtrusive or large out-of-scale structures and buildings
- The islands and sand bars within the harbour which reflect the geology, topography and natural processes of the harbour
- Rolling hill country and the complex hill and valley stream and river systems that provide a backdrop to the harbour
- Cultural/archaeological features that are visible in the landscape.



Map 2 Land Cover of the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment Ohiwa's population

2.1.2 Ohiwa's population

Between 1996 and 2001 the population of the Ohiwa Catchment grew at a much faster rate than that for the rest of the Bay of Plenty. More recently, the population of the Ohiwa Catchment has been growing at a much slower rate than the Bay of Plenty as a whole. Growth continues to add to development pressure around the Harbour.

Population change	Ohiwa Catchment	Bay of Plenty
1991 to 1996	4% ↑	10% ↑
1996 to 2001	22%↑	7% ↑
2001 to 2006	2% ↑	7% ↑

In the Ohiwa Catchment 60% (2,148) people live in an urban area and 40% (1,458) people live rurally, which illustrates that the Ohiwa area has a strong rural/lifestyle focus. This trend is continuing and subdivision and development is a threat to maintaining the quality of the Harbour.

2.1.3 Ecology and habitats

Historical land clearance and development in the catchment means that there are few areas of forest left in the coastal zone (1 – 3 km inland). These include Pataua Island, Uretara Island and Hiwarau Forest. Nevertheless, there are many areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats in the harbour and the wider catchment, and much of this is in private ownership.

Ohiwa is regarded as one of the most natural harbours in New Zealand with high conservation values and outstanding wildlife values. The coastal margins are home to a number of threatened and migratory birds e.g. the bar-tailed godwit and the northern New Zealand dotterel. Many of the remaining natural areas are fragmented and often degraded remnants of the original ecosystems that were there prior to human settlement.

The remaining bush is generally in small fragmented pockets and these remnants require ongoing management to halt continuing ecological degradation. Many of these remnants are on private land, so landowner support and involvement is vital for their long term sustainability. Despite the change that has occurred, Ohiwa Harbour is still recognised as being a very significant area for its ecological values and as being an important estuarine area where a myriad of natural processes take place.

The population of the North Island Brown Kiwi in the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment is also significant as kiwi are surviving despite being relatively close to urban areas.

2.1.4 Wetlands

Wetlands and their margins buffer the effects of land management on the natural water resources. They filter runoff from pastoral land by screening sediment and nutrients. Bacteria in the wetlands convert nitrates to nitrogen gas, which is then safely released to the atmosphere, rather than to the harbour waters. About 97% of semi-coastal freshwater wetlands and about 60% of coastal freshwater wetlands in the Taneatua Ecological District (of which Ohiwa Harbour is part of) have been drained.

Much of the harbour margin area has been fenced off and protected from stock grazing or is in land use that does not involve grazing. However, there are still some places where domestic stock is gaining access to Ohiwa Harbour to graze in the wetlands, saltmarsh and mangrove. Wetlands remain at risk from drainage, flood control and sedimentation.

From 1945 to 2003 the area of mangrove has increased by over 400% from 21ha to 91ha. Sedimentation and nitrification accelerates the spread of mangrove and sea couch (*Elytrigia pycnantha*). Sediment deposited in the upper reaches of the Ohiwa Harbour is likely to come from streams within the catchment and upper reaches of the harbour.

2.1.5 Freshwater

Freshwater streams and rivers are an important component of the overall ecological context of the Harbour, and provide important habitat for indigenous fish. Many of the freshwater streams (comprising over 50 kilometres in length) in the harbour catchment have been significantly modified. Channelisation, stopbanking, stock access and weed control along the margins of some streams has reduced their habitat values. Removal of tall vegetation from the stream margins also diminishes freshwater fish habitat. Barriers to fish passage such as culverts and floodgates prevent freshwater fish from re-entering streams, preventing the completion of their life cycle. Many streams no longer provide suitable spawning conditions for whitebait.

Of the upper Nukuhou River catchment, 61% is in pasture. This means a higher peak runoff in a shorter time than was the case under the original forested catchment. Increasing stock numbers also causes soil compaction and further increases the rate of runoff. The removal of streambank vegetation and stock access to banks has aggravated streambank erosion.

The Nukuhou River drains 10,200 hectares of land into the harbour. The nutrient and bacteria measurements consistently do not meet Ministry of Health freshwater bathing guidelines although this is a localised problem. The main source of nutrients and bacteria is farming activities, particularly dairy effluent discharge.

2.1.6 Harbour water quality

The harbour has a very low water volume with strong tidal effects, so that water does not remain in the harbour for long; most is flushed out of the estuary in just one or two tidal cycles. This has benefits for water quality. Monitoring of the harbour water shows that its quality is good.

Ohiwa Harbour is shallow, with over 80% of its bed exposed at low tide. This makes it vulnerable to being infilled by sediment. While Ohiwa Harbour will slowly infill over a long period due to natural erosion processes, human activities increase the speed of sedimentation.

Earthworks from the development of subdivisions, roading, tracking, forestry harvest operations and soil cultivation all contribute to erosion, soil instability and sediment movement. Siltation from catchment streams is the most obvious source of sedimentation of Ohiwa Harbour. Wave lap erosion, storm surge, erosion of headlands and sediment drift along the coast also contribute to increased sediment levels in the harbour. One-off storm events such as the flood in July 2004 can deposit large quantities of silt into the harbour over short periods.

2.1.7 Cultural/archaeological sites

A large number of cultural/archaeological sites have been recorded in and around Ohiwa Harbour. For reasons that still exist today (such as the ready food source) the Harbour was an attraction for early use and settlement. The Harbour is known for the high concentration of recorded sites of heritage significance. There are also a number of heritage features associated with later settlement, such as the Kutarere Wharf, that play a part in describing the history of the area.

2.1.8 Pests

Pest animals and plants are present throughout the catchment. Pest animals include possums, wild goats, deer, pigs, rabbits, hares, rats, mice, mustelids (stoats, weasels, ferrets), and feral cats. There has been ongoing possum control in selected parts of the catchment, local goat control, but only limited control of predators that threaten indigenous fauna.

There are many invasive pest plants (i.e. plants that will establish and spread into indigenous vegetation if left unchecked) in the catchment, but these are, for the most part, relatively small infestations that can be controlled. Pest plants in the Ohiwa Harbour catchment include Ginger, Woolly Nightshade, Pampas, Mothplant, Japanese Walnut, Wattles and Wilding Pines.

2.1.9 Reserves and public land

There are a number of unformed road reserves and esplanade strips in the Ohiwa Harbour. There are also esplanade reserves and marginal strips along rivers and streams within the catchment. Some of the unformed road and esplanade strips on the harbour and stream margins provide significant opportunities for ecological restoration and public access.

Some areas of public land are being actively managed and monitored by individuals or community groups. Environment Bay of Plenty, the Department of Conservation, Opotiki District Council and Whakatane District Council provide support for this work, although volunteers carry out most of the physical work. Some of these reserves were protected for public access and others for their conservation value, and some for both. Many of these reserves are not actively managed and many are unfenced. They were established when Crown land was disposed of (marginal strips) or where private land was subdivided (esplanade reserves). Many of these reserves are incorporated, informally, into the neighbouring property and are often grazed.

Two reserves located at the end of Te Taiawatea Drive at Ohope Spit have been set aside under section 338 of Te Ture Whenua Maori (Maori Land Act) 1993. These reserves are set aside for the private use of the Maori landowners and their guests; however, many members of the public use this area to gain access to the foreshore and seabed of the harbour.

Opotiki and Whakatane District Councils and the Department of Conservation have limited funding for management of existing gazetted reserves within Ohiwa Harbour and catchment.

The Port Ohope Recreation Reserve at the end of Ohope Spit, including the Port Ohope Golf Club, has been vested in Whakatane District Council by the Department of Conservation. One hectare of the Port Ohope Recreation Reserve has become the Ngati Awa nohoanga (customary camp site), with a further

10 hectares to the west being returned to Ngati Awa under settlement with the Crown. The Ohiwa Harbour Sandspit Wildlife Refuge, covering 24 hectares at the tip of the spit, has been retained by the Department.

2.2 Tangata whenua and the harbour

Ohiwa Harbour lies within the homelands of Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe. For centuries they have lived in and harvested food from Ohiwa Harbour and its environs. This is reflected in the high concentration of cultural/archaeological sites in and around the Harbour. Ohiwa is still recognised as a food basket by Maori, many of whom continue to rely on collecting shellfish and other food to help feed their families.

Maori knowledge of the abundant food resources at Ohiwa has endured for many centuries. The earliest names of the harbour reflected this, including "Te Kete Kai a Tairongo"¹ (the food basket of Tairongo) and 'Te Umu Taonoa a Tairongo' or the place where Tairongo found an abundance of food ready to eat.

In the 1860s all iwi in the eastern Bay of Plenty were dispossessed of much, if not all of their land. For Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe this included Ohiwa Harbour and catchment. While the Crown's confiscation adversely affected the ability of tangata whenua to use, occupy and manage Ohiwa Harbour's resources, it did not extinguish their ancestral relationships nor eliminate evidence of their former use and occupation of Ohiwa Harbour.

Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe have agreed that as tangata whenua they will work co-operatively to exercise kaitiakitanga of the Ohiwa Harbour. They also acknowledge the relationship that distant iwi like Ngaitai, Te Whanau a Apanui, Te Whanau a te Ehutu, Ngati Manawa, Ngati Whare and others, have with Ohiwa Harbour.

To Maori, Ohiwa Harbour continues to be an important taonga, a priceless treasure that must be looked after so its rich resources are there for future generations to share.

2.3 Definitions

To assist with interpreting and understanding what the Strategy is trying to achieve, the following definitions have been developed. The definitions do not have any formal status (such as within District Plans). They are designed to help show how the policies within the Strategy would be applied.

Urban – the area of residential development on the Ohope Spit. Characterised by an intense level of development (mainly residential in nature) and a high level of infrastructure provision.

Coastal settlement – the areas of localised, isolated residential development. Infrastructure is limited or smaller scale. Settlements include Kutarere and Ohiwa.

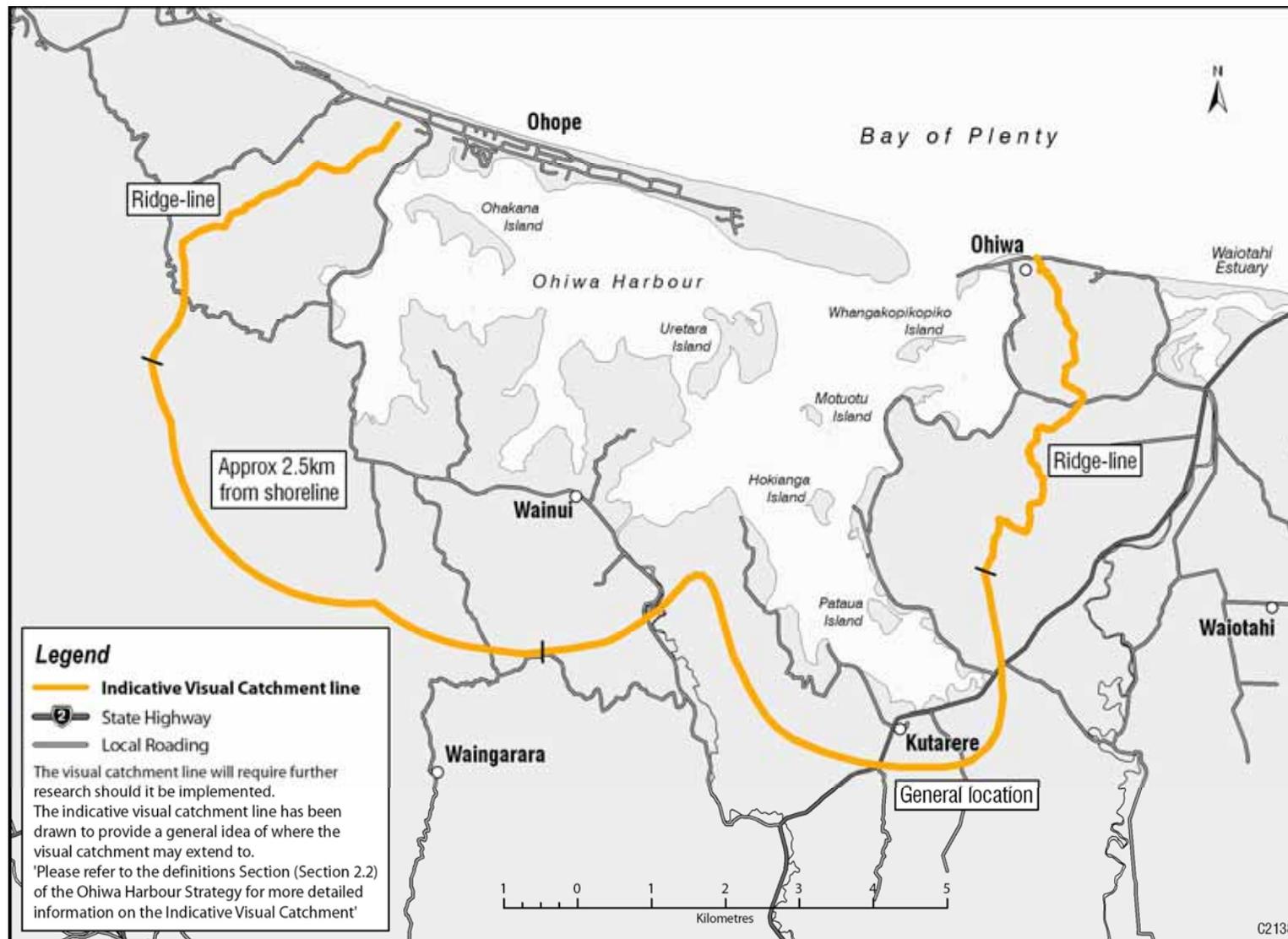
Indicative visual catchment – the area inland away from the water that can be seen from within the Harbour or from its edge. The extent of this indicative visual catchment is defined either by a distance of 2.5 kilometres from the harbour margin or by significant ridgelines if these are located closer to the water (see map on the following page). The visual catchment is characterised by smaller farming units or rural lifestyle blocks.²

¹ Tairongo was an early voyager said to have first arrived at Ohiwa where he found food ready to eat. No preparation required!

² The visual catchment line is partially based on preliminary visual landscape research by a qualified and experienced landscape architect, and also based on a combination of identified ridgelines, a distance of 2.5 kilometres from the harbour's margin, consideration of specific sight lines, and areas of population. Please note that the indicative visual catchment line will require further research should it be implemented.

Rural Catchment – the land further away from the Harbour and its visual catchment, characterised by a greater proportion of economic farming units and forestry. A significant connection of this land to the Harbour is via the waterways that drain the catchment.

Ohiwa Harbour Catchment – the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment includes all the land that drains into the harbour. This includes all the land drained by the Nukuhou River and its tributaries. The catchment boundary encompasses the townships of Kutarere, Ohiwa, Ohope and Nukuhou North. The seaward boundary of the catchment is defined as the line of Mean High Water Springs on the seaward side of the Ohope and Ohiwa Spits (refer to Map 2 for the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment boundary).



Map 3 Indicative Visual Catchment Boundary

Chapter 3: The role of agencies and organisations

Following is a list of the various groups and organisations involved in managing Ohiwa Harbour. A brief description of their role and how their role relates to Ohiwa is provided. A list of the key policies and plans which they work under in relation to Ohiwa Harbour is also provided.

3.1 Whakatane District Council's role

The Whakatane District Council undertakes a number of functions, responsibilities and activities to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of its residents for the present and the future. To this end, the Council currently carries out the following roles:

- Governance, leadership and advocacy for the people of the district.
- Constructing, managing and maintaining local infrastructure on behalf of the community. This infrastructure includes: roads, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse collection and disposal, and stormwater drainage.
- Providing and maintaining community facilities and assets such as parks and gardens, recreation programmes, libraries, community halls, a museum, cemeteries, swimming pools, public conveniences and an airport.
- Planning for the future needs of the district.
- Undertaking a regulatory role to ensure that residents have a safe, desirable and healthy environment in which to reside.
- Promoting and facilitating development of the district that is to the benefit of the residents.
- Promoting the sustainable management of natural and physical resources under the Resource Management Act.
- Promoting natural and cultural heritage protection (e.g. through the Preservation Incentive Fund).

The Whakatane District covers the Ohope Spit, Ohakana Island, Uretara Island, the Paparoa and Burke Road peninsulas, and the majority of the harbour's catchment.

Whakatane District Council policies and plans that relate to Ohiwa:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whakatane District Plan • Opotiki District Plan for Paparoa and Burke Road in the interim • Bylaws • Ohope Reserves Management Plan • Long Term Council Community Plan

3.2 Opotiki District Council's role

The Opotiki District Council carries out activities to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the Opotiki District. The Council carries out similar functions to those described above for Whakatane District Council.

The Opotiki District covers the area of the Ohiwa Harbour from the Nukuhou Saltmarsh to the Ohiwa Spit and the catchment area inland from Kutarere.

Opotiki District Council policies and plans that relate to Ohiwa:
--

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opotiki District Plan • Ohiwa Reserves Management Plan • Bylaws • Long Term Council Community Plan |
|---|

3.3 Environment Bay of Plenty's role

Environment Bay of Plenty is the regional council for the Bay of Plenty. Its role encompasses the whole of the harbour and catchment. Environment Bay of Plenty undertakes flood management, pest management (plant and animal), soil conservation, river and harbour navigation and safety, natural hazard management, coastal management (such as aquaculture permits and structures) and regional transport.

It has a number of roles under the Resource Management Act to ensure the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. These include controlling discharges to land, air and water, managing the use and development of land and water resources, protection of heritage sites/values and managing contaminated sites.

Environment Bay of Plenty undertakes a number of non-regulatory functions in the Ohiwa Harbour area. These include offering assistance with environmental management advice, preparation of environmental programmes, supporting care groups (such as Estuary Care Groups) to enhance community initiatives, and financial support through grants (such as the Environmental Enhancement Fund).

Environment Bay of Plenty policies and plans that relate to Ohiwa:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement • Bay of Plenty Regional Land Management Plan (to be superseded by the Water and Land Plan) • Proposed Bay of Plenty Regional Water and Land Plan • Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan • Bay of Plenty On-Site Effluent Treatment Plan • Bay of Plenty Regional Air Plan • Pest Management Strategy • Regional Land Transport Strategy • Navigation and Safety Bylaws |
|--|

3.4 Department of Conservation's role

The Department of Conservation's role in the Ohiwa Harbour catchment includes:

- Managing conservation land vested in the Crown, such as reserves vested under the Reserves Act 1977, Conservation Areas and National Parks.
- Protection of indigenous fauna including freshwater fish and their habitat.
- Advocacy on conservation issues including the protection of the habitat of indigenous flora and fauna, the coastal environment, natural and historic resources, wetlands and trout and their habitat.
- Wildlife Act enforcement provisions, Marine Mammals Act, fire management responsibilities and Conservation Act requirements.

The Department of Conservation works closely with district and regional councils, tangata whenua, and other organisations such as Fish & Game Council. The Department of Conservation role on private land is generally limited to advocacy, although there are instances where they have assisted with advice, facilitation, and practical assistance by providing protection and planting materials.

Department of Conservation policies and plans that relate to Ohiwa:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy • New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement • Reserves Act 1977 • Conservation Act 1987 • Wildlife Act 1953 • Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978 • General Policy

3.5 Ministry of Fisheries' role

The Ministry of Fisheries' role is to ensure that marine and freshwater fisheries are sustainably used within a healthy aquatic ecosystem. Through the Fisheries Act 1996 and associated legislation, the Ministry administers rules, limits and restrictions on the activity of fishing by recreational and commercial fishers. The Ministry also administers the framework for managing fishing undertaken for customary Maori purposes. Fishery Officers, appointed by the Ministry, have extensive powers to enforce these rules.

3.6 Local iwi role

Whakatohea, Upokorehe, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe exercise kaitiakitanga of Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment. The role of iwi is to provide a kaitiakitanga focus context for management actions in the Harbour.

Kaitiakitanga is a duty inherited by Maori who act in accordance with their tikanga (principles) and kawa (practices, protocols and behaviours). Kaitiakitanga is inextricably linked to tino rangatiratanga and embraces a diverse set of practices, designed to achieve sustainable management of resources. Kaitiakitanga helps people to behave appropriately when making decisions about occupying, using and sharing geographical space and resources.

Today the practice of kaitiakitanga also involves active engagement in resource management processes like consultation, the preparation of cultural assessments, implementation of restoration and enhancement projects, protection and management of cultural/archaeological sites, and monitoring the environmental effects of activities.

Local iwi policies and plans that relate to Ohiwa:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iwi Management Plans • Tawharau o Nga Hapu o Whakatohea (Whakatohea Resource Management Plan) • Ngati Awa statutory acknowledgments

3.7 Estuary Care Groups

Estuary Care Bay of Plenty is a community partnership programme coordinated by Environment Bay of Plenty with the support of territorial authorities and the Department of Conservation. Estuary Care Groups are made up of volunteers who undertake a variety of work to maintain or improve the health of estuaries. There are currently two Estuary Care Groups at Ohiwa Harbour – the Ohiwa Care Group and the Nukuhou Salt Marsh Group.

3.8 Resource allocation by agencies and organisations

The local authorities involved with managing the Harbour and the agencies and organisations mentioned above, allocate resources in relation to needs and aspirations. The allocation can be based on infrastructure requirements (for example, the need to upgrade or maintain roads), community aspirations (for example, a new reserve to cope with demand) or regulatory requirements (for example, costs to prevent discharges from waste water systems).

At the District and Regional Council level, all activities within the Ohiwa Harbour are subject to budget development processes. Councils must prepare annual and long term (Long Term Council Community Plan) financial budgets and these must be consulted on. The community has the chance to influence how money is spent within the harbour through providing submissions to these processes.

For information on estimated costs of implementing actions in this Strategy please refer to Appendix 1.

3.9 Integrated management

People identify statutory organisations, such as councils, as being responsible for managing the resources of the Ohiwa Harbour. However, while these organisations have an important role to play there are many other people and organisations that share the management responsibility. This Strategy looks at ways people and organisations can work together to keep Ohiwa Harbour special, while still being able to use resources within the catchment and harbour.

The Strategy promotes good conduct and effective communication. It acknowledges that all people and organisations have their roles to play in achieving sustainability and is intended to provide a focus for effective involvement in contributing to decision-making and positive action. A commitment to acting appropriately will keep Ohiwa Harbour and catchment special for the next generations.

For Resource Management Act and Local Government Act purposes, control of Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment is divided among three units of local government: Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty. These local authorities have significant roles to play in the management and enhancement of Ohiwa Harbour. In particular, the local authorities have a role to bring together and to facilitate the efforts of other agencies and the community.

Additional statutory responsibilities are exercised by other agencies for particular aspects of the Harbour, such as the Department of Conservation for Crown reserves and the Ministry of Fisheries for managing sustainable use of fisheries resources.

Several iwi and hapu are tangata whenua and have a traditional relationship with Ohiwa Harbour and continue to provide for their relationships with their ancestral taonga. They exercise their role as kaitiaki of that taonga.

Other agencies and organisations also have parts to play in the management of the harbour. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Landcare Trust (sustainable land management practices)
- QEII Trust (advice and financial assistance to landowners for voluntary land protection)
- Fish and Game New Zealand
- New Zealand Historic Places Trust (Historic Places Act)
- Nga Whenua Rahui (advice and financial assistance to Maori landowners for voluntary land protection)
- Forestry operators (Forestry Accord)
- Federated Farmers

Integrated management seeks to ensure that the individual efforts of all the organisations and agencies are working together in a common direction. To this effect an implementation forum will be set up to oversee the implementation of the various actions in the Strategy.

Chapter 4: Key Issues

Section 6 identifies a number of themes that have emerged through consultation with the community and stakeholders. However, through the process two significant issues were identified as being critical to the future management of Ohiwa Harbour and these are discussed below.

4.1 Management of development

The vision for the harbour is to preserve its natural qualities as much as possible. There is an acceptance by the community that development is not in itself a negative thing but poor development, development that dealt with the wider environment in an insensitive manner, or development in inappropriate locations was seen as diminishing the harbour's value. The main focus for concerns is the visual catchment – that area that can be viewed from the harbour and adjacent residential areas. There is also the ability for development within the urban area to detract from the qualities of the Harbour but to a far lesser extent given its built context.

Pressure for residential development and the cumulative effects of incremental subdivision will make it difficult to protect the harbour catchments natural character and landscape values without a robust and adaptable planning framework. The challenge is to manage this development in a way that gives positive outcomes for the natural character and landscape values of the Ohiwa Harbour catchment – which is what attracts people to it in the first place.

The effective protection and management of the natural character and landscape values of Ohiwa Harbour require a transparent and consistent approach between the three councils when they assess development proposals. The high value placed on the Harbour by the community creates a responsibility for the regulatory authorities (through monitoring and review) to be confident that their planning regimes are achieving the desired outcomes.

The future level and type of residential development for the visual catchment of the harbour will need to be carefully considered. The use of structure planning is a useful mechanism to help achieve a balance between development and landscape protection of the visual catchment. This may see high levels of development in some areas (for example, cluster housing), and corresponding lower levels in others. The district plans for Opotiki and Whakatane will need to reflect the outcomes of the structure plan.

Residential/subdivision development can have a positive impact on the landscape, ecological values, public access and protection of cultural sites. This type of development is more intensive than current uses, such as farming, so it presents a risk to the natural character values but it can have a positive influence on the Harbour such as through the protection of ecological areas, provision of public access and reduction in nutrient runoff.

The key is creating the right balance between development and protection of those natural character, ecological and landscape values of importance to the community for the benefit of present and future generations. The goal is that we will all be able to enjoy and appreciate the natural character and landscape values of Ohiwa Harbour not just now, but into the future.

4.2 **Kaitiakitanga**

A key element of achieving integrated management for Ohiwa Harbour is the involvement of tangata whenua in processes relating to change and development in the Ohiwa Harbour. This issue has a number of facets to it – including how the practice of kaitiakitanga can be used to provide a greater understanding of issues of significance to tangata whenua and the Harbour and its processes, the inclusion of a cultural overlay into management of the Harbour, as well as increasing developers and the community's understanding of kaitiakitanga.

As discussed in section 3.6, local iwi have a role to exercise kaitiakitanga for the Harbour. Historically a lack of process for consulting with iwi and hapu (for example, in resource consent processes) has led to less than ideal outcomes for all concerned, including tangata whenua, councils and developers. Of particular concern also to tangata whenua was the lack of appropriate provisions for the protection of sites and values of significance.

Identifying environmental issues, iwi contacts and processes for consultation in respect to places, values, and relationships of cultural significance will assist landowners, tangata whenua and councils in being proactive in knowing where and how to avoid adverse effects on the environment.

In the development of the Strategy, intensive consultation was undertaken with tangata whenua and this resulted in the development of a common set of planning tools including principles, processes, and protocols to provide for co-operative kaitiakitanga of Ohiwa Harbour. This work is being formalised by all three iwi as an iwi planning document to be taken into account by all three local authorities. Iwi planning documents provide a framework for consultation. They can strengthen the partnership between local authorities and iwi and can provide more certainty in making sure the interests of iwi (such as statutory acknowledgements and sites of significance) and environmental issues of significance to tangata whenua are taken into consideration at the appropriate time.

Chapter 5: Policies for the Harbour

This section contains policies that will be used to guide the implementation of this Strategy. The Strategy works within the framework provided by a number of other policy documents such as the Regional Policy Statement, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Regional Coastal Environment Plan.

The policies are designed to work together to guide activities within the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment. The policies are not ranked in any particular order. Specifically they will be used by Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty to provide guidance and direction for management and planning decisions for the Ohiwa Harbour. For example, in developing district plan changes or promoting the development of facilities, these policies will be used as the start point for any relevant process.

Objective

To maintain and enhance the health and natural qualities of Ohiwa Harbour.

1 The health of Ohiwa Harbour and its tributaries

Policy:

- 1.1 Management of the catchment will aim to reduce sediment and nutrients entering the Harbour waters.
- 1.2 Ecological restoration and enhancement will be promoted throughout the Harbour and its catchment.
- 1.3 Active management and protection will be undertaken for the riparian margins of the harbour and tributaries.

While the quality of the Harbour's water is good it is clear that sedimentation and run-off has the potential to harm the Harbour through the introduction of contaminants and by siltation of the estuary. Greater attention and effort will be needed to protect and enhance estuarine health from the effects of the urban and rural catchments. The improvement of the Nukuhou River's water quality will be a priority for action.

2 Development within the natural context of the Harbour

Policy:

- 2.1 All development proposals will be required to minimise their impact on the wider environmental context of the Harbour.
- 2.2 Concentrated built development will be limited to the existing urban areas and coastal settlements.
- 2.3 Concept and structure planning within the visual catchment will be used to achieve the best balance of development and landscape protection.³
- 2.4 Design controls on development will be used to minimise the effect on Ohiwa Harbour's visual catchment.
- 2.5 Structures for public access to the Harbour, navigation and protection works that are deemed to be necessary will be supported, with a preference for location within areas of existing modification.

The landscape and natural character of Ohiwa make it a place of great beauty. This significance means that it can be more easily degraded. The importance that the community has placed on the landscape means that a higher level of attention needs to be given to defining and protecting the character and natural values of the Harbour.

An important aspect of the Harbour's management is supporting sensitive development that respects its relationship with the Harbour. Appropriate development has a significant contribution to make to the future of Ohiwa. For example smaller scale development, such as clusters of houses within the landscape, may be appropriate in certain areas rather than an even spread across the landscape. Areas suitable for such development will be considered as part of the review of district plans and through the development of growth strategies.

3 Management of Recreation

Policy:

- 3.1 Recreation in and surrounding the Harbour will be supported where it does not significantly impinge upon the amenity, cultural and natural values of the Harbour.
- 3.2 Any conflict between recreational activities and/or between recreational activities and the environment will be actively managed.

Recreation within the Harbour has been identified as being very important to the community. There is a balance that needs to be maintained between recreational activities, and between recreation and the Harbour's naturalness and wildlife values. Forms of recreation that do not require substantial modification of the environment and that do not significantly impinge on the amenity and natural values of the Harbour will be supported.

³ Structure Plan: Means a plan for an area that includes objectives and anticipated outcomes for a defined area and may include a general land use plan, hapu or iwi management plan, an urban design plan, a utilities and a services plan.

4 **Access**

Policy:

- 4.1 The level of access to and along coastal and river edges will be increased where this enhances recreation opportunities, and does not adversely affect the environment, in a more than minor way.

Providing access to the Harbour allows the community to experience what Ohiwa has to offer. Access will not always be appropriate, however opportunities will be assessed to determine whether they add to or create new recreation opportunities.

5 **Tikanga and kawa for Ohiwa Harbour**

Policy:

- 5.1 Kaitiakitanga will always be integrated into management of Ohiwa Harbour.
- 5.2 Sites of significance to Maori will be protected, or managed in an appropriate manner.

Respecting the relationship between tangata whenua and the land means developing a partnership to understand cultural connections and to seek appropriate management approaches. Identification of significant sites will also play an important role.

6 **Education and information**

Policy:

- 6.1 Education and information provision will aim to increase the community's understanding of the Harbour and their involvement in its care.

A community that is educated about the Harbour will be a community that is able to play its part in protecting and enhancing the Harbour and its values. An understanding of the impact of human activity on ecological, cultural and biophysical values will be an important step in developing community stewardship for the Harbour. It is recognised that there will be different education and information needs – for example visitors to the harbour are likely to have different educational needs than those who live near or close to the harbour.

7 **Ecological values**

Policy:

- 7.1 The land and water biodiversity of Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment are recognised and managed to ensure ecological values are a respected part of the Harbour's future.
- 7.2 Indigenous, endemic and migratory birds and their habitat will be protected to ensure that birdlife and healthy bird populations remain an integral part of the Ohiwa Harbour character.
- 7.3 Advocacy will be undertaken to promote the sustainable management of the Harbour's fishery resources.

The Harbour is well known for its birdlife. The birds that live and breed in the Harbour as well as those that use the tidal flats as a migratory stopover point are an integral part of its character. The community has concerns about the future of the fishery resources that are associated with Ohiwa Harbour. Advocacy to fishery management authorities will be used to promote options for effective management of the estuary's fishery resources.

Principles

- 1 Effective working relationships between organisations will be fostered and maintained on an ongoing basis.
- 2 Statutory agencies will continually seek to improve their responsiveness to, and ability to engage with, the Ohiwa Harbour catchment community.
- 3 The planning and regulatory mechanisms for Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment will be consistent in their application, aligned in their aims and will be mutually supportive.

Chapter 6: Themes

The following sections are based around themes that group the many issues and concerns that were raised by the community. Under each theme, activities that are already occurring for Ohiwa have been listed to recognise that a significant amount of effort and resources are already being contributed to the Harbour. While issues and concerns may be based more on perception, it is clear that there is an overall desire to see the qualities of the harbour protected.

The themes that are addressed in the following sections (and numbered accordingly) are:

- 7 Health of the Estuary
- 8 Kaimoana
- 9 Kaitiakitanga
- 10 Recreation Opportunities
- 11 Managing Development Pressure
- 12 Natural Areas, Plants and Animals
- 13 A More Informed Community

In response to the issues and concerns a number of actions have been identified by the community or have been developed to address the points that have been raised. Some of the actions that have been developed are detailed while some are in the form of processes or long term research projects that will result in recommendations for further actions.

The table below lists the actions that are discussed in the following sections.

7.3	Health of the Estuary
7.3.1	Managing Earthworks within the Catchment
7.3.2	Planting on Unstable Slopes
7.3.3	Nutrient Budgeting Information
7.3.4	Advice on Shellfish Risks
7.3.5	Stop Contamination of Urban Stormwater
7.3.6	Management of Mangroves
8.3	Kaimoana
8.3.1	Advocacy on Fishing Issues
8.3.2	Māhinga Mataitai Status for Ohiwa Harbour
9.3	Kaitiakitanga
9.3.1	Develop Iwi Planning Document for Ohiwa Harbour
9.3.2	Whakatohea Review 'Tawharau o Nga Hapu o Whakatohea'

9.3.3	Identify Ohiwa Harbour's Cultural Heritage
9.3.4	Develop Protocols with Statutory Agencies
9.3.5	Add Kaitiakitanga into the Community's View of Harbour Management
10.3	Recreation Opportunities
10.3.1	Consider Opportunities to Obtain Harbour Access
10.3.2	Clarify the Status of Public Land
10.3.3	Develop Reserves Vision for Ohiwa Harbour
10.3.4	Enhance Ohope Spit Harbour Edge Walkway
10.3.5	Assess Public Camping Facilities
10.3.6	Investigate Development of Regional Parks
10.3.7	Monitoring Recreation Activities
10.3.8	Review Bylaws Relating to Higher Impact Activities
10.3.9	Develop Policy for Controlling Vehicles on Tidal Flats and Beaches
10.3.10	Promote Harbour Wardens, Fisheries Officers and Kaitiaki
11.3	Managing Development Pressure
11.3.1	Understand Future Residential Development
11.3.2	Review Resource Management Protocols
11.3.3	Evaluate Plans to Protect Character and Estuarine Health of Ohiwa
12.3	Natural Areas, Plants and Animals
12.3.1	Develop Incentives for Landowners
12.3.2	Review Monitoring and Enforcement Regimes
12.3.3	Assess Ecological Quality of Ohiwa Harbour
12.3.4	Develop an Understanding of Indigenous Fish Species
12.3.5	Protect Bird Habitat and Species
12.3.6	Ramsar status for Ohiwa Harbour
13.3	A More Informed Harbour Community
13.3.1	Provide Coordinated Signs and Interpretive Material
13.3.2	Develop a Communication/Education Plan
13.3.3	Ohiwa Harbour Website
13.3.4	Support the Work of Landowners and Community Groups
13.3.5	Review Community Suggestions

Each action described in the following sections has an associated timeframe for when it should be done. The timeframe for actions to be completed by is in months or years from the 1 July 2008.

Chapter 7: Health of the Estuary

7.1 Community concerns and issues: health of the estuary

Community Concerns

- The water quality of Ohiwa Harbour needs to be maintained and enhanced.
- Accelerated sedimentation due to land use activities e.g. earthworks, especially in riparian margins or on steep north-eastern slopes, storm events, the removal of vegetation that plays a role in stabilising land and stream banks.
- Sedimentation being caused by increased runoff from clearance of native bush and loss of freshwater wetlands from the valleys leading to the harbour.
- Sedimentation is contributing to the spread of mangroves, affecting access to recreation areas and threatening the seafood resources.
- Effects on shellfish and aquatic ecosystems.
- Natural events (such as storms) impact on water quality.
- Effect on water quality and habitats for shellfish and other traditional foods gathered from the Ohiwa Harbour.
- Impact of increased development, especially septic tank systems and stormwater runoff.

Issues

1 Rates of sedimentation threaten the health of the Harbour

The upper reaches of the harbour are at risk from sedimentation deriving from land use practices. Monitoring cannot yet provide long term trends but observations suggest that sedimentation rates are significant and have been exacerbated due to storm events. The spread of mangroves is associated with this increased sedimentation.

2. The cumulative effect of development represents a risk for water quality

The pressure for residential development (such as the impact of onsite effluent disposal) combined with existing farming practices within the catchment creates concerns for the health of the estuary. Understanding the long term effects of, in particular, the various kinds of point and non-point discharges are important. The fact that the harbour is strongly tidal is beneficial for water quality.

7.2 What is being done for the health of the estuary?

- 1 Environment Bay of Plenty has a number of survey cross-sections of tidal flats in the harbour to monitor sedimentation rates accurately over relatively short time periods. These cross sections are in areas of the harbour where sedimentation is most likely to reflect catchment inputs.
- 2 An accurate terrain model (LiDAR) of channel locations and intertidal flats survey has been created. This will be used to follow larger morphological changes and assess sedimentation rates over a very long period of time.
- 3 Water quality monitoring is done on suspended solids, chlorophyll, salinity, and bacteria to establish suitability for swimming and shellfish gathering. Monitoring is carried out for metal contamination of shellfish and distribution of mangroves. Water quality monitoring of the Nukuhou River is undertaken to establish ecosystem health and also at bathing beaches during the summer.
- 4 Water quality classification has been carried out under both the Regional Coastal Environment Plan (coastal waters) and the Proposed Regional Water and Land Plan (fresh waters) to recognise the values of individual waterbodies, and to provide a benchmark for monitoring and enhancement.
- 5 Controls on land disturbance operations to reduce sedimentation have been established through resource consent processes set out in regional plans prepared by Environment Bay of Plenty. Forestry companies in particular have established strict procedures designed to minimise sedimentation from their operations in the catchment. These measures are monitored by Environment Bay of Plenty.
- 6 Opotiki District Council and Whakatane District Council have controls within their district plans on subdivision and land use to reduce sedimentation from the catchment.
- 7 The Environment Bay of Plenty Proposed Regional Water and Land Plan contains rules to control the effects of stock access to water-bodies (a prohibited activity in the Coastal Marine Area), earthworks, vegetation clearance and other activities that discharge contaminants to water and land.
- 8 Land management practices within the harbour and catchment are improving. Farmers are encouraged to use best management practices to achieve clean streams. Forest accreditation and certification requirements recognise forestry managers that have adopted best management practices.
- 9 Environmental programmes – there have been extensive land management works undertaken by Environment Bay of Plenty to reduce soil erosion and to restrict stock access to waterways. An increasing number of landowners are approaching Environment Bay of Plenty to enquire about 'environmental programmes'. Ohiwa Harbour is a priority area for the establishment of environmental programmes.
- 10 Changes in disposal of dairy shed waste have occurred which means that there are no longer any discharges directly to water.
- 11 The Environment Bay of Plenty On-Site Effluent Treatment Plan has provisions to prevent the disposal of effluent contaminating water.

- 12 Some companies are offering tailored information for the efficient application of agri-chemicals and these help landowners to reduce costs and runoff into waterways.

7.3 Actions: health of the estuary

7.3.1 Managing Sedimentation within the Catchment	
What	Evaluate current rule provisions and management practices to ensure best practice methods are in place to avoid sediment entering Ohiwa Harbour and catchment tributaries.
Why	<p><i>Sedimentation is a critical issue that needs to be understood to protect the health of the Harbour. It appears likely that land management practices are contributing significantly to the natural erosion processes. Current practices and rule provisions will be evaluated to ensure that as far as is practical earthworks do not cause sedimentation.</i></p> <p><i>The July 2004 storm event caused a high number of landslips and erosion that deposited large amounts of sediment in the harbour. The problem was exacerbated when slip material on roads was deposited below the road and in close proximity to watercourses as roads were re-opened by contractors and machinery while emergency works were undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>Some damage occurred on tracks and public roads. It is possible that these earthworks were not constructed to a sufficient standard to withstand such high rainfall events. Reviewing current standards and practices may provide useful information for future works.</i></p>
When	1 year
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council
Who else	Federated Farmers, Forestry Companies, Transit New Zealand, Tangata whenua, Roding contractors
How	<p>Forum to review controls and practices.</p> <p>Advice to roading authorities on emergency works.</p> <p>Enforcement action for poor practice if required.</p>
Resources	Staff time to review current controls and practices

7.3.2 Planting on Unstable Slopes	
What	Planting on steep, unstable land and in riparian margins to mitigate the effect of soil slips and sedimentation on Ohiwa Harbour.
Why	<p><i>The July 2004 storm event caused a high number of landslips and erosion that deposited large amounts of sediment in the harbour. Advice is available to landowners on appropriate species and planting techniques. Landowners can also access funding through Environment Bay of Plenty's environmental programmes.</i></p> <p><i>The planting of public land, including road reserve, should continue.</i></p> <p><i>For example, removal of forestry trees in steep or unstable riparian margins can contribute to sedimentation and siltation issues arising.</i></p>

When	Ongoing
Who	Landowners Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council
Who else	Iwi/hapu, voluntary/care groups
How	Target high-risk upper catchment or highly erodible areas with environmental programmes
Resources	Funding from Environment Bay of Plenty for Environmental Programmes Planting on reserve land

7.3.3 Nutrient Budgeting Information	
What	Nutrient budgeting promoted by Environment Bay of Plenty
Why	<i>Fertiliser companies can provide nutrient budgeting services to farmers. Databases and local information can be used to identify the degree of risk of loss of phosphorus, nitrate and faecal material to water, across the farm. Nutrient budgeting and application advice is provided so that farmers can more accurately tailor the amounts of fertilisers to be applied and use application methods that reduce wastage and cost, while also avoiding the loss of nutrients to runoff.</i>
When	1 year
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	District Councils, Federated Farmers
How	Website and information sheets to promote nutrient budgeting process and sources of advice.
Resources	Development and review of information

7.3.4 Advice on Shellfish Risks	
What	The provision of advice that people do not gather shellfish after heavy rain.
Why	<i>Shellfish quality can be marginal at some sites around the harbour after periods of strong wind or heavy rain because of bacterial contamination. The Nukuhou River has poor water quality, with high bacteria counts. Strong winds in the harbour may also raise bacterial numbers by re-suspending sediment and associated bacteria. General advice is that shellfish should not be collected for five days or more after heavy rain or strong winds.</i>
When	1 year
Who	Ministry of Health
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty with monitoring data District Councils with sign locations and information Iwi and Hapu with location of signage

How	Signage should be placed in appropriate locations to inform shellfish gatherers about harvesting risks following heavy rain.
Resources	Information added to any new or upgraded signs

7.3.5 Stop Contamination of Urban Stormwater	
What	<p>Work to keep contaminants out of urban stormwater systems by:</p> <p>Advising that they drain into the harbour with no treatment (part of regional stormwater awareness education programme = raise awareness of the environmental issues surrounding stormwater disposal, and promote better management practices to avoid contamination of stormwater;</p> <p>Asking people to wash cars on grass or at a car wash, rather than hard surfaces that drain to stormwater.</p>
Why	<p><i>Stencilling the drains is a relatively inexpensive, simple but effective way of increasing public awareness of threats to the harbour from inappropriate materials entering drains.</i></p> <p><i>While stencils on drains and washing cars on lawns will help reduce unwanted chemicals and other contaminants entering the harbour, active promotion of better management practice will help urban residents to avoid contaminating stormwater.</i></p> <p><i>Environment Bay of Plenty's Stormwater Strategy addresses this issue through the development of comprehensive stormwater catchment discharge consents. These require action plans to address contamination issues.</i></p>
When	1 year
Who	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty, community groups
How	<p>Stormwater drains be stencilled to indicate that they drain into Ohiwa Harbour</p> <p>Progressive project involving community groups</p>
Resources	<p>Stencils are available from Environment Bay of Plenty</p> <p>Funding from district councils</p> <p>Information on stormwater locations from district councils</p>

7.3.6 Management of Mangroves	
What	Monitor mangrove distribution, research historical trends, the cause of mangrove spread in Ohiwa Harbour and the impact of mangrove growth on wildlife, cultural, hydrological and recreational values. Management plans will be supported.
Why	<p><i>The management of mangroves within the harbour needs to recognise where problems for wildlife, cultural, hydrological or recreational activities are occurring so that actions can be taken. Mapping and monitoring of the harbour and research from other harbours will allow the identification of sustainable mangrove management practices.</i></p> <p><i>The implementation of mangrove control may be a role for community groups to undertake through the Estuary Care programme. Estuary care takes a wider view than just mangrove management as it includes pest control, wildlife monitoring, recreational access and sedimentation control.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Ministry of Fisheries, Department of Conservation, Care Groups, Territorial Authorities, tangata whenua
How	Spatial monitoring as part of programme
Resources	Monitoring programme, Estuary Care

Chapter 8: Kaimoana

8.1 Community concerns and issues: kaimoana

Community Concerns

- Over-fishing and inappropriate methods threaten the fisheries resources.
- Need to ensure that Ohiwa Harbour remains an important seafood resource for future generations.
- Ohiwa is an important traditional māhinga mataitai of tangata whenua and the preservation of māhinga mataitai is important.
- Ohiwa Harbour is a customary and recreational fishery.
- Observation of rahui and other traditional methods of kaitiakitanga are supported by tangata whenua.
- Shellfish stocks are being seriously depleted in Ohiwa Harbour and monitoring of shellfish stocks does not occur on a regular basis.
- Enforcement of fishing regulations is not occurring frequently enough.
- There are not enough fisheries officers at Ohiwa Harbour.
- The introduction of marine pests (such as animal and macro invertebrates) threatens the biodiversity of the Harbour.

Issues

1. Overfishing, and illegal or inappropriate gathering, threatens the integrity of the Harbour's fisheries.

The fisheries of the harbour are under pressure from the level and in some cases the method of fishing/gathering. When people use grapples to drag the harbour bed for shellfish, they are potentially adversely impacting the shellfish beds. Combined with the stress that water quality and sedimentation are causing this means that the continued harvest of kaimoana is not guaranteed.

8.2 What is being done for kaimoana?

- 1 The Department of Conservation enforces the Whitebait Regulations 1991, especially on the lower reaches of the Nukuhou River to ensure the sustainable management of the fishery.
- 2 Honorary Fishery Officers appointed under the Fisheries Act 1996 patrol the harbour.

- 3 A rahui was used to assist with the sustainable management of the green-lipped mussel resource in Ohiwa Harbour. This Rahui was initiated by Upokorehe and supported by Ngati Awa, Tuhoë, Whakatohea, Ministry of Fisheries, Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council and the Ohope Community Board. The Rahui was formally backed up through the placement of a section 186A temporary closure under the Fisheries Act 1996. A second section 186A temporary closure has been applied for and granted and will expire in June 2008.
- 4 Ministry of Fisheries enforces the fishing regulations or rules for the commercial, amateur and customary Maori use of fisheries resources, as they relate to marine and freshwater fisheries.
- 5 Intertidal shellfish stocks (including pipi, cockle and tuatua) were introduced into the quota management system on 01 October 2005. As a result a total allowable catch has been established for each stock that is considered to be sustainable. The portion available for commercial fishers is a very small proportion of the total harvest that is considered to be sustainable.
- 6 Environment Bay of Plenty manages the habitat of fish and shellfish within the Coastal Marine Area.

8.3 Actions: kaimoana

8.3.1 Advocacy on Fishing Issues	
What	<p>Enforcement and research is needed to ensure the sustainable use of Ohiwa Harbour's fishery resources. The following suggestions have been made in relation to concerns expressed by Harbour users.</p> <p>Provide more fisheries officers.</p> <p>Support kaitiaki o nga ika wardens by empowering them to enforce compliance with fishing regulations.</p> <p>Investigate grapple dredge fishing methods and the impact they have on the Ohiwa shellfish fisheries.</p> <p>Investigate the sustainability and impact of recreational, commercial and customary fisheries in the Harbour, including the variety of fishing methods used (such as grapple dredging and use of nets).</p> <p>The Ministry of Fisheries provides resources with the aim of sustainably managing fisheries. The community has a view that further resources and a greater level of attention are needed to protect the harbour. The local authorities in association with iwi/hapu can advocate for greater protection of the Ohiwa kaimoana resource.</p>
Why	<p><i>There are community concerns about the level of enforcement that is provided in Ohiwa Harbour and that more resources should be provided to assist with fishery protection.</i></p> <p><i>Grapple dredging is thought to be unsustainable within the Ohiwa Harbour due to the damage that it does to the shellfish beds. A specific investigation is required to look at this concern.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Iwi/Hapu, Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council
Who else	Ministry of Fisheries

How	Communication of issues to the Ministry of Fisheries. Joint advocacy for harbour protection.
Resources	Staff time

8.3.2 Māhinga Mataitai Status for Ohiwa Harbour	
What	Seek māhinga mataitai status for Ohiwa Harbour
Why	<p><i>The pressures that exist on the customary fishery at Ohiwa Harbour may mean that māhinga mataitai status for the Harbour could provide a useful sustainable management tool. An assessment of fisheries management initiatives will be part of determining whether a mataitai reserve is the best option for managing the customary fishery.</i></p> <p><i>Mataitai reserves are areas where the tangata whenua manage all non-commercial fishing by making bylaws under the Fisheries Act. The bylaws must apply equally to all individuals. Mataitai reserves may only be applied for over traditional fishing grounds and must be areas of special significance to the tangata whenua.</i></p> <p><i>The tangata whenua and the Ministry of Fisheries must consult the local community together. There are a number of criteria that must be satisfied before the Ministry of Fisheries can approve a mātaimitai reserve proposal. These criteria include:</i></p> <p><i>A special relationship exists between tangata whenua and the area of the proposed reserve</i></p> <p><i>The proposed reserve is a traditional fishing ground</i></p> <p><i>The proposed reserve can be effectively managed by tangata whenua</i></p> <p><i>The general management aims are consistent with the sustainable use of the fisheries resources in the area</i></p> <p><i>The proposed mataitai reserve is not a marine reserve</i></p> <p><i>The proposed mataitai will not unreasonably affect the ability of the local community to take fish or commercial fishers to fill quota within the quota management area for that species.</i></p> <p><i>It is important that the community has an understanding of mataitai reserves and local iwi can work with local authorities to progress this understanding.</i></p>
When	2 years
Who	Iwi/Hapu
Who else	Ministry of Fisheries
How	Consultation with Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, community, Ohope Community Board, Taneatua Community Board, fishers and commercial users followed by application process.
Resources	Hui for consultation Public notices Enforcement and management resources

Chapter 9: Kaitiakitanga

9.1 Community Concerns and Issues: Kaitiakitanga

Community Concerns

- Historical events of great significance to tangata whenua have occurred at Ohiwa, including the landing of various waka
- Ohiwa Harbour is seen by iwi as a significant taonga
- Waahi tapu and waahi taonga located in and around Ohiwa Harbour are important to tangata whenua
- The maintenance and enhancement of traditional Maori relationships with Ohiwa Harbour is important.

Issues

- 1 There is a desire to see greater acknowledgement of cultural connections to the harbour.
- 2 There is a concern that sites of significance to tangata whenua need to be identified and protected.
- 3 There is a desire to utilise kaitiakitanga to assist in achieving sustainable management of Ohiwa Harbour.
- 4 Partnerships can be used to explore the benefits of traditional methods of control for the harbour's resources.

9.2 What is being done for kaitiakitanga?

- 1 Whakatohea, Ngati Awa, Tuhoe and Upokorehe have agreed that as tangata whenua they will work co-operatively to exercise kaitiakitanga of the Ohiwa Harbour.
- 2 An iwi planning document is being prepared and will contain a common set of planning tools including principles, processes, and protocols to provide for co-operative kaitiakitanga of Ohiwa Harbour.
- 3 Statutory acknowledgements for Ngati Awa are in place for parts of Ohiwa Harbour.
- 4 The Whakatohea Resource Management Plan was prepared in July 1993. It is the only iwi-planning document recognised as relevant to the Ohiwa Harbour.

- 5 The identification of some sites of significance to tangata whenua has occurred in district and regional plans, and through archaeological surveys.

9.3 Actions: kaitiakitanga

9.3.1 Develop Iwi Planning Document for Ohiwa Harbour	
What	Develop an integrated iwi planning document for Ohiwa Harbour and deliver to statutory authorities.
Why	<p><i>Iwi planning documents recognised by an iwi authority as being relevant to the Ohiwa Harbour can provide clarity and certainty to resource consents and planning processes.</i></p> <p><i>Through the Ohiwa Harbour Project the framework for an iwi planning document has been developed that coordinates the kaitiakitanga responses for Upokorehe, Whakatohea, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe.</i></p> <p><i>Following the recognition process tangata whenua initiated workshops on their iwi-planning document can help relevant staff in statutory agencies to understand how tangata whenua intend for the planning document to be taken into account by those statutory agencies.</i></p> <p><i>Protocols can also be negotiated that reinforce the outcomes sought by the iwi planning document.</i></p> <p><i>Processes for consultation are also being prepared and practiced by tangata whenua.</i></p>
When	1 year
Who	Ngati Awa, Tuhoe, Upokorehe and Whakatohea
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council, other statutory agencies
How	Adopt iwi planning document and present to statutory authorities. Invite consultation with statutory agencies over draft protocols prepared by tangata whenua.
Resources	Funding from Environment Bay of Plenty to complete project.

9.3.2 Whakatohea Review 'Tawharau o Nga Hapu o Whakatohea'	
What	That Whakatohea review their 'Tawharau o Nga Hapu o Whakatohea: Whakatohea Resource Management Plan' to see if the processes and protocols developed through the Ohiwa Harbour Strategy project are useful for inclusion.
Why	<p><i>The Whakatohea Resource Management Plan was prepared in July 1993. It is the only iwi-planning document currently recognised as relevant to the Ohiwa Harbour.</i></p> <p><i>Review of this plan is recommended for the following reasons:</i></p> <p><i>The Plan is 14 years old</i></p> <p><i>Case law and legislation have changed over time</i></p> <p><i>Processes and protocols discussed as part of the Ohiwa Harbour Strategy project may be suitable for inclusion in the existing Whakatohea Resource Management Plan or a reviewed Whakatohea Resource Management Plan.</i></p>

When	To be determined by Whakatohea
Who	Whakatohea
Who else	Assistance from: Environment Bay of Plenty Opotiki District Council Whakatohea Maori Trust Board Whakatane District Council
Resources	Costs for hui, consultation

9.3.3 Identify Ohiwa Harbour's Cultural Heritage	
What	Identify Ohiwa Harbour's cultural heritage for protection.
Why	<p><i>There are many waahi tapu and waahi taonga in and around Ohiwa Harbour. Consulting Maori that have a relationship with the affected area will ensure that the appropriate people are describing those relationships, and identifying and assessing the values associated with the place.</i></p> <p><i>While there are general protection mechanisms in place the identification of such places will assist their protection and wise management. Generally land based sites can be protected through district plans and coastal sites through the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. Iwi planning documents are another useful tool for cultural heritage protection. The heritage criteria within the Regional Policy Statement can assist with the identification of cultural heritage sites.</i></p> <p><i>Identification will provide landowners with greater certainty about the importance of these places. Information relevant to these places of significance can sometimes be misused and protection from misuse of sensitive information may be necessary. Protection can also come from the Historic Places Act and from iwi becoming heritage protection authorities for their own heritage, either separately or jointly.</i></p> <p><i>A number of studies have been completed which contribute to our understanding of the cultural heritage of Ohiwa, such as Environment Bay of Plenty's Heritage Review Project on the Coastal Marine Area. It is however recognised that there is still a need for further research to identify the cultural heritage in and around Ohiwa Harbour.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Tangata whenua (identification)
Who else	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Environment Bay of Plenty (processes)
How	Schedules and rules within district plans and the Regional Coastal Environment Plan Iwi planning documents
Resources	Costs for hui, consultation, administration, plan development and publication.

9.3.4 Develop Protocols With Statutory Agencies	
What	Develop appropriate protocols between statutory agencies and tangata whenua to provide for processes that integrate kaitiakitanga into Ohiwa Harbour resource management practices.
Why	<p><i>Protocols between organisations can assist with integrating kaitiakitanga into resource management practices. As a first step, hui need to be held to discuss what protocols can offer to each party.</i></p> <p><i>Protocols may identify methods for recovering costs and recognising the value of work undertaken by tangata whenua engaged in consultation. A range of services and products are provided by tangata whenua in relation to consultation. Some justify full cost recovery (such as consulting work for resource consent applications), some cost sharing (such as consultation on statutory policies and plans) and some should not attract any charge (such as responses or submissions to the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan). Where no charge is warranted, contributions from issuing agencies may still be appropriate.</i></p>
When	2 years
Who	Tangata whenua
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council.
How	Conduct hui to discuss benefits of protocols and objectives of each party.
Resources	Costs for hui, consultation, documentation, staff training seminars.

9.3.5 Add Kaitiakitanga Into the Community's View of Harbour Management	
What	Develop methods for integrating kaitiakitanga into the community's view of harbour management.
Why	<p><i>Resource Management and kaitiakitanga work to achieve the same end – sustainability. There is much information to learn and share. Seminars or wananga on the management of stormwater disposal, effluent disposal, riparian planting, pest management and a host of other matters would be advantageous to the whole community.</i></p> <p><i>Other opportunities include:</i></p> <p><i>Signage that acknowledges the relationship of tangata whenua with Ohiwa Harbour. There are many places of historical and cultural significance to tangata whenua that other people are interested in knowing more about.</i></p> <p><i>Environmental education resources about the relationship of tangata whenua with Ohiwa Harbour for use in schools and the community. Developing educational material that teaches people about the significance of Ohiwa Harbour to tangata whenua helps people know why they should keep it special.</i></p> <p><i>Holding kaitiakitanga conferences associated with the harbour.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Tangata whenua Environment Bay of Plenty, Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council

Who else	Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, community
How	Consider kaitiakitanga as an input into all decisions for infrastructure, resource management and education projects.
Resources	Staff time to contact iwi/hapu as part of projects Develop material as required Part of education programmes Conference costs.

Chapter 10: Recreation Opportunities

10.1 Community concerns and issues: recreation opportunities

Community Concerns

- Ohiwa Harbour's relatively unspoilt and safe environment for many recreation activities should not be compromised.
- Public access to the harbour is threatened by development. Opportunities should always be taken to increase access to the harbour, for example, in association with subdivision and development.
- Existing public access to, and around Ohiwa Harbour; and along its edges, associated wetlands and reserves needs to be maintained and enhanced.
- The spread of mangroves may reduce recreational opportunities in parts of the Harbour.
- Reserves and camping facilities might not remain in public ownership. Camping opportunities should remain for future generations.
- District councils lack adequate reserve funds to enhance esplanade reserves or strips.
- Public access along private boundaries can create privacy and security concerns for residents.
- Access-ways can spread plant and animal pests and rubbish.
- Incompatible activities being carried out in close proximity to each other can compromise safety and enjoyment of neighbouring users. For example, smoky beach fires, dogs not on leashes, vehicles on the beach and noisy motorboats.
- Improvements to recreation resources should only be made where the values of the harbour are not unduly compromised.

Issues

- 1 The community is concerned about the potential to lose existing, or to miss out on potential future, public access.
- 2 The policies of the local authorities support public access and recreational opportunities. However, such is the value that is placed on this area that the community is seeking more assurance that public access to the Harbour will be maintained and enhanced where possible.
- 3 Recreational conflicts need active management.
- 4 Conflicts do occur on the Harbour but in general this is at a low level and is generally temporary. Increasing numbers of residents and visitors will increase

the potential for recreation conflict to occur.

- 5 Recreational improvements should not be at the expense of other values.
- 6 The provision of recreational resources tends to be viewed by the community as a positive step. In the case of Ohiwa Harbour the desire for improvement needs to be carefully considered against other values of the Harbour (for example recreational activities can in some cases disturb wildlife habitat).

10.2 What is being done for recreation opportunities?

- 1 There is consistent policy that supports the provision of public access-ways to the harbour in the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement, Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan, Whakatane District Plan and Opotiki District Plan.
- 2 Reserves, esplanade strips and other areas of formally protected land that provide for public access have already been established around parts of the harbour. Some were created as conditions on resource consents for subdivisions.
- 3 There are three camping grounds around Ohiwa Harbour. Two are on the Ohope Spit and are leased from Whakatane District Council and Ngati Awa, and the other is on the Ohiwa Spit and is leased from Opotiki District Council. Some customary camping areas (Nohoanga) also exist within the Ohiwa Harbour Catchment.
- 4 Many public reserves have been created and vested in local authorities. For each of these reserves Opotiki and Whakatane District Council develop and implement reserve management plans.
- 5 The Department of Conservation Bay of Plenty Conservancy has a ten-year Conservation Management Strategy that provides an overview of conservation issues. A specific objective is "*Practicable public access to, and free access on, lands administered by the Department*".
- 6 The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement recognises instances when access to and along the coastal marine area may need to be restricted. The Regional Coastal Environment Plan provides some guidance on the relative sensitivity of the coastal environment to public access.
- 7 The Department of Conservation, councils and community groups have successfully used signs and fencing to discourage inappropriate access to ecologically sensitive areas and wildlife habitats.
- 8 The old railway lines that were near the Ohiwa Spit have been removed from the harbour as they were a navigational hazard.
- 9 Visitor facilities (such as toilets) are provided in coastal reserve/access areas.
- 10 District council bylaws and Environment Bay of Plenty navigation and safety bylaws provide for:
 - Control of beach fires
 - Designated areas and controls for activities such as jet skis and water skiing
 - General control of water activities to reduce conflict

-
- Where dogs can and cannot go and whether they need to be on a leash
 - Avoidance of swimming around the wharf
 - Control of vehicle access to beaches.
- 11 The Ohope Reserves Management Plan and the Regional Coastal Environment Plan have provisions that seek to restrict vehicle access to the foreshore.
- 12 A proposal to develop a jetty or pontoon at the Port Ohope boat ramp was initiated with the aim of enhancing the boat launching facility. This proposal has not progressed.
- 13 Harbour recreational opportunities that have been considered:
- An additional ski lane on the Opotiki side of the harbour was considered, but not implemented.
 - In the past dredging of channels for recreational purposes was raised as an issue, but not progressed further on the basis of ecological effect, tangata whenua opposition and cost/benefit analysis. There is currently still sufficient depth of water in various channels to accommodate the recreational boating that presently takes place.
- 14 Honorary harbour wardens are appointed by the Regional Council. Currently five harbour wardens cover Ohiwa Harbour on a roster system. They have an educational and advisory capacity to:
- Provide information so harbour users are aware of current navigation and safety rules and regulations
 - Provide advice to boat users to help them avoid breaking rules and regulations
 - Encourage safe use of segregated recreational areas within the harbour
 - Supervise all harbour users
 - Issue warning notices and recommend that the Harbour Master issue infringement notices.

10.3 Actions: Recreation Opportunities

10.3.1 Consider Opportunities to Obtain Harbour Access	
What	Consider all opportunities to obtain harbour edge access.
Why	<p><i>The community sees harbour edge access as important. Access opportunities can be created through subdivision or separately through negotiated agreements (such as through acquisition or access agreements) with landowners. Both approaches are important.</i></p> <p><i>The Opotiki and Whakatane district plans contain provisions for esplanade reserves or strips to be vested as part of subdivision. While public access is not always appropriate, there needs to be explicit consideration of public access when subdivision applications are being assessed. The general proposition is that the harbour edge should be in public ownership and linked with other public land over the long term. Acquisition may be required in cases.</i></p> <p><i>District Plan changes may be useful to ensure a high priority is accorded to securing appropriate access opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>As part of individual developments, discussions should be held to explore opportunities to secure public access or harbour edge reserve land through, for example, land exchanges.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Opotiki District Council and Whakatane District Council
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty, Department of Conservation, iwi/hapu, landowners, developers
How	District Plans and plan changes Regional Coastal Environment Plan Acquisition, access agreements
Resources	District Plan changes, acquisition costs

10.3.2 Clarify the Status of Public Land	
What	Assess and clarify the status of public land around the harbour (such as reserves and unformed legal road) and what public access they should provide.
Why	<p><i>There was concern during consultation that public reserves may be closed down or sold.</i></p> <p><i>Access over paper roads or other informal access-ways needs to be clarified. Closure and sale of legally formed roads and paper roads should be discouraged. There is a need to improve the information base about 'paper roads' and to establish the status of land currently identified as unknown.</i></p> <p><i>Some public land, for example, unformed roads, marginal strips and esplanade reserves are 'landlocked' by private land, creating access issues. Improved public access to such land will require consultation with landowners.</i></p>

	<i>As part of this project an assessment of each site should be carried out to identify what level of access is appropriate particularly where sensitive sites are involved. The project may recommend that management controls should be implemented for sensitive sites (for example, bylaw amendments or infrastructure to control access).</i>
When	1 year
Who	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Department of Conservation, reserve trustees
How	Reserves Act District plans Reserve Management Plans
Resources	Mapping costs Land information research costs

10.3.3 Develop Reserves Vision for Ohiwa Harbour

What	Assess the long term objectives for reserves within the Ohiwa Harbour catchment including developing public walkways.
Why	<p><i>Within the Ohiwa Harbour catchment there are a number of reserves and pieces of public land administered by the Department of Conservation and the territorial authorities. Planning for the future development of the area will be assisted by an understanding of what new public reserves might be needed and where they would be best located.</i></p> <p><i>To achieve the long term objectives for reserves in the catchment, a number of mechanisms are available. For example, key areas in private ownership might be identified and consultation undertaken with landowners about possible options for obtaining access to these areas – avoiding wherever possible adverse effects on natural and cultural heritage values, and the privacy and security of landowners. Some actions may be longer term and involve district plan provisions (such as the identification of future esplanade reserves).</i></p> <p><i>Specific areas, such as the Otao South Reserve were identified by the community as sites for various activities and these ideas can be included in the development of the overall vision and the next review of the Ohope Reserves Management Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Further, a Port Ohope Development Concept Plan is being developed by the Whakatane District Council for harbour land in the area around Port Ohope. It is anticipated that the plan, once adopted, will offer additional opportunities for recreation and defined access to the harbour.</i></p> <p><i>(Note: This Action is linked to Action 10.3.5 'Assess Public Camping Facilities')</i></p>
When	2 years

Who	Whakatane District Council and Opotiki District Council
Who else	Department of Conservation, persons in whom public reserves have been vested (for example, Maori reserves set aside for the use of the public generally) Iwi/hapu, adjacent landowners and occupiers. Environment Bay of Plenty
How	Long Term Council Community Plan, District Plans, Regional Coastal Environment Plan, Ohope Reserves Management Plan, Ohiwa Reserves Management Plan
Resources	Researching current land status Development of reserves vision Future resources are dependent on agreed vision.

10.3.4 Enhance Ohope Spit Harbour Edge Walkway	
What	Enhancement of the walkway along the harbour edge of the Ohope Spit
Why	<i>It is possible to have an enjoyable walk along the harbour edge of the Ohope Spit by using existing esplanade reserves, streets and access ways. However, signposting, track development and information on tides is needed to enhance the experience, encourage good conduct and to show the access way.</i>
When	2 years
Who	Whakatane District Council
Who else	Department of Conservation and persons in whom public reserves have been vested (for example, Maori reserves set aside for the use of the public generally) Adjacent landowners and occupiers.
How	Reserve Management Plans Route description Signage and track infrastructure
Resources	Development of a walkway plan Future resources are dependent on plan

10.3.5 Assess Public Camping Facilities	
What	Assess existing camping opportunities and protection mechanisms to ensure the future availability of camping on the Harbour.
Why	<p><i>Camping remains an important recreation activity that provides people with affordable accommodation at desirable holiday destinations at Ohiwa and Ohope spits. New Zealand's coastal camping opportunities have reduced in the recent past and there is a community desire to see the Ohiwa Harbour opportunities protected.</i></p> <p><i>There are three public camping facilities on the Ohiwa Harbour margin and while these existing campgrounds may be sufficiently sized to cater for current demand for camping, in the future this demand is likely to increase. Camping holidays are an important aspect of the Kiwi way of life and it is important that an awareness is maintained of the capacity of campgrounds to continue to provide this amenity to the public.</i></p> <p><i>If it is found that there is insufficient space allocated to camping in the Ohiwa Harbour catchment then there may be a need to encourage the establishment of new camping grounds or to expand existing ones.</i></p>
When	6 months to evaluate demand and to develop policy position
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council and Department of Conservation
Who else	Interest Groups, tangata whenua, lease holders
How	Reserve Management Plan Council policy reports
Resources	Staff time for reporting

10.3.6 Investigate Development of Regional Parks	
What	Investigate development of regional parks at Ohiwa Harbour, to enhance access to the Harbour
Why	<p><i>During consultation for this Strategy the community has said that priority should be given to the purchase of land that provides appropriate access, supports appropriate lower impact recreation, provides views of the harbour and links with other reserves. These locally identified priorities are consistent with regional park policy.</i></p> <p><i>The regional parks initiative also relates to action 10.3.3.</i></p>
When	6 months for initial assessment Ongoing process of monitoring acquisition opportunities.
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council, Department of Conservation, iwi/hapu, landowners

How	Long Term Council Community Plan Policy on Regional Parks
Resources	Initially staff resources and valuations If a regional park is developed, costs would include acquisition, infrastructure and maintenance.

10.3.7 Monitoring Recreation Activities	
What	Continue regular monitoring of recreation activities to assess usage, to identify incompatible activities, including conflict with cultural and ecological values, and to assist demand management (such as the need for facilities).
Why	<i>Monitoring may involve complaint registers, surveys, compliance activities and community feedback. The monitoring will indicate areas and activities that may need further investigation. This may lead to separation, more stringent controls or integrated management. Regular reporting of findings should occur to the relevant local authority.</i> <i>Bylaws and reserve management plans are all reviewed on a regular basis. For each review statutory authorities will share information on known issues or conflicts.</i>
When	Ongoing
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty Harbour Master for water based user groups District Councils for land based user groups
Who else	Department of Conservation, user groups, tangata whenua
How	Complaints registers Navigation and Safety Bylaws Reserve Management plans
Resources	Survey costs

10.3.8 Review Bylaws Relating to Higher Impact Activities	
What	District Councils to review their bylaws and Reserve Management Plans to ensure that a range of land based recreation activities, some with potentially significant impacts on the environment or other users, are catered for.
Why	<p><i>There was a view expressed by the community that some activities that were previously allowed around the Harbour have been excluded. Examples given include:</i></p> <p><i>Dogs not on a leash</i></p> <p><i>Small camp and beach fires</i></p> <p><i>The public land network as a whole can provide a range of recreational activities. Rather than each piece of land being “all things to all people”, they could be designated for different purposes. Activities in each reserve could be limited to those that are consistent with the sustainable management of each reserve and the differences promoted by District Councils.</i></p>
When	2 years.
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, tangata whenua
Who else	Department of Conservation
How	Bylaws, Reserve Management Plans
Resources	Possible Bylaw and Plan Changes, signs, brochures

10.3.9 Develop Policy for Controlling Vehicles on Tidal Flats and Beaches	
What	Develop and implement a coordinated policy for controlling vehicles on tidal flats and beaches around Ohiwa Harbour
Why	<p><i>Potential adverse effects from vehicles on beaches include damage to the natural environment, reduced amenity and compromised safety. Council cooperation is needed for management of vehicles, as district and regional councils have differing responsibilities above and below the Mean High Water Springs mark.</i></p> <p><i>The Ohope Reserves Management Plan and the Regional Coastal Environment Plan have provisions that seek to restrict vehicles. However, the community concerns suggest there is a need for enforcement of bylaws and distribution of educational material to make people aware of them.</i></p> <p><i>The current project looking at vehicles on beaches applies to the whole region and Ohiwa Harbour will be addressed through the project.</i></p>
When	1 year – in development.
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Department of Conservation, landowners, vehicle owners

How	Information provision Regional Coastal Environment Plan provisions Bylaws
Resources	Staff time, consultation costs Possible bylaw and plan changes

10.3.10 Promote Harbour Wardens, Fisheries Officers and Kaitiaki	
What	Promotion of the roles and responsibilities of Harbour Wardens, Fisheries Officers and tangata kaitiaki.
Why	<i>It is important that statutory authorities and organisations support the contributions made by honorary harbour wardens. It is also important that the public understands the distinctions between the roles of honorary harbour wardens, fisheries officers and tangata kaitiaki.</i>
When	Ongoing
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Ministry of Fisheries, Iwi/hapu
How	Provision of website, sign and publicised information.
Resources	Educational material New/replacement signs

Chapter 11: Managing Development Pressure

11.1 Community concerns and issues: managing development pressure

Community Concerns

- There is pressure for development on sites with high visual effects – harbour margins, headlands and ridgelines. Inappropriate development should be avoided.
- There is pressure for large-scale/multi-level development along the Ohope Spit residential areas.
- The Harbour and its catchment area may not be able to cope with the increasing resident and visitor numbers (for example, wastewater treatment and disposal).
- Cumulative effects of ad-hoc development from urban sprawl and rural residential subdivision.
- Managing intensive residential development to concentrate them in existing areas for example, Ohope and Ohiwa Spits, areas zoned Coastal Settlement on the eastern shores of Ohiwa Harbour.
- New structures, development and marine farming activities within the harbour may have significant negative impacts on the harbour. For example, marine farming may lead to a build-up of silt in the harbour.
- Correct and consistent implementation of regional/district plan rules and provisions is required.
- Only appropriate development should be allowed in the harbour and catchment area.
- Greater control is needed over development close to the waters edge.
- Night glare from domestic and street lighting can be a problem.
- Glare from buildings that contrast strongly in colour and reflectance from their surroundings can create adverse visual impacts.

Issues	
1	Development that includes built structures (mainly residential) within the visual catchment can detract from Ohiwa's values.
2	This issue is a key concern for the community. An understanding of landscape values and appropriate controls is required to create appropriate development opportunities.
3	Rules and controls need to be consistent and consistently applied across the whole harbour.
4	The division of the harbour across two tiers of government and between districts means that there is the potential for different interpretations and approaches to planning and resource management. There are differences within the rules that guide development and use within the Harbour's catchment. Care must also be taken to ensure that the rules that are in place are applied correctly and consistently.
5	There is a need to strategically and specifically plan for the future development of the Harbour, particularly in its visual catchment.
6	A good understanding of demand and the ability of the Harbour to accommodate development is required to ensure that informed decisions are made about the future management of the Harbour.
7	A high level of scrutiny is required for any coastal or coastal edge development or infrastructure.
8	The naturalness of the estuary itself is an important value that can be undermined if structures are placed in the water or on the water's edge without careful consideration of the effects.

11.2 What is being done for managing development pressure?

- 1 The Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement and various regional plans include provisions that provide for natural character and landscape values to be protected.
- 2 The Regional Coastal Environment Plan controls development within the coastal marine area, including the placement of structures and marine farming activities. The Proposed Regional Water and Land Plan promotes the sustainable management of land and water resources (outside the coastal marine area).
- 3 Both Whakatane and Opotiki District Councils have specifically identified zones, assessment criteria and baseline standards that are designed to minimise actual or potential adverse environmental effects of activities on Ohiwa Harbour. District plans play a crucial role in controlling and managing the effects of land use and subdivision activities on areas with high natural character and landscape values.
- 4 District Plans, as well as Regional Plans take into account the impact of climate change / sea level rise on existing and future development. Research is being undertaken at a regional and national level and any findings will be applied to the management of Ohiwa Harbour.
- 5 Ohiwa Harbour is a priority area for Environment Bay of Plenty's Environment Programmes. Estuarine margins have been priority areas but few upper catchment landowners have taken up Environmental Programmes.

- 6 Computer modelling, using the LiDAR-sourced terrain model or similar, means it is possible to visualise the impact of proposed developments on landscape and natural character values before they proceed.
- 7 Protection of a number of areas of natural character as reserves has occurred as part of subdivisions.
- 8 Community groups are working to improve sites around the harbour margins including via a number of Environmental Enhancement Funds projects to revegetate and restore specific sites around the harbour.
- 9 Iwi and hapu are working more cooperatively in their roles as kaitiaki of Ohiwa Harbour.

11.3 Actions: managing development pressure

11.3.1 Understand Future Residential Development	
What	In order to avoid ad hoc development, develop an understanding and position about the capacity of the Ohiwa Harbour area to absorb future built development.
Why	<p><i>It is likely that the trend for rural lifestyle living and subdivision in the Ohiwa Harbour catchment will continue, particularly as development reaches its potential at Ohope Spit. As a result there may be pressure for more intensive residential development in other parts of the Ohiwa Harbour catchment. Understanding the potential and demand for development will assist the councils in planning for development and in protecting the harbour's values.</i></p> <p><i>Factors that should be considered are:</i></p> <p><i>Development creep into adjoining undeveloped areas</i></p> <p><i>Funding reticulation of underground utility services to any future coastal urban development.</i></p> <p><i>For any higher-density development the needs for stormwater, wastewater treatment, stability, natural hazards, and energy transmission.</i></p> <p><i>Analysis of demand and environmental conditions, growth and market predictions, structure planning and district plan changes are all mechanisms that may assist the future management of the Ohiwa Harbour area.</i></p> <p><i>The Whakatane District Council is currently developing a Development Concept Plan for land that it owns around the Port Ohope area. The plan has a residential component to it as well as community reserves and business components.</i></p>
When	2 years
Who	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty Landowners, developers, tangata whenua
How	Analysis, growth and market predictions
Resources	Geotechnical, wastewater engineer, surveyor consulting fees Staff reporting

11.3.2 Review Resource Management Protocols	
What	Local authorities to consider reciprocal protocols between Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council and Opotiki District Council for resource management processes (consents and plan changes) that are specific to Ohiwa Harbour.
Why	<p><i>Resource management protocols have the potential to improve the integrated management of the Harbour. The benefit of this needs to be balanced against the extra time and cost that is involved.</i></p> <p><i>Applicants have concerns about the length of time, conflicting requirements, lack of clarity in terms of information requirements, and perceived duplication of expense and energy of consent processing, particularly for developments that require resource consent from both district and regional council.</i></p> <p><i>The District Councils have expressed interest in reviewing general processes for consent processing to provide for more frequent joint processing, and greater integration of processes, thereby providing a more streamlined process for applicants.</i></p> <p><i>Complex consents are dealt with jointly but there are also benefits in processing "simple" non-notified applications in a coordinated manner.</i></p>
When	Current Environment Bay of Plenty project to look at plan change protocols
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council
Who else	Landowners, developers, tangata whenua
How	Review internal and external protocols and agreements Amend where necessary
Resources	Staff time, travel

11.3.3 Evaluate Plans to Protect Character and Estuarine Health of Ohiwa	
What	Evaluate the District and Regional plans and Regional Policy Statement provisions to ensure the natural character, heritage and estuarine health of Ohiwa Harbour is protected.
Why	<p><i>To address the special character of the Ohiwa Harbour catchment area, district plan provisions and assessment criteria need to produce consistent outcomes for mitigating the potential impacts of development. . The Whakatane and Opotiki District Plans contain differing provisions on subdivision, development and land use in the catchment. Regional Coastal Environment Plan also contains provisions applying to the protection of the natural character and landscape values of Ohiwa and the Proposed Change No. 1 to the Regional Policy Statement has introduced heritage assessment criteria.</i></p> <p><i>Through Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty working together to analyse the planning provisions that apply to the Ohiwa Harbour, an integrated approach</i></p>

	<p><i>can be developed. Council-specific changes would need to be formally adopted by each council.</i></p> <p><i>This project would look at:</i></p> <p><i>Assessing present rules in the district and regional plans (such as subdivision, land use, development in sensitive locations (including cultural areas), accessory buildings and earthwork control) for alignment throughout the catchment.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying gaps in coverage or differences in application between regional or district rules.</i></p> <p><i>Identify physical constraints to development within the harbour catchment.</i></p> <p><i>Drafting development rules if required for changes to the district and regional plans to produce consistent planning outcomes that protect the harbour, such as management of development within the indicative visual catchment boundary.</i></p> <p><i>Developing draft guidelines for assessing the effects of development, subdivision and land uses</i></p> <p><i>Identifying where structure planning or similar methodologies may assist with assessing activities with the potential for significant effects on the Harbour.</i></p> <p><i>The impact of colour and building materials will also be considered in relation to this evaluation process. Appropriate colour schemes and choices of materials are commonly controlled in visually sensitive areas and can assist with maintaining landscape values.</i></p>
When	2 years for evaluation and recommendations on future plan changes
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Landowners, developers, Department of Conservation, Royal Forest & Bird, Federated Farmers, Iwi and hapu
How	Forum to review district and regional regulatory framework and to make recommendations.
Resources	<p>Staff time, travel, materials, equipment</p> <p>Plan and policy change process</p> <p>Regional Policy Statement review project</p>

Chapter 12: Natural Areas, Plants and Animals

12.1 Community concerns and issues: natural areas, plants and animals

Community Concerns

- Indigenous biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced.
- Riparian margins should be protected from development.
- Existing reserves should be managed well and wherever possible be ecologically restored.
- Improve in-stream habitat for freshwater indigenous fish and remove fish passage barriers, particularly fish passage to and from the harbour.
- A strong ecological focus and land management practices that are sustainable, so valued qualities are not lost through inappropriate land use and development.
- Recognise people as being an integral part of the catchment environment.
- Provide the community with further information about the Ramsar Convention that protects wetlands of international significance, and any consequences of Ramsar registration prior to any action to register Ohiwa Harbour as a Ramsar site.
- The management of the harbour needs to fully recognise the importance of the harbour for resident and migratory bird species.

Issues

- 1 The focus on the management of riparian areas needs to be maintained.
- 2 While the harbour needs to be managed as an integrated whole there is often a focus on riparian areas. This focus comes about due to the rareness of wetlands as an ecosystem type and because of their importance for ecological biodiversity, water quality and sediment control.
- 3 Current management and maintenance is as important as enhancement.
- 4 The community has identified a number of enhancement opportunities for ecological values. However the ongoing management and protection of existing sites (such as reserves with ecological values) through maintenance regimes is equally important to protect the harbour.
- 5 Protection of birdlife as a key component of the Harbour's character.
- 6 An integral part of Ohiwa Harbour is the birdlife that lives and breeds in the Harbour and which uses the Harbour as a migratory stopover. Active management is required to protect bird roosts, feeding habitat and breeding sites, and to manage the interaction of people with the birdlife.

12.2 What is being done for natural areas, plants and animals?

- 1 The approach to land management by all local authorities now recognises and provides for ecological biodiversity as well as water and soil values.
- 2 Environment Bay of Plenty and other agencies are providing assistance and advice to landowners to develop environmental programmes for specific areas of private land.
- 3 Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, and Department of Conservation support community groups with environmental projects, such as the Nukuhou Saltmarsh Care Group or Coast Care groups. There are a number of volunteer programmes that provide opportunities for the public to become involved in conservation activities.
- 4 Environment Bay of Plenty has undertaken a survey of animal pests within the Ohiwa Harbour catchment.
- 5 The Department of Conservation carries out animal and plant pest control within Uretara Island Scenic Reserve and pest plant control in Tauwhare Pa Scenic Reserve. Tauwhare Pa is also regularly mown to allow public viewing of the archaeological features of the reserve. Environment Bay of Plenty and Department of Conservation are currently carrying out pest plant control works in Matekerepu Historic Reserve.
- 6 Environment Bay of Plenty monitors plant pest populations and works with agencies and private landowners to control pest plants on reserve and private land.
- 7 Department of Conservation goat control has been carried out in Ohope and Kotare Scenic Reserves and Matekerepu Historic Reserve. The Bay of Plenty Regional Pest Management Strategy provides direction for controlling pest plants and animals (including goats) in the Bay of Plenty Region.
- 8 The Department of Conservation has carried out kiwi surveys in several reserves, including Waiotane Scenic Reserve, and has an active kiwi management programme in place for the neighbouring Ohope Scenic Reserve and other reserves in association with Environment Bay of Plenty, Ngati Awa and the Whakatane Kiwi Trust. Forestry companies have also undertaken kiwi surveys in their forests in the catchment, e.g. Kererutahi and Stanley.
- 9 Work is being done by community groups, the Department of Conservation and local authorities to improve and protect the habitat of indigenous and migratory birds at Ohiwa Harbour. Monitoring is also undertaken.
- 10 The Directory of Wetlands in New Zealand lists Ohiwa Harbour as a potential Ramsar site as being a wetland of international significance, including cultural, waterfowl, fisheries and vegetation values.
- 11 Some indigenous fish surveys have been undertaken, usually in conjunction with resource consent applications. This information is contained in the NIWA Freshwater Fish Database.
- 12 A number of ecologically significant areas are being formally protected through a variety of mechanisms. Some landowners are informally protecting some areas. Landowners and community groups are actively restoring some significant sites.

- 13 Environment Bay of Plenty has established a Freshwater Ecological Monitoring Programme (FEM) and conducted freshwater macro-invertebrate sampling and analysis to determine the health of the Nukuhou River aquatic ecosystem.

12.3 Actions: natural areas, plants and animals

12.3.1 Develop Incentives for Landowners	
What	That councils develop incentives for landowners that encourage the formal protection of natural areas.
Why	<i>Incentives such as rate relief or incentive lots (within subdivisions) provide a non-regulatory avenue for the protection of ecological values. They can be instrumental in helping landowners be able to afford to retire natural areas on their private land.</i> <i>Some incentives are available (such as rates relief for certain circumstances and incentive lot provisions). This project would assess current incentives and then recommend others if appropriate.</i>
When	1 year
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Department of Conservation, QEII National Trust
How	Review current incentives Consult landowners, iwi/hapu Develop options analysis and recommendations for implementation
Resources	Staff time for review and reporting Financial analysis if required.

12.3.2 Review Monitoring and Enforcement Regimes	
What	That statutory agencies evaluate enforcement and compliance regimes to ensure that natural environments are being protected from damage.
Why	<i>A number of community concerns about damage to ecological resources relate to areas where regulations are currently in place or legal sanctions available. For example, vehicles driving across estuarine areas or in sand dunes or stock in waterways. In a number of cases the problem translates to one of enforcement.</i> <i>Bylaws, district and regional plan rules, resource consent conditions and covenants/encumbrances are all methods by which enforcement can occur.</i> <i>The idea of an Estuary Care Officer / Ranger for Ohiwa Harbour has been raised several times. This role will be further investigated for feasibility, and may include educational and enforcement components.</i> <i>Evaluation may also highlight problems with the regulatory framework that may need to be addressed separately.</i>
When	1 year
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty

Who else	Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, agencies managing agreed covenants, iwi/hapu
How	Compile examples of community concerns and enforcement activities Forum to evaluate enforcement and compliance activities Recommendations if changes supported
Resources	Staff time

12.3.3 Assess Ecological Quality of Ohiwa Harbour	
What	The assessment of Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment for ecological quality and management requirements. The establishment of a revegetation/restoration programme if considered necessary.
Why	<p><i>Work has been and is being undertaken in the area of understanding the environmental quality of the Ohiwa Harbour. The identification of ecological values and significant natural ecosystem areas is the first step to achieving appropriate management and protection of natural values, including ecological corridors.</i></p> <p><i>There are however significant gaps in the information of indigenous fauna populations in the catchment. Indigenous fish populations have not been surveyed in many of the small streams within the catchment. There have been no surveys of reptiles in the Harbour and only very limited surveys of invertebrates.</i></p> <p><i>A coordinated approach to identifying sites and their condition will provide useful information for reserve management purposes, pest control, coordination of on-site works and for making decisions about the reserves network. It will be a useful point of reference for coordinated planning, consultation and information sharing. For example, pest animals and plants might be more effectively controlled if a co-ordinated 'sweeping' approach is used to clear areas at adjacent reserves.</i></p> <p><i>Following an assessment of monitoring gaps, statutory agencies should implement monitoring of indigenous flora and fauna as a tool for assessing the ecological health of land and waterways that they manage or for the roles that they carry out. This work would cover both private and public land.</i></p> <p><i>As a result of monitoring it may be considered necessary for a revegetation/restoration programme to be established and implemented.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Department of Conservation
Who else	Environment Bay of Plenty, tangata whenua
How	Long Term Council Community Plan budgeting and timeframes for management actions
Resources	Compilation of register of sites using existing information and site inspections. Environment Bay of Plenty Database.

12.3.4 Develop an Understanding of Indigenous Fish Species	
What	Develop a greater understanding of indigenous fish species and habitat in the streams that flow into Ohiwa Harbour. The establishment of a programme of action to improve fish habitat, if considered necessary.
Why	<p><i>There is only limited information about fish species presence in the streams that flow into Ohiwa Harbour. Fish habitat values and artificial barriers to fish passage are not well documented.</i></p> <p><i>Survey all streams (where NIWA records are absent, incomplete, or outdated) and record fish passage barriers, fish species present and existing habitat values.</i></p> <p><i>Identify locations where fish habitat can be enhanced or recreated without compromising flood protection works.</i></p>
When	1 year to establish a monitoring programme
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty Department of Conservation
Who else	Ministry of Fisheries
How	Consultation with landowners and iwi/hapu on a stream-by-stream basis prior to any such investigation.
Resources	Staff resources for investigation/study Current Department of Conservation programme

12.3.5 Protect Bird Habitat and Species	
What	That a plan is developed identifying key bird habitat that includes a programme for protection measures.
Why	<p><i>The birds that live and breed in the Harbour as well as those that use the tidal flats as a migratory stopover point are an integral part of the harbour's character. There are a number of pressures on the bird populations from pests, recreation, dogs, changes in the harbour conditions and changes in habitat.</i></p> <p><i>Protection of the birdlife will involve monitoring, identification of specific threats, options for addressing the threats and initiating a programme of action. A number of activities undertaken by local authorities, the Department of Conservation, interest groups and individuals already contribute to protection of the birdlife however joint effort and a coordinated approach will assist.</i></p>
When	1 year
Who	Department of Conservation, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Iwi, interest groups (such as the Ornithological Society)
How	<p>Review currently known information</p> <p>Map sites and identify protection requirements (physical, regulatory)</p> <p>Develop programme for implementation</p> <p>Engage community groups in implementation and monitoring</p>

Resources	<p>Staff time for review and reporting</p> <p>Following the development of a plan and programme, funding for protection measures will be required through current budgets and Long Term Council Community Plans.</p>
------------------	--

12.3.6 Ramsar status for Ohiwa Harbour	
What	That Ohiwa Harbour be considered for nomination as a Ramsar site.
Why	<i>Ohiwa Harbour has been suggested as a possible Ramsar site. As a first step an assessment of the Harbour's potential to meet the criteria for inclusion as a Ramsar site has been undertaken. The assessment shows that Ohiwa Harbour has the potential to become a Ramsar site. Any application would be jointly developed and supported by the local authorities and tangata whenua.</i>
When	Part of current work programme
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Department of Conservation, tangata whenua, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council
How	Subject to consultation, compile application and submit to Department of Conservation.
Resources	<p>Staff costs</p> <p>Consultation</p>

Chapter 13: A More Informed Harbour Community

13.1 Community concerns and issues: a more informed harbour community

Community Concerns

- People do not always realise the cultural and ecological significance of the harbour or places around it. Public awareness of the cultural and ecological significance of Ohiwa Harbour should be increased.
- More effective involvement of the community in ecological management and planning in relation to the Ohiwa Harbour and its catchment would be beneficial.
- People are interested in learning more about the Ohiwa Harbour.

Issues

- 1 More information, education and support is needed to improve Harbour protection and management.
- 2 The Ohiwa Harbour community has signalled a willingness in a number of areas to contribute to the sustainable management of the harbour. The ability to provide relevant information to target groups and the community as a whole will encourage this to happen.

13.2 What is being done for a more informed harbour community?

- 1 A number of publications and information sheets are available to assist people to understand and modify their impacts on the harbour. These include information on harbour use, pest management, resource consent applications and pollution prevention.
- 2 Members of the community have been active in developing and providing information panels and hosting events that highlight ecological values such as bird roosting habitats and wetlands.
- 3 Ohiwa Spit has explanatory panels about migratory birds.
- 4 The Department of Conservation has produced a report entitled "Distribution and Conservation of Shorebirds in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand 1984-2003" which includes information on Ohiwa Harbour's shorebirds.

- 5 The Ministry of Fisheries has published comprehensive information brochures available at some sport shops and Fisheries offices (including Church St, Opotiki). The Ministry has also provided signs about bag limits and minimum legal sizes of fish and other aquatic life at various places around Ohiwa Harbour.
- 6 Heritage studies – most important ecological and archaeological sites have been identified. The New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) is currently upgrading this information. Most landowners have received information about important sites identified on their land.
- 7 The Environment Bay of Plenty website contains general coastal information and material that is specific to Ohiwa Harbour.
- 8 The Tauwhare Pa interpretation panels were upgraded and replaced in September 2004.

13.3 Actions: a more informed harbour community

13.3.1 Provide Coordinated Signs and Interpretive Material	
What	Statutory agencies to agree to a co-ordinated approach to signage and interpretive material around the harbour.
Why	<p><i>Signs around the harbour can be used for a number of purposes including education, identifying heritage sites, advising of bylaws, and fishing regulations. A number of agencies erect signage around the harbour for these different purposes. Combining signage information would save money, help with ensuring that messages are consistent and be more aesthetically attractive. A standard design for signs or sign kiosks will assist with access management.</i></p> <p><i>As well as signs, there are a number of ways to distribute information. For example, information may be produced in brochure form for distribution in tourism offices, relevant sports clubs and information centres, and mail-outs with rates.</i></p>
When	As work programme requires.
Who	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council, Department of Conservation, Environment Bay of Plenty, Ministry of Fisheries
Who else	Iwi/hapu
How	<p>Review sign placement</p> <p>Long Term Council Community Plan budgets for new signs</p> <p>Develop material for asset replacement or for planned new assets</p>
Resources	<p>Current budgets for signage</p> <p>Sign and interpretive material costs shared between organisations</p>

13.3.2 Develop a Communication/Education Plan	
What	Develop a communication/education plan to increase community understanding of Ohiwa Harbour, its catchment and threats to its natural values.
Why	<p><i>The coordinated provision of various forms of information about matters relating to the health, history and management of Ohiwa Harbour will assist the community as well as visitors to the Harbour to understand issues and to reduce the impact of activities on the harbour's values. Specific actions could include:</i></p> <p><i>Develop and distribute an Ohiwa Harbour Guide to all catchment residents and visitor facilities (including camping grounds, motels and information centres) that provides information about how to keep Ohiwa Harbour's natural values and places special.</i></p> <p><i>Develop/distribute educational pamphlets relating to environmental issues of significance to Ohiwa Harbour (such as mangroves, heritage, sediment management and planting guides).</i></p> <p><i>Provide the community with further information about the Ramsar Convention and any consequences of Ramsar registration for all or parts of Ohiwa Harbour.</i></p> <p><i>Provide resource kits for school – potentially involving local schools in restoration projects.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Department of Conservation, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council Iwi/hapu
How	Review available information Share/coordinate information Develop "Ohiwa Catchment" pamphlet
Resources	Combine into education programme

13.3.3 Ohiwa Harbour Website	
What	<p>Environment Bay of Plenty to add “Ohiwa Harbour” to its internet website with:</p> <p>Results of studies and monitoring on water quality, Harbour health, landscape and heritage</p> <p>Links to relevant scientific reports and codes of practice</p> <p>Actions that can be/are being taken by community groups and landowners that will have a positive impact on the harbour</p> <p>Information on projects that affect the Harbour</p> <p>Consultation processes.</p>
Why	<i>Help match up people’s perception of the problem with science and action.</i>
When	Current project
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty
Who else	Opotiki District Council, Whakatane District Council
How	Webpage on www.envbop.govt.nz and links to District Council websites.
Resources	<p>Website resources</p> <p>Part of education resources</p>

13.3.4 Support the Work of Landowners and Community Groups	
What	Statutory agencies support the work of landowners and community groups working to improve the harbour.
Why	<p><i>Information pamphlets and experienced staff are available to provide assistance to landowners who are interested in sustainably managing their land. Landowners may be interested in receiving specific advice and assistance in relation to biodiversity, revegetation, sediment control and land management practices.</i></p> <p><i>There are already community groups helping to improve harbour margins and protect ecological sites and these groups and their activities will continue to be supported – as will new groups that establish. Support includes capacity building, project facilitation, coordination of relevant agencies and funding (such as Environmental Enhancement Fund funding).</i></p> <p><i>Support is not limited to physical restoration projects but will also be for education initiatives and events. Involving volunteers and schools in surveys and monitoring of natural areas in the Ohiwa Harbour and catchment provides opportunities for community education and specific learning to occur.</i></p> <p><i>Establishing links and providing expertise to care groups can be crucial to successful community projects.</i></p>
When	Ongoing
Who	Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council

Who else	Department of Conservation, Community Groups, Iwi/hapu
How	Current programmes to support groups (for example, Coast Care and Environmental Enhancement Funds).
Resources	Environmental Enhancement Funds Staff resources (provision of expert advice)

13.3.5 Review Community Suggestions

What	<p>That the following community suggestions (listed in no particular order), are reviewed by the relevant council and responses provided to the community on the feasibility/necessity, implementation timeframes, and funding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Repair old Kutarere Wharf and road that leads to it 2 Develop a management plan and work programme to establish (in stages) a heritage trail around the Ohiwa Harbour 3 Enhance old Pumice pit 4 Provide toilet facilities at Ohiwa Scenic Reserve 5 Stabilise and replant dunes on the beach side of the parking area at Ohiwa Road 6 Provide more rubbish bins and seating around the harbour 7 A nightlight at the Port Ohope boat ramp at the eastern end of Ohope Spit for night time users 8 Promote night safety precautions for Harbour use 9 Better identification of channels 10 Signs warning swimmers to avoid boat ramp and boating areas 11 Control location of fish nets 12 Provide more navigational beacons on the Opotiki side 13 Floating pontoon at the Ohope boat ramp at eastern end of Ohope Spit 14 Provide more information on the bar 15 Address the hazard of moored fishing craft / vessels in the ski lanes 16 Control and supervise water ski areas 17 Plant shade trees along reserve edges 18 Provide a tidal swimming facility 19 Investigate alternative flap-gates that allow fish passage. 20 Establish an Animal Pest Eradication Programme on islands within the Harbour (and consider for mainland islands) 21 Assess coastal erosion works for possible restoration of harbour margins 22 Provide toilet facilities at Kutarere Channel
-------------	--

Why	<p><i>Harbour users provide useful first hand information on amenity and safety issues. However, to be implemented by councils, community suggestions have to relate to councils' functions and responsibilities and should be included in the council budgeting process. Members of the public through submissions to annual plans and long term council community plans can pursue the suggestions listed above. Some of these ideas have been raised before and unless circumstances have changed in the intervening period the response is likely to be unchanged.</i></p> <p><i>Community suggestions will need to be included in the statutory organisations' budgeting processes and will need to reflect the functions and responsibilities of the respective statutory organisation.</i></p>
When	<p>3 months for councils to provide a response as to which suggestions are achievable.</p> <p>If suggestions are agreed to, timeframes and budgets will be determined through the relevant Long Term Council Community Plan processes.</p>
Who	<p>Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty, Department of Conservation</p>
Who else	<p>Landowners, Iwi/Hapu, Community Boards, Bay of Plenty Conservation Board, Historic Places Trust, Voluntary groups, Recreation user groups</p>
How	<p>Responses will be communicated via Environment Bay of Plenty's website</p> <p>Long Term Council Community Plan</p> <p>Reserve Management Plans, Conservation Management Plan, Iwi/Hapu Management Plans</p>
Resources	<p>Varies – Provision and maintenance of facilities</p> <p>Environmental Enhancement Funding may be appropriate for some activities</p>

Appendix 1 – Implementation of Actions (Timeframes and Estimated Costs)

The following table provides estimated costs for implementing the actions identified in this Strategy.

The actions in this Strategy will be funded through the budgets that are developed for the Ten Year Plan/Long Term Council Community Plan and annual plans. Available funding will be directed to the highest priority areas.

Ref	Action	Cost	Timeframe from 1 July 2008
7.3	Health of the Estuary		
7.3.2	Planting on Unstable Slopes	Officer time Ongoing (existing budget)	Ongoing
7.3.3	Nutrient Budgeting Information	Officer time Ongoing (existing budget)	1 year
7.3.4	Advice on Shellfish Risks	Part of Ministry of Health current work programme	1 year
7.3.5	Stop Contamination of Urban Stormwater	Officer time Ongoing (existing budget)	1 year
7.3.6	Management of Mangroves	Existing project	Current monitoring programme
8.3	Kaimoana		
8.3.1	Advocacy on Fishing Issues	Officer time Ongoing (existing budget)	Ongoing
8.3.2	Māhinga Mataitai Status for Ohiwa Harbour	Minor – existing resources	2 years
9.3	Kaitiakitanga		
9.3.1	Develop Iwi Planning Document for Ohiwa Harbour	Officer time Ongoing (existing budget)	1 year
9.3.2	Whakatohea Review 'Tawharau o Nga Hapu o Whakatohea'	Minor resourcing	To be determined by Whakatohea
9.3.3	Identify Ohiwa Harbour's Cultural Heritage	Officer time \$30,000	Ongoing
9.3.4	Develop Protocols with Statutory Agencies	Existing budgets	2 years

Ref	Action	Cost	Timeframe from 1 July 2008
9.3.5	Add Kaitiakitanga into the Community's View of Harbour Management	Existing budgets	Ongoing
10.3	Recreation Opportunities		
10.3.1	Consider Opportunities to Obtain Harbour Access	Officer time Existing budget	Ongoing
10.3.2	Clarify the Status of Public Land	Existing budgets	6 months
10.3.3	Develop Reserves Vision for Ohiwa Harbour	Approx \$25,000	1 year
10.3.4	Enhance Ohope Spit Harbour Edge Walkway	Will be incorporated into budget for Action 10.3.3	1 year
10.3.5	Assess Public Camping Facilities	Officer time; \$5,000	6 months
10.3.6	Investigate development of Regional Parks	Officer time Existing budgets	In progress
10.3.7	Monitoring Recreation Activities	Officer time Existing budget	Ongoing
10.3.8	Review Bylaws Relating to Higher Impact Activities	Officer time Existing budget	2 years
10.3.9	Develop Policy for Controlling Vehicles on Tidal Flats and Beaches	Officer time Existing budget	1 year – in development
10.3.10	Promote Harbour Wardens, Fisheries Officers and Kaitiaki	Officer time	Ongoing
11.3	Managing Development Pressure		
11.3.1	Understand Future Residential Development	Officer time \$30,000 research budget	1 year
11.3.2	Review Resource Management Protocols	Officer time Existing	Current project
11.3.3	Evaluate Plans to Protect Character and Estuarine Health of Ohiwa	Existing budgets + \$100,000	1 year
12.3	Natural Areas, Plants and Animals		
12.3.1	Develop Incentives for Landowners	Existing budget	1 year
12.3.2	Review Monitoring and Enforcement Regimes	Existing for Whakatane District Council. Extra resourcing required for Opotiki District Council. Note: Extra resourcing (approximately \$100,000) would be required if an Estuary Care Officer /	1 year

Ref	Action	Cost	Timeframe from 1 July 2008
		Ranger Position were to be established.	
12.3.3	Assess Ecological Quality of Ohiwa Harbour	Existing budget	Ongoing
12.3.4	Develop an Understanding of Indigenous Fish Species	Existing budget	1 year
12.3.5	Ramsar status for Ohiwa Harbour	Officer time \$2,000	Current project
12.3.6	Protect Bird Habitat and Species	Officer time; \$20,000	1 year
13.3	A More Informed Harbour Community		
13.3.1	Provide Coordinated Signs and Interpretive Material	Existing budgets	As required
13.3.2	Develop a Communication/Education Plan	Existing budgets	Ongoing
13.3.3	Ohiwa Harbour Website	Officer time	In progress
13.3.4	Support the Work of Landowners and Community Groups	Officer time Existing budgets	Ongoing
13.3.5	Review Community Suggestions	Officer time	3 months

Note: Funding will also be required for the running of a forum to oversee the implementation of the Ohiwa Harbour Strategy.