



Te Kaunihera o Te Tairāwhiti
GISBORNE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Wainui Coastal Adaptation Plan

Mitigation Options

June 2025

Managing current and future coastal hazard risks



participate.gdc.govt.nz

Why are we doing this?

Wainui Beach holds deep cultural, social, and economic significance but faces ongoing challenges from erosion and coastal hazards. These risks are expected to grow due to the impacts of climate change.

There is a Wainui Beach Erosion Management Strategy (WBEMS) which was last updated in 2014, however, to address the current and future challenges, we need to shift to a more adaptive approach.

We are developing a Wainui Beach Coastal Adaptation Plan to guide hazard management and development decisions. This includes guiding the review of the coastal rules in the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan.

Wainui Beach is our pilot project for community adaptation planning. The insights and learnings gained will help us plan for adaptation in other communities.

Where are we up to in the process?

- **2023 - 2024**
Hazard and risk assessments updated for Wainui Beach
- **March - April 2025**
Community engagement on values and risks
- **June - July 2025**
Community engagement on options and pathways
- **July - September 2025**
Develop DRAFT Coastal Adaptation Plan
- **October - November 2025**
Consultation on DRAFT plan
- **December 2025**
Final plan

What is most important to you?

The Wainui community rated their values for Wainui Beach from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important).

Most important (between 4-5)

- Maintaining natural beach function
- Protecting wildlife
- Restoring habitat function
- Surf breaks
- Plan longevity

Important (Under 4):

- Balancing individual rights with collective rights
- Broad community acceptance of the plan
- An affordable plan
- Protecting wāhi tapu (sacred sites)
- Holistic approach
- Protect beachfront properties from erosion

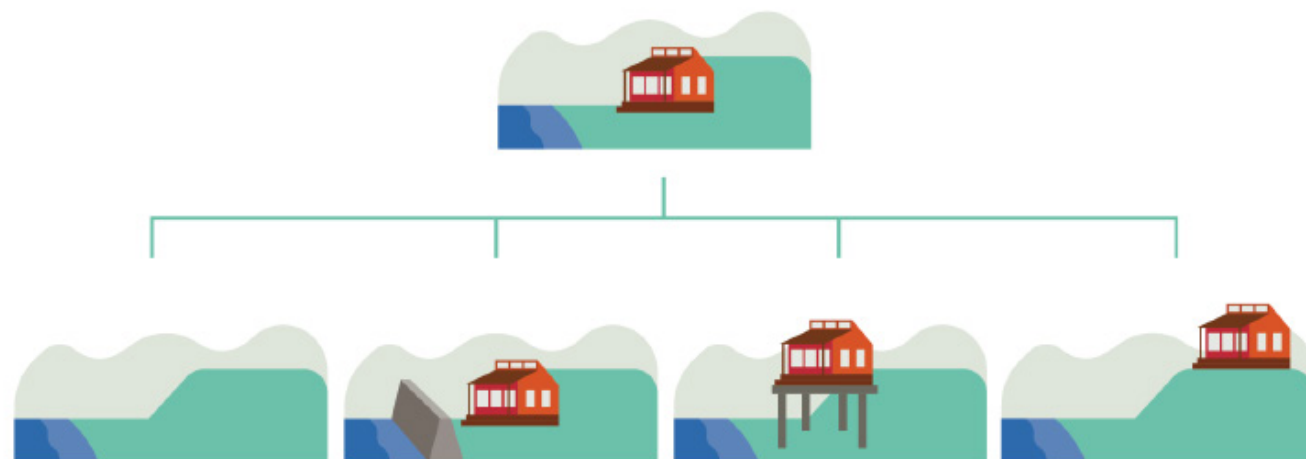
Least Important (less than 3):

- Working within current policy framework
- Acknowledging European history

Options for managing risks

Protect, Avoid, Retreat, Accommodate (PARA framework)

The PARA framework sets out the options for adaptation. Below are examples of the types of options considered.



Avoid	Protect	Accommodate	Retreat
Natural hazard zoning	Engineered structures such as sea walls	Flood proofing	Relocate on-site
Restrictions on development	Scour protection	Elevated or relocatable homes	Relocate to different site
Setting buffer or reserve land	Dune building/ push-ups	Modified access ways e.g. removable in storms	Reduce service levels e.g. for protection, access, parking, and recreation areas
	Beach nourishment	Emergency management response	

Adaptation approaches outline in National Adaptation Plan (Adapted from Figure 7 of MfE, 2022)

Options for Wainui Beach

Short term

Business as usual approach

Maintains current levels of service. Existing structures are managed for health and safety but are not maintained for ongoing protection. Current levels of emergency management, dune care and environmental monitoring continue.

Investment is still required to manage existing structures, especially as many of them are degraded. This also involves repairs of access ways and stairs when failure occurs.

Pros	Cons
• No change to current management and funding	• Health and safety issues difficult to manage and address • Inconsistent responses to both public and private protection works • Uncertainty for emergency works, development and consenting • Current and future risks are not managed at some locations

Business as usual – Plus increased planning and dune management

Continue with existing levels of service but provide more planning/policy direction and dune care:

- Update planning regulations through TRMP review to avoid increasing risk by restricting further development in hazard areas.
- Develop a policy for emergency management, including no unplanned protection works.
- Guidance for planting and pest control on private property
- Increased budget for dune care/management
- Develop policy for managing access/stairs – progressive upgrade of stairs to meet building standards and more resilient design.

Pros	Cons
• Relatively low-cost option • Avoids compounding risk in future • Greater consistency in management across the beach	• Health and safety issues remain for existing structures • No significant risk reduction

Short term - Medium Term

Dune restoration with sand push-ups

Sand push-ups involve moving sand mechanically from the lower beach to the upper beach/dune toe. Push-ups are supported by dune planting to try and restore sand dunes. Relic structures would remain, with aim to keep them buried. Council would require a global consent for sand push ups.

Pros	Cons
• Enhances natural defences • Ecological and natural character benefits • Relatively simple and low cost initially, as long consent granted	• Reliant on continual maintenance for success • Not applicable across the whole beach due to narrow beach and limited sand availability • Short to medium term only • Potential failure and property risk during prolonged erosion events • Impacts on surf breaks uncertain • Consenting issues – previous consent application withdrawn • Potential health and safety issues remain

Medium - Long Term

Dune restoration with structures

Maintain/rebuild structures within existing footprints. Restore embankments with native planting. Look to develop design guidance and a global resource consent for property owners to pursue protection works on private property.

Pros	Cons
• Maintains existing beach setting and function • Improves habitat function • Enhances existing levels of protection • Addresses health and safety issues • Lower cost to Council/ratepayers – protection led by property owners	• Cost overall – medium to high • Unnatural elements included in coastal area • Requires continuity across respective sections of the beach • May not be viable over longer term (60+ yrs) • Potential impacts on beach processes and amenity

Traditional Seawalls

Construct engineered seawalls to modern standards. Potential to include bank treatment or planting.

Pros	Cons
• Provides protection for properties • Long term resilience- but not permanent without future work	• Loss of beach amenity, especially when sand levels are low • Some loss of ecological function • Cost - high • Consenting difficult – previous application declined • Requires continuity across respective sections of the beach • Potential impacts on surf breaks

Managed Retreat

Removal of property and infrastructure from hazard zone. Establishment of natural buffers and reserves.

Pros	Cons
• Maximum reduction in risk profile • Restoration of beach and habitat function • Increased beach amenity opportunities • Beach processes retained including formation of dunes	• Cost - high • Unclear legal framework • Loss of private property rights • Change in the way the beach is used

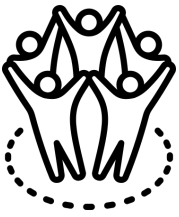
How do we evaluate options?

Options will be evaluated by assessing them against the following criteria. These criteria have been developed based on the values for Wainui Beach – what you told us was important.



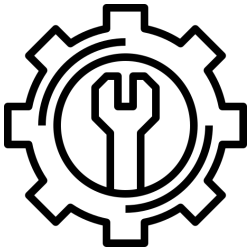
Environmental

- To what degree does the option enhance habitat and ecosystem services.
- Will the option disrupt natural beach behaviour.
- Will the option provide protection of the foredune.



Social/cultural

- Will the option have potential impacts on surf breaks.
- Will the option have impacts on how people enjoy the beach.
- Does the option provide adequate protection of waahi tapu sites.
- Does the option provide protection to private and public assets/property.
- To what degree does the option address existing health and safety issues.



Feasibility and implementation

- What is the level of hazard mitigation provided from the option.
- Is the option reliant upon regular maintenance for success.
- Are there significant consenting barriers.
- How long will the option effectively mitigate hazard risk.



Economic

- How much will it cost ratepayers.
- Is there an opportunity for cost share arrangements.
- Are there ongoing maintenance costs.
- Are there additional monitoring costs.

Have your say now!

Thank you for taking your time to read through the plans for Wainui Coastal Adaptation Plan.

To learn more, please use the form on our Participate webpage to have your say. Keep updated by following the page using the button at the top.

If you have any more questions, email us at TRMP@gdc.govt.nz



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