



**WHANGANUI  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

# **Statement of Proposal**

## **Representation Review 2018**

## **1. SUMMARY OF INFORMATION**

Whanganui District Council ("Council") is seeking feedback on its initial Representation Review proposal.

This proposal seeks to make minor adjustments to the Wanganui Rural Community Board's (the Board) subdivision boundaries to more closely meet the 'population to elected member' ratio rules of the Local Electoral Act 2001 (the Act).

This would affect the boundaries of the Whanganui and Kaitoke subdivisions but would still take into account recognised communities of interest. The proposal would result in only small scale changes and the same number of elected members would continue to represent each rural subdivision. It would reduce the level to which we currently do not comply with the rules in the Act.

It is also proposed to change the name of the 'Wanganui Rural Community Board' to the 'Whanganui Rural Community Board'.

All other representation arrangements for the Council and the Board would remain the same.

It has already been decided to retain the First Past the Post electoral system and not to establish a Māori ward.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

Under the Act local authorities must review their electoral arrangements at least every six years. Council last reviewed its arrangements in 2012 for the 2013 elections, with no changes made. That means we have to do another review before the 2019 elections.

Representation reviews are about:

- Identifying our communities of interest.
- Considering how these communities of interest are best represented through:

- the basis on which councillors are elected (i.e. at large, wards or a mixture of both);
- the total number of councillors;
- ward numbers, names and boundaries; and
- community board arrangements.
- Ensuring each councillor represents about the same number of people
- Making decisions about the electoral system to be used; and
- Identifying any arrangements for Māori wards.

### ***Council***

Council resolved, on 6 September 2017, to keep the First Past the Post (FFP) voting system for the 2019 elections. Council has also decided, after consulting with mana whenua, not to establish a Māori ward.

In general, Council has decided to retain all of its existing representation arrangements. This means that the same number of elected members<sup>1</sup> will represent the district and the use of an 'at large' approach will continue to be used.

### ***Board***

The Wanganui Rural Community Board's boundaries for the Whanganui and Kaitoke subdivisions do not currently meet the Act's rules on fair representation. These say that each elected member should represent about the same number of people. This is called the +/- 10% rule<sup>2</sup>.

As a result, it is proposed that minor adjustments be made so that representation can be more equally spread.

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<sup>1</sup> A mayor and 12 councillors.

<sup>2</sup> It must be ensured that the population of each subdivision, divided by the number of members to be elected by that subdivision, produces a figure no more than 10% greater or smaller than the population of the community, divided by the total number of elected members.

### **3. PROPOSAL**

#### **Council**

##### ***Status quo***

The following arrangements would remain the same:

- Whanganui District will be represented by a Mayor and 12 councillors.
- The Mayor and councillors will be elected by the electors of the Whanganui District as a whole ('at large').

#### **Board**

##### ***Name change***

These arrangements for the Board are proposed to remain the same, however, the name of the Board would be changed.

- The name of the Wanganui Rural Community will be changed to the Whanganui Rural Community Board.
- The Whanganui Rural Community Board will consist of three subdivisions (Kai Iwi, Whanganui and Kaitoke).
- The members of the Whanganui Rural Community Board will be elected by the electors of the subdivisions of the community as follows:
  - Kai Iwi subdivision – Three members
  - Whanganui subdivision – Two members
  - Kaitoke subdivision – Two members
- Two councillor appointments will be made to the Whanganui Rural Community Board.

##### ***Proposed changes***

Two current subdivisions – Whanganui and Kaitoke – do not comply with the Act's rules on fair representation which say that each elected member should represent about the same number of people. Currently Whanganui has too few people for the number of elected members it has and Kaitoke has too few elected members for the number of people living in this subdivision.

It is proposed that the Whanganui and Kaitoke boundaries be adjusted. This would see the Whanganui subdivision expanded into Kaitoke to incorporate mesh blocks 1684900 and 1685000. This is illustrated in the maps included with this proposal.

This will enable Kaitoke to meet the population rule and would bring Whanganui much closer in line.

### ***CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS***

<b>Subdivision</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Pop / member ratio</b>	<b>Difference from quota</b>	<b>% difference from quota</b>
Whanganui	1,140	2	570	-249	<b>-30.37</b>
Kaitoke	1,940	2	970	151	<b>18.50</b>
Kai Iwi	2,650	3	883	64	7.91
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,730</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>819</b>		

### ***PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS***

<b>Subdivision</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Pop / member ratio</b>	<b>Difference from quota</b>	<b>% difference from quota</b>
Whanganui	1,308 (an increase)	2	654	-165	<b>-20.10</b>
Kaitoke	1,772 (a decrease)	2	886	67	8.24
Kai Iwi	2,650	3	883	64	7.91
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,730</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>819</b>		

If the proposed changes are confirmed, the Whanganui subdivision will remain under represented (by 20.10%). The Kaitoke subdivision would now be within the ratio (moving from 18.50% to 8.24%).

More information, including maps, is provided from page 8.

## 2. REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL

Although the proposal will not completely comply with the Act's population rule it is considered that this is the most appropriate demarcation given the importance of retaining the existing Fordell community in its entirety within the Kaitoke subdivision.

The proposal also provides the opportunity to incorporate larger farming blocks into the Whanganui subdivision. This is believed to be a better community of interest alignment than the current relationship with Kaitoke.

While the Whanganui subdivision will still remain outside of the rule, these changes would keep communities of interest intact. It was not possible to do this and also create a fully compliant proposal. The proposal put forward is largely compliant (i.e. the extent of non-compliance is relatively small). Non-compliance is permitted where respecting communities of interest makes it necessary.

As a result, this proposal has been selected as it provides the following benefits:

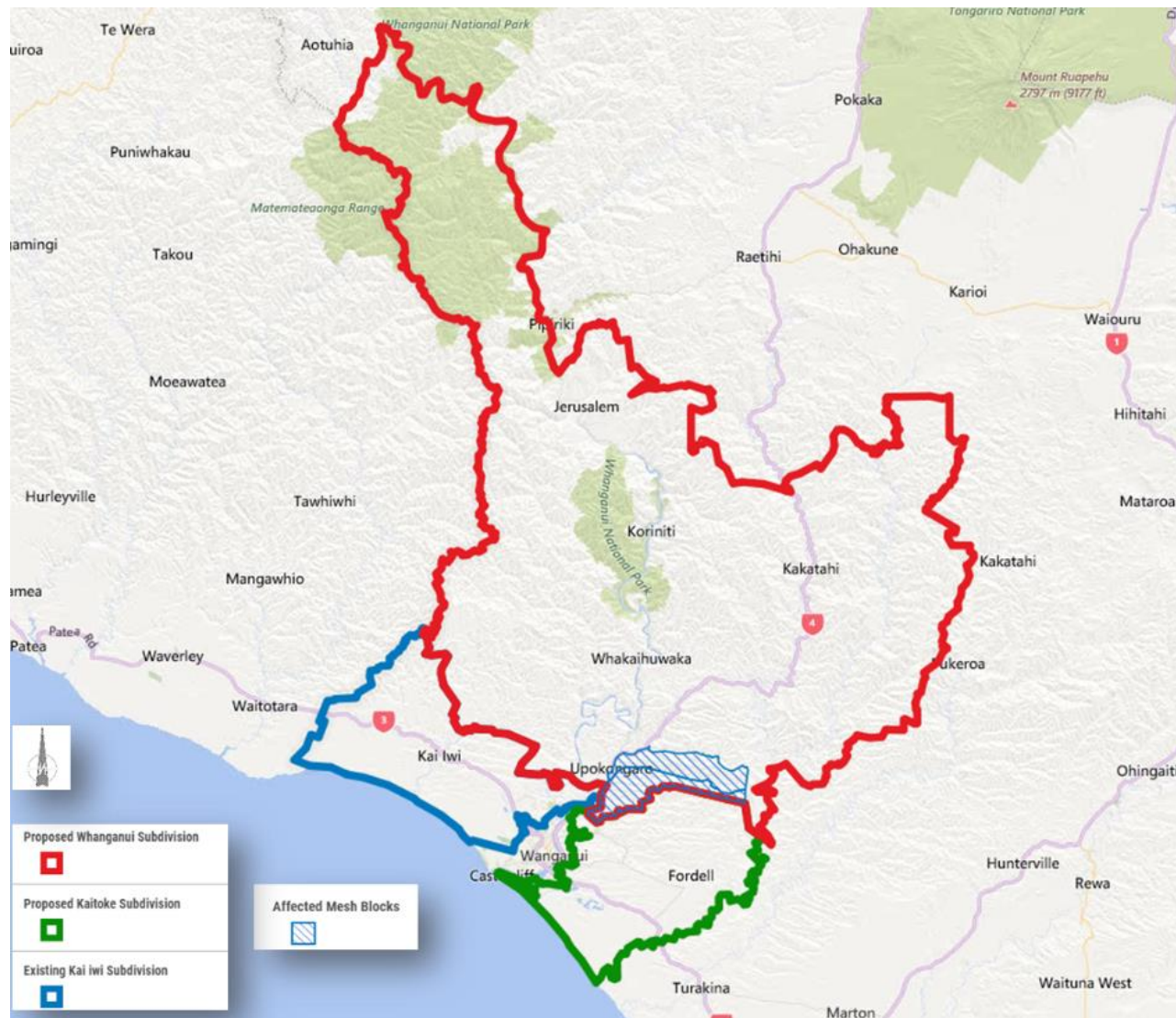
- Retains existing communities of interest.
- Provides minimal upheaval for affected parties and recognises that the current split appears to have worked well.
- Offers only a small scale change but will generally address the population equality rule.
- Provides the potential to create more accurate representation through refining existing communities of interest (i.e. getting the split between Whanganui and Kaitoke right).

## 3. PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES

Change	Reason	Who this would affect
<b>Whanganui</b>  Moving the boundary of the Whanganui subdivision (with Whanganui taking in some of what has been Kaitoke).	Bringing the Whanganui subdivision into closer alignment with the population to elected member ratio.	Mesh blocks 1684900 and 1685000 would be transferred from the Kaitoke subdivision to the Whanganui subdivision.

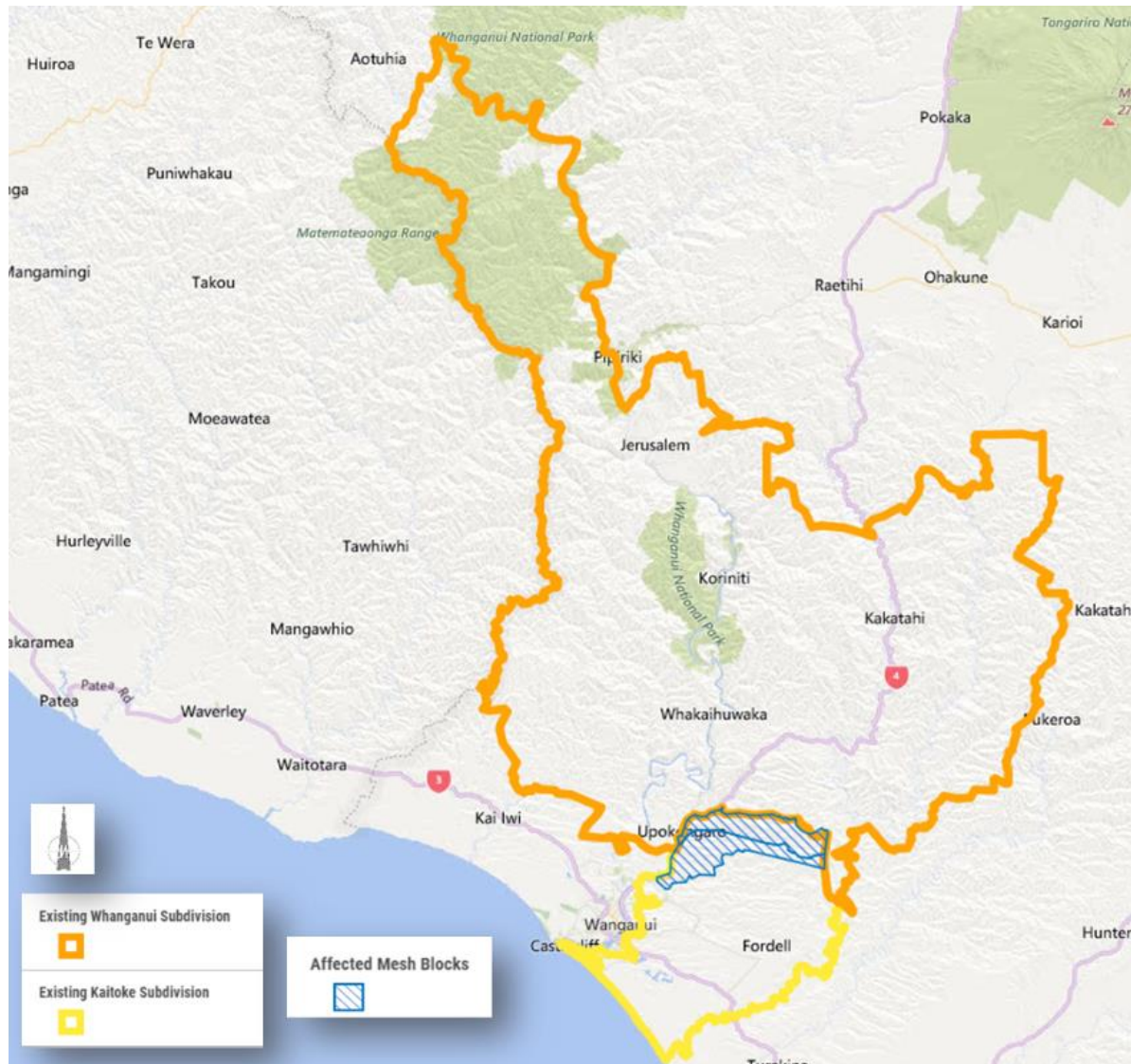
<p>This would make the Whanganui subdivision larger and would mean that some areas that were part of Kaitoke would now be part of Whanganui.</p>	<p>This would retain existing communities of interest and would also bring some larger farming properties into the Whanganui subdivision. It is considered that a stronger community of interest may exist here.</p>	
<p><b>Kaitoke</b></p> <p>Changing the boundary of the Kaitoke subdivision (with Whanganui taking on some of what has been Kaitoke).</p> <p>This would make the Kaitoke subdivision smaller and would mean that some areas that were part of Kaitoke would now be part of Whanganui.</p>	<p>Bringing the Kaitoke subdivision into alignment with the population to elected member ratio.</p> <p>This would retain existing communities of interest and would move some of this subdivision's larger farming properties into the Whanganui subdivision. It is considered that a stronger community of interest may exist here.</p>	<p>Mesh blocks 1684900 and 1685000 would be transferred from the Kaitoke subdivision to the Whanganui subdivision.</p>

**MAP ONE: SHOWING ALL SUBDIVISIONS, THE PROPOSED NEW BOUNDARIES AND AFFECTED MESH BLOCKS**





**MAP TWO: SHOWING THE EXISTING SUBDIVISIONS OVERLAID AND THE AFFECTED MESH BLOCKS**



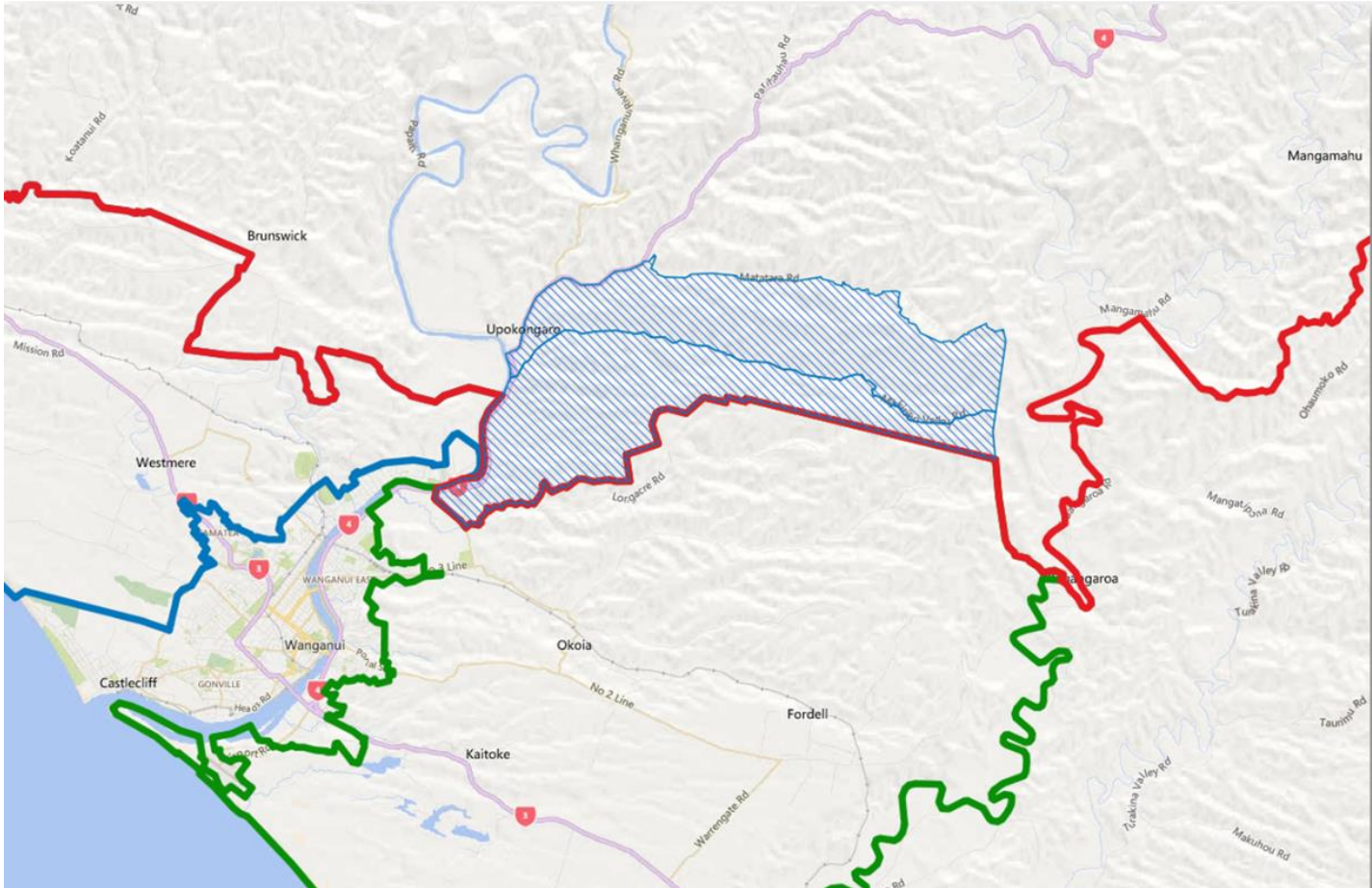
The map displays the Whanganui River catchment area, including the river itself and surrounding land. Key features include:

- Existing Kaitoke Subdivision:** Indicated by a yellow square symbol.
- Existing Whanganui Subdivision:** Indicated by an orange square symbol.
- Proposed Whanganui Subdivision:** Indicated by a red square symbol.
- Affected Mesh Blocks:** Indicated by a blue hatched square symbol.

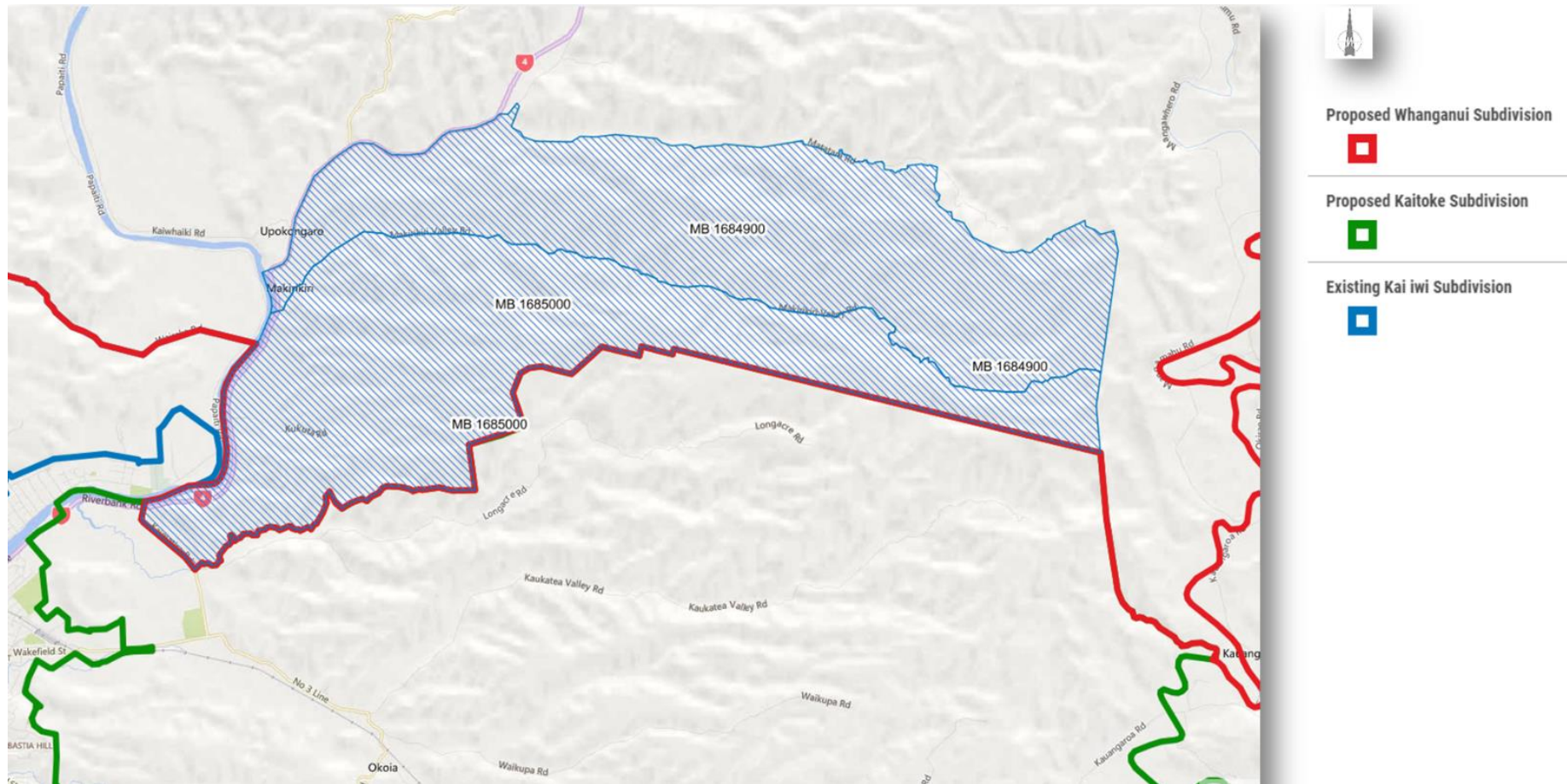
The map shows the river flowing through the catchment area, with various roads and land parcels labeled. The affected mesh blocks are highlighted in blue hatching, and the proposed subdivision is outlined in red. The existing subdivisions are outlined in yellow and orange.



The map displays the Wanganui region with the proposed urban boundary highlighted in blue with diagonal hatching. The boundary encompasses the central urban area of Wanganui and extends to include Upokongaro. Surrounding the urban boundary are several other outlined areas: a red outline to the north and east, a green outline to the south and west, and a blue outline to the west. Key locations labeled on the map include Wanganui, Upokongaro, Okoia, Fordell, Kaitoke, Castlecliff, Westmere, and Mangamahia. Major roads shown include Longacre Rd, Mangatapu Rd, and various local roads like Mission Rd and Mangatapu Rd. The map also shows the Wanganui River and the surrounding terrain.



**MAP FIVE: DETAILED VIEW OF THE PROPOSED WHANGANUI AND KAITOKE SUBDIVISIONS SHOWING AFFECTED MESH BLOCK NUMBERS**



#### **4. HAVE YOUR SAY**

To have your say about the representation proposal you can make a submission online at [www.whanganui.govt.nz/haveyoursay](http://www.whanganui.govt.nz/haveyoursay)

Alternatively, you can collect submission forms from the Whanganui District Council Customer Service counter at the main municipal building located at 101 Guyton Street or from the Davis Central City Library and Gonville Library.

Please indicate whether you would like to speak to your submission and include contact details. People who wish to be heard by Council will be given the opportunity to do so. The time and venue for the hearing of submissions is yet to be confirmed.

For any queries please contact Stephanie Macdonald-Rose, Policy and Governance Manager on (06) 349 0001.

**Written submissions open on 20 June and close at 5pm on 3 August 2018.**

#### **5. NEXT STEPS**

Oral submissions will be heard and all other submissions considered. Council will then meet to make a decision on its final proposal.

This will be publically notified within six weeks of the close of submissions. There will then be a one month period to appeal or object to the decision.

If there is an appeal or objection, or the final proposal does not comply with the Act's requirements for fair representation it must be referred to the Local Government Commission (LGC). The LGC will determine the representation arrangements for the 2019 Whanganui District Council elections. That decision must be made by 10 April 2019.

## **6. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **Subdivision boundaries**

**Q: This proposal doesn't meet the rules set out by the Local Electoral Act 2001. Why haven't you offered a proposal that is compliant with the Act?**

**A:** Because of the need to recognise and protect communities of interest, and ensure people with common interests are grouped in the same subdivision, it wasn't possible to create a fully compliant proposal.

The proposal we have provided is largely compliant (i.e. the extent of non-compliance is small), and recognises communities with similar interests by grouping them in the same subdivision.

Non-compliance is permitted where respecting communities of interest makes it necessary.

### **Communities of interest**

**Q: How do you decide what a "community of interest" is?**

**A:** Generally a "community of interest" is a geographic area where people feel a sense of belonging. It is a place where the people living there look to the immediate area for social, service and economic support. A community of interest can be influenced by geographic features.

**Q: Why have you decided on these communities of interest?**

**A:** We have taken into account feedback from the rural community and acknowledge the importance of keeping the Fordell community intact. This is a strongly recognised community with well-developed and enduring social, service and economic connections. It is important that this sense of belonging for residents within this settlement is retained. In addition, the proposed boundary changes provide the opportunity for larger farming blocks to be incorporated into the more farming focused Whanganui subdivision. This is considered to be a better community of interest alignment than the existing arrangement within the Kaitoke subdivision.

**Q: Why change the name of the Rural Community Board?**

**A:** This would align the Board with the Council's approach to the use of 'Whanganui' and would recognise the government's determination in relation to the correction of the spelling. It would also accurately reflect the spelling of the community that the Whanganui District Council, and ultimately, the Board, represents.