

1800 Kapiti beachfront homes at risk

Kay Blundell
KAPITI

SOME of the Kapiti Coast's most desirable beachfront real estate is at risk from erosion or flooding, according to a council report.

About 1800 homes have been identified as at risk within the next 100 years, and 1000 of them could be affected within half that time, according to a Coastal Erosion Hazard Risk report commissioned by Kapiti Coast District Council.

Owners of million-dollar beachfront homes along Manly St in Paraparaumu and Field Way in Waikanae are among those who have received letters from the council telling them their property and insurance values are likely to be affected by the new data, which will be included in future land information memorandums (Lims) on those properties.

The report contains maps showing lines running up the coastline from Paekakariki to Otaki, representing the predicted shoreline in 50 and 100 years' time. Within 100 years, 220 properties will be affected in Paekakariki, 435 in Raumati, 545 in Paraparaumu, 240 in Waikanae, 170 in Te Horo/Peka Peka and 175 in Otaki.

The report was done by coastal science company Coastal Systems, and was peer-reviewed by experts. It was commissioned to comply with the Government's New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010, which requires councils to make coastal hazard assessments.

Mayor Jenny Rowan said the shoreline predictions would shock some property owners, and a real estate agent confirmed the report would definitely affect prime beachfront valuations.

"The issue of climate change, rising sea levels and changes in weather patterns has been around for some time," Ms Rowan said. "However, I suspect a number of people have seen this debate as largely one for green activists and have not been engaged."

"This report brings home the reality, however, that we have a very low coastal fringe that is both open to rising sea levels and damage from storms. The big issue is how we tackle the results of this assessment: what sort of policies and rules we put in place."

Tommy's Real Estate Paraparaumu owner Chris Packer said values would be affected from Paekakariki to Peka Peka.

"The Kapiti Coast has always been associated with a lifestyle, and the beach and the beachfront is the piece de resistance."

"It is scary. It will have an effect on values immediately because of the perception it creates... It will probably have an effect on about 50 per cent of people look-



More worry: The sea-risk report is "just another thing to bamboozle... residents", say Elizabeth and Terence O'Brien, from Raumati. Photos: CRAIG SIMCOX/FAIRFAX NZ

'SAND IN OUR EYES'

They've battled the expressway and water meters, and now Terence and Elizabeth O'Brien have been told their beachfront home in Raumati is at risk from the sea.

"It is like throwing sand in residents' eyes right now," said Mr O'Brien, who has lived in his Kirk Way home for 35 years.

"It is just another thing to bamboozle and keep residents unbalanced."

"There certainly needs to be a downward adjustment of the rates. What on earth are they [the council] doing pushing this out at this time, when we have all these other issues here like roads and God knows what else."

His wife said: "People will be alarmed... I do not know if it can be justified, in view of what is known scientifically. It is also unknown what the world is going to do about climate change."

Neighbour Peter Evans has just moved into a palatial architecturally designed home on the beachfront and said he was surprised Kapiti Coast District Council had not mentioned the new maps while he



Surprised: Peter Evans at his just-completed Raumati home that falls inside the boundary.

and his wife were building their home over the past year.

"I am surprised the council has not talked to us when we put plans forward."

"They could have made some reference to it - we could then have had a judgment of our own as to whether we went ahead or not."



ONLINE

For the council's detailed maps of which homes are affected, go to dompst.co.nz

ing at the market now."

Waikanae Community Board chairman Michael Scott agreed the information would be quite scary for people at first.

"They will think their properties will be washed away imminently and it is all doom and gloom. These are worst-case scenarios."

"People's property values will

inevitably go down and they will be looking for lower rates payments."

Ms Rowan said the council would work through questions raised by the report, and that would include rates.

However, Mr Packer said: "I do not think the rates will be adjusted to the level people hope they will be."

The council plans to hold workshops to discuss the report. Residents with queries are asked to contact the council.