DESIGNATION

The Resource Management Act allows for areas of land to be identified (designated) for specific uses. The Council’s aim in designating Cooper’s Wells is to protect the water source that supplies water to over 7000 people.

The main area to be designated, known as the Water Supply and Protection Area, is 14ha owned by
• the Sharp Trust (3.4ha)
• Gore District Council and the Crown (7.6ha)
• defunct New Zealand Agricultural Company (3ha)

There is also a four metre-wide strip of land from the wells to the Mataura River, which crosses land owned by the Trust and a private landowner, Margaret Palmer McKenzie. This strip is the proposed route for buried pipes and cables that will enable water to be extracted from the river, to recharge the wells when water levels are low.

A Notice of Requirement must be prepared as part of the designation process. The notice sets out details of the designation.

The Council has decided to publicly notify the Notice of Requirement to get feedback from affected parties and the wider public. Any person can lodge a submission in support, opposition or neutral to the proposal.

The Notice of Requirement allows for existing use rights on the land tagged for designation. In this instance it means the Sharp Trust can continue to graze the land around Cooper’s Wells. However, no new activities are allowed without the permission of the designating authority, the Council.

The Council has identified activities it believes are contrary to the designation. These include
• earthworks
• gravel extraction
• winter grazing of stock
• spreading fertiliser

The Council appreciates the impact designation will have on the landowner and the process allows for it to acquire an interest in the land. This could be by way of lease or purchase. Negotiations for any compensation are conducted outside the designation process.

The 14ha has been identified as the 30-day time of travel (TOT) zone for Cooper’s Wells. Time of travel refers to the time it takes for groundwater to move from the land surface to the pumping wells. Therefore, if a chemical was released into the groundwater inside the 30-day TOT zone, it could make its way to the well in 30 days or less.

For more information go to www.goredc.govt.nz/cooperswells