

2nd April 2026

Hurunui District Council

CEO, Mayor, Councillors

Subject: Urgent Request for Independent Peer Review of Jacobs Report

Dear Council

It has come to our attention that the Jacobs Report—which underpins the Coastal Adaptation Plan (CAP) and associated initiatives addressing coastal inundation, including HDC’s proposed subdivision and land relocation at Rosewood—has not been subject to independent peer review.

We do not understand why the Council would rely on and build policy upon a report of such significance without it first being independently peer reviewed. In our view, this raises serious concerns regarding the robustness of the evidence base informing Council decisions and may constitute a breach of the Council’s responsibility to ensure that planning and policy are founded on sound, tested, and transparent technical advice.

Given the far-reaching implications for property, community wellbeing, and public expenditure, it is essential that this report be subjected to rigorous independent scrutiny before any further decisions are advanced.

Accordingly, we request that Council:

1. Immediately place any further reliance on, or progression of, policies and initiatives based on the Jacobs Report on hold;
2. Commit to commissioning a fully independent peer review of the report; and
3. Confirm the proposed scope, process, and reviewer(s), ensuring that independence is clear and beyond question.

For the avoidance of doubt, a review undertaken by parties with existing commercial relationships with Jacobs would not meet the required standard of independence. We note, for example, concerns raised in other jurisdictions regarding reviews undertaken by affiliated entities such as Beca.

We also request that the Amberley Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association be included in, or consulted on, the selection of the independent reviewer and the scope of the peer review process.

If Council is not prepared to commit to commissioning an independent peer review, the Amberley Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association is prepared to engage a suitably qualified and recognised independent expert to undertake this work.

We would appreciate your prompt response given the seriousness and urgency of this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Amberley Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association
Marc Coulthard [Chair]

