



Will this information affect my property value or insurance?

We have been advised by Quotable Value that valuations follow the market rather than set the market. They would not expect to discount a valuation without there being market data to support that approach, and this was not the case from their observations of the market at the time of their valuations. This advice was based on work they have recently undertaken in the Mangaroa Valley which is in a similar situation.

Many areas in the Wellington Region are subject to flood risk. We advise that any known facts relating to the physical risk to a property should be disclosed to an insurer. This includes whether the property is exposed to any particular hazard by virtue of its location (e.g. flood). An insurer requires these facts when evaluating whether or not to underwrite the risk and, if so, on what terms.

What you can do if you intend to develop, build or renovate?

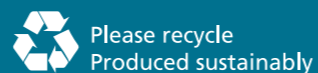
Consider the following actions if you are building or renovating in a flood or erosion-prone area:

- Always speak to Hutt City Council (Telephone (04) 570 6666 – ask for Environmental Consents) before you start building.
- Avoid the area affected by flood or erosion. Greater Wellington also advises that development avoids flood hazard areas, but if this is not possible, such as for an existing dwelling, we can provide you with site-specific advice.
- Raise your building platform or floor levels, or build to two storeys. The underside of the floor joists or concrete slab should be clear of the 1 in 100 year return period flood level. Remember that the design flood event could be exceeded.
- Consider access issues and provide flood free evacuation routes. No one wants to be caught in a flood event with no safe escape routes. Elevating access routes is not recommended as they can act as barriers to flood waters
- Know your risk. Find your property on the flood hazard map and find out what the predicted depth of water will be. Work out how flooding may affect your access routes, and where you can go to escape the flood water in an emergency or whether you would be better staying put. Greater Wellington, Hutt City Council and Civil Defence can help you with this.
- Be prepared. Make yourself an emergency kit that will last you for at least 3 days (water, canned food, torch, first-aid and spare medication, camp-stove and fuel, battery or wind-up radio, dry blankets/sleeping bag and warm clothing). For more information, check the Yellow Pages or contact a Civil Defence emergency management advisor at your local council.

Greater Wellington is always available to provide advice, site-specific information and recommendations for individual properties, whether they are for specific development proposals or simply in regard to enquiries from residents or interested parties. So please do not hesitate to contact us on the numbers below.

For more information, contact
 Flood Protection Department
 Greater Wellington Regional Council
 P O Box 11646
 Wellington
 T 04 384 5708
 F 04 385 6960
 www.gw.govt.nz

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Quality for Life



Flood Hazard Information Sheet 30 Waiwhetu/Awamutu Streams

JANUARY 2010

One of Greater Wellington's key roles is to help communities protect themselves from the effects of river and stream flooding. To do this, our communities need to understand the risk from flooding and have affordable and acceptable solutions in place. We also want to ensure that inappropriate developments don't create new problems.

The lower reaches of the Waiwhetu Stream are currently being widened and deepened in conjunction with Waiwhetu Stream clean-up works. The widening and deepening works will improve the flood carrying capacity of the lower Waiwhetu Stream. New flood hazard maps will be produced at the completion of physical works as a part of completing a Floodplain Management Plan for the catchment, due in 2010/2011.

In the interim, Greater Wellington has produced flood hazard information sheets to show the present flood hazard for the Waiwhetu and Awamutu streams, what the risks are, and what you can do to manage them. Identifying hazards, such as those caused by river and stream flooding, is the responsibility of local and territorial authorities under the Resource Management Act.

The Waiwhetu/Awamutu catchment

The Waiwhetu stream catchment has an area of about 19 square kilometres, and a main channel length of about 9 kilometres (as shown in Figure 1 below). The largest tributary is the Awamutu stream which meets the main channel of the Waiwhetu at Hutt Park and drains the suburb of Moera.

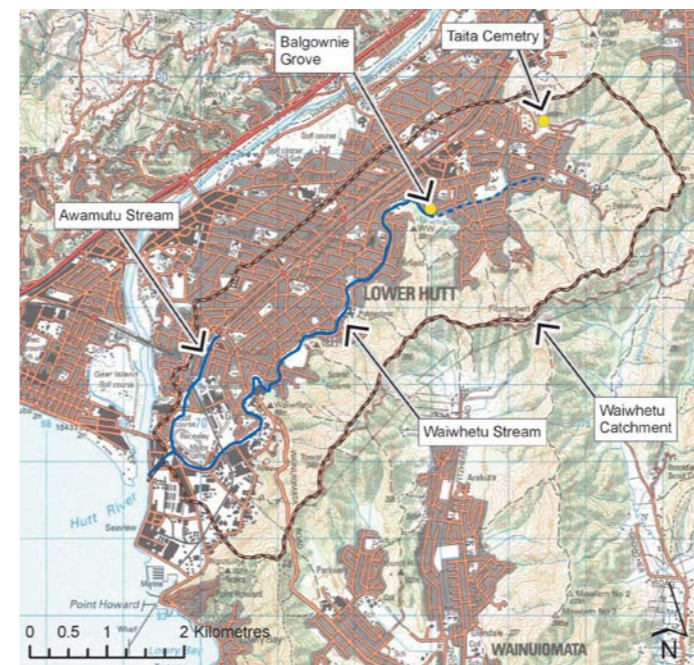


Figure 1: Location of the Waiwhetu/Awamutu streams

How do Greater Wellington and Hutt City manage the Waiwhetu and Awamutu streams?

The Waiwhetu stream is jointly administered by Greater Wellington and Hutt City. Greater Wellington manages the reach from the Hutt River to the concrete channel at Balgownie Grove. Hutt City maintains the remaining channel to Taita Cemetery. Maintenance activities include removing obstructions from the channel (such as trees), berm mowing and removal of Cape Pond Weed which is a pest species.

Hutt City administers the whole of the Awamutu Stream.

How we measure floods

The amount of water flowing in a river is measured by a unit called a cumec (cubic metre per second), which is a measure of how much water flows past a given point every second.

The frequency of the flood is measured by how often a flood of a particular size is likely to happen such as a 1 in 5, 1 in 50 or 1 in 100 year return period flood event. A 100 year return period flood event has a 1% chance of being equalled or exceeded in any year. On average, one of these events will occur every 100 years based on past records.

But don't be misled into thinking that a 100 year return period flood can only happen once in a hundred years – two big floods could happen soon after each other!

Floods on the Waiwhetu/Awamutu Streams

The Waiwhetu Stream has a history of flooding in the lower reaches, where the capacity of the stream channel has been greatly restricted. Water levels in the lower reaches are also affected by tide conditions, and storms and low pressure systems can lead to tidal extremes which can exacerbate widespread flooding of both the Awamutu and Waiwhetu streams.

More serious events that cause significant levels of property damage can, and do, occur every 10 to 20 years. Greater than 5 year return period flows in the Waiwhetu Stream (>19 cumecs) have occurred in November 2001, February 2004, and January 2005.

The flood on 16 February 2004 had a maximum flow of approximately 40 cumecs with an estimated return period of 40 years.



Figure 2: Lower Waiwhetu on 16 Feb 04

Why this information is useful

The hazards associated with flooding and the natural evolution of the floodplain should be considered when new development is being considered on the floodplain. This approach is useful as it helps to:

- minimise the future damage from flood events to property;
- identify any potential threat to life;
- allow evaluation of any impact on the river environment; and
- alert people to any potential flood and erosion risk.

What it means

The hazard assessment shows areas along the Waiwhetu and Awamutu streams and floodplain that are affected by the 100 year return period flood event. The maps covering the main channels of the Waiwhetu and Awamutu Streams are shown in Figure 3. A typical flood hazard map is shown in Figure 4.

100 Year Flood Extent: is the extent of flooding for a 100 year return period flood event.

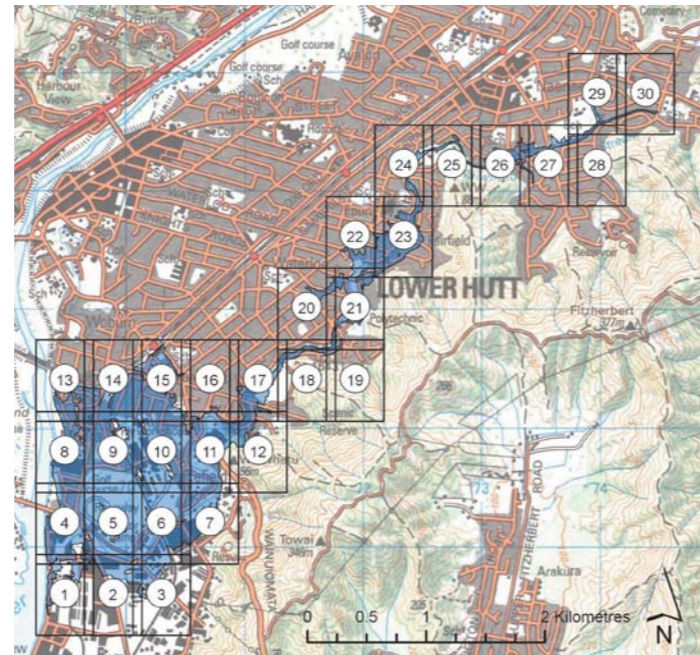


Figure 3: Location map for Figure 4 flood hazard map

Figure 4: Waiwhetu and Awamutu Streams flood hazard map

