



Flood Protection Works

Hutt Park and Seaview Gracefield

Large areas of Hutt City are contained within two relatively narrow valleys – Hutt and Wainuiomata – with rivers and streams draining water from the surrounding hills and ranges out to the sea.

In most wet weather situations, surface water is drained away from commercial and residential properties through a substantial network of stormwater pipes and drains.

However, during extremely heavy rainfall, the capacity of the network to carry this stormwater can be exceeded, and this leads to flooding and ponding in low-lying areas.

The Hutt River still represents the major flood risk to Hutt City with the potential for damage of up to \$700m. In recent years the Council has worked with the Greater Wellington Regional Council, which has overall responsibility for the Hutt River, to complete the floodplain management plan. An \$80m major upgrade is underway.

There is a perception that we have been experiencing more frequent extreme weather events in recent years. Hutt City Council recognises that this is of concern to businesses in the Seaview Gracefield area and so has put in place both short and long-term strategies to improve the capacity of the stormwater system.

Hutt City's stormwater renewal and upgrade programme

From around 1990, Council began a programme to progressively replace and upgrade the entire stormwater system as pipes reached the end of their useful lives. The programme uses much higher stormwater design

standards than those that in the past were generally accepted as best practice.

For example, whereas the old system was built to cope with one in five year weather events, the new standard requires that the system be capable of withstanding one-in-ten year and one-in-fifty year standards, depending on the level of risk in particular areas.

Information about commercial buildings

Codes for commercial properties are not as stringent as they are for residential buildings. For example, residential dwellings must be built with the floor at a minimum height. There is no such requirement for those building commercial premises. This is because requiring a raised floor could make the building inappropriate for some uses – for example warehouses where forklifts are regularly moving in and out loading.

Hutt Park and Seaview Gracefield catchment

Flooding in the Hutt Park and Seaview Gracefield area is related to the combination of water flows in the Waiwhetu and Awamutu Streams and the Hutt River.

Hutt City Council is responsible for the section of Waiwhetu stream above the end of the concrete channel in Naenae and for the Awamutu Stream. The Waiwhetu Stream is the responsibility of the Greater Wellington Regional Council from the end of the concrete channelling in Naenae down to where the stream meets the Hutt River at Port Road.

The Awamutu Stream joins the Waiwhetu Stream at Hutt Park, just upstream of the Seaview Road Bridge. Both authorities are working together to reduce the risk of future flooding.

The Waiwhetu Stream is the main drainage channel for much of the eastern side of the Hutt Valley from Naenae in the north, to the stream

outlet into the Hutt River just south of the Hutt River Estuary (Waione Street) Bridge. The flooding events in February and August 2004 saw water levels reach record heights in the Waiwhetu Stream.

A combination of water overflowing the Waiwhetu Stream's banks and runoff from the heavy rain caused severe flooding in the vicinity of the Hutt Park roundabout, the Hutt Park Holiday Camp and the wider Seaview Gracefield area.

Short term strategies for Hutt Park and Seaview Gracefield area

Hutt City Council is increasing both stormwater pipeline and intake capacity as part of a programme dealing with flooding 'hotspots'. This programme has been accelerated since the two major flood events that occurred in 2004.

The programme includes a \$180,000 project to install increased pipeline capacity in Seaview Gracefield and adjacent areas to deal with local ponding issues. This is part of the Hutt City Council's programme to progressively upgrade all stormwater pipes with pipes of bigger capacity and higher design standards. Pipes are being replaced as existing pipes reach the end of their useful lives.

Additional pumping capacity is likely to be installed in a purpose-built chamber constructed as part of the Seaview Roundabout upgrade.

Longer term strategies

Greater Wellington Regional Council has commenced a "Waiwhetu Stream Floodplain Management Study". This will set out how the flooding issues associated with the Waiwhetu Stream can most effectively be approached. The Greater Wellington Regional Council will consider an initial report in late 2004.

As part of this study, the Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council have commissioned a detailed aerial survey of the Waiwhetu Stream catchment. This will produce data on the catchment to enable the development of a high quality computer model.

The computer model will enable the effectiveness of a range of different options for addressing the flood risk, to be assessed.

The aerial survey is due in November 2004 and the computer model will be completed in mid-2005.

The study will present a range of issues, design options and recommendations to protect against future flooding. These will be the subject of consultation with the community prior to resource consent applications being lodged and the commencement of physical works.

For further information:

Phone: 570 6666 or
http://www.huttcity.info/council/services/emo/bad_flood.html

Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan is available from the Greater Wellington Regional Council,
Phone: 0800 496 734 or
www.wrc.govt.nz/fp/hutt/htm