

22 July 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-28473

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request for information 2024-138

I refer to your request for information dated 24 June 2024 and subsequent correspondence. You have asked for the following information

'If there are specific GWRC policies regarding land use intensification that are relevant to the Ōtaki area'

Greater Wellington's Response follows

We understand that this information request is related to questions raised by [REDACTED] the Waitohu Catchment. The reason being that the proposed flood protection works on the Lower Waitohu are primarily designed to protect lives and dwellings rather than to enable land use intensification.

Greater Wellington's role

Greater Wellington recommends that development is avoided in areas subject to flood hazard. While Greater Wellington makes recommendations regarding flood hazard, the conditions applied to any development are up to Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) under their District Plan. Greater Wellington generally also recommends that building floor levels are raised for commercial development, but whether this is carried out depends on relevant District Plan rules.

The conditions applied to any development are up to the District Plan rules applied by the territorial authority (KCDC in this case). Generally, the District Plan rules result in requiring flood hazard information being provided by Greater Wellington, so that the flood hazard impact is managed on an individual building basis up to the recommended Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood level (1% AEP flood standard for Kāpiti).

Greater Wellington policies

Greater Wellington maintains a set of principles for Floodplain Management Planning (The Principles) that underpin our approach to flood risk management across the Region. The Principles are regularly reviewed and readopted by Council. The last update being in 2017.

The first two of these principles are relevant in this instance;

1. Avoid building in high hazard areas
2. Only consider new flood protection infrastructure where existing development is at risk

The Principles are consistent with global best practice in hazard management and seeks to reduce both residual risk today but risk to future generations. The Principles in full are included in Principles for Floodplain Management Planning.¹

Specific plans

To support this advice, I refer to you to the Regional Policy Statement, Ōtaki Floodplain Management Plan and the Guidelines for Floodplain Management Planning.

Regional Policy Statement

Further, I refer you to Objectives 19, 20 and 21 of the Regional Policy Statement 2013 (RPS) <https://www.gw.govt.nz/rps/>. The Regional Policy Statement outlines the resource management issues of significance to the region and provides a framework for managing the natural and physical resource of the region in a sustainable manner. The RPS identifies objectives, policies and methods which are designed to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region. Section 3.8 of the RPS, Natural Hazards, identifies flooding as one of the regionally significant resource management issues for the region.

The related objectives and policies for natural hazards are Objectives 19, 20, and 21 which seek to reduce the risks and consequences from natural hazards and climate change effects, ensure hazard mitigation measures do not increase the risk and consequences of natural hazard events, and to create more resilient communities which are better prepared for the consequences of natural hazard events.

Policies 29, 51 and 52 implement these objectives, and Policy 51 is of particular note and states that development in areas at high risk from natural hazards should be avoided.

¹ [Microsoft Word - WGN_DOCS-#1462942-v2-Report_15_99 - Attachment 1 - Floodplain Management Planning - Principles \(gw.govt.nz\)](#)

Ōtaki Floodplain Management Plan 1998

The Ōtaki Floodplain Management Plan 1998 (FMP)² identifies flood hazard categories for incorporation into the KCDC³. The KCDC District Plan requires that development in the river corridor, stream corridor, overflow path, and residual overflow path areas will be avoided unless the 1% AEP hazard can be mitigated on-site to avoid damage to property or harm to people, and the following criteria are met:

- no increase in flood flow or level on adjoining sites or other parts of the floodplain;
- no reduction in storage capacity on-site; and
- all flow corridors or overflow paths are kept clear to allow flood waters to flow freely at all times.

Additionally, when assessing applications for subdivision, use or development within a ponding, residual ponding, shallow surface flow, flood storage or fill control area, consider the following:

- the effects of the development on existing flood mitigation structures;
- the effects of the development on the flood hazard – in particular flood levels and flow;
- whether the development redirects floodwater onto adjoining sites or other parts of the floodplain;
- whether access to the subject site will adversely affect the flood hazard;
- the extent to which buildings (excluding minor buildings) can be located on areas of the site not subject to flooding; and
- whether any subdivision or development will or may result in damage to property or harm to people.

These flood hazard categories were determined by taking the following factors into account:

- threat to life
- depth and velocity of floodwaters
- difficulty and danger of evacuating people and their property
- residual risk from flooding
- potential for damage to property and social disruption

² <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2021/11/FP-Otaki-FMP.pdf>

³ <https://eplan.kapiticoast.govt.nz/eplan/rules/0/186/0/11388/0/215>

Guidelines for Floodplain Management Planning

Information regarding Greater Wellington's approach to floodplain management planning is set out in the Guidelines for Floodplain Management Planning⁴, which gives further information on the legislative and policy background for Greater Wellington's flood risk management approach.

Resource Management Act 1991

Also of note that since these documents were written, the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) has been strengthened by adding the management of significant risks from natural hazards as a matter of national importance in part 6 of the RMA.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Lian Butcher

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rōpū Taiao | Group Manager Environment

⁴ <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2015/06/Guidelines-for-Floodplain-Management-Planning.pdf>