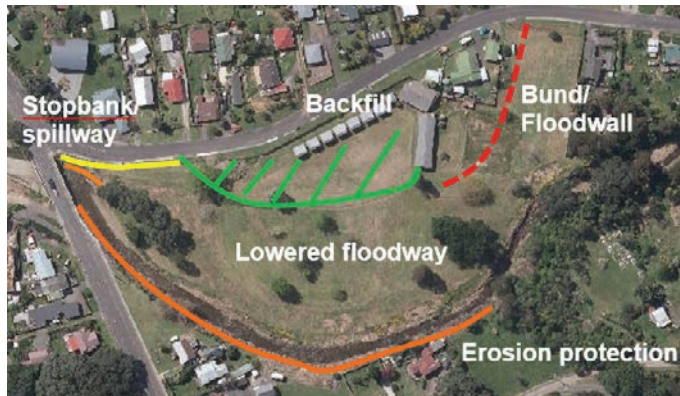


Protecting Waiomu

Flood protection

Flood protection reduces the likelihood of floods impacting on our communities. It safeguards lives and property, enables use of land, and protects services such as water supply and power. However, some people have no idea that flooding was an issue in the past, or even know they are protected by schemes.



Why was the scheme built?

It came out of the Peninsula Project, which is about improving the health of the environment and reducing flood risks on the Coromandel Peninsula. Waiomu was one community identified in the project as having a very high risk to life and property due to flooding. The flood infrastructure was put in after the weather bomb of 2002, when water carrying trees and debris came down the hills and through the campground and into all the homes along the sea.

What's in the scheme?

The assets protecting Waiomu are floodwalls. Basically, the scheme focuses on providing a clear floodway (obstruction free) for the stream during extreme weather events. There is a spillway to take flows greater than the design can cope with to protect the integrity of the bridge.

The scheme is designed to handle a 2% annual exceedance probability (AEP). This level of service is only for flooding caused by the river and does not include various tidal and coastal conditions. It also doesn't take into account climate change, which may mean more frequent and intense weather events and rises in sea level.

Scheme review

The scheme is reviewed periodically to make sure it is still of a standard to withhold the level of flood events it is designed to protect against. This is to ensure we know about changes in the catchment and that the structures remain suitable.

Residual risk

This exists when a flood event is larger than the scheme is designed to handle, and it could be from debris within the flow or obstructions within the scheme. Obstructions (including walls, buildings, sheds and other structures) in the stream or floodway may result in wider, higher and faster floodwaters, so if you see anything you're unsure about please let us know.



Clearing obstructions from Waipapa Stream.

River management and flood response

The heavy rain event during the 2002 Queen's Birthday weekend essentially broke the drought, but in the worst possible way, and was quickly followed by more flooding. About 300mm of rain fell in the Coroglen and Whenuakite catchments within six hours during the long weekend, and the Pinnacles rain gauge recorded 540mm of rain.

In mid-July, another heavy rain event had a wider impact between Whitianga and Wharekawa with the Pinnacles rain gauge recording 600mm over 48 hours. Rainfall peaked at 470mm in 24 hours, the equivalent of a 5% AEP event. In the aftermath, the regional council helped landowners with the removal of debris and obstructions, erosion protection and reinstating channel capacity. The remedial works for both events is estimated to be \$315,000 for contracted services alone.

Willows and poplars intended for other projects had to be redistributed to landowners to help remediate waterways impacted by the flood damage, with our catchment staff helping with the planting in the worst affected areas. The council also worked with Waka Kotahi/NZ Transport Agency, Thames-Coromandel District Council and forestry service PF Olsen to clear obstructions from waterways. More work in response to these floods was planned to begin in December, along with usual river management and maintenance jobs.



Manuka Stream, Whenuakite.

To find out more about flood protection in the Coromandel area visit waikatoregion.govt.nz/integrated-catchment-management/asset-management.