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Attention: Chris Dawson

Kia ora koutou

I am writing to you in relation to your submission on the Waikato District Plan Review in which you have requested a rezoning of the Mercer airfield to enable extension of the existing airfield activities on the site.

Your submission says that:

- *Mercer Airport does not rely on any Council provided reticulated infrastructure apart from access to a formed public road; and*
- consideration of potential natural hazards and how the related risks will be managed are not applicable.

This is incorrect. The Mercer airfield is located in an area that benefits from both flood and drainage infrastructure provided by the Waikato Regional Council (WRC).

The airfield is located upstream from, and within the catchment of, the Motukaraka pump station, which is required for both drainage and flood protection. I have attached maps taken from WRC's hazard portal showing the area defended by the WRC stopbank along the Maramarua Stream, and the land drainage district in which the airfield sits. WRC's Hazard Portal can be viewed at [Waikato Regional Hazards Portal \(arcgis.com\)](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/arcgis.com)

Any development on this land, irrespective of its zoning will need to consider:

- the potential risks related to being located within an area defended from a flood hazard to a specified service level and the residual risks, including how these residual risks are exacerbated by increasing the intensity of development in defended areas,
- that land drainage services are to rural service levels only and that there is no current intention to increase these levels; and
- that significant increases in impervious services may increase the volume and speed of run-off, impacting on the ability to maintain current drainage services levels resulting in increased flood hazard risks from ponding.

WRC did not make a further submission on submission #921 and is not intending in participating at Hearing 25 specifically on this submission. However, I wish to draw your attention to my evidence for Hearing 25 – Zone extents relating to WRC's flood and drainage infrastructure. I have included the relevant paragraphs (16.4 – 16.7) from my evidence below:

*Flood and drainage infrastructure managed by WRC is included in the definition of 'regionally significant infrastructure' under the WRPS, therefore Policy 6.6 and Implementation Method 6.6.1 apply.*

*Flood infrastructure is designed to manage flood events based on particular land uses. For example, the acceptable level of flood risk for pastoral farming, and the subsequent level of infrastructure investment required for this land use, is quite different to the acceptable level of flood risk for residential development. I believe that that zoning decisions should consider how the change in land use might also change expectations of the level of flooding infrastructure service delivery provided by WRC.*

*A number of the areas proposed for growth are beside or within areas that have land drainage systems that are funded through a targeted rate on benefiting landowners. These drainage areas are managed for pastoral land use. Under these schemes WRC has three days to remove surface flooding from a 10% AEP event. The discharge of semi-urban or urban stormwater in to existing rural designed drainage channels can negatively impact drainage channels which suffer from additional discharge flow volumes over longer duration, conflicting with WRC audited performance requirements. If there are areas that are expected to have significantly increased discharge into drainage networks through urbanisation, it is anticipated that the responsibility of those networks should be taken over by the district council to manage. This will need to be factored into infrastructure calculations going forward and be part of a changed operating, and subsequent rating, landscape for the district council.*

*I consider it is both appropriate and necessary that flooding and drainage infrastructure be considered alongside the other core infrastructure, such as three waters and transport infrastructure, when enabling an increase in land use intensity to accommodate growth.*

I will also provide a copy of this letter to the Hearings Panel for their information.

If you would like more information, or should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Sarah Lealand, Manager of the Lower and Central Waikato, Integrated Catchment Management Directorate, on 07 859 2781 or [Sarah.Lealand@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:Sarah.Lealand@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

Kind regards

**Miffy Foley**

Senior Policy Advisor, Policy Implementation

**cc. The Hearings Panel for the Waikato District Plan Review**

Attachment – Map extracts from WRC’s Hazard Portal

**Waikato Regional Hazards Portal**

Visit our regional hazards and emergency management page [f](#) [t](#) [e](#)

Overview River flooding Flood management **Waikato District defended areas** Coastal hazards Coastal inundation Earthquakes and landslides Volcanoes and geothermal Karapiro dam break

**Defended Areas**

Defended areas are those that are defended from flooding by structural defences such as stopbanks or floodwalls.

Although these areas are defended by most flood events (depending on their level of protection), they still have the potential to flood. Defended areas may flood due to a larger than design event, e.g. a 1% AEP flood in the Waikato River may overtop a stopbank designed to a 2% AEP level. Defended areas may also flood due to failure of a structural defence - this is unlikely but can still happen.

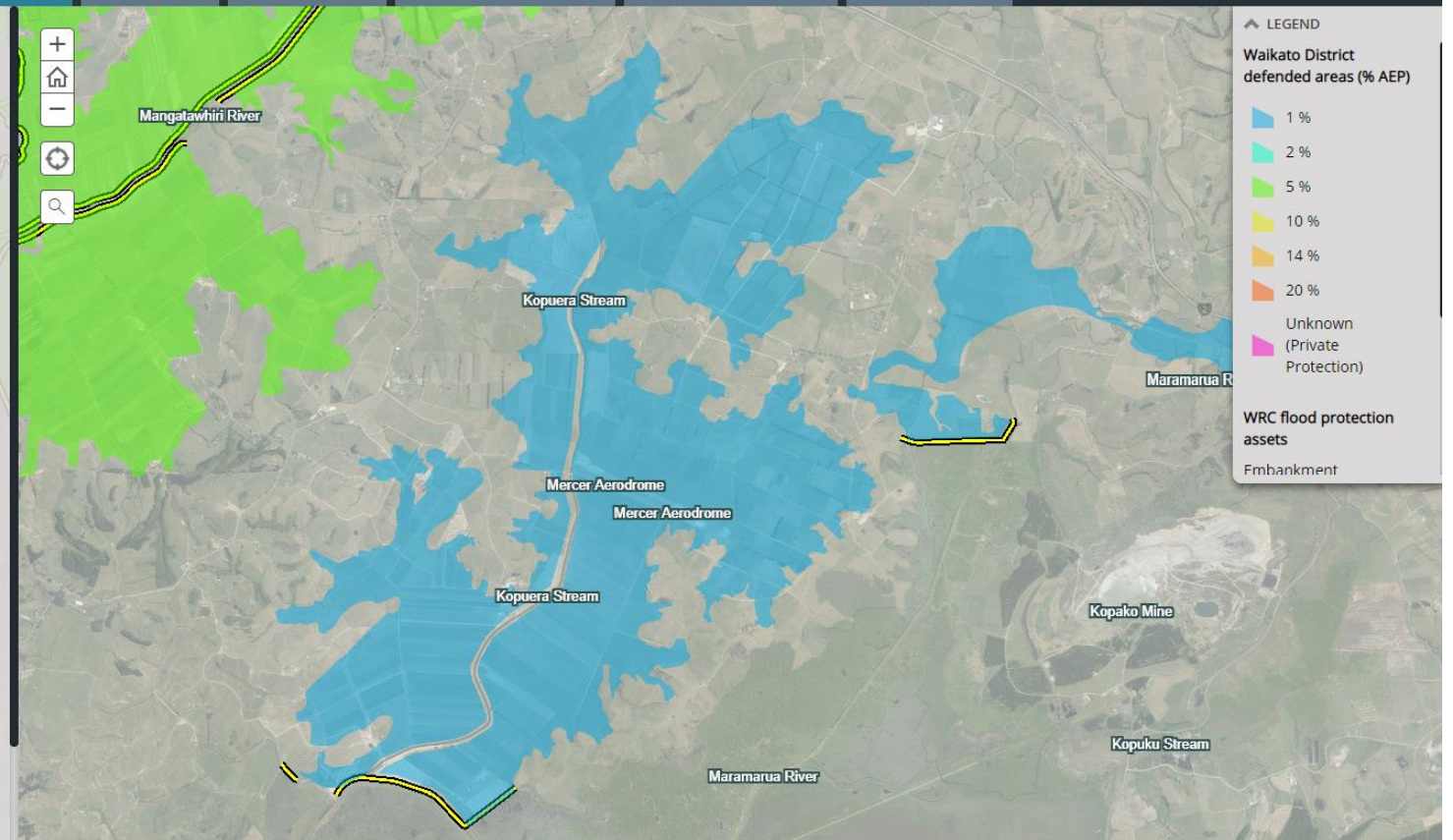
This risk that remains is known as "residual risk". The Waikato Regional Policy Statement includes policies and methods about residual risk, including that residual risk zones shall be identified in District Plans. Currently the portal shows only defended areas for Waikato District and Thames Coromandel District (see River flooding tab), but more will be added as they become available.



Waikato River at Huntly, August 2008

**Key terms:** To Toki Island

AEP = annual exceedance probability, or the chance of an event happening in any one year.  
A 1% AEP is equivalent to a 100 year average return period.





Overview

River flooding

Flood management

Waikato District defended areas

Coastal hazards

Coastal inundation

Earthquakes and landslides

Volcanoes and geothermal

Karapiro dam break

## Land Drainage

Waikato Regional Council also own and maintain land drainage schemes. The level of service for the open drains and culverts of these schemes is generally to drain water from a 10% AEP rainfall event within 3 days. This is intended to remove ponding from rural areas prior to pasture damage occurring, rather than to prevent inundation. Different Drainage Differentials receive different levels of benefit. [This table](#), provides the benefit description for each class type (in pop-up).



Drain

For more information on flood protection and land drainage, visit [Come High Water](#).

To discover the function of each asset type, visit the [Flood protection and land drainage assets map](#).

### Key terms:

AEP = annual exceedance probability, or the chance of an event happening in any one year. A 1% AEP is equivalent to a 100 year average return period.

