

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan Hearing Topic 9,  
(Flood Hazard Overlays, Flood Zone & Floodway Zone Extensions – response to  
Hearing Minute 31)

Between

**Marlborough District Council (Assets & Services Department –  
Rivers Section)**

and

**Hearing Panel for Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan  
Hearings Process**

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**Response from Geoffrey Richard Dick on behalf of  
Marlborough District Council, 29 June 2018**

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## Introduction

1. Before I respond to the Chair's specific questions, I make the following general comments:

a. **Level 3** Flood Hazard Areas identified in the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (PMEP) is land that is located in / or directly adjacent to high energy, high volume rivers, such as, but not limited to, the Wairau River, Wairau Diversion, Roses Overflow and the Taylor River. Locating vineyard structures in land within Level 3 Flood Hazard areas is generally not sustainable, either from a flood diversion, floodway capacity or vineyard damage perspective.

b. **Level 2** Flood Hazard Areas are generally located either directly adjacent to high energy, high volume rivers, or are deeper ponding areas in behind flood protection works of varying standards. Vineyards outside formal floodways, or in behind flood protection works are generally acceptable. The 'trigger' of needing to apply for resource consent to site a building or structure that has the potential to divert water does allow careful consideration of any effects on the floodway network, floodway infrastructure and local communities.

Note: In the Upper Wairau Valley protection works are typically required in Level 2 Flood Hazard Areas to limit flood related damage to an acceptable level for a commercial proposition.

c. Vineyards in **Level 1** Flood Hazard Areas are generally of no concern and accordingly do not trigger any need for resource consent from a flood perspective.

2. Looking at the specific questions raised in paragraphs 4(i) – (iv) of the Minute for **Level 2** Flood Hazard Areas:

- 4(i): I am aware of one instance where two vineyards adjacent to each other in the upper Wairau River lost several hectares of vineyard following failure of an old Catchment Board training bank. The resulting materials had to be removed from the riverbed so they were not a pollution or general debris hazard. The area of lost vineyard is now Level 3 Flood Hazard and not suitable for re-establishment. I am also aware of quite a number of properties where major expenditure on river protection works, at landowners cost, have been required to protect existing or proposed vineyards. These are all in the upper Wairau Valley upstream of the Waihopai River confluence.
- 4(ii)(a),(b),(c):
  - At the two vineyards in the Upper Wairau Valley that sustained significant damage following failure of old protection works, approximately 25 Ha of vineyard was lost in 2 or 3 flood events in 2012, requiring a major debris removal operation from the reclaimed river bed and retreat of vineyard structures along the vineyard boundary. The

clean-up operation would have been several weeks of work and disposal costs of the vineyard materials is unknown. No bridge or similar blockages occurred because of the location of the flood damage and the prompt debris removal (refer photographs attached).

- I cannot think of any specific damage examples in Level 2 Flood Hazard Areas mapped in the PMEP, however similar damage to the above properties is likely if there is a private stopbank/training bank failure in a large future Wairau flood event.
- There is one vineyard established in the lower Wairau floodway that missed the planning approval process that will ultimately have to be removed to ensure floodway capacity and stopbank security.
- 4(ii)(d): In my opinion, outside formal managed Floodways/Floodway Zones, the risks to the wider community of not requiring resource consent for structures in Level 2 Flood Hazard areas is small. The same cannot be said for buildings or similar flood vulnerable structures where Council has an obligation to ensure Building Act requirements in relation to flood damage are met. There are a number of examples on the Wairau Plains where Council staff have worked proactively with vineyard developers with the aim of:

- Establishing vineyard rows in the direction to least impede flood flow
- Ensuring appropriate setback distances to waterbodies are provided
- Ensuring, where necessary, secondary flow paths through the vineyard property are retained
- Ensuring appropriate flood mitigation works are constructed.

These opportunities for good development can only occur if a level of consultation or approval happens before work on the ground starts.

- 4(iii): No, provided the vineyard was outside Floodway Zones. Outside of Floodway Zones, Rivers did not seek specific control of vineyard development in Level 2 Flood Hazard Areas.
- 4(iv): Rivers input was primarily focused on having the necessary controls for management of Floodway Zones. The main control in Level 2 was and is buildings, and similar flood vulnerable structures (generators, frost fans etc).

**Geoff Dick**

29 June 2018



**Attachments:**



Photograph 1: Site Visit 15 July 2012 – aerial view of vineyard damage



Photograph 2: Site Visit 26 September 2012 – damage to vineyard



Photograph 3: Debris piles in Wairau riverbed, 13 December 2012