

UHCC Mayor, CE, GM Operations

Subject: Request to Include Pinehaven Stream Catchment in the Upper Hutt Flood Hazard Modelling Consultation and to Extend the Consultation Period

To:

- Mayor Peri Zee
 - Chief Executive Geoff Swainson
 - Group Manager Operations Tim Harty
- Upper Hutt City Council

From:

Flooding Us – A Community-Led, Evidence-Based Initiative

Date: 24 November 2025

Executive Summary

We respectfully request that Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC):

- 1. Formally request the inclusion of the Pinehaven and Silverstream flood maps in the current Upper Hutt Flood Hazard Modelling Consultation, and**
- 2. Extend the consultation beyond 12 December 2025, to allow Councillors and the public adequate time and information to participate meaningfully.**

The Pinehaven Stream catchment flood maps are 15 years old, contain documented technical flaws, and underpin key planning and resilience decisions within UHCC's jurisdiction. Their exclusion from this consultation undermines the completeness and credibility of the process and exposes the community to potentially avoidable flood risk.

Because this issue requires coordinated regional leadership, we are writing separate letters to GWRC leadership and the Wellington Water Board and Executive, raising the same concerns. In the interests of transparency, we will also publish this letter on our website along with the parallel letters to GWRC and WWL.

Key Concerns

1. Pinehaven flood maps are outdated and technically flawed

Despite being 15 years old, these maps continue to influence planning decisions. The underlying flood model was:

- calibrated to only one event (23 July 2009),
- based on **no rainfall data** from within the catchment,
- based on **modelled peak water levels lower than the recorded gauge level,**

- unsupported by any published maps or observed flood extents.

Independent hydrological analysis indicates that:

- the 2009 flood was **larger** than the 25-year flood of 8 December 2019,
- the modelled 25-year flow (21.0 m³/s) used for streamworks design is nearly **double** the observed 25-year flow (11.4–11.7 m³/s),
- the model embedded **incorrect rainfall-loss assumptions** that overstated baseline runoff and concealed the effects of potential future development on the Pinehaven hills.

2. UHCC planning decisions depend on reliable flood information

The Pinehaven model and maps materially affect decisions on:

- growth planning (including GTC's land),
- infrastructure renewals and capital budgets,
- Plan Change 50 and future plan changes,
- climate resilience and community safety obligations.

It is not appropriate for UHCC to continue relying on maps built on outdated standards and unverified inputs.

3. The current consultation presents itself as covering “Upper Hutt flood maps” — yet Pinehaven and Silverstream are excluded

This exclusion is not explained in the consultation material.

At the final drop-in session, staff indicated only that Pinehaven was “not in the programme for renewal”, which does not justify excluding an entire catchment with known inaccuracies.

4. Councillors have not yet been briefed

The consultation opened three weeks after the 2025 local elections, during a period when Councillors are attending inaugural meetings and have not yet received technical briefings. This timing limits their ability to engage with the community or the consultation.

5. UHCC has statutory responsibilities for public safety and risk-informed planning

Under the Local Government Act, CDEM Act, and NPS-UD, UHCC must ensure that planning and infrastructure decisions are supported by reliable hazard information. Continuing to rely on known-flawed flood maps exposes the community and Council to avoidable risk.

Requested Actions

We respectfully request that UHCC:

1. **Formally instruct GWRC and Wellington Water to include Pinehaven and Silverstream in the current consultation** to ensure the catchment is reviewed concurrently with the rest of Upper Hutt.
 2. **Extend the consultation period beyond 12 December 2025**, allowing Councillors, residents, and technical experts time to understand the modelling and make informed submissions.
 3. **Provide public clarity on which agency is responsible for decisions regarding inclusion or exclusion of catchments** in this consultation, to improve transparency and accountability.
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Conclusion

UHCC's leadership is crucial to ensuring that this consultation is complete, transparent, and technically sound.

Excluding Pinehaven and Silverstream, despite long-recognised issues in the model and maps, places future planning, infrastructure investment, and community safety at risk.

We urge UHCC to ensure Pinehaven Stream catchment is included in the consultation and that the consultation period is extended accordingly.

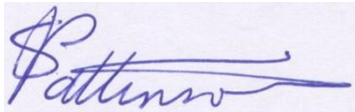
We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

Flooding Us

A community-led, evidence-based initiative

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Pattinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Pattinson

Director

Flooding Us NZ Limited