

Te Mauri o Te Wai Haewai / Houghton Valley Workshop

Introduction

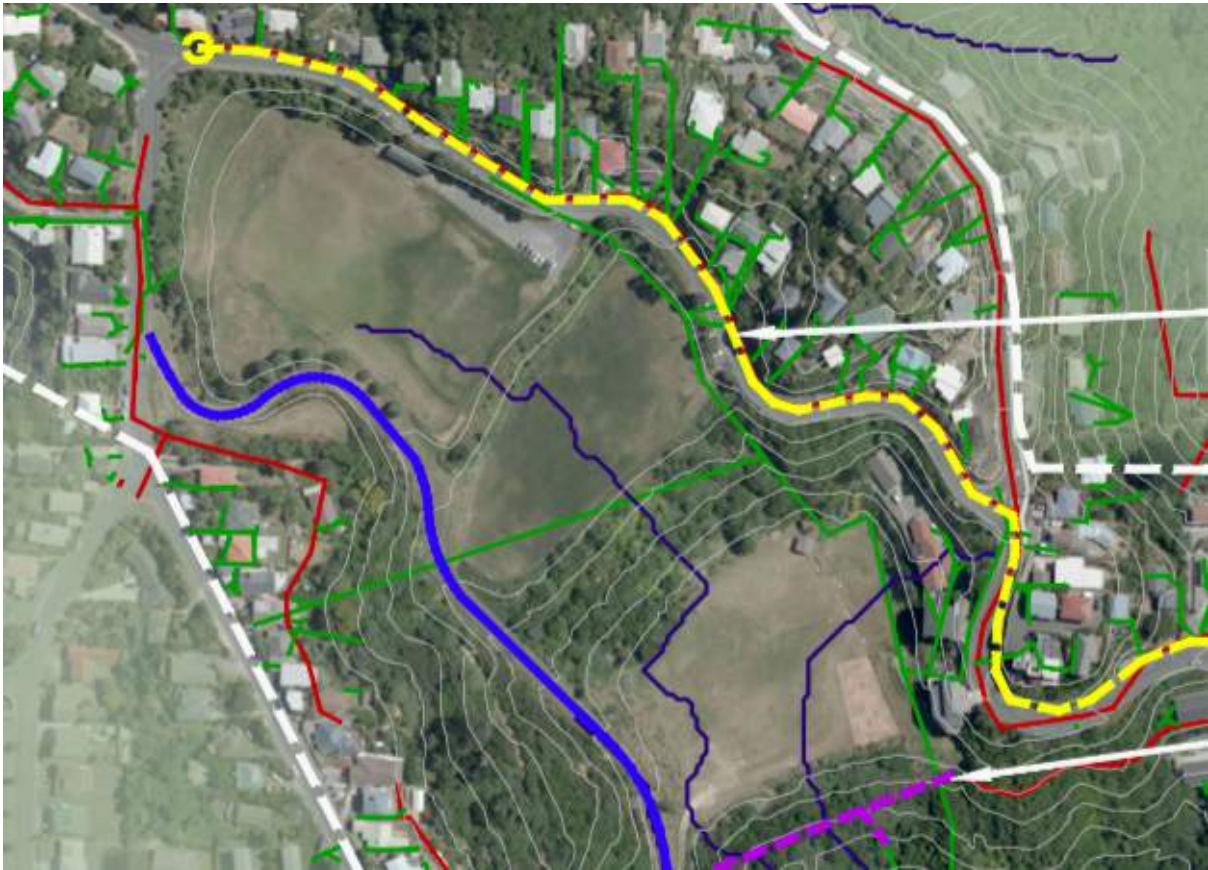
On 27 August 2023, fifteen participants met and generated the following ideas. Five areas of the valley were looked at. There were also general comments that covered all of the areas.

General comments

- The project is to have guidance from Mana Whenua;
- Our creek is to have the same rights as humans;
- The storm water that currently runs into the tip needs to be directed into the new creek channel. Steps need to be taken to ensure the water is clean or can be cleansed by wetlands;
- Create a Virtual Reality model of the whole valley that can show what it was like originally and imagines what it might look like in a 100 years;
- A fish passage and Tuna trail that goes from the beach to the headwaters;
- Signage that explains the valley's past;
- Create several wetlands down the valley to moderate flow and to provide habitats for birds, insects, tuna, flounder, kōura, kōkopu and more.



Sinclair Park (top two fields)



Observations from workshop

- Football fields are uneven despite re-levelling 5 years ago. Seldom used for social league, mostly children's practice. Used for casual sports / recreation, dog walking;
- Playground removed, now in Southgate Road. Hammer throw used occasionally;
- Water pools / boggy on southern side of field;
- Sheltered park bench with excellent view - need more elsewhere in the valley;
- Native seedlings have been recently planted;
- Stormwater pipes in poor condition.



Suggestions from workshop

- Areas of forest on grassy banks;
- Urban farm;

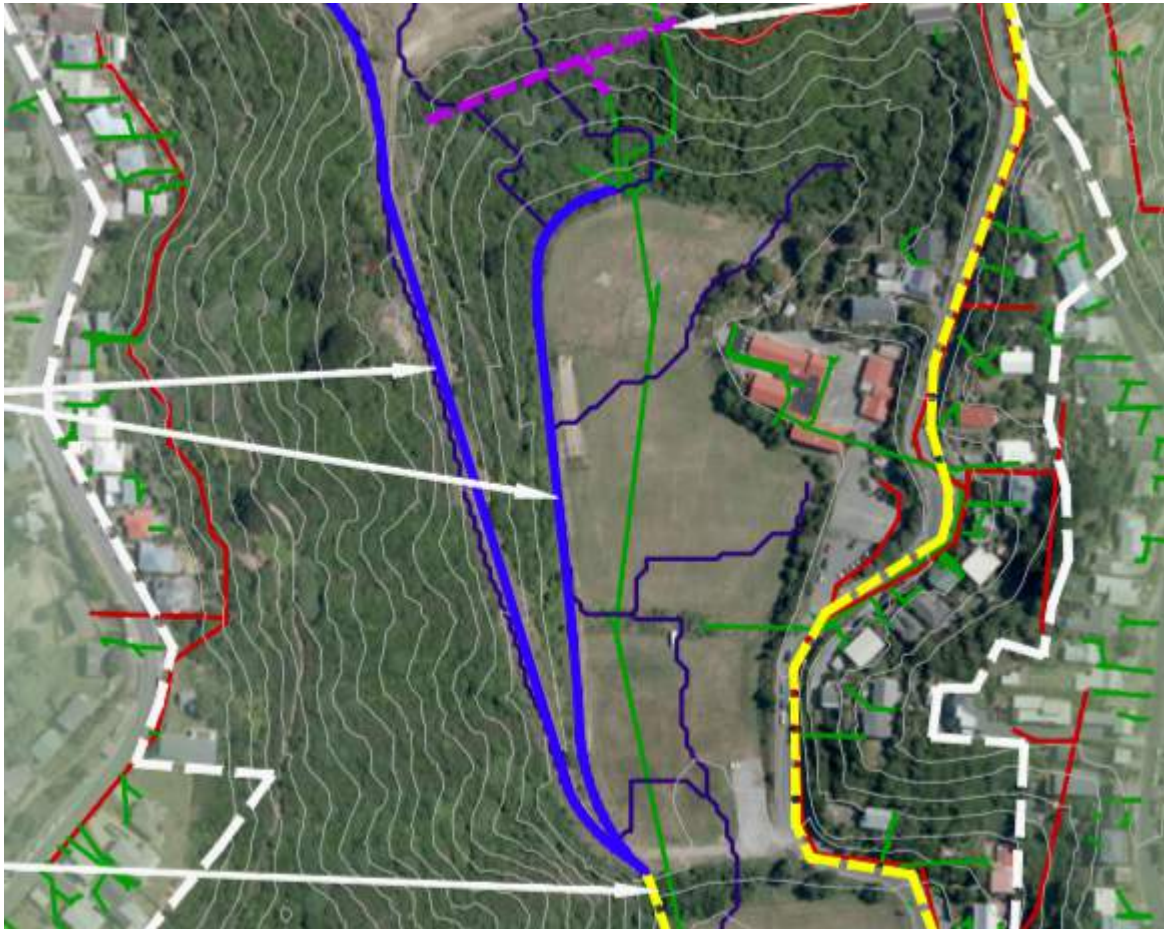
- Compost hub;
- Children's play area.

Earlier suggestions

- An urban farm concept was developed in 2020, but would take up the best recreational fields we have;
- A berm with native planting on the eastern side of the top field for wind shelter;
- A built shelter for spectators;
- Turn the boggy area into a wetland and divert stormwater into it. Better drainage for playing fields also draining into wetland;
- Orchard trees on the slopes. Bee hives well away from the cell phone tower;
- Second access between the fields and shortcut up to the main path;
- Another basketball hoop instead of hammer throw;
- EV car charging station in car park for residents and visitors;
- Create a stream channel down the dump face to a wetland area at the edge of the horse paddock instead of having it flood over the main path.



Houghton Valley School (school field and adjacent field)



Observations from workshop

- Native forest planting has improved the area;
- The community garden is valuable as a meeting place and increases resilience;
- The school field is an essential flat land amenity for sporting activities, although it can get quite wet. The lower field is underutilised;
- The lower field is 1 m higher than the school field and blocked pipes have previously turned the school field into a swimming pool, threatening the the lower dump faces.

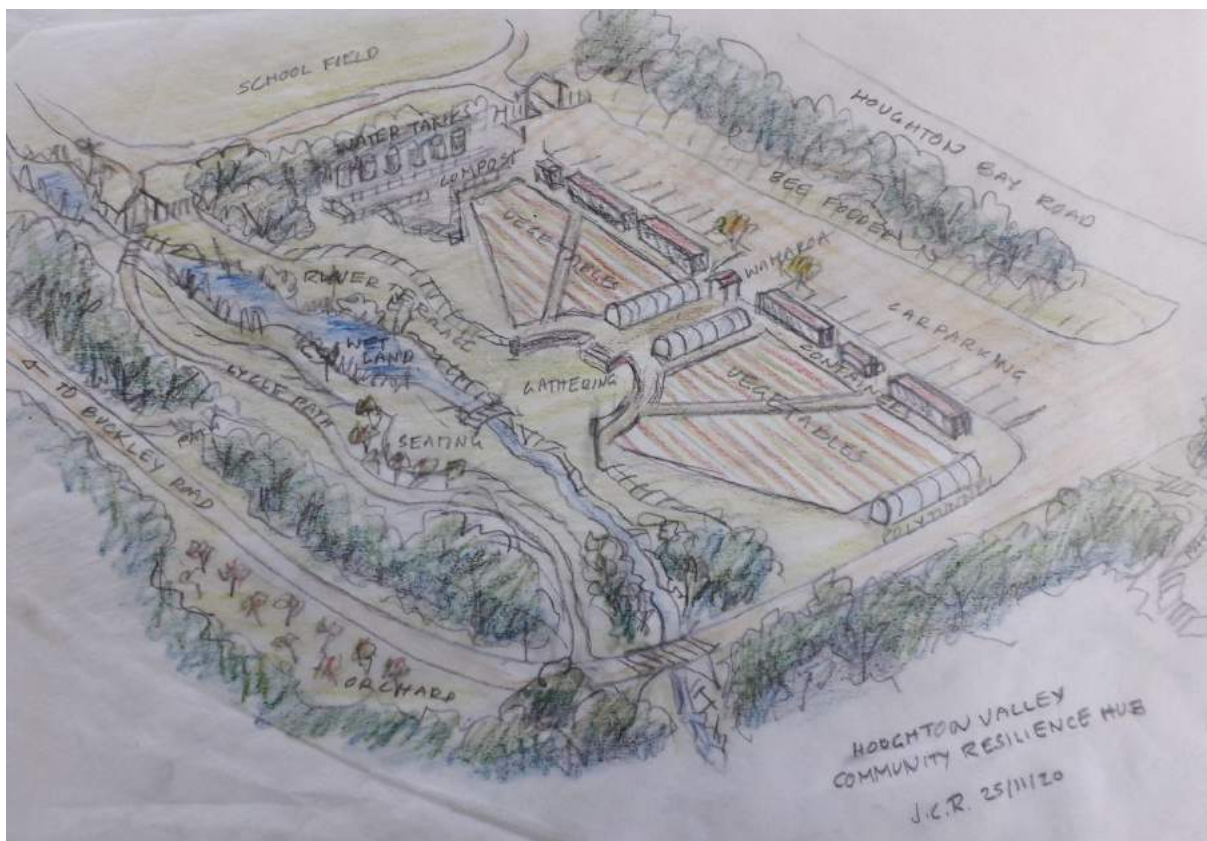


Suggestions from workshop

- Expand regenerating forest and enhance community garden;
- Create food forests, bring in beehives, community fruit trees;
- Make history of the area more accessible;
- The lower field could be a place for community events / fairs or growing food;
- Windbreaks at southern edges to shelter the recreation areas to increase activity;
- Bench seats;
- Educational benefit in involving the school in the project;
- Stream and wetlands integrated into the area;
- Create a 3-D model of the pipe network.

Earlier suggestions

- An urban farm concept and composting hub was developed in 2020 as an alternative to Sinclair Park, including a community gathering area, food forest, orchards, a stream channel and wetlands;
- A WCC landfill engineer did not recommend digging into the tip surface of the lower field, but if we don't do it, nature may do so for us. Water needs to travel downhill;
- EV charging station near the school.



Unused fields (from school down to playground)



Observations from workshop

- No one uses these fields, too boggy.

Suggestions from workshop

- Create a stream channel and wetland areas;
- Planted windbreaks on the dump faces;
- Food growing area in dry, sunny area;

Earlier suggestions

- Create tracks up the dump faces to improve the off-road walking access;
- Play trail feature activities;
- Create earth mounds to plant islands of trees;
- Wetlands and grassy spots;
- Tawatawa Reserve wetland on landfill (opposite).



Buckley Road Reserve fields (playground and lowest field)



Observations from workshop

- Fields get boggy, limiting use;
- Playground area and basketball hoop well used, and the fields when they are dry;
- Several freshwater springs drain into the landfill, one stream is piped. Pictured is the stream when the pipe blocked after heavy rain.

Suggestions from workshop

- Space for our permanent stream to wind and flow;
- Wetland area to filter and polish stormwater from Hungerford Road;
- Public toilets for the playground area.
- A fountain to provide fresh drinking water.

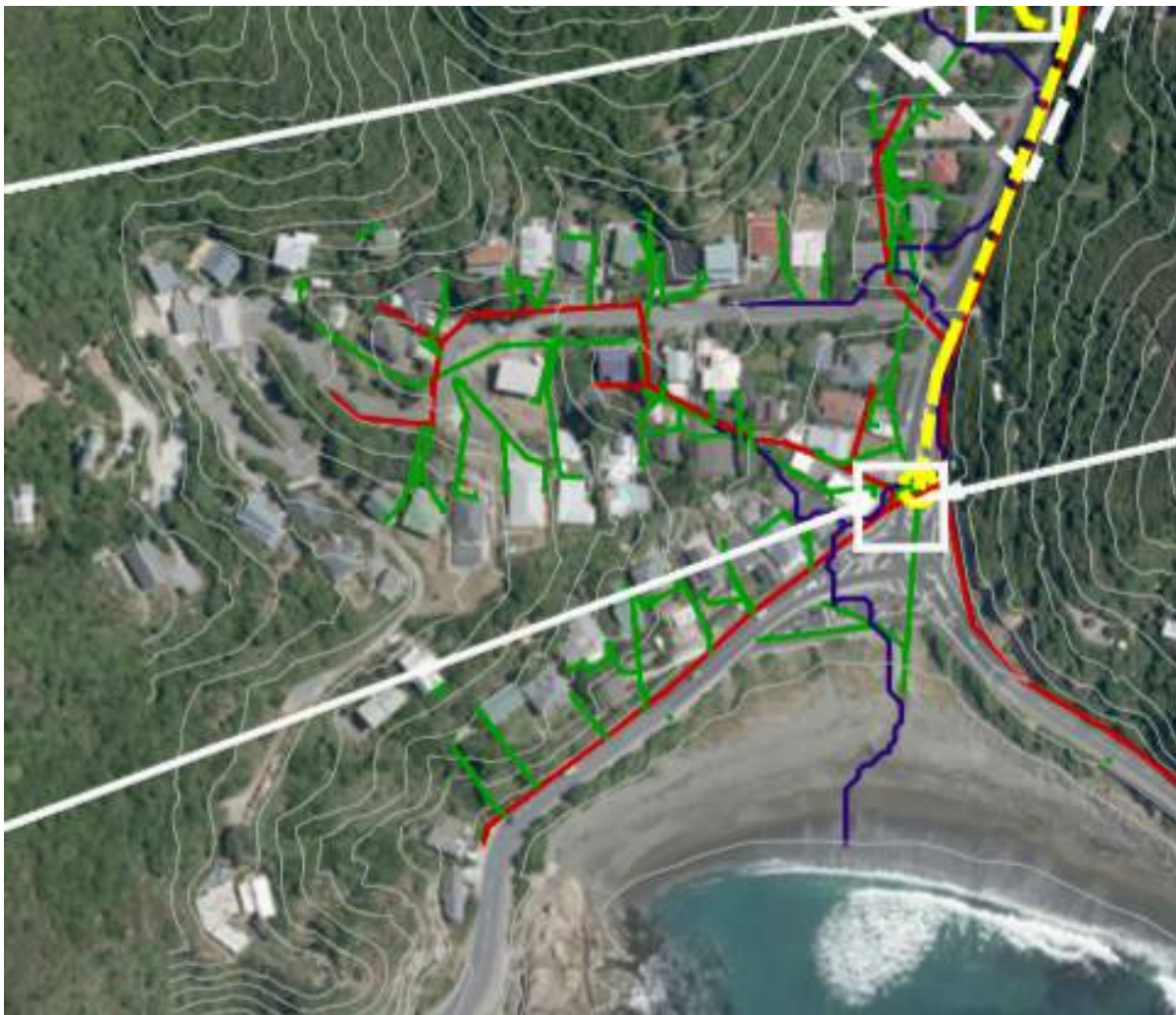


Earlier suggestions

- Freshwater springs need to drain into a wetland rather than into the landfill. Flow supplemented by overland water. Boardwalks and tracks created through and around the wetland. Fenced to keep dogs out and young children safe. Keep some grass access;
- Overflow piped to Houghton Bay Road.



Built up area (down the road to the beach)



Observations from workshop

- Area used for beach activities, surfing, dog recreation;
- Mostly developed land, not much scope for soft landscaping;

Suggestions from workshop

- Leachate spilling onto the beach and into the sea is the most important issue to address. Marine Reserve must be protected from contaminants;
- Rongoa forest on Te Raekaihau.

Earlier suggestions

- Stream channel underneath the pavement needs to facilitate fish passage;
- Glass panel viewing points;
- Connect into the existing pipe at Cave Road to avoid tearing up the roundabout area.

Overland stream channel concept

