

# Burrum/Cherwell

This brochure describes the flood risk and previous flooding in the Burrum/Cherwell River catchment, last updated in July 2025.

## Flood Risk

The Burrum River catchment covers an area of about 935 square kilometres which includes its major tributary, the Cherwell River, with a catchment area of about 200 square kilometres. The headwaters of the Burrum River are in the Sea View Range to the west of Hervey Bay.

Lenthalls dam is located on the Burrum River upstream of Howard. The dam was originally built in 1984 at the confluence of six creeks, Logbridge Creek, Doongul Creek, Harwood Creek, Sugar Bag Creek, Duckinwilla Creek and Woolmer Creek. In 2006, the dam wall was raised two metres with the addition of 5 crest gates to increase the capacity of the dam from 17,800 ML to 29,500 ML and ensure a greater water supply for the area. The height of the dam spillway now sits at 25.86m AHD.

The main flood affected area is the Pacific Haven Estate which lies on the Cherwell River just upstream of the Burrum River junction. Heavy rainfall in the Cherwell River catchment can cause rapid river rises at Pacific Haven and travel times are very short. Pacific Haven is also susceptible to backwater flooding from the Burrum River and flood levels can also be affected by higher-than-normal tides and storm surges.

Flooding at Pacific Haven Estate has the potential for significant impact on property and lives. The area has very low topography and is extremely flat with poor drainage. It has a large population (778 in the 2021 census) that may have difficulty during an evacuation.

Flash flooding can occur at Buxton (Isis River) and Pacific Haven (Cherwell River).

Flooding on the Burrum River around Howard (forecast location) has less impact on properties than Pacific Haven on the Cherwell River but does have isolation impacts for the town.

High astronomical tides alone will not cause a minor flood at Pacific Haven, however with a positive tidal anomaly, the minor flood level can be reached.

There is a significant risk to life in this catchment as a result of flash flooding.

## Previous Flooding

Official flood records for the Burrum River only commenced in 1995 although there is some historical data available for earlier major floods in 1955 and 1992. The highest flood in the Burrum River at Howard was 13.40 metres recorded in 1955. This compares with the 1992 flood level in Howard of 11.96 metres. There is no flood record for the Pacific Haven site prior to the major flood of 1992.

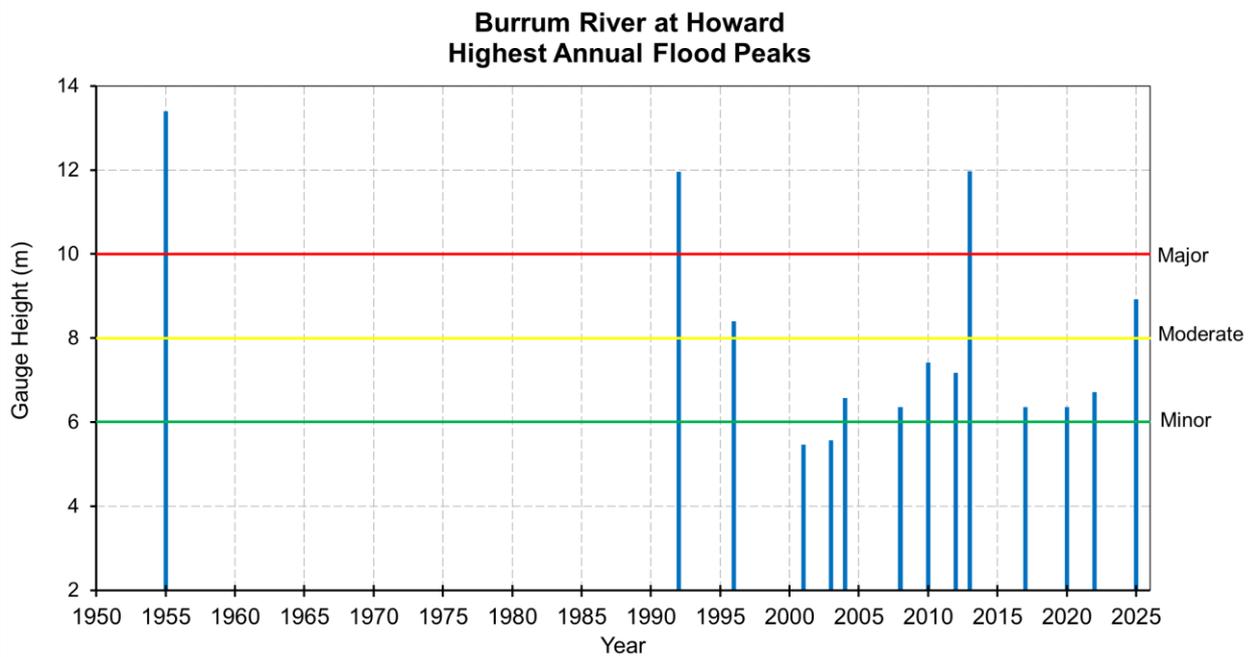
Significant flood events of note also include 2010 and 2013 (TC Oswald). 2013 was the last major flood event in the catchment with minor to moderate flood level peaks observed during 2017, 2021, 2022 and 2024.

The table below summarises the flood history of the Burrum and Cherwell River catchment - it contains the flood gauge heights of some of the more historically significant flood peaks.

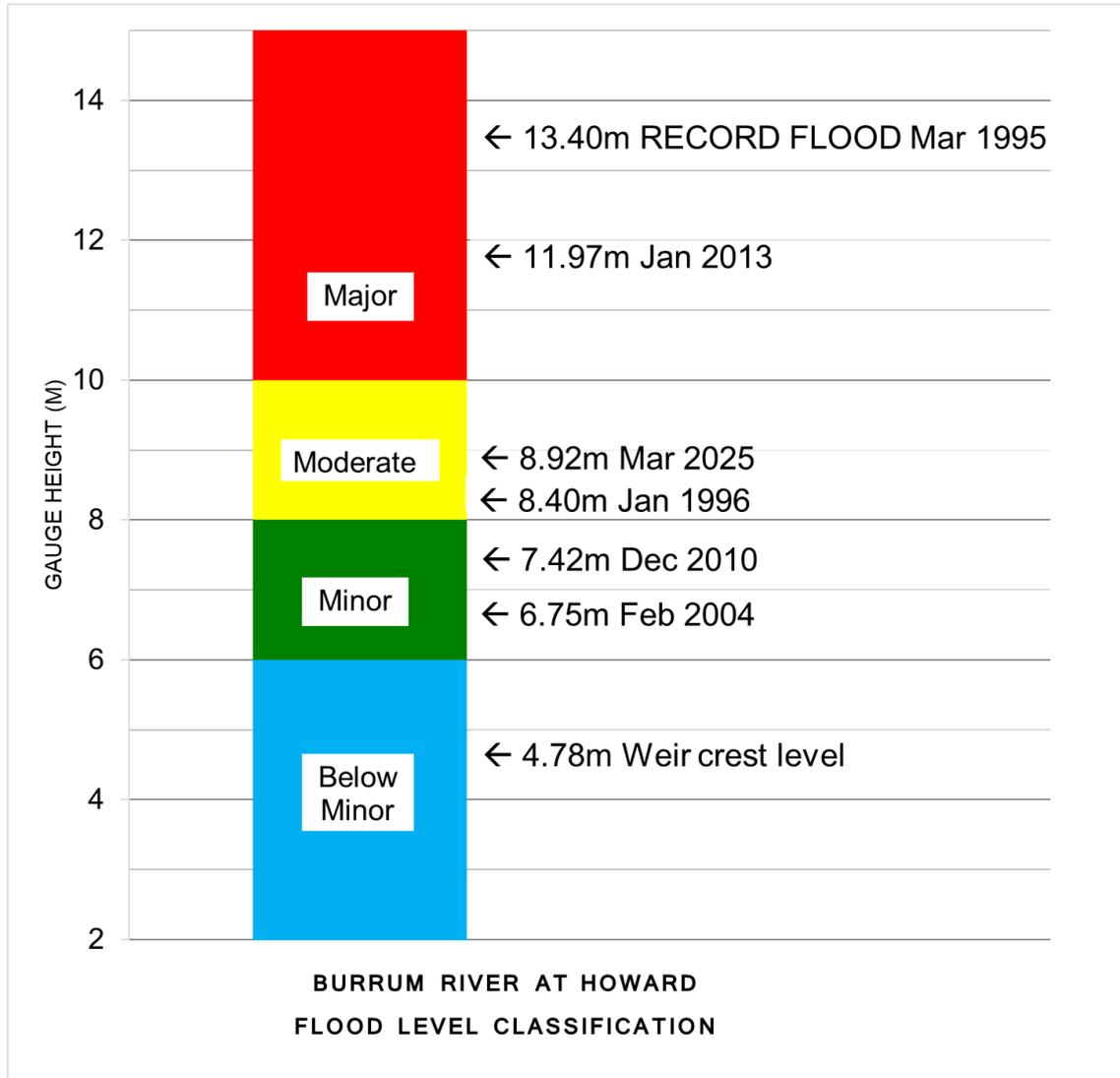
Flood Event	Howard	Pacific Haven
Mar 1955	13.40	-
Feb 1992	11.96	6.16
Jan 1996	8.40	3.35

Flood Event	Howard	Pacific Haven
Feb 2004	6.57	3.99
Feb 2008	6.36	3.15
Mar 2010	5.80	-
Dec 2010	7.42	4.30
Mar 2012	7.17	-
Jan 2013	11.97	5.60
Mar 2017	6.26	2.78
Oct 2017	6.36	3.18
Jan 2022	6.71	2.93
Mar 2025	8.92	3.59

\*All heights are in metres on flood gauges.



Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology



## Further Information

- [Latest rainfall and river heights](#)
- For information on the flood warning service for the Burrum and Cherwell Rivers: [Queensland Service Level Specification](#)
- Catchment map: [Queensland Burrum-Cherwell map](#)
- [National Arrangements for Flood Forecasting and Warning](#)