Water at the University of Canterbury: a brief historical overview

Okeover Stream near Engineering School, 1969 and 2007

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The University at Ilam

- Ilam farm established 1851, farming carried on until c. 1970.
- University constructed in three stages, opened 1960 (Engineering), 1965 (Science), 1973 (Arts).
- Modernist construction and layout.
- High water table, swampy land.

**Top:** Ilam Homestead, late 19th century  
**Bottom:** Science buildings construction, 1962
Three campus waterways

- Avon River.
- Ilam Stream (a.k.a. Clarkson’s Drain).
Water features

- Planned for many buildings, although most cut because of cost:
  - not built (History, Law)
  - closed (Old Maths, Commerce).

- Proposed lake.

Left: James Hight water feature, 1979
Right: Old Maths water feature, 1966
Waterways restoration

- Mowing of banks ended c. 1996.
- Restoration began 1997
  - trees and shrubs
  - fish, birds, insects
  - stream bed work and water flow.

Right: Okeover Stream, 2007*