

8. INSTITUTIONAL PRECINCTS

8.1 Introduction

Victoria University, Massey University and Wellington Hospital are three major institutions located among Residential and Centres Areas close to the Central Area. These institutions have developed over many years, and as state organisations, were previously protected by Public Works designations. They make an important contribution to the cultural and economic welfare of the city and its health services.

Following government restructuring and the introduction of the Resource Management Act, land occupied by the Victoria University, Massey University and the Hospital can no longer be designated. Council therefore decided that because of their special characteristics, these institutions should be the subject of specific management provisions in the District Plan. The factors which distinguish the institutions are:

- The form and scale of building development. Sites are intensely developed, with mixed building forms including large slab blocks and towers which contrast with nearby housing.
- The scale and intensity of activities on site. The institutions generate large flows of people and vehicles both by day and night.
- The effects of building development and activities impact on surrounding residential neighbourhoods. Vehicle parking in residential streets is a continuing problem.
- Considerable pressure for change is arising from growing student numbers, a need to become more integrated with other community activities and changing management structures.

To address these issues, activities and new building within the Institutional Precinct areas are subject to performance standards and building design guide provisions aimed at encouraging good development and protecting the amenities of Residential Areas.

In past years all three institutions have had some conflict with local residents because of moves to expand into residential neighbourhoods. Council therefore seeks to ensure that any expansion of institutional boundaries is properly evaluated. Expansion proposals will be dealt with under the plan change processes to enable a full assessment of environmental effects.

There is also considerable scope for growth and development of these institutions and related activities in the Central Area and Centres. In these areas there are few restrictions on the types of activities undertaken.

8.1.1 Primary functions

The Institutional Precincts have been identified because of their scale and the role that they play in relation to the city. The rules that have been developed do not unduly restrict the operation of the Precincts in carrying out their functions. The primary functions of the Precincts are:

- Mount Cook Precinct : The provision of educational services as defined in 3.10.
- Victoria University : The provision of educational services.
- Wellington Hospital : The provision of health services.

8.2 Institutional Precincts Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE

- 8.2.1 To promote the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources within Institutional Precincts.**

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

- 8.2.1.1 Provide for the effective and efficient operation and development of the institutions within defined precincts.**
- 8.2.1.2 Permit the development of Institutional Precincts for their primary purposes and allow the establishment of appropriate related activities where the effects of those activities can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.**

METHOD

- Rules

All of the institutional uses have existed for a long period, but some conflict has occurred as development has expanded into surrounding Residential Areas. For this reason Council generally requires the Precincts to develop within their existing boundaries to protect nearby residential neighbourhoods from the encroachment of non-residential development. Future expansion of the Precincts is not prohibited, but extensions require a Plan Change to enable the environmental effects to be fully assessed.

Considerable scope for expansion of education-related activities exists in Centres and the Central Area.

All activities for which a Precinct is identified will be permitted to encourage their ongoing development. Council aims to ensure that activities within the Precincts do not adversely impact on neighbouring properties.

One of the primary functions of the Mt Cook Precinct is to allow the establishment of activities that cover the scope of university activity as set out in the Education Act 1989 (refer section 162) to recognise the change in status and purpose of the former Wellington Polytechnic now that it has merged with Massey University. Policy 8.2.1.2 recognises that education and research are often integrated with business and social enterprises, some of which will be based at the university campus.

The environmental results will be the maintenance of distinct centres which provide for the institutional uses to continue to develop, yet protect nearby Residential Areas from adverse effects.

- 8.2.1.3 [Encourage energy efficiency and the development and use of renewable energy within Institutional Precincts.**

METHOD

- Advocacy

Council has, through its Sustainable Development Strategy, made a commitment to encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. With respect to Institutional Precincts this may be in the form of new development incorporating sustainable and energy efficient building design principles, and the use of renewable energy sources for space and water heating, and electricity generation. This may involve more simple energy efficiency design principles such as correct building orientation to the sun to assist in passive solar heating, cooling and natural lighting. Many of these activities may not require resource consent, but the Council recognises its responsibility in terms of role model and advocate to encourage the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Institutional Precincts have opportunities for the application of energy efficiency and conservation measures as well as innovative applications of renewable energy technology. This should be encouraged.

Note: for all applications relating to or involving renewable energy under this chapter the objectives and policies in Chapter 25 should also be considered.]^{PC32}

OBJECTIVE

8.2.2 To maintain and enhance the amenity values of Institutional Precincts and any nearby Residential Areas.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.2.1 Ensure that the effects of activities are managed to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects on other activities within the Institutional Precincts or on properties in nearby Residential Areas.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Regional Air Quality Plan, Abatement Notices, Enforcement Orders)

The effects generated by activities permitted in Institutional Precincts, such as fumes, smoke, smell, vibration, glare or other nuisances can have adverse impacts beyond the precinct boundaries. Some activities will be noxious or dangerous wherever they are sited but others, relatively less harmful, become more dangerous if sited in residential or sensitive areas. Council therefore seeks to ensure that such activities are contained and do not cause a nuisance or danger.

To do this, Council relies on the general duty of every person under the Act to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of activities (Section 17). Where necessary Council will use the enforcement or abatement provisions of the Act to control nuisances.

Other effects identified in the rules are controlled by the application of performance standards.

The environmental result will be that uses or activities in Institutional Precincts will not cause a nuisance or danger either within Institutional Precincts or in nearby Residential Areas.

8.2.2.2 Require that where activities, buildings or structures in Institutional Precincts areas adjoin or face a Residential Area, they satisfy additional conditions.

METHOD

- Rules

The interface between Institutional Precincts and nearby Residential Areas is particularly sensitive. Activities within Institutional Precincts can affect residential properties. Additional conditions have been imposed to avoid, remedy or mitigate such impacts.

The Precinct Design Guide provisions will work to ensure that the design and external appearance of new building development complements adjacent residential building form in terms of height, scale, character, design and other amenity value conditions.

The environmental result will be the continuing operation of activities and development within Institutional Precincts which do not cause a nuisance and be in harmony with adjacent Residential Areas.

8.2.2.3 Control the adverse effects of noise within Institutional Precincts.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Abatement Notices, Enforcement Orders)

Peace and quiet are particularly important for people's wellbeing, and the District Plan contains specific rules to control noise. Council is particularly concerned to protect residents from the effects of noise. As well as these rules, enforcement orders and abatement procedures will be used to control any excessive noise.

The environmental result will be the improvement of the noise environment in Institutional Precincts.

8.2.2.4 Generally permit signs within Precincts, but control their size and their placement on buildings to protect the amenities of nearby Residential Areas.

METHOD

- Rules

Signs are necessary for Precincts to function properly, but their size and type must meet certain requirements.

The environmental result will be Precincts in which signs are not overly intrusive and do not affect the amenities of adjacent Residential Areas.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.3 To maintain and enhance the physical character of Institutional Precincts, and their adjacent streets.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.3.1 Control the design and appearance of all new building work.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides (University, Hospital, Mount Cook)

Building development within the Precincts identified is of a form and scale which contrasts dramatically with surrounding residential development. To ensure that new buildings in the Precincts are of a form and scale appropriate to their location, Council requires an assessment of the design and appearance before construction begins.

Design Guides have therefore been prepared for each Institutional Precinct to provide the basis for assessing of new building development. The Guides address the general scale and form of development and do not control the detailed architecture of buildings. Particular consideration is given to the scale of development at the

edge of Precincts where they adjoin or face Residential Areas. The guidelines will work to ensure that the Precincts can develop in a manner that is suitably integrated with Residential Areas.

The Design Guides also address elements of site layout and landscaping to promote coordinated development and to improve the visual quality of the precincts. In particular the Council seeks to maintain the existing trees and open space around the main Massey Building (formerly the National Museum), the Hunter building on the Victoria University Campus and those in front of Massey University.

The environmental result will be that the built character of the Precincts will be enhanced and better integrated with surrounding residential development.

8.2.3.2 Control the location and design of building development on or over the road in or near to Institutional Precincts.

METHOD

- Rules

Buildings on or over roads such as pedestrian overbridges can have a significant impact on the streetscape, and such developments need to be carefully controlled.

The environmental result will be improved streetscapes.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.4 To ensure that the adverse effects of new subdivisions are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.4.1 Ensure the sound design, development and servicing of all subdivisions.

METHOD

- Rules (compliance with the Code of Practice for Land Development)

The Council is concerned that all new subdivision be developed to a high standard. To encourage their sound design, development and servicing, all subdivisions are assessed in terms of relevant Plan rules and the Council's Code of Practice for Land Development.

The environmental result will be well-designed and properly serviced subdivisions in Institutional Precincts.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.5 To avoid or mitigate, the adverse effects of natural and technological hazards on people, property and the environment.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.5.1 Identify those hazards that pose a significant threat to Wellington, and ensure that areas of significant potential hazard risk are not occupied or developed for vulnerable uses or activities.

METHOD

- Rules

Natural and technological hazards pose a threat to health and safety throughout the City. It is therefore necessary to identify the hazards and risks that people face by living in Wellington.

[Council's hazard management involves four phases – mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Mitigation is addressed through a combination of land use management within the District Plan and Building Act controls. Control can be exercised over some hazards to avoid the hazard (such as technological hazards), whereas other hazards such as fault rupture and ground shaking from earthquakes are unavoidable. However, the risk to life from these unavoidable hazards can be reduced with appropriate mitigation measures.

Not everyone is able to respond to an event in the same way. Portions of the population (due to factors such as age, health and income) may be less able to cope with an emergency and are more vulnerable. Certain high-intensity land uses (such as public assembly sites, schools, high rise housing) may also increase the hazard risk.]¹

The environmental result will be a reduction in the adverse effects of hazard events, and a reduction in risk to people from natural or technological hazards to an acceptable level.

8.2.5.2 Ensure that the adverse effects of hazards on critical facilities and lifelines are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

METHODS

- Rules
- Advocacy

The services people depend on to help them cope with emergencies include the fire, police, ambulance and civil defence organisations as well as other volunteer services. People also rely on other services, such as communications, transport routes, electricity, gas and water, to cope after the event. These essential services are known as lifelines. Council considers it essential that critical facilities and lifelines be located as far as is reasonably practicable from Hazard Areas.

The environmental result will be the establishment of critical facilities and lifelines in locations that avoid, remedy or mitigate risks from hazards.

8.2.5.3 Ensure that the adverse effects on the natural environment arising from a hazard event are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

¹ District Plan Change No.22 – Hazard (Fault Line) Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

METHOD

- Rules

If a hazard event occurs, its after-effects on the natural environment need to be considered, such as contamination of ground water from ruptured pipe-lines and storage tanks. It is also important to consider an activity's potential to affect the natural environment under emergency conditions. Rules have been included in the District Plan to take these factors into account.

The environmental result will be that when hazards occur, the environment will be better protected.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.6 To prevent or mitigate any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances, including waste disposal.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.6.1 Require that the storage, use, handling and disposal of hazardous substances are subject to analysis using the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure and, where appropriate, the resource consent procedure in order that any potential or actual adverse effects are managed in such a way as to safeguard the environment.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Health Act, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and its Transitional Provisions, Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1992)

Council is concerned that the community and environment should not be exposed to unnecessary risk from hazardous substances. The District Plan aims to control use of land in order to prevent or mitigate any potential adverse effects of hazardous substances by considering the appropriateness of the site location and other site requirements to minimise the risk of accidental release. Although these are only two facets of hazardous substances management, others are outside the scope of the District Plan.

[The hazardous substance provisions of this Plan work in conjunction with the provisions for hazardous substances under the Hazardous Substance and New Organisms Act 1996. Controls imposed on hazardous substances under the Resource Management Act cannot be less stringent than those set under the Hazardous Substance and New Organisms Act 1996. This requirement is reflected in the rules for hazardous substances in this Plan.]¹

The Regional Council has developed rules in the Regional Plans to control discharge of hazardous substances to land, air and water.

The Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure has been incorporated into the District Plan. Uses which have unacceptable potential effects will be located and contained where their potential adverse effects can be prevented or mitigated.

¹ District Plan Change No.35 – Hazardous Substances (Operative 6 July 2006)

The environmental result will be a safer environment as a result of the safer storage, use and disposal of hazardous substances.

8.2.6.2 Reduce the potential adverse effects of transporting hazardous substances.

METHODS

- Rules (conditions on resource consents)
- Other mechanisms (advocacy and bylaws) [and NZ land transport legislation (including Land Transport Act 1993, Land Transport Rule: Dangerous Goods 1999 and New Zealand Standard 5433:1999)]¹

Because there is always a risk of an accident, the transportation of hazardous substances potentially has adverse effects on the surrounding locality. Where practicable, transport of hazardous substances to a hazardous facility will be restricted to main arterial routes and avoid peak periods of commuter traffic.

The environmental result will be safer communities.

8.2.6.3 To require hazardous facilities to be located away from Hazard Areas.

METHOD

- Rules

The likelihood of an accidental release of a hazardous substance is increased during a natural hazard event.

For this reason, Council wishes to discourage the development of new hazardous facilities in identified Hazard Areas.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of hazards and risk to the environment and people in Hazard Areas.

¹ District Plan Change No.35 – Hazardous Substances (Operative 6 July 2006)

OBJECTIVE

8.2.7 To enable efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods within Institutional Precincts.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.7.1 Seek to improve access for all people, particularly people travelling by public transport, cycle or foot and for people with mobility restrictions.

METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria
- Other mechanisms (Regional Land Transport Plan)
- Operational activities (WCC Transport Strategy)
- Advocacy (Council Social Policy)

Good access for all modes of movement is an important element of a sustainable city. Council will use a variety of methods to improve accessibility.

Council's transport strategy for the city includes a broad range of both short and longer-term initiatives to improve access. Programmes and plans under this strategy will be implemented primarily through the Annual Plan process.

The actions of many authorities or organisations, including the Wellington Regional Council, Transit New Zealand and companies involved in the movement of people and freight on land, sea or air, work to shape the City's transportation system. Where there are opportunities for input, Council will advocate for improved accessibility.

In particular the Council works closely with the Wellington Regional Council on transportation matters. The District Plan will remain consistent with the Regional Policy Statement, the Regional Land Transport Strategy and relevant plans.

Council acknowledges that an important element of urban design is making the City accessible to people with mobility restrictions. Working with interest groups, Council will also undertake strategic actions to promote equity and safety in access, such as awareness improvement initiatives. It will also promote accessibility for people with mobility restrictions by implementing its 'Policy for People with Disabilities' and employing the national standard access design criteria in NZ Standard 4121 (or its successor).

The environmental result will be improved access for people and goods to all Institutional Precincts.

8.2.7.2 Require suitable on-site parking, including for older people and all others with mobility restrictions and safe site access to Institutional Precincts.

METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria

Where institutions generate a great deal of traffic, the spillover of parking into adjacent residential streets is a continuing problem. To reduce those problems and street congestion in general, Institutional Precincts should provide reasonably for their own parking needs. Consultation will continue with Precinct authorities with the aim of improving vehicle circulation patterns, reducing the number of entry and exit points and ensuring that exit points are safe. It is also important that equitable provisions for older people and others with mobility restrictions are made in the design of parking and site access.

The environmental results will be better access and the saving of energy.

8.2.7.3 Protect and enhance access to public spaces in Institutional Precincts.

METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria
- Operational activities (urban design strategies)

Good access is essential to the quality of public space and amenities. Council aims to protect and enhance existing access, and to seek new access opportunities. This includes ensuring these public spaces are equitably and safely accessible to all persons within the community, including older people and all others with mobility restrictions.

The environmental result will be better access to public space.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.8 To promote the development of a safe and healthy city.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

8.2.8.1 Improve the design of developments to reduce the actual and potential threats to personal safety and security.

METHOD

- Advocacy (Crime prevention design guide)

Council considers that urban design measures can be adopted to minimise or reduce threats to personal safety and security and has prepared guidelines for design against crime. These guidelines will be used by Council to advocate for the development of a safe city.

The environmental result will be that buildings or spaces are designed to avoid, remedy or mitigate the incidence of crime.

8.2.8.2 Promote and protect the health and safety of the community in development proposals.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (WCC Bylaws)
- Advocacy

A safe and healthy city will be striven for through a broad range of Council actions, including District Plan rules.

Council also uses other mechanisms, such as the Healthy City initiative and general bylaws, to promote the health and safety of Wellington's communities. Some involve physical actions while others centre on providing information.

The environmental result will be Institutional Precinct environments that provide for the health and safety of people by controlling the adverse effects of activities.

OBJECTIVE

8.2.9 To facilitate and enable the exercise of tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga by Wellington's tangata whenua and other Maori.

Maori concepts present a different view for the management of the City's natural and physical resources. In particular, kaitiakitanga is a specific concept of resource management. By acknowledging ancestral relationships with the land and natural world, a basis can be constructed for addressing modern forms of cultural activities.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

- 8.2.9.1 Identify, define and protect sites and precincts of significance to tangata whenua and other Maori using methods acceptable to tangata whenua and other Maori.** *Refer to Chapter 21*

METHODS

- Rules
- Information

Particular features of the natural and cultural landscape hold significance for tangata whenua and other Maori. The identification of specific sites (such as wahi tapu/sacred sites and wahi tupuna/ancestral sites) and precincts will ensure that this significance is respected. For this reason sites of significance and precincts are listed and mapped within the Plan.

The environmental result will be that such sites and precincts are identified and protected from inappropriate development.

- 8.2.9.2 Enable activities that relate to the needs and wishes of tangata whenua and other Maori, provided that the physical and environmental conditions specified in the Plan are met.**

METHOD

- Rules

The Institutional Precinct provisions facilitate the establishment of activities appropriate to the Precinct and this includes activities for Maori such as marae or kohanga reo. For this reason rules have been included in the Plan requiring consultation in specific situations.

The environmental result will be appropriate developments respecting the existence of Maori cultural values.

8.2.9.3 In considering resource consents, Council will take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

METHOD

- Rules (conditions on resource consent, consultation)

The principles that underlie the Treaty of Waitangi provide a basis for the management of natural and physical resources, including having regard to consultation, partnership and a shared responsibility for decision making. For this reason, rules have been included in the Plan requiring consultation in specific situations.

The environmental result will be that appropriate developments respect the existence of Maori cultural values.