

14. RURAL AREA

14.1 Introduction

The Rural Area extends from the outer boundary of urban areas of the city to the coastal margins and boundaries of Hutt City and Porirua City to the north. About 65 percent of the total City land area is included in the Rural Area.

The landscape of the Rural Area is rugged and is characterised by steep ridges and deep gullies like much of the hill country of the North Island. [Some areas are reverting back to native bush in parts of Makara and South Karori, otherwise a pastoral character predominates.]^{PC33} The Rural Area has important landscape values for the City as a whole, and contains areas of indigenous vegetation and habitat for indigenous fauna.

Maori occupied the area for centuries, particularly along the coast, but there are no existing Maori settlements. Numerous sites of significance to Maori still remain and these are identified and protected.

[In 2004, Wellington's rural population of some 1200 people reside mainly in Makara, Ohariu and Takapu Valleys and Horokiwi.]^{PC33} Two clustered settlements exist, one at Makara Village and the other at Makara Beach. [Rural residential/lifestyle blocks are a feature of the land adjoining the northern motorway around Grenada Village and Grenada North.]^{PC33} Council intends to maintain the open rural character while recognising that some change will occur over time.

[There is continuing demand for rural/residential living and lifestyle farming blocks within rural areas.]^{PC33} This demand imposes pressures to subdivide existing titles and erect new dwellinghouses. [The potential environmental impacts of allowing further subdivision in Wellington's diverse rural areas have been the subject of a significant investigation and consultation with existing rural communities.]^{PC33}

[During 2001/2002 the Council undertook a Rural planning exercise and through consultation with rural landowners developed four non-statutory rural community plans for South Karori, Makara, Ohariu Valley and Horokiwi. The community plans that were adopted by the Council in 2002 have subsequently informed a review of the rural provisions of the District Plan, and reflect a community led response to Wellington's rural resource management issues.

Council's policy is to generally discourage the fragmentation of most rural land, and particularly land to the west of the Outer Green Belt, Takapu Valley and at Horokiwi. However, provision has been made for some minor subdivision on an incremental basis in these areas.

In addition, provision has been made for rural residential development close to specified areas to the east of the Outer Green Belt generally on the city fringe. In all cases, where subdivision and the development of new dwellings is proposed in these areas, the Council will seek to ensure that developments are sensitively located and designed to respect the existing rural character and to ensure that existing amenities will not be compromised. Flexibility with design solutions is possible through the use of the Rural Area Design Guide. It is expected that densities in these areas will

be generally low due to topographical constraints, and to achieve consistency with the principles of the Rural Area Design Guide.

A particular resource management issue for the City is the extent to which rural land on the edge of the city (particularly in the north where there is a significant area of undeveloped rural land) should be used for new urban development. In this regard, the Council initiated a planning review of the northern suburbs in March 2001. The Northern Growth Management Framework was adopted by the Council in October 2003. This strategic plan provides a framework for the growth and development of the northern area of the City over the next 20 years and identifies areas of existing rurally zoned land considered appropriate for urban expansion. Rural land proposed to be developed for urban purposes will be considered by way of a change to the District Plan.

Council specifically seeks to encourage farming activities with the Rural Area. Provision is made for most activities and farm buildings as either Permitted or Controlled Activities, subject to compliance with specified conditions.

[The impact of possible future change from pastoral farming to forestry will be monitored. No restrictions on forestry planting or harvesting currently apply. The effects of forestry activities have not proved to be a significant resource management issue for Wellington to date, although consultation relating to appropriate rural and non-rural activities has raised a concern over the short term effects of the harvesting of trees. There is also a need to consider the visual and ecological effects of permitting forestry activities within the Outer Green Belt. Further monitoring and assessment work will be undertaken to work through an appropriate approach to these issues.]^{PC33}

Various activities that provide services to the City, but which are not traditionally rural or suitable to an urban location, are proposed from time to time. Council supports the establishment of a limited range of appropriate non-rural activities in the Rural Area provided that the adverse effects on rural character and amenity are avoided, remedied or mitigated. Such activities require individual assessment through the resource consent process to ensure that they are appropriate to the Rural Area and that adverse effects on the environment will be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

14.2 Rural Area Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE

14.2.1 To promote the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources in the Rural Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.1.1 Encourage new urban development to locate within established urban areas.

[14.2.1.1(a) Provide for areas of anticipated future growth as identified in the Northern Growth Management Framework, in accordance with the values and principles of the Framework subject to the requirements for ridgelines and hilltops.]^{PC36}

METHODS

- Rules
- [Design Guide (Rural Area)]^{PC33}
- Operational activities (management of infrastructure)
- [Other mechanisms (Northern Growth Management Framework)]^{PC36}

[The existing urban area of Wellington City is contained by the surrounding hills and particularly the Outer Green Belt that separates the urban area from the main rural areas of Makara and the Ohariu Valley.

Council intends to contain urban development to the east of the Outer Green Belt. Within the rural area to the east of the Outer Green Belt the Council will support well designed rural residential development in identified locations (shown on Appendices 4 to 7 in Chapter 15) on the city fringe if it can be demonstrated that this will promote sustainable management. In many of these areas steep slopes or difficult access will need to be overcome before consideration will be given to allowing rural parcels of land on the edge of the city to be subdivided. In general such sites will only be appropriate for a lower density of residential development than that allowed in residential areas. An assessment will need to be made on a case by case basis, with the Council seeking a high standard of design through the assessment of proposals against the Rural Area Design Guide.

In 2003, the Council completed a comprehensive planning review of the future development of the northern part of the City between Newlands and Johnsonville in the south and Porirua to the north. The resulting Northern Growth Management Framework provides the communities, landowners, developers and Wellington City Council with a set of agreed goals and an agreed process for urban expansion. This includes the identification of areas currently zoned rural that are considered suitable for residential development and which will strengthen existing communities. Rezoning of areas earmarked for new urban development will be undertaken by way of future plan changes.]^{PC33}

The environmental result will be that the city's development occurs in a manner which will reduce transport distances, make public transport systems more viable and make better use of existing [and intended]^{PC36} infrastructure.

14.2.1.2 Encourage the design of any rural subdivision or housing development to optimise resource and energy use.**METHODS**

- Rules
- Design Guide ([Rural Area]^{PC33})
- Advocacy

Subdivision development in the Rural Area is [generally]^{PC33} limited, but where it occurs Council seeks to ensure that the most effective use is made of available land and that houses are oriented to the sun. [Flexible siting provisions and the Rural Area Design Guide which applies to subdivision and buildings are included in the Plan to help achieve this.]^{PC33}

The environmental result will be improved subdivisions and housing developments.

14.2.1.3 [Encourage energy efficiency and the development and use of renewable energy within the Rural Area.**METHOD**

- Advocacy
- Rules

Council has, through its Sustainable Development Strategy, made a commitment to encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. With respect to the Rural Area 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.

Wellington has some of the country's best wind resources. Much of the potential for commercial development lies within the Rural Area. Resource consents will be required for all wind energy developments.

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}

14.2.1.4 Allow work-from-home activities in Rural Areas.**METHOD**

- Rules

It is in keeping with the objective of achieving a sustainable city that rural residents have the opportunity to work from home.

The environmental result will be a greater mix of compatible uses in the Rural Area.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.2 To maintain and enhance the character of the Rural Area by managing the scale, location and rate [and design]^{PC33} of new building development.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.2.1 Control the number and location [and design]^{PC33} of new building developments and activities to avoid, remedy or mitigate their adverse effects on the rural character and landscape.

METHOD

- Rules
- [Design Guide (Rural Area)
- Other mechanisms (Rural Community Plans)

Council seeks to maintain the natural elements which give the Rural Area its character especially those areas west of the Outer Green Belt and within Horokiwi. These areas (South Karori, Makara, Ohariu Valley and Horokiwi) have their own non-statutory Rural Community Plans which have a primary focus to maintain and enhance rural character, amenity and identity for those living, working and visiting these areas. A large component of ensuring this is for new development to be limited and controlled when it does occur. This focus has therefore been reflected in the District Plan rules, and is implemented through the application of a Rural Area Design Guide. The District Plan seeks to limit the intensity of residential development by controlling the subdivision of rural land. Resource consents are required for all subdivisions and most residential buildings, including alterations and additions that result in large dwellings. The Rural Area Design Guide is a key mechanism by which the Council will determine the appropriateness of specific proposals for subdivisions and residential buildings.

Council recognises the essential nature of accessory buildings and structures associated with rural activities for the efficient use of the rural resource and has provided for them accordingly. It is also acknowledged that accessory buildings associated with rural activities have different characteristics to residential buildings, and they are an accepted feature of the rural environment.

There are some areas adjacent to the urban fringe (identified on Appendices 4 to 7 of Chapter 15) where well designed low density residential development can be visually absorbed, and that the sustainable management of the City's land resources can be achieved by careful development of these areas. Again, rather than attempting to apply a formula for how development in these areas should occur, the Council uses the Rural Area Design Guide to inform good design. Flexibility in lot size is provided to enable subdivisions to be designed to fit the natural features and landscape of the site.

Renewable energy developments, including windfarms, involve structures for wind resource evaluation and wind energy generation. This objective and policy does not control the design of these elements.

The environmental result will be limited development of the more remote parts of the Rural Area, ensuring that new buildings reflect the rural character of the area and

well considered and sustainable development of some land closer to the urban fringe.]^{PC33}

14.2.2.2 [Control the construction and siting of new buildings, structures and earthworks on identified ridgelines and hilltops in ways that avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse visual effects and effects on any natural, recreational or heritage values that may exist in these identified areas.]

METHOD

- Rules
- Design Guide (Rural Area)

The Council has undertaken a city wide study to identify which ridgelines and hilltops should be afforded greater protection than less prominent landforms in the city. Visual values were paramount in determining the identified ridgelines and hilltops but other natural, recreational and heritage values were also recognised. These ridgelines and hilltops are identified on the District Plan maps.

In the Rural Area the Council wishes to maintain the relatively undeveloped character of the important ridgelines and hilltops, although this character can vary throughout the Rural Area. Rules have therefore been included to account for variations in local character, whereby any proposed new building, structure or earthworks, can be assessed according to the visibility and how well development can be integrated while maintaining the visual continuity of the ridgeline or hilltop from district wide, community of interest and neighbouring view. These rules provide the management framework for these areas.

It is acknowledged that ridgelines and hilltops in rural areas covered by the Northern Growth Management Framework (adopted by Council in 2003) will be the subject of further work relating to the rezoning of land for future urban development. The adoption of appropriate ridgeline and hilltop provisions in these areas will be part of future changes to the District Plan.

In other rural areas not covered by the ridgeline and hilltop rules, the Rural Area Design Guide will work to ensure that any new development fits sensitively into the landscape.]^{PC33}

14.2.2.3 [Control the construction and siting of buildings, structures and earthworks on identified ridgelines and hilltops in city fringe areas where satisfactory infrastructure allows for future growth.]

METHOD

- Rules
- Design Guide (Rural Area)

Some identified ridgelines and hilltops cover rural land, located within or close to existing residential areas, which has potential for low density rural residential type development. These areas have been specifically identified in Appendices 4 to 7 in Chapter 15. Separate ridgeline and hilltop provisions have therefore been included to provide for development in these situations. The Council will seek to ensure that any development is designed to respect the special location. These rules provide the management framework for these areas.

The environmental result will be limited rural residential development that is sensitively designed to respect the important ridgeline and hilltop locations.]^{PC33}

14.2.2.4 Control the siting and size of new signs within the Rural Area.**METHOD**

- Rules

The Rural Area is presently free of any significant signage. District Plan rules control the erection of new signs and protect existing amenities. Temporary signs are permitted for specified purposes.

The environmental result will be Rural Areas which are generally free of signs.

14.2.2.5 Seek to ensure that activities located in the Rural Area do not have harmful effects on urban areas.**METHOD**

- Rules (Conditions on resource consents)
- [Design Guide (Rural Area)]^{PC33}

Certain activities in Rural Areas can have effects far beyond the rural environment. Activities in the Rural Area can, for example, generate heavy traffic or appear unsightly from nearby Residential Areas. Through the determination of resource consents and other means Council works to ensure that any adverse effects on the urban area are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

The environmental result will be the protection of Residential Areas from the adverse effects of rural activities.

OBJECTIVE**14.2.3 To maintain and enhance the amenity values and rural character of Rural Areas.****POLICIES**

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.3.1 Control non-rural activities to ensure that their potential adverse effects on the rural environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated.**METHOD**

- Rules
- [Design Guide (Rural Area)]
- Other mechanisms (Rural Community Plans)]^{PC33}

Although farming and residential activities predominate in the Rural Area there are other uses which serve both the local, rural and wider City populations. Council supports the establishment of a limited range of appropriate non-rural activities in the Rural Area provided that the adverse effects on rural character and amenity are avoided, remedied or mitigated. The rural environment is generally more sensitive to certain environmental effects than the urban parts of the city. Non-rural activities may generate effects such as noise, traffic, and odour which could have a major impact on the quality of rural life.

Such activities are assessed as Discretionary Activities to make sure that they are appropriate to the Rural Area and any potentially harmful effects prevented.

The environmental result will be that Rural Areas are maintained primarily for rural purposes, but a mix of activities is allowed where the adverse effects on rural character and amenity are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

14.2.3.2 Control the adverse effects of noise within the Rural Area.

METHODS

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

With the exception of noise from power generation, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, water, sewage pumping and treatment systems and other similar domestic installations associated with rural or residential activities, residential and rural activities shall be controlled by the provisions of Section 327 of the Act (Issue and effect of excessive noise direction) or other relevant Acts or bylaws. The Rural Area is a working environment and as such will be subject to noisier rural activities, mostly on a seasonal basis. Nothing in the Plan shall limit reasonable noise emissions resulting from the working of the land or raising of livestock.

The District Plan Rules aim to avoid, remedy or mitigate unreasonable noise from factory farming and non rural activities including Work-from-Home.

Traffic noise is not controlled through rules, and alternative actions need to be taken to avoid, remedy or mitigate intrusions from this source.

The environmental result will be less noise in Rural Areas.

14.2.3.3 Acknowledge the natural and cultural landscape of the Belmont Hills in recognition of their scenic and recreational values.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Belmont Regional Park Management Plan)

This policy is taken into account when assessing activities within areas that are part of the Regional Park (specifically the land to the east of Horokiwi Road).

The environmental result will be the establishment of activities that support the intention of the Belmont Regional Park Management Plan.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.4 To ensure that the adverse effects of new subdivisions in the Rural Area are avoided, remedied or mitigated and that subdivision is consistent with the approach to containment of the urban area in this Plan.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

- 14.2.4.1 Control greenfield subdivision [initiated in the Rural Area]^{PC33} to ensure that adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated and that if land is developed, it is developed in a way that will lead to neighbourhoods which have a high amenity standard and which are adequately integrated with existing [and intended]^{PC36} infrastructure.**

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guide [(Rural Area and Subdivision)]^{PC33}
- [Other mechanisms (Northern Growth Management Framework)]^{PC36}

The District Plan Maps identify the extent of urban (primarily residential) areas on the basis of existing residential and suburban centre development and land subject to current subdivision consents. In accordance with the purpose of sustainable management, the aim is to provide for the intensification of land use within the urban area and [potential growth areas as identified within the Northern Growth Management Framework]^{PC36} to accommodate, where adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated, the orderly development of new subdivisions on the fringes of the existing urban area.

Greenfield subdivision [may]^{PC36} be considered as part of a District Plan change to extend the urban area. [However]^{PC36} the effects of the potential development [can]^{PC36} be assessed [according to the]^{PC36} design of the subdivision, its impact on the natural and physical environment, and constraints (such as natural hazards) imposed by the environment, [which may be identified by mechanisms such as the Northern Growth Management Framework]^{PC36}.

The environmental result will be a more compact city and, where approved, the development of new subdivisions that are well designed, [which recognise and protect ecological values, and are]^{PC36} integrated with existing [and intended]^{PC36} infrastructure.

14.2.4.2 [Manage the rate of subdivision to minimise fragmentation of land in the Rural Area and to maintain a compact city.]

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides (Rural Area and Subdivision)

Council seeks to manage subdivision in the Rural Area to enable rural land use activities to be undertaken but also to restrict the amount of fragmentation that occurs, thereby maintaining Wellington as a compact city. In addition, the rate of subdivision is managed to maintain the open, undeveloped rural character. This has been supported in the consultation with the rural communities of South Karori, Makara, Ohariu Valley and Horokiwi, which revealed a strong desire to maintain the existing natural and rural character. These goals have been balanced against the recognition that some subdivision would be beneficial to the wellbeing and viability of the rural communities.

For these reasons, in most of the Rural Area, provision is made for subdivision on an incremental and limited basis, provided that it can be demonstrated that any effects on the environment can be managed. Where subdivision is possible, other than Horokiwi, no minimum lot size has been specified for new allotments. This allows flexibility for subdivisions to be designed sensitively to fit in with the local environment in accordance with the principles of the Rural Area Design Guide. The ability to subdivide is limited in terms of the size of the parent allotment and a 5 year period before another subdivision can occur. A stricter approach to subdivision will apply in Horokiwi where land is already fragmented, and on allotments of less than 1200m² at Makara Beach and Makara Village because of sewage treatment issues.

The environmental result will be the retention of a compact city and the existing character of the Rural Area, while providing for limited and sensitively designed subdivision that will support the continued wellbeing and viability of rural communities.]^{PC33}

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

METHODS

- Rules (compliance with Code of Practice for Land Development)
- Information (promotion of good subdivision practice)

To encourage the sound design, development and appropriate servicing of subdivisions, Council requires that relevant parts of the Subdivision Design Guide and Code of Practice for Land Development be taken into account.

The environmental result will be the development of well-designed and properly serviced subdivisions that maintain amenity standards.

[14.2.4.4 To require esplanade areas along identified streams and the coast to protect conservation values, provide public access or other recreational use.

METHODS

- Rules

Esplanade areas are required on all new lots that are less than 4 hectares (including boundary adjustments) that are created along identified streams or the sea coast to protect conservation values, provide public access or other recreational use. In addition to the coast, the esplanade rules apply to the following streams:

- Porirua Stream and tributaries
- Makara Estuary
- Makara Stream and tributaries including Ohariu Stream
- Oteranga Stream and tributaries
- Karori Stream and tributaries

Because of significant conservation values in the case of the Makara Estuary esplanade reserves will be required rather than esplanade strips.

The environmental result will be the provision of esplanade areas to provide for conservation values, public access and recreational use.]^{PC33}

OBJECTIVE

14.2.5 To maintain and enhance natural features (including landscapes and ecosystems) that contribute to Wellington's natural environment.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.5.1 Protect significant escarpments and coastal cliffs from development and visual obstruction.

METHOD

- Rules

The Wellington faultscarp, coastal cliffs, areas of open space and skylines are important parts of the City's visual character. Where these are not protected by public ownership, Council aims to restrict development and avoid, remedy or mitigate its visual impact. The Open Space and Rural rules will be the main methods of dealing with this issue, but where possible Council also seeks added protection where subdivision or other non-permitted rural development is proposed.

The environmental result will be the protection of significant features of Wellington's rural landscape.

Policy 14.2.5.2 has been deleted by Plan Change 70

14.2.5.3 Encourage retention of existing vegetation, especially established trees and existing native vegetation.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guide ([Rural Area and] ^{PC33} Subdivision)
- [Wellington Wet and Wild: Bush and Streams Restoration Plan] ^{PC33}
- Open Space Strategy
- [Other mechanisms (Rural Community Plans)] ^{PC33}

Existing native vegetation and established trees are an important element in Wellington's landscape and can also have importance as wildlife habitat, as linking corridors and buffer zones, and for soil and water conservation values. Remaining areas of native vegetation and established trees will be retained as far as possible where subdivision or other development is proposed.

The environmental result will be the greater protection of indigenous ecosystems.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.6 To maintain and enhance the quality of the coastal environment within and adjoining the Rural Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

- 14.2.6.1 Maintain the public's ability to use and enjoy the coastal environment by requiring that public access to and along the coastal marine area is maintained, and enhanced where appropriate and practicable.**
- 14.2.6.2 Enhance the natural values of the rural coastal environment by requiring developers to consider the ecological values that are present, or that could be enhanced, on the site.**
- 14.2.6.3 Ensure that any developments near the coastal marine area are designed to maintain and enhance the character of the coastal environment.**

METHODS

- Rules
- [Design Guide (Rural Area)] ^{PC33}
- Advocacy
- Other mechanisms (New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, Regional Coastal Plan)

The coastal environment is an important asset for Wellington, and Council is concerned that its qualities and character should not be lost through inappropriate activities or development. Council aims to maintain and enhance the character and public amenity of the coastal environment by means of rules and strategies.

Maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coast is an important issue. However, there are occasions when public access will not be appropriate or practicable. "Appropriate and practicable" means:

"Public access may not be appropriate where it is necessary to protect any Area of Significant Conservation Value, Area of Important Conservation Value, sites of significance to tangata whenua, public health or for safety, animal health, security, defence purposes, or quarantine facilities. In other cases, particularly along sections of coastal cliff, access along the foreshore may not be practicable. Practicable includes recognition of both technical and financial constraints." (Coastal Plan for the Wellington Region - Explanation to policy 4.2.17).

The environmental result will be maintenance and enhancement of the coastal environment within and adjoining the Rural Area.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.7 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:

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

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Building Act controls)

Hazards occur whenever people are in contact with natural or technological phenomena that pose a threat to health and safety. 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.]^{PC33}

Not everyone is able to respond to an event in the same way. Some people, due to socio-economic factors (for example, 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 [and schools])^{PC33}, may also increase the hazard risk.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of hazards and risks to people in high hazard risk areas.

14.2.7.2 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 important services are known as lifelines. For these reasons, Council considers it essential for critical facilities to 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 the risk from hazards.

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

METHODS

- Rules
- Advocacy

If a hazard event occurs, the natural environment needs to be protected from its flow-on effects, such as contamination of ground and surface water from ruptured pipelines and storage tanks. The potential for an activity to affect the natural environment under emergency conditions is also an important consideration. For these reasons relevant rules have been included in the District Plan.

The environmental result will be better protection of the natural environment from hazard events.

14.2.7.4 Ensure that structures in the Rural Area do not exacerbate natural hazards, particularly flood events.

METHOD

- Rules

Structures have the potential to increase the degree of risk associated with flooding. Where they are proposed for flood plains or flood-prone areas they will be controlled to ensure that they do not increase the flood hazard.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of hazard risks on flood plains or flood-prone areas.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.8 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:

14.2.8.1 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.

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

14.2.8.2 Reduce the potential adverse effects of transporting hazardous substances.

METHODS

- Rules (conditions on resource consents)
- Other mechanisms (advocacy and bylaws)

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.

14.2.8.3 Control the use of land for end point disposal of waste to ensure the environmentally safe disposal of solid and hazardous waste.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (Waste Management Strategy)
- Designation
- Other mechanisms (Regional Plans)

Unrestricted land disposal of waste by landfilling is increasingly less environmentally acceptable as a method of dealing with the City's waste. For this reason, Council wishes to discourage the proliferation of waste disposal sites.

Council's Waste Management Strategy, which addresses waste disposal in Wellington City, includes guidelines on the environmentally acceptable management of the hazardous wastes produced in Wellington.

The environmental result will be fewer and better-managed waste disposal sites.

14.2.8.4 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.

^{1,2,3} District Plan Change No.35 – Hazardous Substances (Operative 6 July 2006)

OBJECTIVE

14.2.9 To enable efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods within the Rural Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.9.1 Manage the road network to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects of road traffic on Rural Areas.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (traffic management)
- [Other mechanisms (Rural Community Plans)]^{PC33}

The movement of traffic on narrow, winding rural roads requires appropriate management to maintain access and safety. Council will use traffic management techniques and road improvement measures to achieve these ends.

The environmental result will be safer rural roads.

14.2.9.2 Manage the road system in accordance with a defined road hierarchy. *Refer to District Plan Map 33*

METHOD

- Rules

The road hierarchy, which classifies roads according to their function, is used in the administration of the Plan to ensure that land uses or activities are appropriately related to the network.

The environmental result will be that uses or activities in Rural Areas are appropriately located in relation to the roads that service them.

14.2.9.3 Provide for, and in certain circumstances require, extensions to the existing road network. In particular the actual development or potential for future development of the following connector routes *For the routes listed in 14.2.9.3 refer to District Plan Maps 23,*

is sought:

26 and 27

- from the existing alignment of Westchester Drive in the north to Ohariu Valley Road in the south
- from Ohariu Valley Road in the north to McLintock Street in the south
- the connector between the existing northern and southern ends of John Sims Drive

METHOD

- Rules (conditions on resource consents)

To improve access for motor traffic in the City, some additional roads may be required. Proposed extensions to the existing road network are implemented through the designation process or through requirements on subdivision proposals.

The reference to connector routes on the accompanying District Plan Maps is not an indication that Council wishes to see the urban area expand along these routes or to fill the area between the proposed road and the present urban fringe. They are an acknowledgement that the future efficient development of the City may require these connector roads to be established. Unplanned subdivision may prevent the construction of these routes. The indications give the approximate location of the connector routes. The actual alignment of the road will be established as required.

The environmental result will be that motor traffic will have better access to parts of the Rural Area, and energy will be saved.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.10 To promote the development of a safe and healthy City.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

14.2.10.1 Improve the design of developments to reduce threats to personal safety and security.

METHOD

- Advocacy (Crime Prevention Design Guide)

A city's operation and design must take account of its occupants. The District Plan aims to reduce crime and to increase safety through the use of environmental design guidelines.

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

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

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms ([Rural Community Plans,]^{PC33} WCC Bylaws)
- Advocacy

The promotion of a healthy and safe city will be implemented through a broad range of Council actions, including District Plan rules. [Wellington's rural communities have also taken responsibility for community well-being through the development and implementation of non-statutory Rural Community Plans (South Karori, Makara, Ohariu Valley and Horokiwi)]^{PC33}

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 Rural Areas that provide for the health and safety of people by controlling the adverse effects of activities.

14.2.10.3 Reduce the potential risks associated with high voltage transmission lines by encouraging the location of these away from inhabited areas and by restricting the location of residential development near such lines.

METHOD

- Rules

High voltage transmission lines generate potentially hazardous electromagnetic fields. Council is taking a precautionary approach by restricting activities near these transmission lines.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of possible hazards to people from the effects of high voltage transmission lines.

OBJECTIVE

14.2.11 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:

14.2.11.1 Identify, define and protect sites and precincts of significance to tangata whenua and other Maori using methods acceptable to tangata whenua and other Maori.

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 the identification of such sites and precincts and their protection from inappropriate development.

14.2.11.2 Provide the opportunity for establishing marae, papakainga/group housing, kohanga reo/language nests, or similar activities in Rural Areas that relate to the needs and wishes of tangata whenua and other Maori, provided that environmental conditions are met.

METHODS

- Rules
- Information

General provision has been made for non-rural activities in Rural Areas as Discretionary Activities. This enables tangata whenua and other Maori to undertake activities that are appropriate in Rural Areas.

The environmental result will be that, if such non-rural uses establish, they are managed in such a way as to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects.

14.2.11.3 In considering resource consents, Council takes into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

METHODS

- Rules
- Information

The principles that underlie the Treaty of Waitangi provide a basis for the management of natural and physical resources. These principles include 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.