

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

The Upper Hutt City District Plan sets out the specific objectives, policies, methods and rules that have been adopted to enable Council to promote the sustainable management of the City's natural and physical resources.

This Chapter outlines the role of the District Plan, the influences on its preparation, its format, and the strategy taken within it. It also includes a guide to its use.

1.1 Sustainable Management

The purpose of the Resource Management Act is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Sustainable management is defined as:

managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while -

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- (b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and*
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

Natural and physical resources, as defined in the Act: *includes land, water, air, soil, minerals and energy, all forms of plants and animals (whether native to New Zealand or introduced), and all structures.*

The Act also places a duty on Council to recognise and provide for a range of matters of national importance which are set out in Section 6 of the Act.

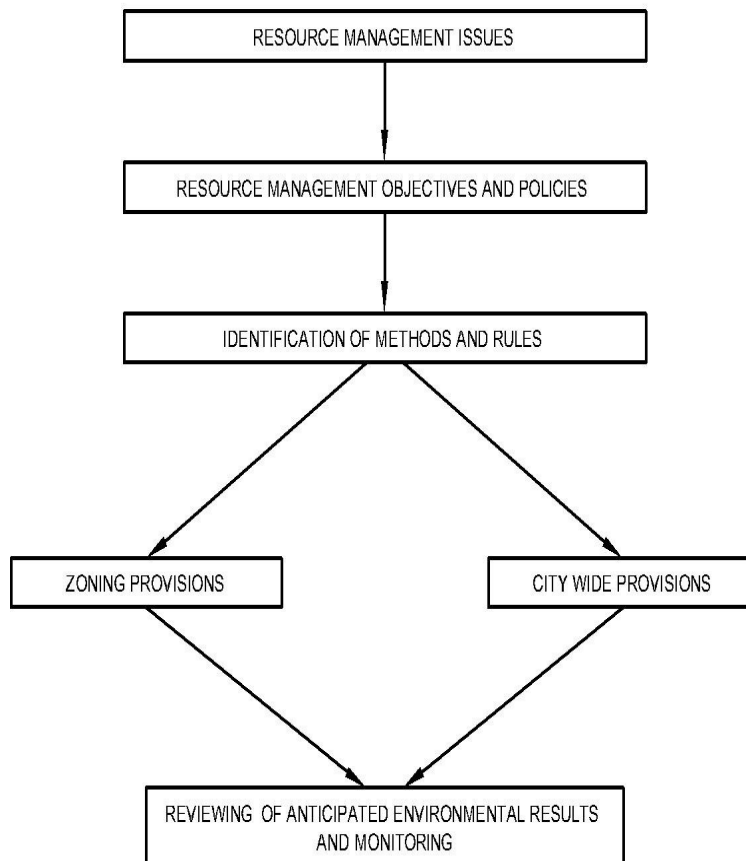
Other important matters, including maintaining and enhancing amenity values and the quality of the environment, and the recognition and protection of heritage values are set out in Section 7 of the Act. Section 8 of the Act requires Council to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

1.2 Planning Strategy

As each district has different problems and issues, the Act does not prescribe the means which Council must use to promote the sustainable management of resources in its district. Instead, it allows flexibility for a Council to choose from a variety of methods that are appropriate in the context of its own district's requirements and its community's views.

The approach taken to the resource management issues within Upper Hutt is outlined in Figure 1 below. The strategy has developed from the identification of resource management issues. Rules and standards will be Council's main method of implementing the Plan. Other non-regulatory methods will also be used to implement the policies.

Figure 1
Planning Strategy



The following sections of this Chapter provide a general explanation of the main methods used in the Plan to achieve the objectives and policies. It is not an exhaustive list. Council's monitoring of the effectiveness of the methods over time will provide the basis for a review of the Plan.

1.2.1 Zoning

The technique of zoning is used as the principal method for managing the effects of activities to enable sustainable management of resources.

Zoning provides a means of recognising the different types of environment in the City, and the effects that different activities have on those environments, and their amenity. These environment types or zones include Residential, Rural, Business, Open Space and Special Activity.

Council has established appropriate objectives, policies, methods and rules for each zone, in order to control the adverse effects of activities. Flexibility within zones enables a range of activities, compatible with their surroundings, to be established.

1.2.2 Listing of Activities

Within zones, activities are classified as permitted, controlled, discretionary, restricted discretionary, non-complying or prohibited according to the effects they may have. These classifications are explained further in Chapter 2.

1.2.3 Standards

Standards that establish limits and conditions for the effects of activities are listed within each zone. The standards seek to ensure that resources are used sustainably and that any actual or potential adverse effects are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

1.2.4 Non-Regulatory Methods

Non-regulatory methods, such as providing information and educating the public, can contribute effectively to the achievement of resource management goals. Council will make available the following information where appropriate:

- Pamphlets and brochures will be produced summarising the Plan rules and expected environmental outcomes.
- Educational programmes on the effects of land use practices, which may involve producing pamphlets that illustrate good land use practices.

- Use of appropriate NZ Standards and industrial codes of practice.
- Awareness of sites of ecological and historical importance by listing and identifying these on the planning maps.
- Public reports on the results of the monitoring process.
- A Hazards Register listing the location of sites prone to natural and other hazards.
- Consultation with developers and other parties in relation to particular proposals.

1.3 Format of the Plan

The plan is in five main parts:

- Part 1 - Introduction
- Part 2 - Issues, Objectives, Policies and Methods
- Part 3 - Rules and Standards
- Part 4 - Appendices
- Part 5 - Planning Maps

1.3.1 Part 1 - Introduction

Chapter 1 (this chapter) provides an explanatory background and information on how the Plan is set out and how to use it.

Chapter 2 - General Procedures, contains information on how the Plan is administered, including the provisions that apply to the processing of resource consents, the designation of land, monitoring and review of the Plan.

1.3.2 Part 2 - Issues, Objectives, Policies and Methods

Two approaches have been taken to addressing issues and formulating objectives, policies and methods. The first is zone based.

Chapter 3 considers Zoning in general and Chapters 4 to 8 deal specifically with the Residential, Rural, Business, Open Space and Special Activities Zones.

The second approach is to consider specific topics which are general or City-wide in nature. Chapters 9 to 17 address:

- Subdivision and Earthworks
- Financial Contributions
- Heritage
- Landscape and Ecology
- Water Resources
- Natural Hazards
- Environmental Quality
- Utilities
- Hazardous Substances and Waste Management

Each chapter within this part of the plan has the following structure:

Background

The background statement describes the context within which the relevant resource management issues are addressed and introduces the Council's approach to the sustainable management of the resource.

Resource Management Issues

The particular resource management issues of concern to the Council are described in this part of the Chapter. The statement of issues sets the scene for the application of objectives, policies, methods and rules to address those issues.

Objectives

An objective is a statement specifying an intended or desired environmental outcome.

Policies

A policy is a course of action that will be taken to achieve one or more objectives.

Objectives and policies help to explain the purpose of rules. They will also guide decision making when Council is considering resource consent applications.

Methods

A method is a specific means or action that will be taken to achieve objectives and policies. Rules, including activity lists within zones and standards are methods to be used to pursue the objectives and policies of the Plan. Methods also include non-statutory measures which operate outside the framework provided by the Plan but are consistent with it. They seek to achieve the same objectives and implement plan policies.

Anticipated environmental results and monitoring

Anticipated environmental results state the results expected to be achieved by the objectives, policies, methods and rules detailed in each chapter. The means of monitoring whether the Plan achieves the necessary outcomes are also set out.

1.3.3

Part 3 - Rules and Standards

The structure of this part of the Plan is similar to that of Part 2 in that rules and standards are set out for each zone, followed by rules and standards which are City-wide in application.

Chapters 18 to 22 provide the rules and standards for activities within the Residential, Rural, Business, Open Space and Special Activities Zones.

Chapters 23 to 34 provide the city-wide rules and standards for:

- Earthworks and Vegetation Clearance
- Esplanade Reserves and Strips
- Reserves and Leisure Facilities Contributions
- Temporary Events
- Heritage Features
- Notable Trees
- Protected Ridgelines
- Water Bodies
- Utilities
- Car Parking
- Noise and Vibration
- Flooding and Fault Band Hazards
- Hazardous Substances and Contaminated Land

1.3.4 Part 4 - Appendices

Part 4 contains the following four chapters:

Chapter 35 - Definitions, provides the meanings of a number of terms and words used in the Plan.

Chapter 36 - Schedule of Designations, provides an alphabetical listing of the designations which appear on the Planning Maps.

Chapter 37 - Roading Hierarchy, provides an alphabetical listing of the roads and streets in Upper Hutt according to their status in the roading hierarchy.

Chapter 38 - Access Design Standards and Criteria, consists of diagrams to explain the operation of an access rule in Chapters 18 to 22.

1.3.5 Part 5 - Planning Maps

The Planning Maps provide the zoning for each property within the City. They also identify designations, heritage features, faults, notable trees, protected ridgelines, rivers/streams and flood hazard areas.

For the purposes of clarity, formed Council roads have been shown without zoning colours on the Planning Maps (ie – they are white). However, activities which take place within them are still subject to the relevant zone rules which pertain to the area in which the road is situated, as well as the City-wide rules. Where a road separates different zones on opposite sides of the road, the centre line of the road defines the boundary of the two zones.

1.4 How to use the Plan

The following provides a reference guide on how to use the Plan effectively.

Step 1 - Planning Maps

Locate the site you are interested in on the Planning Maps. This will show which zone the site is located in and whether the site:

- adjoins another zone boundary;
- contains heritage features or protected trees;
- is located near a fault or within a floodplain; or
- is subject to a designation.

Step 2 – Zoning

Once the zoning for the subject site has been determined, the next step is to check the rules for that zone. This will determine whether the proposed activity is identified as permitted, controlled, discretionary, restricted discretionary, non complying, or prohibited. It will also show the relevant standards for the activity.

Step 3 - City-wide provisions

As part of the permitted activity standards within each zone, any activity is also required to comply with the City-wide provisions. To determine which particular provisions apply, the following questions may be helpful:

- Does the site contain, or is it in close proximity to, any protected trees, ridgelines or heritage features?
- Is there a water body nearby?
- Could faults or flooding affect the activity?
- Would the activity cause noise or vibration?
- Would the activity require car parking or provision for loading ?
- Would any utilities be involved, such as telecommunications or roading?
- Is the site contaminated or potentially contaminated?
- Would the activity involve the use of hazardous substances?
- Would there be earthworks or removal of vegetation?
- Would financial contributions be applicable?
- Would signs be erected?

1.5 Resource Management Framework

The District Plan is only one method of promoting sustainable management within the City and cannot achieve it on its own. The Act establishes a framework for integrated management that addresses the effects of activities on the environment. It also defines the different roles and responsibilities of central, regional and territorial authorities in the promotion of sustainable management.

1.5.1 Role of Central Government

The functions of the Minister for the Environment are set out in the Act. On resource management issues of national importance, central government may determine national policy direction. This may involve preparing:

- Government policies that have implications for the environment. This includes strategic directions to guide government, for example, the Environment 2010 Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy.
- National Policy Statements on matters of national significance that are relevant to achieving the purpose of the Act.
- National Environmental Standards which are technical standards relating to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources.

1.5.2 Role of Regional Government

The Act requires the Wellington Regional Council to provide:

an overview of the resource management issues of the Region and Policies and Methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region.

This overview is documented in the Regional Policy Statement. The Regional Council has also produced a number of Regional Plans. The purpose of Regional Plans is to manage the impact of development on the Region's water, air, soil and coastal resources.

1.5.3 Role of Territorial Local Authorities

As a territorial local authority, Upper Hutt City Council is responsible for managing the effects of activities on the City's natural and physical resources. The Act requires Council to undertake the following functions:

- *The establishment, implementation, and review of objectives, policies, and methods to achieve integrated management of the effects of the use, development, or protection of land and associated natural and physical resources of the district:*
- *The control of any actual or potential effects of the use, development, or protection of land, including for the purpose of -*
 - (i) *The avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards; and*
 - (ii) *The prevention or mitigation of any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances; and*
 - (iii) *The maintenance of indigenous biological diversity:*
- *The control of the emission of noise and the mitigation of the effects of noise:*
- *The control of any actual or potential effects of activities in relation to the surface of water in rivers and lakes:*
- *Any other functions specified in this Act.*

1.6 The District Plan

The District Plan must be prepared, implemented and administered to assist the Council to carry out the above functions. In its District Plan the Council provides for the purposes and principles contained in Part II of the Act. The Act requires that a District Plan must state:

- (a) *The significant resource management issues for the district; and*
- (b) *The objectives sought to be achieved by the plan; and*
- (c) *The policies for those issues and objectives, and an explanation of the policies; and*
- (d) *The methods (including rules if any) to implement the policies; and*
- (e) *The principal reasons for adopting the objectives, policies and methods of implementation set out in the plan; and*
- (f) *The information to be included with an application for a resource consent; and*
- (g) *The environmental results anticipated from the implementation of those policies and methods; and*
- (h) *The processes to be used to deal with issues that cross territorial authority boundaries; and*
- (i) *The procedures used to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies, rules, or other methods contained in the plan; and*
- (j) *Any other information for the purpose of the territorial authority's functions, powers, and duties under this Act.*

1.7 Other Council Planning Documents

Although the District Plan is the primary method of fulfilling Council's resource management functions, the Plan has been influenced by other Council policies and plans that the Council produces under various Acts. The relevant documents that Council has considered during the development of this Plan included:

- The Strategic Plan which indicates long-term goals and visions for the City, and establishes the planning framework for the Council.
- Annual Plans prepared under the Local Government Act 1974.
- The Capital Works Programme which documents those works that are desirable for the City's long term development.
- Reserve Management Plans which are produced for the management of gazetted reserves under Council management.

1.8 Plans of other Authorities

In preparing this District Plan, Council has had regard to the Wellington Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Plans prepared by the Wellington Regional Council, as required by the Resource Management Act. This District Plan is not inconsistent with the Regional Policy Statement and applicable Regional Plans.

In addition to the Wellington Regional Council's Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plans, the Act requires the Council, in preparing the District Plan, to have regard to any:

- *Management plans and strategies prepared under other Acts; and*
- *Relevant entry in the Historic Places Register; and*
- *Regulations relating to ensuring sustainability, or the conservation, management, or sustainability of fisheries resources (including regulations or bylaws relating to taiapure, mahinga mataitai, or other non-commercial Maori customary fishing), -
to the extent that their content has a bearing on the resource management issues of the district; and*
- *The extent to which the district plan needs to be consistent with the plans or proposed plans of adjacent territorial authorities.*

For Upper Hutt City, the adjacent authorities are the Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council and South Wairarapa District Council.

1.9 International Plans

Globally, the main influence has come from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Earth Summit, held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. One of the main outcomes of the Earth Summit was Agenda 21. This framework of action for all countries addresses how sustainable development can be achieved in all aspects of human activity. Local authorities and communities in New Zealand play a crucial role in the framework by putting into practice the concept "Think globally and act locally".