

4 RESIDENTIAL ZONE

4.1 Background

The residential areas within the City are characterised by mainly low-rise dwellings sited on individual allotments. Past architectural styles, settlement patterns and geographical factors have resulted in diverse residential characteristics and form, resulting in a range of individual neighbourhoods.

Within the Residential Zone the Residential Conservation and Residential Hill areas reflect the particular environmental and topographical characteristics of those areas.

The City's residential areas are also characterised by the presence of non-residential activities and community facilities. These activities tend to provide essential community services, including shops, churches, schools, doctors' surgeries, day care centres and halls. In some areas motels and hotels have been established. Many non-residential activities and community facilities are generally accepted within residential areas provided they do not give rise to significant adverse effects.

4.2 Resource Management Issues

4.2.1 *The loss of environmental quality within residential areas caused by adverse effects of activities.*

Amenity values are those inherent qualities or characteristics which contribute to people's appreciation or enjoyment of the local environment. Components of amenity include privacy, sunlight admission, open space, visual streetscape, noise and public health and safety.

Factors which could adversely affect the amenity values of the local residential environment include:

- Noise and illumination.
- The presence of non-residential activities and facilities.
- Signs.
- The design, appearance and siting of buildings.
- Toxic, noxious, offensive, dangerous or hazardous elements.

Dwellings and other buildings can block out sunlight, and reduce privacy and amenity in residential areas. Council seeks to minimise these adverse effects while maintaining a choice of dwelling styles and development opportunities.

Operating non-residential activities in residential areas may also have adverse effects including noise, increased traffic flows and the appearance of utilitarian buildings. Council seeks to maintain a high standard of residential amenity in residential environments.

4.2.2 ***The effects on amenity values of infill development, redevelopment and new subdivisions within and adjoining established residential areas.***

The amount of land suitable for urban use is influenced by servicing, topographical, ecological and other constraints. The Residential Zone covers the existing residential areas as well as undeveloped land suitable for residential use in the future. Expansion of existing urban areas will be encouraged in appropriate environments with the existing urban areas being the preferred location for higher density development. Council will promote the maintenance of the general character and amenity values of particular neighbourhoods.

4.3	Objectives
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4.3.1 ***The promotion of a high quality residential environment which maintains and enhances the physical character of the residential areas, provides a choice of living styles and a high level of residential amenity.***

The essential components of residential amenity values include adequate daylight and open space, satisfactory design standards, a reasonable degree of privacy and low noise levels.

The primary role of the Residential Zone is to provide opportunities for residential activity. Residents want a range of living styles to reflect their various needs, while maintaining high levels of amenity and residential character. In the Residential Zone, the provisions of the Plan seek to ensure that new development will be provided for in a manner that will respect existing forms. Appropriate activities are provided for as permitted and others will be assessed by way of resource consent applications.

4.3.2 *The maintenance and enhancement of the special landscape and natural values of the Conservation and Hill Areas.*

Within the Residential Zone of the City are environments with special character. The Residential Conservation Sub-zone includes the areas adjoining Trentham Memorial Park, Palfrey Street, Chatsworth Road and parts of Pinehaven. These areas have a mature landscape and townscape, contain native flora and fauna, natural watercourses, as well as larger sections. They also include residential development on the hills surrounding the urban area. These areas require a lower density of development in order to maintain their important landscape and ecological values.

In contrast, the Residential Hill Sub-zone is characterised by more recent development which recognises the topographical constraints by having a lower density of development. This sub-zone also contains areas undergoing development as well as some earmarked for future development.

Within the Conservation and Hill Areas there are a number of standards and controls which maintain and enhance the special values of those parts of the Residential Zone. These controls are in addition to the provisions relating to the Residential Zone.

4.3.3 *The management of the adverse effects of subdivision within residential areas.*

This objective seeks to provide for subdivision which promotes residential amenity values, creates safe and well-designed housing development and promotes the efficient use of natural and physical resources.

4.4	Policies
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4.4.1 *To provide for a range of building densities within the residential areas which takes into account the existing character of the area, topography and the capacity of the infrastructure.*

A number of housing density standards are provided for within the Residential Zone to provide choice, and to take into account existing characteristics, topography and infrastructure. These differences were recognised under zoning policies relating to the Residential General and Residential Conservation Zones in the previous District Plan.

Density refers to the number of dwelling units allowed in a given area, together with the relationship between buildings and open spaces on sites. Density affects the potential number of people living in an area, the area occupied by buildings, driveways and car parking spaces, as well as the available space for gardens. The density provisions provide a degree of certainty to residents on such matters.

4.4.2 ***To ensure that the scale, appearance and siting of buildings, structures and activities are compatible with the character and desired amenity values of the area.***

Buildings, structures and activities need to be of a scale or type that reflects the character of the neighbourhood. The overall aim of this policy is to promote residential character, and to ensure the compatibility of activities with the surrounding environment.

The Plan includes visual amenity standards, including controls over the location of residential buildings, and the screening of non-residential buildings. The relocation of residential buildings requires resource consent as it can cause adverse visual effects.

4.4.3 ***To ensure that non-residential activities within residential areas do not cause significant adverse environmental effects.***

Some business activities service or benefit the local community. Changing technology and business practices mean that some non-residential activities can occur without adversely affecting the character or amenity values of the residential environment.

Similarly, many people now work from home, and this creates social and economic advantages. This policy provides the opportunity for home occupations and non-residential activities to establish, provided any adverse effects are avoided, remedied, or mitigated, and the character of residential areas is maintained.

To control the adverse effects of such uses on residential amenity, the Plan includes standards on the scale and location of buildings, noise, car parking and use of hazardous substances.

4.4.4 *To ensure that the location and design of buildings and earthworks do not significantly detract from the residential amenity of the area.*

There are a number of matters that influence residential amenity. These include:

- The density and topography of sites.
- The closeness of dwellings to boundaries and other buildings.
- The height and orientation of buildings.
- The height or existence of fences, trees or other vegetation.
- The size, location and appearance of earthworks, retaining walls and fill batters.

Private open space is an important factor in the use and enjoyment of a residential site. Open space provides an area for outdoor leisure activities. This policy seeks to provide a reasonably open and private outlook protecting residential sites from being 'closed in' by neighbouring buildings.

Access to sunlight and daylight also contribute to the use and enjoyment of a residential site. To avoid excessive shading effects and allow the admission of daylight to a site, the Plan provides daylight controls on all side and rear boundaries. Similarly, to control the size and height of earthworks and associated retaining, the Plan provides for earthworks plane controls along all boundaries in order to avoid or mitigate adverse effects.

4.4.5 *To ensure that sites fronting streets present a pleasant and coherent residential appearance.*

The setback of buildings from the front boundary assists with privacy and provides for landscaping. The front setback provides an open style streetscape which is part of the established residential character of Upper Hutt.

4.4.6 *To mitigate the adverse effects of noise within residential areas to a level consistent with a predominantly residential environment.*

Noise is a particularly important amenity consideration in residential areas as people are living in close proximity to each other. This policy aims to ensure that noise levels experienced are reasonable for a Residential Zone.

4.4.7 *To promote a safe and efficient roading network which avoids, remedies or mitigates the adverse effects of road traffic on residential areas.*

Traffic on roads, whether mobile or stationary, can have major impacts on the amenity values of residential areas.

An efficient residential roading network of a high standard will meet the mobility needs of the City's residents, give access to available transport services, provide safety for those using the network and mitigate the adverse effects of traffic on the environment.

4.4.8 *To ensure that signs in residential areas do not adversely affect neighbourhood amenity or traffic safety.*

The Residential Zone is relatively free from signs, which can detract from amenity values. For this reason, controls are needed to prevent the proliferation of signs and to manage the effects of those that are appropriate in the zone.

4.4.9 *To promote a relatively low intensity of development within the Conservation and Hill Areas.*

These areas have a lower level of building density with a corresponding sense of spaciousness compared with other residential areas. They have developed a certain character as a result of past patterns of development. This policy seeks to recognise and protect the existing and potential future levels of amenity.

4.4.10 *To protect trees and vegetation which contribute to the amenity values of the Conservation and Hill Areas.*

Trees add to the character of residential areas and also have ecological, historical, and cultural values.

The Conservation and Hill Areas have special qualities which merit the protection of trees. They also merit different requirements for development and subdivision to assist in protecting their amenity values and land stability.

4.4.11 *To provide for new residential development within the City in a sustainable manner.*

The edge of the urban area is defined primarily by a rural interface. Council generally intends to contain new residential development within the existing zoned urban area. Continuous expansion at the City's edge, while large parts of the urban areas remain undeveloped, does not constitute sustainable management.

Greenfield subdivision, for urban residential development outside Residential Zones should be considered by way of a District Plan change to extend the urban area. This enables the full effects of the potential development to be assessed.

4.4.12 *To promote subdivision and residential development with a high level of amenity and ensure that it has adequate access to infrastructural requirements.*

The Plan provides for the intensification of land use within the urban area to accommodate residential development where adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Subdivision requires resource consent because Council may need to impose conditions that relate to provision or co-ordination of services and other matters relating to the sustainable management of resources.

4.5	Methods
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4.5.1 District Plan provisions consisting of a Residential Zone identifying the residential environments within the City, including the Conservation and Hill Areas. Rules and standards apply to activities so that adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated. Consent application procedures provide for the consideration of effects on a case-by-case basis and the imposition of appropriate conditions when necessary.

4.5.2 Code of Practice for Civil Engineering Works.

4.5.3 Abatement notices and enforcement orders may be issued where it is necessary to enforce the Plan rules and mitigate any adverse effects of activities.

4.5.4 Reserve Management Plans.

4.5.5 District Plan rules requiring reserve contributions and development impact fees.

4.6 Anticipated environmental results and monitoring

The following results are expected to be achieved by the objectives, policies and methods of this Chapter. The means of monitoring whether this Plan achieves the anticipated environmental results are also set out below.

Anticipated environmental results	Monitoring indicators	Data source
Maintenance of residential amenity and special landscape characteristics, including on-site amenity, streetscape design and appearance	Number of resource consents by type Community Survey Complaints and enforcement proceedings	Council records Council Survey Complaints register
Development of the Residential Zone which reflects the amenity values of the area	Compliance with performance standards within the Residential Zone Number of resource consents by type	Council records