

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

The purpose of the RMA 91

as stated in Part 2 Section 5(1) is

“to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources”

And Section 5(2)

“Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment”

The RMA 91 identifies a number of matters of national importance and other matters, which should be considered in the design and implementation of any proposed land use activities. Landscape and community values are included in Part 2 Sections 6 and 7 of the RMA 91. In particular those matters listed under Section 6, which are relevant to this guide are:

“The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development”

“The protection of outstanding natural features and landscape from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development”

“The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna”

“The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers”

As are the following matters discussed in Section 7:

“the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources”

“the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values”
“intrinsic values of ecosystems”

“recognition and protection of the heritage values of sites, buildings, places, or areas”

“maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment”

Natural values are encompassed within the landscape values to some extent; the District Plan describes them, along with Physical Resources, as:

“Land, water, air, soil, minerals and energy all forms of plants and animals (whether native to New Zealand or introduced), and all structures.”

The Whangarei District has a diverse landscape, some of which displays a varied and unique character, especially around the coast and rural areas. These areas are generally more sensitive to change than urban areas.

Notable and Outstanding Landscapes have been identified in the District Plan, along with strategies for their management. Land development has the potential to result in positive or negative effects on the character of these and the wider district landscapes in the Coastal and Countryside Environments.

Amenity values are described in the District Plan as:

“Those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to peoples appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational attributes.”

Landscape values are described in the District Plan as:

“Landforms, the coast, rivers and wetlands, and the vegetation that grows on the land’s surface, ranging from naturally occurring bush to cultivated pasture, combine to form a variety of landscapes. These are further defined by the way buildings, roads and other structures are set amongst them.”