

# RVE.1

## Rural Village Environment

*Subsequent to the receipt of appeals, a 'marked up' version of the Proposed District Plan was prepared. The provisions of the Proposed Version of the Plan subject to an Environment Court appeal have been highlighted yellow and annotated with an appeal number. For a list of appeals, assigned numbers and any progress please visit the ['District Plan Appeals'](#) page on our website.*

*Please also note that the following terms which appear throughout the Plan are subject to appeal:*

- *“Activities ancillary to farming, forestry or strategic rural industry” [000028]*
- *“Rural production activities” [000018]*
- *“Building” [000022]*
- *“Home occupation” [000022]*
- *“Rural Countryside Environment” [000025]*

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### RVE.1.1 Description and Expectations

The Rural Village Environment (RVE) manages land use and subdivision within established rural villages throughout the Whangarei District. The RVE is made up of three different Sub-Environments: Rural Village Residential, Rural Village Centre and Rural Village Industry. Suitable locations for residential, commercial and industrial activities are identified within rural villages through these Sub-Environments. The objectives and policies are applied across all rural villages. Any additional matters for consideration in the Coastal Area relevant to the appropriate rural villages are addressed in the Coastal Area overlay.

**The Whangarei District Council Growth Strategy – Sustainable Futures 30/50 2009 ('Whangarei District Growth Strategy') [000022]** identifies three rural villages (Hikurangi, Waipu and Parua Bay) as growth areas. It is expected that other rural villages will continue to function at a similar scale and nature to how they are today.

The character and amenity of each rural village differs in terms of their location, the range of activities supported and the service function that fulfils. Many of the rural villages are characterised by traditional quarter acre sections and low density of built development; however, smaller allotment sizes are provided for in the zone provisions to consolidate growth for efficient land use and service provision. Development may be more intensive in the villages where connections to Council reticulated services are available.

## Rural Village Environment

Many of the villages are situated adjacent to the Rural Countryside Environment which provides a rural context for the villages. The boundary interface has the potential for reverse sensitivity effects which need to be managed.

The 13 larger rural villages are each described below. It is expected that the individual characteristics of each rural village will be recognised in the preparation and assessment of any resource consent application. There are also 16 smaller rural villages.

### **Hikurangi**

Hikurangi, located between State Highway 1 and the main trunk railway line, is a service village with a population of approximately 1,500 people. There is grocery shop and other small scale retail activities, a veterinary practice and a museum. The town has a rich history based on mining. From the 1890s coal was mined in the area with the last coal mine closing in 1971. There are also significant limestone resources, with a quarry that supplies limestone to the Golden Bay Cement plant south of Whangarei.

A significant geographical feature is Mount Hikurangi, a volcanic dome that rises 365 metres to the west of the town. In pre-European times the swamp basin was an important resource for Māori and was a highly productive area for food and fisheries. Hikurangi is identified as a growth node in the Whangarei District Growth Strategy.

### **Parua Bay**

Parua Bay is a coastal rural village located on the north side of the Whangarei Harbour; with Manganese Point and Reserve Point wrapping around the entry to the Bay. Existing services in Parua Bay village include a primary school, community centre, sports facilities, petrol station, medical centre, a superette, cafe and small scale retail.

The Whangarei District Growth Strategy identifies the potential to develop Parua Bay as a growth node to service the wider Whangarei Heads area. Ad-hoc development in the past has resulted in fragmented patterns of development in Parua Bay village. Moving forward growth must be carefully managed within the village to provide for the wellbeing of the population over the medium term while not compromising the development potential and sustainability of the village over the long term.

### **Waipu**

Waipu is one of the oldest European settlements in Whangarei District, with its Scottish heritage making a large contribution to the village's identity. The village is rural in nature being located within an area consisting of farmed flats, rolling to steep pasture and pockets of vegetation. Multiple small river catchments converge near the village before flowing into the Waipu River estuary and into Bream Bay, creating high potential for productive uses. Waipu has a strong village centre with a wide range of services, facilities and commercial and industrial activities. Waipu has seen reasonable population growth and is identified as a growth node in the Whangarei District Growth Strategy.

### **Maungakaramea**

Maungakaramea has a distinct historic/rural identity related to the longevity of the village (150 years) and its rural location. Maungakaramea volcanic cone and the Tangihua Range provide a dramatic scenic backdrop to the village. There are some attractive historic buildings including a former hotel, a number of churches and many historic stone walls. Local facilities include a primary school, play centre, church, community hall, sports fields, bowling green, retirement village, a voluntary rural fire force and a garage/general store. The area has experienced rural residential growth; however, the village itself has a relatively stable resident population.

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## Maungatapere

Maungatapere is surrounded by highly productive farmland with versatile soils suitable for a wide range of farming and horticulture activities. The village features many historic stone walls and the volcanic cones of Maungatapere, Maunu and Whatitiri provide a dramatic backdrop to the village.

Maungatapere has experienced moderate growth in recent years and there is a significant amount of rural residential development in the area. The village is characterised by a variety of facilities including a school, community hall, church, retirement home, and museum; as well as industry support services.

## Matapouri

Matapouri Bay, Woolleys Bay and Sandy Bay are recognised as some of the best beaches in New Zealand and are popular holiday destinations. There has been reasonable growth in the area over the last 15 years; however, many of the homes in Matapouri are holiday homes rather than permanent residences. Matapouri has a small general store and a community hall.

## McLeod Bay/Reotahi

McLeod Bay and Reotahi are situated on the inner Whangarei Harbour. Part of the Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserve is located around Motukaroro/Passage Island at Reotahi. McLeod Bay/Reotahi village has a higher permanent population than other coastal villages and there has been a moderate level of growth over recent years. There are some community facilities and a local eatery/dairy; however, the intention is that Parua Bay village will continue to accommodate the majority of commercial services in this area. Reotahi has an historic connection with the farming industry with a meat processing plant built immediately adjoining the coast. Remains of the processing plant are accessible by a walking track along the coast.

## Ngunguru

Ngunguru is a well-established coastal village that has an urban character with small lot sizes and shops, a school, a motel and community facilities. The village adjoins the Ngunguru estuary. Ngunguru Sandspit Pi Manu is a significant environmental feature that separates the harbour from Whangaumu Bay to the east. Ngunguru Sandspit has well recognised cultural, historical and ecological values and is thought to be the last undeveloped sandspit of its type on the east coast of Northland. [000022] It is an important landscape feature for the Ngunguru community.

## Oakura

Oakura is an established coastal village that has experienced minimal growth in recent years, most of which can be attributed to holiday homes. Predominantly residential development is located on the flat adjacent to the coast with further development constrained by the steeper topography to the west and Ohawini Bay to the north, which has limited vehicle access. Oakura is serviced by a small mixed use area of commercial, retail and accommodation activities.

## Pataua

Pataua is made up of two distinct parts located on either side of the entrance to the Pataua estuary. Pataua South is located on the estuary plain on the southern side with Pataua North on coastal dune lands on the north side. The two parts of the village are connected by a footbridge but there is no vehicular access between them. At Pataua South there is a camp ground, holiday homes, permanent residents and a small range of service facilities and activities to support the permanent and holiday populations. Pataua North contains mainly holiday homes but is becoming more popular as a commuter village due to improvements to the road to Whangarei.

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### **Taurikura/Urquharts Bay**

Taurikura/Urquharts Bay village is located towards the Whangarei Heads. Taurikura is a popular beach and is supported by a range of community facilities including a tennis court, community hall and a general store. Taurikura/Urquharts Bay village has a very small permanent population which has seen minimal population growth over recent years.

### **Tutukaka**

Tutukaka is characterised by the existing marina and water based recreation activities and is the gateway to the world famous Poor Knights Marine Reserve. Facilities include the Oceans Resort development comprising retail services, restaurant and hotel facilities, as well as other restaurants/bars located around the harbour. The land around the harbour is steep and clad in coastal forest providing a backdrop to the coastal marine area. In many areas the land is identified as being at risk of land instability or erosion prone. Residential development is accommodated in a series of small bays on the southern side of the harbour and the open coast around to Whangaumu Bay.

### **Waipu Cove/Langs Beach**

Waipu Cove/Langs Beach village is the southernmost village in the District and therefore is in the closest proximity to Auckland. There is some tourist accommodation, a campground, cafes and a dairy, but other services are limited. The village is characterised by white sandy beaches, dramatic coastal headlands and pohutukawa clad coastlines. There is a high proportion of holiday homes and the area is popular with holiday-makers over the summer holiday period.

### **Small Villages**

Smaller rural villages consisting of a cluster of residential development with limited community services such as primary schools and community halls, are located at Portland, Mangapai, Waitira, Ruatangata West, Titoki, Pakotai, Te Horo, Riverview Place, Tamaterau/Waikaraka, Manganese Point, Ocean Beach, Bland Bay, Whananaki, Taiharuru, Helena Bay and Moureeses Bay. These rural villages exist having historically provided important services to rural communities or as isolated coastal holiday destinations. They are zoned for residential land use only (Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment).

### **Description of the Rural Village Sub-Environments**

The Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment provides for the commercial and community centres found in the larger rural villages and is often the focal point for local communities and community facilities. Opportunities are provided for the development of a mix of residential and commercial development within these areas while ensuring the character of the rural village is retained. It is expected that commercial development will be consolidated within the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment with residential development clustered around it to retain a compact rural village centre.

The areas identified as Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment provide for residential activities within the rural villages. The rural villages are developed to varying densities according to a number of factors including topography, known natural hazard zones and depending on whether they are serviced by council's wastewater system. This pattern is expected to continue with larger sites being required if on site disposal of wastewater is proposed. New suitable areas for residential development have been zoned where compatible existing residential development has occurred or where a shortage of residential land supply has been identified.

The areas identified as Rural Village Industry Sub-Environments are existing industrial areas located within the larger rural villages. They contribute to the self-sufficiency of rural villages and benefit the wider community through provision of employment and support to local social and recreational activities.

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Industrial activities also provide supporting services for rural production activities. The Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment is located in close proximity to the Rural Village Residential and Rural Village Centre Sub-Environments. There is potential for reverse sensitivity effects such as noise, odour, lighting glare, vibration and heavy vehicle movements. Consequently, new residential development will be restricted to limit such effects. This Sub-Environment only recognises existing land use activities and does not seek to provide additional zoning.

### RVE.1.2 Objectives

1. Provide for the managed growth of rural villages.
2. Protect and enhance [000022] the amenity and character values of each rural village.
3. Provide for community facilities; including halls, sports fields, churches and schools acknowledging the role of these as focal points for rural villages. [000022]
4. Consolidate residential activities in rural villages. [000022]
5. Enable a mix of residential and commercial activities to occur in rural village centres.
6. Enable a range of business activities that fulfil local service functions in rural villages.

### RVE.1.3 Policies

1. To enable a range of land use activities necessary to support the service, residential and community functions of villages.
2. To enable a greater intensity of development where reticulated services are available.
3. To protect features and characteristics that contribute to sense of place in rural villages and maintain factors that contribute to rural village character including:
  - a. Low to moderate levels of noise and lighting, particularly at night.
  - b. Ample access to daylight.
  - c. Established streetscapes reflecting historical development patterns.
  - d. Semi-formal arrangement and design of roadways and structures.
  - e. Access to public open space and community facilities.
  - f. Opportunity for informal social interaction.
  - g. A range of low density building typology and design.
  - h. A central village focal point containing business and community facilities.
4. To protect residential character and amenity in the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment by restricting the operation of commercial and industrial activities and providing for limits to home occupation activities. [000022]
5. To protect the character and amenity of rural villages and to avoid adverse effects to the road network by limiting the number of traffic movements generated by non-residential activities.
6. To protect and enhance the established character and amenity of rural villages by ensuring that subdivision and development are designed, constructed and operated so that they are consistent with:
  - a. The Description and Expectations set out at RVE.1.1.
  - b. The service function of the village.

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7. To maintain amenity in the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment by ensuring that all new buildings are:
  - a. Of a scale and character appropriate to the Sub-Environment. [000022]
  - b. Sufficiently set back from the road boundary to allow safe pedestrian and vehicle movement and access.
  - c. Designed to enable ancillary activities such as accessory buildings, parking, manoeuvring and landscaping to be accommodated on the site.
8. To ensure that residential units in the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment have sufficient outdoor living space.
9. To avoid reverse sensitivity effects and to ensure that amenity is maintained in the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment by ensuring that all new buildings are:
  - a. Of a scale and character appropriate to the Sub-Environment.
  - b. Sited in a location sufficiently set back from site boundaries to enable privacy, the retention of open space and access to sunlight and separation from Rural Countryside Environment boundaries.
  - c. Designed to enable ancillary activities such as accessory buildings, parking, manoeuvring, landscaping and private open space to be accommodated on the site.
10. To provide for private open space and landscaping in the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment by ensuring that new built development is comprehensively designed so that at least 35% of the net site area is free of impervious areas.
11. To maintain rural village character in the Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment by ensuring that all new buildings are:
  - a. Of a scale and character appropriate to the Sub-Environment and compatible with the surrounding village.
  - b. Sited in a location sufficiently set back from site boundaries to enable privacy, the retention of open space and access to sunlight.
  - c. Designed to enable ancillary activities such as accessory buildings, parking, manoeuvring and landscaping to be accommodated on the site.
12. To locate and design subdivision and associated land development in the Rural Village Environment to complement the existing form of the rural village and maintain or enhance rural village character and amenity values by:
  - a. Locating access ways, services, utilities and building areas where:
    - i. These can be provided without the need for significant earthworks, retaining, benching or site contouring.
    - ii. The location is sensitive to, and responds to, environmental features of the site so that vegetation removal or adverse effects on water quality, wetlands, riparian margins, historic heritage sites or Sites of Significance to Māori are avoided.
  - b. Ensuring that the scale of the subdivision and the resulting land use activity will not adversely impact on the character of the village by significantly altering the mix of land use activities that characterise the village.
  - c. Identifying building areas that respond to site topography and the village character.

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- d. Designing subdivisions to respond to the topography and characteristics of the land being developed.
  - e. Ensuring proposed allotments meet minimum allotment size requirements.
13. To manage the scale and nature of activities within the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment by ensuring activities:
- a. Avoid significant adverse effects on surrounding residential areas.
  - b. Do not compromise the retention, and potential establishment, of a mix of activities within the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment.
  - c. Maintain the vibrancy and vitality of the surrounding Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment.
  - d. Can meet and fund local infrastructure requirements
  - e.
14. Avoid sensitive activities in the Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment unless they
- a. Support and are ancillary to the operation of industrial activities within the Environment; and
  - b. Do not adversely affect existing industrial activities; and
  - c. Ensure that sufficient land is retained for potential future industrial activities.

### ***RVE.1.4 Guidance Note***

1. The following shall form the basis for resource consent application in the RVE:
- a. The objectives, policies and provisions for the Rural Village Environment.
  - b. The objectives, policies and provisions for the Rural Area in the District Plan.
  - c. The objectives, policies and provisions for Resource Areas in the District Plan.
  - d. The District Wide objectives, policies and provisions in the District Plan.



## Landuse

### RVE.2.1 Eligibility Rules

1. Any commercial activity, excluding home occupations, is a **non-complying [000022]** activity within the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment.
2. Any home occupation that exceeds **3 or more of the discretionary criteria in RVE.2.3.2(g)(i – vii) is a non-complying [000022]** activity within the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment.
3. Any industrial activity is a **prohibited [000022]** activity within the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment.
4. Any industrial activity, excluding rural centre service activities, is a **non-complying activity within the Rural Village Centre Sun-Environment. [000022]**
5. Any sensitive activity is a **non-complying [000022]** activity within the Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment.
6. Intensive livestock farming is a **prohibited [000022]** activity within the Rural Village Environment.
7. Any activity not requiring consent as a discretionary or non-complying activity is a permitted activity.

### RVE.2.2 Notification Rules

1. All land use activities are subject to notification tests of the RMA

### RVE.2.3 Discretionary Activities

1. Within the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment:
  - a. Any residential unit:
    - i. Resulting in more than 1 residential unit on a site.
    - ii. That does not provide an outdoor living court of at least 20m<sup>2</sup> and at least 4m depth.
    - iii. Within 2m of a railway line designation boundary.
  - b. Any commercial or rural centre service activity that:
    - i. Exceeds **300m<sup>2</sup> [000022]** gross floor area.
    - ii. Provides for **3 [000022]** or more individual commercial or rural centre service activities on a site.
    - iii. Operates outside the hours of 0600 – 2200 if the activity is located within 50m of an existing residential unit on a separate site.
  - c. Any activity generating more than 200 traffic movements per site, per day.
  - d. Any sign resulting in more than three signs being displayed on site.
  - e. Any building:
    - i. That exceeds a maximum height of 8m.
    - ii. Within 2m of a road boundary.
    - iii. Within 27m of Mean High Water Springs (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).
    - iv. Within 27m of the top of the bank of any river that has a width exceeding 3m (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).



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- v. That exceeds a height equal to 3m plus the shortest horizontal distance between that part of the building and any boundary of a separate site which contains an existing residential unit. [000022]
  - vi. Not set back at least 3m from any boundary of a separate site which contains an existing residential unit
2. Within the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment:
- a. Any residential unit:
    - i. Excluding minor residential units, where there is less than 500m<sup>2</sup> [000022] net site area per residential unit.
    - ii. That is unable to connect to Council's reticulated wastewater system or that does not provide for onsite disposal of wastewater in accordance with Whangarei District Council's Environmental Engineering Standards 2010.
    - iii. Within 4.5m of a railway line designation boundary.
  - b. Any minor residential unit:
    - i. Resulting in more than 1 minor residential unit on a site.
    - ii. Where the net site area of the allotment is less than 750m<sup>2</sup>. [000022]
    - iii. That is not able to connect to a public reticulated wastewater system.
  - c. Any place of assembly that:
    - i. Occupies more than 35% of the net site area.
    - ii. Operates outside the hours of 0800 – 2200.
  - d. Any building:
    - i. That exceeds a maximum height of 8m.
    - ii. Within 4.5m of a road boundary.
    - iii. Not set back at least 3m from non-road boundaries, with one setback of 1.5m.
    - iv. Within 27m of Mean High Water Springs (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).
    - v. Within 27m of the top of the bank of any river that has a width exceeding 3m (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).
    - vi. That exceeds a height equal to 3m plus the shortest horizontal distance between that part of the building and any site boundary. [000022]
  - e. Fencing exceeding 2m in height.
  - f. Impervious areas exceeding 65% of the site area.
  - g. Any home occupation that:
    - i. Generates more than 20 [000022] traffic movements per site, per day.
    - ii. Does not provide the following required car parking spaces:
      - a) 1 in addition to that of the residential unit;
      - b) Plus 1 per employee;
      - c) Plus 1 in circumstances where clients visit the site.

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- iii. Has car parking between the residential unit and the road. [[000022]
  - iv. In addition to the principal operator, has more than two other persons engaged [000022] in providing the activity.
  - v. Occupies more than 15% [000022] of the total GFA of all buildings on site.
  - vi. Has a total area of signage greater than 0.25m<sup>2</sup> [000022] per site.
  - vii. Has illuminated or moving signage.
  - h. Any emergency service.
  - i. Any health care facility.
3. Within the Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment:
- a. Any building:
    - i. That exceeds a maximum height of 20m.
    - ii. Within 4.5m of a road boundary.
    - iii. Within 27m of Mean High Water Springs (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).
    - iv. Within 27m of the top of the bank of any river that has a width exceeding 3m (excluding bridges, culverts and fences).
    - v. That exceeds a height equal to 3m plus the shortest horizontal distance between that part of the building and any non-Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment boundary. [000022]
  - b. Impervious areas resulting in an increase of stormwater flows leaving the site that does not comply with Whangarei District Council's Environmental Engineering Standards 2010.
  - c. Any activity that:
    - i. Generates more than 200 traffic movements per site, per day.
    - ii. Operates outside the hours of 0600 – 2200, excluding any temporary military training activity.
4. Any farm quarry within the Rural Village Environment.

*Note: Refer to RA.4.2 for Assessment of Discretionary Activities.*

## Subdivision

### RVE.3.1 Eligibility Rules

1. Any form of subdivision not requiring consent as a discretionary activity is a controlled activity.
2. Subdivision of a minor residential unit from a residential unit that is not serviced by a public reticulated wastewater system is a **prohibited [000022]** activity.

### RVE.3.2 Notification Rule

1. All subdivision applications are subject to the notification test of the RMA.

### RVE.3.3 Discretionary Activities

1. Subdivision within the Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment creating any allotment:
  - a. Connected to a public reticulated wastewater system with a net site area less than 100m<sup>2</sup>.
  - b. Not connected to a public reticulated wastewater system with a net site area less than 2000m<sup>2</sup>.
2. Subdivision within the Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment creating any allotment:
  - a. Connected to a public reticulated wastewater system with a net site area less than **500m<sup>2</sup>. [000022]**
  - b. Not connected to a public reticulated wastewater system with a net site area less than 2000m<sup>2</sup>.
  - c. That is unable to accommodate a minimum 100m<sup>2</sup> building area on which a residential unit can be built so that there is compliance as a permitted activity with the relevant rules in this Plan.
3. Subdivision within the Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment creating any allotment:
  - a. With a net site area less than **1000m<sup>2</sup>. [000022]**
  - b. That is not provided with connections to Council maintained services (water, wastewater, stormwater, roading) within the net site area.

### RVE.3.4 Information Requirement

1. Any application for subdivision within Pt Lot 1 DP 93517 (Mahanga Road) shall include a comprehensive visual and landscape assessment and design, prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced landscape architecture professional which shall be referred to Council's Parks and Landscape Officer for review. The assessment shall provide detail regarding the following matters over which control is reserved (in addition to those contained within RA.4):
  - a. The location, height and appearance of future buildings and their potential effect on the amenity and landscape values of the locality.
  - b. The visibility of future buildings from the marine environment.
  - c. Effect of buildings on the appearance of skylines and ridgelines.
  - d. Effect of access and buildings on known historic heritage sites and Sites of Significance to Māori.
  - e. Location and finished appearance of accesses.
  - f. The potential effect of subdivision patterns on the landscape values of the locality.

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- g. Extent and nature of landscape planting proposed, and measures proposed to implement and maintain such plantings.
- h. The use of recessive colours and non-reflective finishes to minimise potential adverse effects on landscape values.

*Note: Refer to RA.4 for Matters of Control and Assessment Criteria.*