

6 Built Form and Development

6.1 Significant Issues

The need for strategic direction on the location, shape and form of urban development in order to accommodate population growth and industrial and economic development.

The cumulative effects of ongoing or subsequent urban development, including sporadic or sprawling subdivision, and ribbon development in and around coastal areas.

The potential for adverse effects of urban sprawl, sporadic subdivision and ribbon development on notable and outstanding natural features and landscapes and the natural character of the coast.

Further fragmentation of the city centre through sporadic commercial development.

Loss of focus on CBD and town centres which has resulted in a loss of “sense of place” and community character and identity.

The cost and impact of provision of infrastructure (including transport infrastructure) to efficiently and sustainably meet the demands of future predicted growth.

The potential for urban development to compromise amenity values, character and identity, and Maori cultural values.

The potential for reverse sensitivity issues to arise where incompatible land uses occur in close proximity.

The need for integration of land use activity and transport networks, in order to facilitate the ease of movement of people and goods and maintain or improve the efficiency of the transport network.

The effects of urban growth on the ability of people and communities to have adequate access to education and employment opportunities, and other essential facilities.

The need for adequate suburban centres that are accessible and convenient for local residents to help reduce vehicle usage without detracting from the urban centre.

The need to increase the amount and usability of, and access to, quality open space to provide for the social and cultural well being of a growing population.

The potential for urbanisation to cause adverse effects on important ecological systems and areas of high ecological value.

The potential for degradation and loss of cultural and historic sites of significance due to urbanisation.

The potential risk associated with locating urban development on land subject to physical constraints and natural hazards such as slope instability, flooding, coastal erosion and sea level rise, and mining subsidence.

The need to minimise contribution to and potential damage from climate change to urban development.

The loss of productive soils, economic farming units and rural character due to urban type subdivision of rural land close to the city.

The need to provide for the sustainable management and efficient use and development of existing industrial and commercial activities and to promote industrial and economic growth within existing industrial and commercial areas.

The potential for mineral extraction activities to be affected where rural residential and urban development or other sensitive activities locate in close proximity. Such conflict can result in the mineral extraction activities being forced to shut down, relocate or significantly alter their operations.

6.2 Overview

Whangarei is the major urban and industrial centre for the region. The urban area and the immediate surrounds provide a range of lifestyle options for residents. There is a demand for new houses in the urban areas of the District. Smaller settlements are now turning into larger urban areas, especially in the coastal areas. Increasing population and decreasing numbers of people per residential unit contribute to this demand. It is important that a mix of lifestyle options remain available while allowing for the continuing economic growth that the region will need and in such a way as to minimise or avoid land use conflicts.

This must include the ability of tangata whenua to exercise Treaty-guaranteed rights.

For the purposes of this chapter 'urban form' can be defined as:

the general pattern of built form and development intensity; and

the structural elements that define the District physically, such as natural features, transportation corridors, open space, public facilities, as well as activity centres and focal elements.

Urban form refers to the physical layout and design of the city. Areas that are considered 'urban' in the context of this chapter refers to both Living and Business Environments, including urban areas in coastal and rural settlements.

The way in which a district or city grows and its resulting urban form, can have a significant impact on its environment, the quality of life for its residents and the economic well-being of business. Continued urban growth has brought with it concerns about the impact that intensification of development has upon physical resources such as housing, infrastructure and existing industry and the impact that development at the periphery will have on natural resources such as coastal environments. There is also a concern that urban growth, through peripheral expansion or urban sprawl, will result in substantial increases in commuting distances by residents of the district.

It is important to recognise the impacts that urban development can have on the viability of rural and urban based industries. There are high quality soils (a finite resource) close to the city centre of Whangarei and within areas identified for future growth and the subdivision of arable land lessens the likelihood of farms being economically viable, and can affect the overall rural character and amenity of these areas. Industrial growth assists with job creation and economic development, so there is a need to appropriately manage housing development on the peripheries of urban based industries due to the pressure that reverse sensitivity effects can have on those industries. Subdivision and development can also compromise the efficient extraction of significant mineral resources through the creation or exacerbation of reverse sensitivity effects.

The location and form in which urban development occurs in the District will also affect how efficiently services can be provided and amounts of energy consumed. Inefficient design in terms of lay-out and density can lead to an environment that is less sustainable in physical and social terms. Energy efficiency and conservation measures can be implemented by domestic, commercial and industrial activities, and will slow the depletion of non-renewable energy resources.

In providing for the long-term growth of the District it is also important to ensure that there is careful integration of land use and transportation planning and ensure that future development can be supported by appropriate infrastructure.

The effects of urban growth should be managed so that the future urban form of the District has addressed these concerns and retains the environmental features and qualities of life which makes Whangarei a desirable district to live work and play in.

This chapter contains the policy direction for the urban and industrial areas of Whangarei District. Objectives and policies have been included to assist in the management of urban growth that will provide a range of lifestyle options while recognising the constraints to development in the District. *One of the overarching objectives of this chapter is to provide strategic direction on the location, shape and form of future urban development in the Whangarei District, providing for a range of*

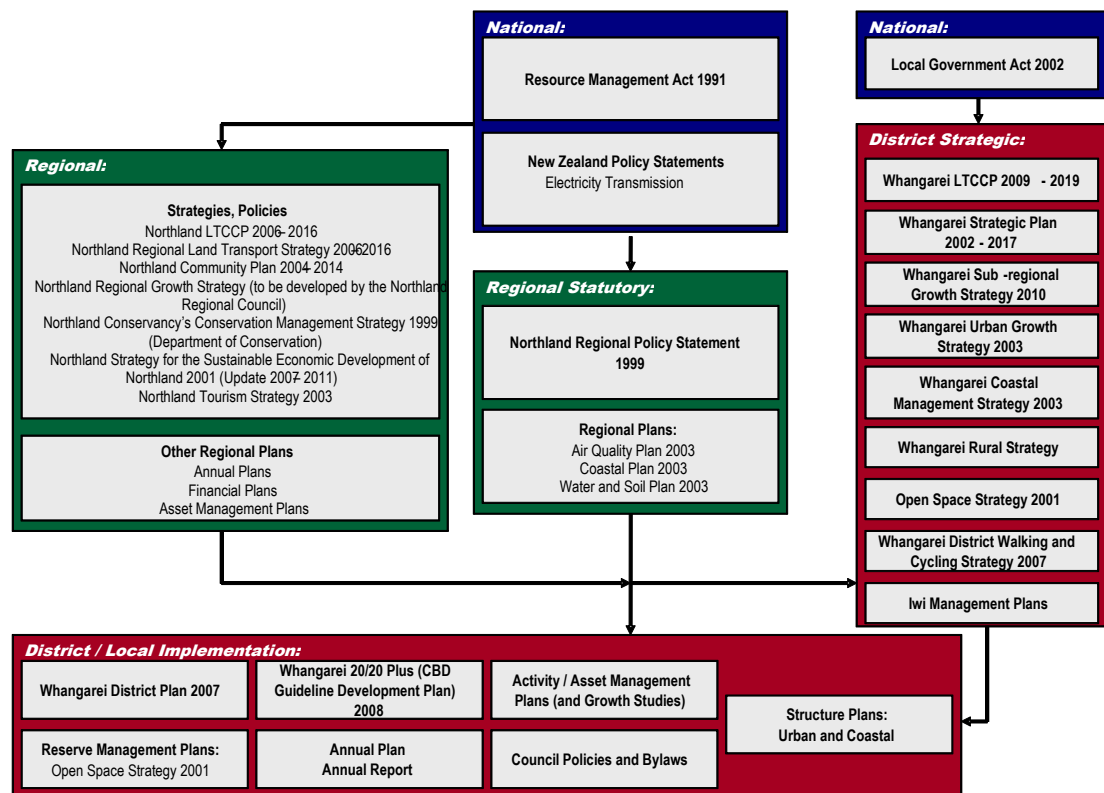
lifestyle choices whilst minimising the impact of urban development on *areas of significant landscape value, sites of ecological significance, or the margins of waterways or the coastline, productive farmland, mineral extraction activities, and existing industry.*

Business and industrial developments are also important for the economic well-being of the urban and industrial areas of the District. Policy provision has also been made for the sustainable development of the industrial areas, to avoid piecemeal development elsewhere, and to recognise the importance these areas have on the continued economic vitality of the District.

It is intended that the objectives provide for the integrated management of the large-scale effects of urban growth and development on the natural and physical resources of the District, in a way which will enable the people and communities of Whangarei to provide for their social and economic well-being.

This chapter is not the only mechanism for setting a strategic direction for urban form and development patterns for the District. The chapter sits within a framework of other statutory and planning documents. The framework diagram below depicts this arrangement.

The Sub-Regional Growth Strategy is based upon longer term planning horizons than the District Plan, looking forward thirty to fifty years. The Sub-Regional Growth Strategy provides an overarching framework for the suite of planning documents required under those statutes outlining the functions of local government. Beneath the Sub-Regional Growth Strategy sit the Whangarei Coastal Management Strategy, Urban Growth Strategy, and the Rural Strategy, and beneath these sits the package of urban and coastal structure plans. These non-statutory, strategic documents all adopt a 20 year planning horizon. Below these document sits the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) formulated under the Local Government Act (2002) and the District Plan, both of which adopt a 10 year planning cycle.



Vision

The vision and anticipated outcomes for Whangarei's urban form and development are based upon a strategy of urban consolidation and a 'centres-based' approach to accommodating growth. The vision and the anticipated outcomes are embodied in the Sub-Regional Growth Strategy, Coastal Management Strategy and the Urban Growth Strategy. The strategy of urban consolidation is underpinned by the principles of *infill development*, *transition*, and *contiguous development*. Urban consolidation will emphasise a compact pattern of development, in contrast to isolated, sporadic and dispersed patterns of urban growth into what are currently rural and coastal areas. The principle of transition provides for a more gradual transition of densities from urban to rural and coastal environments. Contiguous development allows for long-term consolidation of the existing urban area by allowing densities to increase on the fringes in the future as the market demands. The principle of infill development promotes residential intensification in areas that are now, or are planned to be, serviced. *The vision for the urban form of the District is reflected in the District Plan, and depicted in Figure 1 and explained in the following sections.*

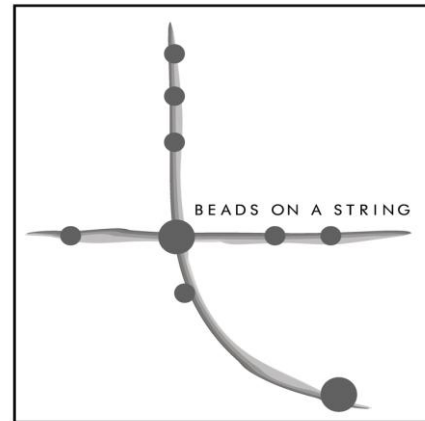


Figure 1

A hierarchy of urban centres has been developed to provide direction for urban growth and consolidation in the District. This centres hierarchy is anticipated to provide for more intensive residential development that would be able to be linked to the CBD via an efficient roading network and an effective public transport system. The vision will seek to limit urban development which may adversely affect areas of significant landscape value, sites of ecological significance, or the margins of waterways or the coastline productive farmland and existing industry. *A focus on good quality urban design and attractive streetscapes forms an integral part of the vision, as part of promoting high amenity, with a liveable city and suburban centres.* Key elements of the centres based vision for Whangarei include:

- A high density, mixed use CBD core;
- Suburban Centres (or Suburban Nodes);
 - a. Primary suburban centres in town centres and Kamo;
 - b. Secondary suburban centres ("Urban and Coastal Villages") in Onerahi, Hikurangi, Tikipunga, Otaika, Maunu, Waipu and Parua Bay;
- Local Centres ("Coastal Settlements and Rural Hamlets");
- Industrial / Employment Hubs;
- Multi-modal Transport Corridors which link to and between these centres; and
- Blue and Green Corridors.

Through the vision for the District's urban form and development, Council has identified a hierarchy of network of centres (i.e. the pattern of provision of different centres). It should be recognised that the hierarchy of centres is dynamic and may change over time, but any significant change in role or function of a centres (upward or downward), should come through the Sub-Regional Growth Strategy process (and consequentially into the District Plan) rather than being brought forward through applications for single developments. At the time that this chapter was reviewed and brought into the District Plan, it was programmed that the Sub-Regional Growth Strategy for Whangarei would be completed in 2010. The key elements and components of the centres hierarchy are explained below:

A key focus of the vision is on a **central business district** (CBD) characterised by a strong inner centre (core) and outer CBD. The CBD will provide the majority of

business, commerce and retailing for the District (and the Northland Region). A range of mixed use activities will be supported in the CBD, including high density residential land use, recreational and entertainment activities, and community and visitor facilities. The CBD forms the District's central public transport hub and is linked to suburban centres via a range of transport choices.

Suburban Centres (or suburban 'nodes') (including town centres, and 'Urban and Coastal Villages') will be the focus for the economic and social life of these particular communities. In particular, **primary suburban centres** will service a significant part of the District's (and Region's) commercial needs, taking on a role as a major employment node, retail centre and hub for community, recreational and entertainment facilities. As **secondary suburban centres**, suburban centres will service their residential catchments and provide accessible shopping and local services to meet people's day-to-day needs. Suburban centres will function as mixed use centres with a high level of accessibility, functioning as sub-district or sub-regional public transport hubs.

Local Centres ("Coastal Settlements and Rural Hamlets") represent the lowest level of centre identified under the centre hierarchy. These include existing rural and coastal settlements that have not been identified as nodes for growth and urban consolidation. Local centres will provide a limited range of local services to assist in meeting the day-to-day needs of residents from surrounding nearby rural or coastal settlements.

Industrial / Employment Hubs will serve sub-district catchments and provide a high proportion of employment activities (including industrial, commercial, business services, and limited large format or bulk retail stores). High employment densities will be supported by moderate accessibility by public transport at peak times. Industrial / Employment Hubs are not intended to support residential, community, entertainment or most retail facilities.

It is envisaged that industrial-employment hubs will provide for industrial and employment activities through agglomeration and clustering of related activities in a way that avoids the effects of reverse sensitivity on industrial / employment hubs. In this way the effects of such activities on the environment can be more readily managed, while promoting employment opportunities that will meet the social and economic aspirations of the community.

Heavy Industry Hubs will provide an environment in which heavy industry can function effectively without compromise to those activities, or to public health and safety. Sustainable development of heavy industry is important to the economic wellbeing of the district. Heavy Industry Hubs will give precedence to industrial activities that may be adversely affected by reverse sensitivity, and are in an inappropriate location for sensitive uses, such as residential and/or retail activities. The primary Heavy Industry Hub is at Marsden Point, incorporating nationally significant infrastructure such as the oil refinery and port.

The hierarchy of nodes also recognises that within centres there will be different categories of retail activity and that certain categories are considered appropriate (or inappropriate) in different locations as a result of their various site requirements and functions. For instance, bulk retail developments are more suitably located outside the inner CBD, and restricted from locating in secondary suburban nodes and local centres. Such activities are considered more appropriately located in the outer (periphery) CBD. These locations are more appropriate because of the size and function of such retail activity, and their potential to compromise pedestrian or residential amenity values. Bulk format retail typically require large building footprints and large servicing and car parking areas due to the nature of their retail activity. Retail activities such as shopping centres can generate much greater social, economic and environmental benefits if they are located within mixed-use activity centres, co-located with other complementary stores. This type of retail will be supported in the inner and outer CBD, and for primary and secondary suburban nodes.

| Centre Type | Typical Commercial Area (approximate) | Population Catchment (approximate) ¹ |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| CBD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBD (inner and outer) • Up to 40 - 45 hectares | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves a district wide population catchment of up to 130,000. • Serves a local population catchment of up to 25,000. |
| Primary Suburban Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 - 10 hectares² | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves a local population catchment of up to 10,000 – 15,000 |
| Secondary Suburban Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 - 6 hectares | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves a local population catchment of up to 5,000. |
| Local Centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 - 2 hectares | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves a local population catchment of up to 2,000. |

¹ Population estimates are based upon associated population projections documented in the WDC *Sustainable Futures 30 – 50* document (Scenario 3). Population projections are to year 2060.

² Note that the stated "Typical Commercial Area" and "Population Catchment" thresholds for Primary Suburban Centres could be exceeded in the Marsden Point – Ruakaka area because the area's growth drivers are mostly external and future growth and development cannot therefore be accurately predicted.

The table below identifies for each type of centre the typical commercial area and population catchment that each centre is anticipated to serve:

| Retail Type | Retail Size and Function | Appropriate Location | Typical District Plan Environment (Zone) |
|---------------------|---|---|---|
| Shopping Centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and sub-district role. • General merchandise and department stores. • Wide variety of comparison goods stores. • Trading floorspace usually > 50,000 m². | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBD (inner and outer) • Primary suburban centres. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business 1 (CBD inner) • Business 3 (primary suburban centres). |
| Bulk Format Retail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison shopping (i.e. items not obtained on a frequent basis). • Yard based (e.g. building supplies, garden centres, car sales). • Trade suppliers (e.g. paint, catering, plumbing supplies). • Bulky comparison goods (e.g. whiteware, furniture, office products, carpet, bedding). • General merchandise (e.g. hypermarkets, discount stores, homewares, factory outlet clothing stores). • Mainly car-borne customers. • Extensive retail offer (20 – 50,000 m² trading floorspace in a cluster or retail node). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outer CBD • Marsden Point - Ruakaka town centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business 2 'type' or 'sub' Environment which allows for bulk format type retail activities.³ |
| Supermarkets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience shopping – self service stores. • A typical store size of 6,500m² of GFA or less • Supporting car parking provided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBD (inner and outer) • Primary Nodes • Secondary Nodes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business 1 (except in the Town Basin Environment) • Business 3 |
| Local Centre Retail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited retail offer - small footprint shops of 300 m² total floorspace. • Services day to day needs – dairy, takeaway, post office. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business 3 |

³ Note that 'bulk format retail' not specifically provided for in current Business 2 environment.

As part of the vision for urban form, the development of **blue and green corridors** will support the enhancement of the natural setting of Whangarei, whilst protecting ecosystems and landscape amenity. Much of the Western Hills, the coastline and river margins in Whangarei have high landscape and ecological values, and these features are a key aspect of the District's identity. *Blue corridors* will improve amenity values and recreational opportunities particularly along key scenic and tourist routes. *Green corridors* will promote the protection of landscape amenity along key arterial routes that approach the CBD, and entry into nodes through a green 'gateway' or amenity buffers.

The key anticipated outcomes of a centres based urban form model are:

- Compact pattern of urban development and increased infill development in areas appropriately serviced.
- Sporadic, sprawling or ribbon development patterns of coastal development avoided.
- Amenity values and identity of urban and coastal communities retained and enhanced.
- Accessible shopping and living services in suburban centres to meet people's day to day needs.
- Vibrancy and vitality of Central Business District
- Protection of natural values and avoidance of development in environmentally sensitive areas
- Agglomeration of industry and business activity.
- Efficient roading and public transport network and reductions in private car-borne trips.
- Avoidance of loss of productive soils

6.3 Objectives

6.3.1

Accommodate future urban growth with an emphasis on urban consolidation of the central business district (CBD) and in and around existing suburban nodes.

6.3.2

1. Subdivision and development that ensures consolidated development in appropriate locations and avoids sprawling or sporadic subdivision and ribbon development patterns in the coastal and rural environment.
2. Subdivision and development providing incentive to protect significant areas of native forest, public access to coast/harbour edge, the retention of built heritage and is environmentally sustainable.

6.3.3

Avoid urban development in sensitive areas (i.e. natural hazard areas, outstanding natural features and landscapes, areas of significant ecological habitats, sites of significance to Maori).

6.3.4

Ensure urban growth and development takes into consideration Maori cultural values.

6.3.5

Maintain and strengthen the city centre (CBD and Town Basin) as the primary centre within the District for shopping, employment, city living, and culture and entertainment,

tertiary education, hospitals and other services and ensure that development in other locations do not compromise this role.

6.3.6

Provide accessible and convenient suburban centres, and focus future intensive residential growth in and around those centres.

6.3.7

Maintain and enhance characteristic amenity values and the identity of suburban centres.

6.3.8

Maintain and enhance accessibility for communities and integrate land use and transport planning.

6.3.9

Recognise and maximise agglomeration and enhancement opportunities for industrial and economic activity, enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well being.

6.3.10

Manage the location of retail activities to ensure they support a consolidated urban form, and support long-term vitality and viability of existing centres.

6.3.11

Ensure that infrastructure services are provided to existing and newly urbanised areas in an efficient and effective manner that avoids, remedies and mitigates potential adverse effects on the environment.

6.3.12.

Avoid [conflict](#) between incompatible land use activities as a result of subdivision and urban development.

6.3.13

Minimise loss of productive soils and economic farming units from urban expansion.

6.3.14

Reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency in subdivision design and land development.

6.3.15

Provide and [increase](#) the amount and usability of, and access to, quality open space for the social and cultural well-being of a growing population,

6.3.16

1. Provide access to education opportunities, and community infrastructure as a result of urban growth.
2. Maintain and encourage pathways for the use of cycleways and walkways within and adjacent to targeted growth areas.

6.3.17

Minimise the contributions from and avoid, remedy and mitigate the adverse effects of natural hazards and climate change on people, property and the environment.

6.3.18

Ensure high quality urban design outcomes for the CBD, suburban nodes and urban and coastal villages through processes established in accordance with the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol.

6.3.19

Avoid zoning areas for urban development (including urban transition development) in proximity to identified Mineral Extraction Areas to avoid reverse sensitivity which may result in a compromise of mineral extraction activities.

6.3.20

Recognise and provide for the efficient use and development of existing physical resources through the creation of industrial / employment hubs and heavy industry hubs which provide for and encourage growth and development of industrial and commercial activities within those areas.

6.4 Policies

6.4.1 Future Growth

To zone land within urban areas in a manner that meets anticipated future urban growth demands, taking into account:

- Landscape values
- Ecological values
- Amenity values
- Natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands and lakes, and rivers and their margins
- Archaeological and heritage features
- Sites of significance to Maori, and other taonga
- Infrastructure, and high voltage transmission lines
- Productive land fragmentation
- Water and soil quality
- Cross-boundary conflicts
- Identified Mineral Extraction Areas

Explanation and Reasons: The extent of the Business and Living Environments shown on the Planning Maps reflects the anticipated, foreseeable future size of urban areas. Any proposed extensions to these boundaries would require careful consideration of environmental and community standards and the necessity for and appropriateness of extending public services and roading infrastructure.

6.4.2 Consolidated Development

To consolidate urban development by:

- i) Focusing residential development on those urban areas with demand, where the landscape and natural character have already been compromised.
- ii) Further develop within existing built up areas, so as to avoid sporadic or sprawling subdivision and ribbon development patterns, particularly in rural areas and along the coast.

- iii) Directing rural lifestyle and rural-residential development to appropriate locations adjacent to existing settlements, rather than allowing sporadic development throughout rural and coastal areas.
- iv) Promoting clustered, mixed use activity that focus on existing urban and coastal centres.
- v) Retaining and encouraging a distinctive sense of place.

Explanation and Reasons: Locating residential and urban development in proximity to other development of like character and effect reduces the size of development impact and enables other areas to retain a rural and/or natural character. It also helps prevent sporadic subdivision and ribbon development, which can have adverse effects on natural, cultural (including tangata whenua) and amenity values and prevent the efficient and orderly provision of infrastructure and services.

6.4.3 Infill Development

To provide for infill development in areas appropriately serviced, to accommodate future urban growth, and in a manner that is consistent with maintaining and improving the character and amenity value of neighbourhoods and quality of the built environment.

Explanation and Reasons: This policy promotes a consolidated urban form, while as far as possible retaining existing character and amenities of localities. Infill development can involve new development or redevelopment and provides for greater intensity of use. Areas of the District considered appropriate for infill development have been zoned accordingly, and specific rules apply. For example, minimum lot size on subdivision.

6.4.4 City Centre (CBD and Town Basin)

- i) To promote opportunities for mixed use developments and intensification in the city centre.
- ii) To foster and promote the CBD's sense of place and identity.
- iii) To promote the city centre as a principle focus for commercial, administration, employment, entertainment, cultural and tourism activities.

Explanation and Reasons – A focus on the central business district with a strong inner centre (core) and outer CBD is a key component of the strategy for achieving urban consolidation. The CBD will provide the majority of business, commerce and retailing for the District (and Northland Region).

The core of the CBD and its outer peripheral areas should be the most accessible part of the District for most people, with a logical priority focus for public transport. Strengthening the CBD will ensure that it retains its primary role and function as an employment and retail centre for the District. Encouraging a high density mixed use CBD will also increase living opportunities in the CBD and create a city centre with a sense of vitality and vibrancy with reduced reliance of private motor vehicles.

Furthermore the city centre is a significant physical resource in terms of public and private buildings, infrastructure and amenities. The area provides for the social, economic and cultural well-being of the people of Whangarei (and surrounding districts in the Northland Region). This is reflective of the greater scale and variety of facilities and services available in the CBD. The maintenance and development of this resource is an important part of the overall sustainability of Whangarei's urban area.

6.4.5 Policy – Suburban Centres

To provide accessible, well-designed and convenient suburban centres, in a manner that enhances the amenities of living environments and minimises adverse effects on the transport network.

Explanation and Reasons: This policy seeks to encourage a reduction in travel demand by private vehicles by encouraging a distribution of shopping centres that are conveniently located throughout the District. Some of the larger centres will serve to function as areas for consolidation, and would be complemented by medium housing density in close proximity.

Suburban nodes (including town centres, and ‘Urban and Coastal Villages’) will be the focus for the economic and social life of these particular communities. In particular, primary suburban nodes will service a significant part of the District’s (and Region’s) commercial needs. Marsden Point – Ruakaka is a primary suburban node that will take on a role as a major employment node, retail centre and hub for community, recreational and entertainment facilities.

Secondary suburban nodes are suburban centres that will service their residential catchments and provide accessible shopping and local services to meet people’s day-to-day needs. Suburban centres will function as mixed use centres with a high level of accessibility, functioning as sub-district or sub-regional public transport hubs.

The creation of suburban nodes can have positive effects on the sense of community in an area. Suburban centres already exist in Whangarei and by allowing them to provide a comprehensive range of services and increasing the density of housing around them a node can be created, and this in turn provides a centre or focus for the communities around which an identity for the area, therefore enhancing and maintaining the character and amenity of the area.

Consolidation of existing suburban centres should occur in locations or on routes that reinforce community density, minimise adverse effects on amenity, are served by public transport, and where the level of demand on the road network can be accommodated.

6.4.6 Policy – Retail Activity

- i) To support proposals for bulk retail located in the periphery (outer) CBD and in the Marsden Point - Ruakaka area
- ii) To support proposals for retail activities which generate and require high parking and vehicle access requirements (such as supermarkets) only within or on the edge of existing centres.
- iii) To support retail proposals elsewhere in the city where they are of a scale or nature that does not impact on the long-term viability and vitality of the city centre.

Explanation and Reasons - The hierarchy of nodes recognises that there are different categories of retail activity and that these categories are considered appropriate in different locations as a result of their various site requirements and functions. For instance, yard-based retail and bulk retail developments are more suitably located outside the inner CBD, and restricted from locating in secondary suburban nodes and local centres. Such activities are considered more appropriately located in the outer (periphery) CBD or at the Marsden Point - Ruakaka town centres. These locations are more appropriate because of the size and function of such retail activity, and their potential to compromise pedestrian or residential amenity values. Yard-based retail and bulky goods retail generate infrequent customer visits as the goods for sale are often large sized products, and by necessity of their nature require large building footprints and subsequently large servicing and car parking areas.

Retail that falls under ‘general merchandising’ category such as shopping centres may generate greater social, economic and environmental benefits if they are located in a mixed-use activity centres, co-located with other complementary stores. This type of retail will be supported in the inner and outer CBD, and for primary and secondary suburban nodes.

6.4.7 Policies – Business Activity

- i) To encourage consolidation and development of the central business district (CBD).
- ii) To avoid sporadic commercial development.
- iii) To promote agglomeration and clustering of businesses and industry.
- iv) To recognize and provide for the continued operation and appropriate further development of existing and commercial and industrial activities.

Explanation and Reasons: The city centre has become increasingly fragmented which has begun to affect the accessibility and functionality of the wider business district in Whangarei, and poses long term impacts on the economic viability of Whangarei. By containing the CBD and consolidating business growth in this area long term benefits for the businesses and communities of Whangarei will be realised.

The policy seeks to maximise the economic benefits derived from agglomeration of industrial and employment activities in the Marsden Point – Ruakaka area and other areas where there are existing industrial activities through development of Greenfield land, whilst ensuring that such activities requiring a more rural location are of a scale compatible with the dominant rural character. Any industrial relocation to more rural environments should take account of the relationship between rural resources, scale of development, servicing requirements, impacts on amenity values and loss of productive soils. Existing industries that are located close to areas that create issues of reverse sensitivity (e.g. residential areas) can be severely limited in their ability to operate to their full potential and/or expand operations if demand requires. Council should therefore monitor the amount of industrial land available within the District and levels of occupancy, so that zones changes can be made to accommodate demand. This should limit the fragmentation of industrial areas, allow for greater intensification and agglomeration where appropriate and also provide the opportunity to develop buffer areas, or strips between potentially conflicting land-uses.

6.4.8 Policy – Reverse Sensitivity and Incompatible Land Use

- i) To ensure that land use activities, subdivision and development are designed and located so as to avoid or mitigate conflicts between incompatible land uses.
- ii) To facilitate separation of incompatible land uses through location of District Plan Environments and Resource Areas, and specific requirements for land use activities.

Explanation and Reasons: Reverse sensitivity issues arise where different land uses occur in close proximity (for example: residential and rural, residential and commercial, residential and industrial). As Whangarei's urban area expands conflict between different types of land use has the potential to increase. This can affect the potential uses and users of the land. Council needs to recognise the adverse effects that reverse sensitivity can have on amenity values, and the ability of land owners to utilise their land to its full potential.

6.4.9 Policies - Rural-Urban Interface

- i) To carefully manage the interface between rural areas and adjacent residential or Urban Transition Environments and between rural land and the land managed for conservation purposes.
- ii) To provide for the establishment of Urban Transitional living, particularly where normal urban residential densities would be inappropriate.
- iii) Urban and Urban Transition development is avoided in areas which:
 - a) Contain productive farmland;
 - b) Are located in the vicinity of Mineral Extraction Areas identified in the District Plan;

- c) Contain significant environmental, heritage or landscape values and areas or are areas of significant natural character; or
- d) Are prone to the impact of natural hazards, such as flooding or land instability, or are areas which if developed are likely to induce flooding or instability elsewhere.

Explanation and Reasons: Some peripheral locations, because of servicing constraints may be unsuitable for full residential development (i.e. typical Living 1 Environment) but may be appropriate for similar lower density development forms. Provision for Urban Transitional development can reduce pressure for the use of productive soils for lifestyle reasons. Urban Transitional development may also be an appropriate 'transition' from residential to rural character on parts of the urban periphery. Provision within the District for Urban Transitional development will need to be managed and contained in extent and location as a result of constraints on servicing, and the need to prevent low density sprawl of Urban Transitional development occurring. The policy intent of this set of policies is two fold, firstly to reinforce objectives and policies on urban consolidation, and secondly, to improve the amenity qualities of the urban-rural interface (i.e. larger lots will provide increased scope for amenity planting etc).

6.4.10 Policy – Productive Soils

- i) To identify and protect the district's highly productive and versatile soils for their productive capacity.
- ii) To recognise the value of productive soils and economic farming units to the District's economy.

Explanations and Reasons: There are some high quality soils close to the city and within areas that have been identified for future growth. It is important to recognize the impacts that urban development can have on the viability of rurally based industries (agriculture and horticulture). Identification of where the productive soils are in the District and systems for their management would form a significant part of managing this issue.

6.4.11 Policies – Integrated Transport

- i) To promote and seek to create an effective and efficient transport system, integrating transport and land use planning for improved ease of access to public transport and walkability of neighbourhoods.
- ii) To promote higher living densities around nodes of suburban development to enhance the use of public transport.
- iii) To promote Rural roadside safety for pedestrian and cyclists.

Explanation and Reasons: It is important for Whangarei residents to be able to live and work within accessible distance from a public transport node. This form of integration between transport and land use planning involves not only the need to locate new development around key transport nodes and corridors but also to improve existing and new transport connections (including cycling and walking) within areas of existing urban development. It is important that provision is made for land transport (particularly public transport, walkways and cycleways) and this is incorporated into future urban developments.

6.4.12 Policy – Infrastructure

- i) Growth and development is planned and located to maximise the benefits available from existing infrastructure. Where infrastructure is not available, growth and development does not occur until the necessary infrastructure is in place.
- ii) To provide infrastructural services to existing and newly urbanised areas in an efficient and effective manner that matches the needs of the community and the

capacity of infrastructure, whilst avoiding the adverse effects of urban growth and development on the environment.

Explanation and Reasons: Whangarei's infrastructure resources need to be recognised when considering urban growth and development. It is considered by Council to be more economically and environmentally sustainable to efficiently utilise existing infrastructure where capacity is available. Priority should be given to providing for growth where the benefits of that growth location most outweigh the economic and environmental costs of infrastructure provision or upgrading. Particular attention needs to be given to the impact of new infrastructure on coastal margins, waterways and harbours.

6.4.13 Policy – Energy Efficiency

To promote the incorporation of energy efficiency and conservation measures into the design of subdivision and land development.

Explanation and Reasons: Sites for development can be made more energy efficient by designing subdivision lay-outs that assist with reducing energy use, and by following simple energy saving principles for possible building location and positioning within a site. Encouragement will be given to passive solar design, the use of renewable resources in buildings and energy efficient building practices.

6.4.14 Policy – Natural Resources

To identify and protect resources and areas of high amenity value, environmental quality that contribute to a diverse sense of place (including notable view shafts, notable trees, native flora and fauna, outstanding natural features and landscapes).

Explanation and Reasons: This policy seeks to discourage, except where provided for in the District Plan, urban development which may adversely affect outstanding landscape values and features, sites of ecological significance, the margins of waterways or the coastline. Much of the Western Hills, the coastline, and river margins in the District have high landscape and ecological values and these natural features are a key aspect of the District's identity. Consequently development which may create visual detractor, impede public access, result in the loss of ecological habitats, loss of vegetation, or a decline in water quality would not be favoured.

6.4.15 Policy – Open Space

- i) To provide, and increase the amount and usability of, and access to, quality open space (for both active and passive uses) within urban areas, to meet the recreation needs of a growing population.
- ii) To ensure linkages are created between areas of existing open space and any new areas created.

Explanation and Reasons: Open space is a major factor contributing to the character and amenity of urban areas of the District. Open space provides for the social and cultural well being of the community. As Whangarei grows increased demand will be placed on the recreational opportunities which the open space in Whangarei currently affords. The demands on recreational areas will increase and diversify, and in order to provide people with high quality recreational experiences, forward planning for provision, creating linkages, and providing diversity for recreational requirements will be needed.

Through Council's Development Contributions Policy (2004), Council will only accept reserve land as a development contribution where it is specifically a recreation, scenic or historic reserve and will be vested as such. Under the Development Contribution Policy, the default policy is to take contributions in the form of money unless the land offered meets the open space objectives. This has resulted in open space outcomes that meet the open space objectives of the city. However, the vesting of land that offers little recreational opportunities are often proposed in residential subdivisions (e.g. land in steep gullies or flood prone areas). It is important that Council ensures that such

areas are not accepted and that the vesting of any land as fulfilment of reserve contributions is of the right type and in the right location, in order to provide usable open space and meet the recreation needs of the community.

6.4.16 Policy – Community and Educational Facilities

To encourage the provision of and access to community and educational facilities in urbanisation.

Explanation and Reasons: Adequate provision of community and educational facilities is required to provide the growing population with recreational and cultural opportunities. Council needs to take an active role in community development, recognising and developing opportunities and methods, to encourage residents of Whangarei to become active in their community and assist Council in realising the vision of the city. This policy also seeks to minimise costs associated with provision of new facilities, and enhance the viability of those which already exist in urban areas.

6.4.17 Policy – Urban Design Principles and CPTED

To promote the use of urban design and CPTED principles to encourage a high quality urban amenity, form and design around the city centre, suburban centres, creating lively streetscapes and safe and attractive public spaces.

Explanation and Reasons: There is a need to improve the quality of public and private development in both the CBD and in suburban centres. As a result there appears to be a negative perception of Whangarei's image and identity in terms of safety, and other social and economic factors. The application of urban design and CPTED principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) to development will assist in achieving the anticipated outcomes of a vibrant, mixed use CBD and suburban centres with lively streetscapes and safe and attractive public spaces.

Whangarei District Council is now a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol. The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol provides a platform to make towns and cities more successful through quality urban design. The Urban Design Protocol is a voluntary commitment by central and local government, property developers and investors, design professionals, educational institutes and other groups to undertake specific urban design initiatives. Becoming a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol signifies the Council's commitment to continuous improvement to the District's urban areas, and recognises its role in helping set an example for others in their sector.

6.4.18 Comprehensive Redevelopment

To promote comprehensive redevelopment across multiple lots by methods that provide incentives to amalgamate sites where appropriate

6.4.19 Environmental Protection and Enhancement and Public Benefit

To provide incentives to achieve protection and enhancement of degraded natural and physical resources and wider public benefits including:

- i) Protecting and enhancing native bush, wetlands, riparian and coastal margins;
and
- ii) Providing public access to those areas created above where appropriate.

6.5 Methods

6.5.1 Regulatory Methods

Identification of a pattern of land uses (through zoning as a regulatory mechanism) that supports a strategy (as depicted in Figure 1 of this chapter) for a consolidated urban form for the District (i.e. preventing sporadic outward spread of urban development into the surrounding rural and coastal area and provide for opportunities for medium to high density development in urban areas (i.e. central city living environments and around areas that have been identified for consolidation). In particular:

- Identification of Living and Business Environments on the District Plan Planning Maps
- Environment rules relating to provision of car parking, signs, types of activities, building design, bulk and location in Business Environments.
- Environment rules relating to bulk and location of buildings, types of activities and standards for protection of amenity values in Living Environments.
- Subdivision rules relating to allotment size and shape, setbacks from high voltage transmission lines provision of utility services such as water supply, sewage and stormwater disposal, electricity etc.
- Propose zoning changes for city port areas – i.e. relocation of business land to provide for mixed use/intensification.
- Identification of new rules for Town Basin sub-environments to enable and promote mixed use type developments.
- Identification of new rules for building adjacent to waterways for Town Basin areas – setbacks, passive surveillance.
- Resource consent conditions.
- Roading hierarchy – add indicative roads to planning maps.
- For areas of transition, the identification of specialised low density (rural-residential type Living Environment) and/or peripheral Living environments and associated zone rules, e.g. minimum net site areas, special set-backs and performance standards. (i.e. develop a new rural residential environment).
- Identification of existing and future (known) high voltage transmission line corridors on relevant District Planning maps.
- Propose amendments to Environment Rules relating to setbacks from high voltage transmission lines.

6.5.2 Economic Instruments

- Development contributions for, and provision of works and services (e.g. development of public open space, water supply, drainage and district roading programmes, environmental enhancement of older parts of the District).
- Development contributions from land use development applied to development and maintenance of the open space network within the CBD.
- Development contributions for reserves land contribution through subdivision and [development](#).
- Incentives offered to leaseholders of WDC land, with activities inappropriate to the long-term vision to [relocate](#) elsewhere.
- Council-led initiatives and joint development ventures with the private sector for redevelopment of [WDC](#) and NRC land holdings in CBD areas.

- Financial contributions to address the mitigation of environmental effects from land use and [development](#).
- Financial [contributions](#) to mitigate any effects of development on the safety and efficiency of infrastructure networks where provided for through the LTCCP.

6.5.3 Council Works and Services

- Maintenance and development of public infrastructure services, recovering costs from users as appropriate.
- Implementation of Coastal Management Strategy.
- Implementation of Urban Growth Strategy.
- Implementation of Rural Strategy (yet to be completed).
- Implementation of Open Space Strategy (and develop levels of service provision for open space to meet needs of a growing population).
- Implement Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy.
- Complete and Implement Tree Strategy.
- On-going implementation and/or review of 'Whangarei 20/20 Plus'.
- Develop and implement CBD Land Use Plan, and prepare a Town Basin Strategic and Activity Plan for development of Council's land holdings in the area.
- Works and services relating to the creation, maintenance and operation of public open space areas within the Town Basin Environment.
- Works and services relating to the linkage of open space areas within the Town Basin Environment to the wider network of Whangarei's reserves.
- Provision of public infrastructure in centres (including street furniture, lighting, signage, public artworks and other visitor facilities).

6.5.4 Other plans and legislation

- Building Act 1991.
- Local Government Act 2002.

6.5.5 Design Guidelines

- The design of areas for intensification in the CBD can be managed through District Plan processes and design criteria/guides (e.g. urban design controls and guides for medium density living environments around selected commercial centres).
- Develop design guidelines (that incorporate CPTED) to preserve and enhance safety, character and amenity for residential and commercial development.
- Production, implementation, review of main street programmes for CBD main streets in precincts.
- Design guidelines and principles for urban and coastal villages – built form (urban design controls and guides for built form, materials, setbacks etc).
- Built form and landscape development through the need to develop design guidelines that ensure appropriate heavy and light industry addressing size, bulk, form, finishing materials, colour etc. The development of such guidelines shall be undertaken by Council in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

6.5.6 Information, Education and Advocacy

- Liaise with adjacent local authorities

- Educate and inform resource users about energy efficiency and conservation.
- Liaise with business groups on issues relating to consolidation, development of CBD and Town Basin.
- Liaise with all stakeholders, including landowners, to aggregate and consolidate industrial and economic activities in Employment/Industrial Hubs.
- Promote and facilitate redevelopment of land (e.g. via comprehensive development plans).
- Liaise with communities to identify community character and amenity values (sense of place studies).
- Support existing public transport services and advocate for expansion of service.
- Preparation of an urban design guide to promote good development within the Town Basin Environment.
- Liaise with tourism and economic development agencies to promote the Town Basin Environment.
- Establishment of a community liaison group chaired by WDC to meet regularly and share issues and ideas impacting on the Town Basin.
- Council to work with local communities, Housing NZ and other key agencies to develop area plans to allow for infill development.

6.6 Anticipated Environmental Results

The following results are expected to be achieved by the foregoing objectives, policies and methods:

- A pattern of consolidated urban development and increased infill development in areas appropriately serviced.
- A pattern of nodal urban development to allow for a range of living choices.
- Sporadic, sprawling or ribbon development patterns of coastal development avoided.
- Enhanced amenity values and identity of urban and coastal communities.
- Accessible shopping and living services in suburban centres to meet people's day to day needs.
- Redevelopment, vibrancy and vitality of the Central Business District.
- Agglomeration of industry and business activity.
- Avoidance of reverse sensitivity effects and appropriate separation of incompatible land uses.
- Improved efficiency in infrastructure provision that is sustainable.
- Efficient roading and public transport network, and reductions in private car-borne trips.
- Protection of natural values, cultural and historic heritage, and avoidance of development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Avoidance of loss of productive farmland.
- Avoidance of reverse sensitivity effects.
- Efficient use and development of existing and new industry and business activities.

Revision and Sign-off Sheet

| Date Approved | Editor | Paragraph | Change Reference | Decision Date | Approved By |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|---|--|-------------|
| 22 June 2009 | FP | Whole Chapter 6 | Under revision. Chapter hyperlinked to Plan Change 92 | ES 11 June 2009 | PW |
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Editor **France Prevost (FP)**
Lisa Blagrove (LB)
Taya Baxter (TB)
Jane Murdoch (JM)

Editor Position Team Administrator Policy Division

Approved By **Paul Waanders (PW)**
Melissa McGrath (MM)

Approver Position Policy and Monitoring Manager (PW)
Team Leader – District Plan (MM)