

Coastal Area

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CA.1.1 Description and Expectations

Whangarei boasts a long and varied coastline stretching from Bream Tail in the south to Ngaiotonga in the north. The coastline is made up of rugged cliffs and rocky headlands, mangrove-lined harbours and estuaries, sandy beaches and sheltered bays interspersed with small Rural Villages. The Coastal Area applies to land where the coast has a significant influence, and conversely, where land use activities can have effects on the coastal marine area. The coastal parts of the district therefore require slightly different management both under legislation, and to manage the effects of land use and development on the coastal environment. Over the years, the Coastal Area has been substantially modified, with coastal forests, dune vegetation and indigenous wetlands being largely replaced by productive land and residential development. Historically the Coastal Area was extensively settled by Maori and early Europeans and contains many archaeological sites as well as other cultural and natural heritage features.

The Coastal Area has high recreational, amenity, landscape, intrinsic, cultural and ecological value and as such is a highly desirable place to live. It is also a valuable resource to the district's economy, attracting holiday makers from outside the region to experience the many safe swimming and surf beaches, and the world renowned recreational opportunities based around the coast and offshore islands. Due to pressure for residential development it is important that the Coastal Area is managed to ensure that its use and development does not exceed the capacity of the environment to absorb any adverse effects, and that the amenity, landscape, ecological and natural character values that make it special are not compromised. This includes requirements to avoid significant effects on outstanding natural character areas.

The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment is a matter of national importance under Section 6(a) of the Resource Management Act 1991. The RMA, New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and Regional Policy Statement direct Council to protect the natural character of the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Whether subdivision, use or development in the coastal environment is appropriate will in part be determined by the extent to which that location still has natural character, and the extent to which the activity proposed will affect this character.

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Largely undeveloped parts of the Coastal Area have been identified as High Natural Character Areas or Outstanding Natural Character Areas with rules and policies applying to them to protect their ecological, recreational, and landscape values. The remainder of the Coastal Area has a higher degree of human modification, and while parts are still relatively undeveloped, it can accommodate low density rural residential development without generating unacceptable adverse effects provided that development is well designed and located. Development in these areas can also provide a catalyst for environmental enhancement and ecological restoration programs. It is however expected that most development in the Coastal Area should be consolidated around existing coastal villages.

The objectives, policies and rules for the Coastal Area as set out below apply in addition to the rules for the underlying Environments (e.g. Rural Production Environment, Living 1 Environment).

CA.1.2 Objectives

1. Identify and protect the natural character of the Coastal Area from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
2. Manage the cumulative effects of subdivision and development on the amenity, landscape, and ecological values of the Coastal Area.
3. Identify and protect areas of the Coastal Area that display high or outstanding natural character values.
4. Avoid adverse effects on the characteristics and qualities of identified Outstanding Natural Character Areas.
5. Avoid significant adverse effects, and avoid remedy or mitigate other adverse effects, on the Coastal Area and identified High Natural Character Areas.
6. Direct development to established coastal villages and areas with existing development while retaining the special values of undeveloped parts of the coast.
7. Maintain and enhance public access to and along the coast where appropriate.
8. Avoid increasing the risk of social, environmental, and economic harm from coastal hazards.
9. Protect and enhance natural defences against coastal hazards.
10. Encourage the enhancement and rehabilitation of the Coastal Area.
11. Recognise existing development and regionally significant infrastructure which has a functional need to be located in the Coastal Area.
12. To recognise that the Coastal Area contains undeveloped Māori Land and provide for the special relationship of Māori to this ancestral land.

CA.1.3 Policies

1. To design development to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the natural character of the Coastal Area by managing the visual effects of residential buildings, and minimising indigenous vegetation clearance, and earthworks.
2. To provide for low density residential development in the Coastal Area by identifying areas outside High and Outstanding Natural Character Areas appropriate for carefully designed development.
3. To maintain natural character values by locating and designing buildings to avoid adverse impacts on High or Outstanding Natural Character Areas.

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4. To manage the visual impacts of residential buildings in the Coastal Area outside coastal villages by limiting building height and ensuring exterior colour schemes are of low reflectivity value .
5. To protect natural landforms in the Coastal Area by avoiding where practicable locating of buildings, building platforms, and structures on ridgelines, skylines, shorelines and prominent headlands.
6. To avoid sprawling, sporadic and ribbon development in the Coastal Area through the location and design of subdivision.
7. To consolidate residential development in areas where landscape values and natural character have already been significantly compromised.
8. To cluster development within areas where there is the least impact on natural character and natural and cultural features.
9. To use natural features and contours to define boundary lines and to guide fencing, planting and access ways.
10. To design new allotments and building platforms that avoid impacts on natural features or areas with high biodiversity, landscape, or conservation values.
11. To ensure provision of public access to the coast and riparian margins at the subdivision design stage by creating esplanade reserves or strips, access strips or easements.
12. To recognise opportunities for environmental enhancement and improvements in natural character at subdivision stage by:
 - a. Protecting habitats of indigenous vegetation and species such as wetlands, duneland and riparian margins.
 - b. Excluding stock from remnant native vegetation, the coastal marine area and riparian margins.
 - c. Replanting land to provide habitat for indigenous species.
 - d. Implementing weed and pest management programs.
 - e. Providing public access to the coast through the creation of walkways, easements, and esplanade reserves and strips.
13. To promote enhancement and rehabilitation in natural character by encouraging landscape planting that follows landform patterns, and softens or screens the appearance of built development.
14. To ensure that adverse visual effects of earthworks scarps on Outstanding Natural Character Areas are avoided and that the significant adverse visual effects on High Natural Character Areas and coastal landscapes are avoided, remedied or mitigated far as practicable, by encouraging re-vegetation of earthworks scarps.
15. To protect coastal and fresh water quality by using best practice methods to reduce the sedimentation effects of earthworks and by re-vegetating exposed scarps.
16. To avoid earthworks in sand dunes where this will diminish their ability to protect development from coastal hazards.
17. To protect indigenous vegetation which contributes to the character and visual quality of the Coastal Area and protects against natural hazards.

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18. To reduce the risk of property damage by ensuring that building platforms meet minimum floor levels, and are identified outside coastal hazard areas in subdivision plans.
19. To utilise low impact stormwater design to protect coastal water quality and marine ecosystems.
20. To protect and enhance coastal water quality and ecosystems by including riparian planting, indigenous vegetation protection and wetland enhancement in subdivision plans.
21. To enable the continuation of rural production activities in the Coastal Area by allowing the building of non habitable rural production buildings.
22. To recognise that the Coastal Area may contain undeveloped ancestral Māori land and provide for tangata whenua needs for papakāinga development on that land as far as is consistent with the overall protection of the natural character of the Coastal Area.
23. To recognise that there can be a functional need to locate infrastructure in certain locations in the Coastal Area proximate to existing infrastructure.

CA.1.4 Guidance Note

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

Coastal Area Landuse

CA.2.1 Eligibility Rules

1. The rules below apply in addition to the rules of the underlying Environment. Where the standards are different between the underlying Environment and the Coastal Area the most restrictive rule shall apply.

CA.2.2 Permitted Activities

1. Construction of non habitable buildings ancillary to rural production or network utility activities outside a High or Outstanding Natural Character Area is a permitted activity.
2. Maintenance and minor upgrading of buildings and structures associated with public parks and reserves, network utilities, or community infrastructure is a permitted activity.
3. Any other activity not requiring consent as a discretionary or non-complying activity is a permitted activity.

CA.2.3 Discretionary Activities

1. Construction or external alteration of a Residential Unit within both the Coastal Area and the Rural Production Environment but outside a High or Outstanding Natural Character Area:
 - a. That exceeds a height of 8.5m, or
 - b. With exterior facades (excluding joinery) coloured or painted with a colour with a light reflectance value greater than 35%, or
 - c. With a roof colour with a light reflectance value greater than 30%.
2. Earthworks within the Coastal Area where:
 - a. The maximum volume of material disturbed or removed exceeds 500m³, or
 - b. The maximum face height of any cut and/or batter faces exceeds 2m.
3. Earthworks within sand dunes, with the exception of earthworks associated with:
 - a. A dune restoration project, or
 - b. A weed or pest management program, or
 - c. The provision and maintenance of public accessways, or
 - d. The burial of marine mammals.
4. The destruction or clearance of an area of predominantly indigenous vegetation exceeding 500m² in the Coastal Area; with the exception of vegetation clearance associated with:
 - a. Routine maintenance within 3m of existing buildings, or
 - b. Operation, maintenance and repair of existing tracks, lawns, gardens, fences, drains and other lawfully established activities, or
 - c. Pest plant removal and biosecurity works, or
 - d. Vegetation removal for customary rights, or
 - e. Conservation planting, including planting for ecological restoration purposes.

High Natural Character Area Landuse

CA.3.1 Discretionary Activities

1. Construction or External Alteration of a building within a High Natural Character Area:
 - a. That exceeds a height of 5.5m, or
 - b. With exterior facades (excluding joinery) coloured or painted with a colour with a light reflectance value greater than 35%, or
 - c. With a roof colour with a light reflectance value greater than 30%.
2. Earthworks within a High Natural Character Area where:
 - a. The maximum volume of material disturbed or removed exceeds 250m³, or
 - b. The maximum face height of any cut and/or batter faces exceeds 2m, and
 - c. The earthworks are not associated with:
 - i. The repair and maintenance of fences, utility connections, driveways, parking areas, effluent disposal systems, swimming pools, garden amenities, gardening, planting of any vegetation, walking or cycling tracks, farm and forestry tracks; or the burial of marine mammals; or
 - ii. Any legally established mineral extraction activity.
3. The destruction or clearance of an area of predominantly indigenous vegetation exceeding 250m² within a High Natural Character Area; with the exception of vegetation clearance associated with:
 - a. Routine maintenance within 3m of existing buildings, or
 - b. Operation, maintenance and repair of existing tracks, lawns, gardens, fences, drains and other lawfully established activities, or
 - c. Pest plant removal and biosecurity works, or
 - d. Vegetation removal for customary rights, or
 - e. Conservation planting, including planting for ecological restoration purposes.

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Outstanding Natural Character Area Landuse

CA.4.1 Discretionary Activities

1. External alterations or extensions greater than 50m² gross floor area of an existing building within an Outstanding Natural Character Area.
2. Construction of a building within an Outstanding Natural Character Area with a gross floor area that exceeds 50m².
3. Papakāinga development on ancestral Māori land within an Outstanding Natural Character Area.

CA.4.2 Non-Complying Activities

1. Earthworks with a volume greater than 150m³ within an Outstanding Natural Character Area, unless the work is directly associated with:
 - a. The repair and maintenance of fences, utility connections, driveways, parking areas, effluent disposal systems, swimming pools, or farm and forestry tracks, or
 - b. Garden amenities, gardening or the planting of any vegetation, or
 - c. The provision and maintenance of public walking or cycling tracks, or
 - d. Earthworks within sand dunes associated with:
 - i. A dune restoration project, or
 - ii. A weed or pest management program, or
 - iii. The provision and maintenance of public accessways, or
 - iv. The burial of marine mammals.
2. The clearance of more than 150m² of contiguous indigenous vegetation within an Outstanding Natural Character Area.

Subdivision

CA.5.1 Eligibility Rules

1. Subdivision within a High Natural Character Area is a discretionary activity.
2. Subdivision with an Outstanding Natural Character Area is a non-complying activity.
3. All other subdivision proposals will be assessed against the policies and provisions of the underlying Environment.

Revision and Sign-off Sheet

Date Approved	Editor	Paragraph	Change Reference	Decision Date	Approved By

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