

Strategic Direction (SD)

Overview

This chapter contains the key strategic approach to development that will address significant resource management issues of importance to the District. The chapter contains overarching objectives and policies that will guide decision making at a strategic level in relation to urban and rural development, the management of open space and regionally significant industries. It also sets out how Maori Resource management provisions in Part 2 of the RMA will be implemented through the plan.

Significant issues for the District that are addressed by the plan include the following:

- Managing growth and development;
- Managing existing and future development in areas subject to environmental risks;
- Protection of natural heritage (landscapes, biodiversity and natural features);
- Issues of significance to Mana Whenua;
- Protection of built and cultural heritage;
- Cumulative effects of development on the coastal environment;
- Fragmentation of the rural environment;
- The efficient development and maintenance of infrastructure

The following Objectives and Policies apply when changing and implementing the District Plan. They should be read in addition to the objectives and policies in the relevant zone, as well as any District wide provisions that apply.

Objectives

SD-01 – Range of Zones	Provide for differing character and amenity values by having a range of Zones with differing expectations.
SD-02 – Rural and Urban Areas	Protect the range of amenity values and characteristics in the Rural Area and the Urban Area.
SD-03 – Growth	Accommodate future growth through urban consolidation of Whangarei City, existing suburban nodes and rural villages, to avoid urban development sprawling into productive rural areas.
SD-04 – Sense of Place	Identify and protect buildings, sites, features and areas which are valued by the community and contribute to the District’s unique identity and sense of place.
SD-05 – Incompatible Activities	Avoid conflict between incompatible land use activities from new subdivision and development.
SD-06 – Indigenous Biodiversity	Identify and protect the values and attributes of indigenous biological diversity (Significant Natural Areas) and maintain the extent and diversity of other indigenous biodiversity.

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SD-O7 – Reticulated Infrastructure	Provide efficient and effective onsite and reticulated infrastructure in a sustainable manner and co-ordinate new land use and development with the establishment or extension of infrastructure and services.
SD-O8 – Cultural Values	Ensure that growth and development takes into account Maori cultural values.
SD-O9 – Land Use and Transport Planning	Maintain and enhance accessibility for communities and integrate land use and transport planning.
SD-O10 – Hazards	Minimise the risks and impacts of natural hazard events on people, property and infrastructure.

Objectives – Urban Area

SD-O11 – Residential and Business Demand	Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for the development of residential and business land to meet demand.
SD-O12 – Urban Design	Promote safe, compact, sustainable and good quality urban design that responds positively to the local context.
SD-O13 – Unanticipated Activities	Manage, and where appropriate avoid the establishment of activities that are incompatible with existing uses or unanticipated in the zone.

Objectives – Rural Area

SD-O14 – Productive Functions	Protect the long-term viability of the productive functions of rural land in a manner that delivers economic benefit and sustains the environment.
SD-O15 – Rural Area Land Uses	Provide for a range of appropriate land uses in the Rural Area, including rural production activities, residential, rural residential, rural lifestyle, commercial, industrial, strategic rural industries, activities ancillary to farming or forestry and mineral extraction activities in appropriate areas.
SD-O16 – Viability of Productive Functions	Avoid adverse effects on the viability of the productive functions of rural land in the Rural Area resulting from ad hoc or scattered residential, rural residential and rural living subdivision and development.
SD-O17 – Rural Living	Consolidate rural living subdivision and development by zoning appropriate areas as RLZ.
SD-O18 – Rural Residential Development	Provide for areas of rural residential development on the fringe of Whangarei City while ensuring that these areas can accommodate future urban growth.

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SD-O19 – Rural Villages Provide for managed growth of rural villages.

Objectives – Open Space Area

SD-O20 – Sufficient Open Space Provide sufficient quality open space for the social and cultural well-being of a growing population.

SD-O21 – Range of Open Space Provide a range of open space land in the District to enable recreational, cultural, community, conservation, and educational use.

Objectives – Regionally Significant Infrastructure

SD-O22 – Recognised Benefits Identify and protect Regionally Significant Infrastructure and recognise the benefits it provides.

SD-O23 – Adverse Effects Avoid remedy or mitigate adverse effects of the development, operation and maintenance of Regionally Significant Infrastructure.

Policies

SD-P1 – Range of Zones To manage effects on character and amenity values by providing for a range of Zones with differing expectations.

SD-P2 – Incompatible Land Uses To manage the establishment and location of new activities to avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses.

SD-P3 – Natural Hazards To avoid increasing the risk of natural hazards on people and property by:

1. Avoiding zoning land for more intensive development within identified hazard prone areas.
2. Avoiding locating regionally significant and critical infrastructure within identified hazard zones unless there is a functional or operational need for its location.

SD-P4 – Amenity To ensure that the scale and nature of new land use activities are consistent with the existing level of amenity and the stated overview for the relevant zone.

SD-P5 – Sustainable Infrastructure To avoid adverse effects on the sustainable provision of infrastructure by ensuring that all subdivision and land use is appropriately designed, located and constructed.

SD-P6 – Urban Expansion To avoid inappropriate urban expansion by:

1. Ensuring that urban development occurs:
 - a. In a planned and coordinated manner.

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	<p>b. Where appropriate infrastructure and services can be provided.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Requiring new urban development to be consolidated within or adjacent to Urban Areas and rural villages. 3. Avoiding urban development sprawling into the Rural Area.
SD-P7 – Transport System	<p>To manage an effective and efficient transport system by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrating and coordinating transport and land use planning. 2. Improving access to alternative transport options. 3. Enhancing the walkability of neighbourhoods.

Policies – Urban Area

SD-P8 – Housing and Business Capacity	<p>To ensure that there is sufficient residential and business development capacity by zoning land where Development is feasible and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is serviced with development infrastructure; or 2. Funding for development infrastructure is identified in the Long Term Plan.
SD-P9 – Alternative Modes of Transport	<p>To support alternative modes of transport by promoting higher residential densities around nodes of suburban development and public transport infrastructure.</p>
SD-P10 – Urban Design	<p>To protect character and amenity by managing built form and encouraging best practice urban design.</p>

Policies – Rural Area

SD-P11 – Residential Activities	<p>To protect highly versatile soils from activities which would materially reduce the potential for soil-based rural production activities.</p>
SD-P12 – Development Scale and Design	<p>To manage the cumulative effects of onsite wastewater discharge in the RVRZ, RLZ and RUEZ by requiring site specific design and any other evidence and/or mitigation measures necessary to demonstrate that the effects of wastewater disposal can be adequately addressed.</p>

Policies – Open Space Area

SD-P13 – Open Space Linkages	<p>To increase the functionality and effectiveness of the open space network by ensuring that linkages are created between new and existing areas of open space through subdivision design.</p>
SD-P14 – Range of Open Space Zones	<p>To identify and manage the range of Open Space Zones to provide for active sport and recreation, conservation and open space.</p>

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Policies – Regionally Significant Infrastructure

SD-P15 – Benefits of Regionally Significant Infrastructure	To have regard to the social, economic and cultural benefits of Regionally Significant Infrastructure by enabling the ongoing operation, maintenance and upgrading of Regionally Significant Infrastructure where adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.
SD-P16 – Adverse Effects of New Regionally Significant Infrastructure	To manage adverse effects created by new network utilities and Regionally Significant Infrastructure by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allowing adverse effects that have been avoided remedied and mitigated to the extent that they are no more than minor; and 2. Ensuring damage to or loss of the relationship of iwi with ancestral sites, sites of significance, wāhi tapu, customary activities and or taonga is avoided or otherwise agreed to by the affected iwi or hapū.
SD-P17 – Adverse Effects of Existing Regionally Significant Infrastructure	To manage adverse effects from the operation, maintenance and upgrading of existing network utilities and Regionally Significant Infrastructure by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allowing adverse effects that are not significant while the maintenance or upgrading is being undertaken. 2. Requiring that any permanent adverse effects are the same or similar to the adverse effects that existed before the maintenance or upgrading was undertaken.

Policies - Zoning

SD-P18 – Resource Areas	To identify and protect biodiversity, outstanding landscapes and features, the natural character of the coastal environment, heritage features, and sites of significance to Maori from inappropriate subdivision and development by mapping resource areas, and applying rules to protect the values, attributes, characteristics and qualities of these areas.
SD-P19 – Special Purpose Zones	To provide for specific activities or areas where special circumstances apply by identifying and zoning areas as Special Purpose Zones.
SD-P20 – City Centre Zone	To ensure that the viability, vibrancy and activity of the City Centre is maintained and enhanced by applying the City Centre Zone to a limited area: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the core of Whangarei City where a consolidated centre is maintained. 2. With high amenity values and active frontages at ground floor. 3. Where existing uses and development support a vibrant and pedestrianised environment.

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<p>SD-P21 – Shopping Centre Zone</p>	<p>To provide for compatible larger general retail activities by applying the Shopping Centre Zone where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The combined existing net retail area exceeds 2000m². 2. The net floor area for existing retail activities has a minimum average of 450m². 3. Three or more existing retailers are located at a single existing 'destination' shopping centre. 4. Multiple brands are present. 5. The shopping centre can be planned, managed and developed as a single facility. 6. Shared common public facilities (such as parking, restrooms, rest areas, pedestrian network) are provided. 7. The City Centre Zone is within 1km of the shopping centre.
<p>SD-P22 – Commercial Zone</p>	<p>To provide for a mix of commercial, business and small scale industrial activities without materially reducing the economic potential of other Business Zones by applying the Commercial Zone in locations where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a range of existing commercial, business and small scale industrial activities. 2. Good transport access is available. 3. The area is within 1km of the City Centre Zone. 4. There is a low to moderate presence of active frontages at ground floor. 5. There is a low presence of residential and retail activities. 6. The criteria for other Business Zones are not met.
<p>SD-P23 – Mixed-use Zone</p>	<p>To improve the amenity adjacent to the City Centre and provide opportunities for residential activities while minimising potential reverse sensitivity conflicts by providing for the Mixed-use Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are adjacent to the City Centre Zone. 2. Are adjacent or in proximity to key arterial transport routes or the Waterfront Zone. 3. Have an existing presence of active frontages at ground floor. 4. Have an existing level of amenity that is compatible with residential activities.
<p>SD-P24 – Light Industrial Zone</p>	<p>To provide for small scale industrial activities and larger scale trade retail activities by providing for the Light Industrial Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contain an existing range of industrial and large scale retail activities. 2. Are in proximity to major transport routes. 3. Enable adverse effects on proximate Living and Green Space Zones to be avoided. 4. Have minimal existing active frontages at ground floor. 5. Have a supply of medium to large sized sites. 6. Are in proximity to key resources and infrastructure.

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<p>SD-P25 – Heavy Industrial Zone</p>	<p>To enable noxious and large scale industrial activities to operate, expand and establish by providing for the Heavy Industrial Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contain an existing presence of large scale industrial activities. 2. Are in proximity to major transport routes. 3. Are not adjacent to Living Zones. 4. Have no existing active frontages at ground floor. 5. Have an existing supply of large sized sites. 6. Are in proximity to key resources and infrastructure. 7. Will not compromise significant natural, historical or cultural features.
<p>SD-P26 – Local Commercial Zone</p>	<p>To maintain the community focal point and provide convenient business and service activities by applying the Local Commercial Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contain a range of existing small scale commercial and community activities to support the surrounding residential community. 2. Have predominately active street frontages and strong pedestrian networks. 3. Are not identified as hazard prone. 4. Are not located within 500m of the City Centre Zone and maintain the viability of the City Centre Zone. 5. Have an identified demand for business, service and community activities for the surrounding residential community. 6. Occupy a maximum total contiguous land area not exceeding 6ha.
<p>SD-P27 – Neighbourhood Commercial Zone</p>	<p>To maintain the community focal point and provide convenient business and service activities by applying the Neighbourhood Commercial Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contain a range of existing small scale commercial and community activities to support the surrounding residential community. 2. Have predominately active street frontages and strong pedestrian networks. 3. Occupy a maximum total contiguous land area not exceeding 1ha.
<p>SD-P28 – Waterfront Zone</p>	<p>To provide a mixed-use environment while protecting and promoting the maritime, open space, recreation and tourism themes of the Waterfront by applying the Waterfront Zone in locations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adjacent to the Open Space Zone, Hatea River or Waiarohia Stream. 2. In proximity to the Hatea Loop Walkway. 3. That are well well connected to convenient transport routes and major facilities.
<p>SD-P29 – Airport Zone</p>	<p>To recognise and provide for Whangarei Airport as regionally significant infrastructure by applying the Airport Zone in locations where there is a functional need to support airport operations.</p>

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SD-P30 – Hospital Zone

To recognise the regionally significant nature of the Whangarei Hospital and provide for the wide range of existing and future medical facilities and supported activities by applying the Hospital Zone in the locations of Whangarei Hospital and associated medical facilities.

SD-P31 – Medium-density, High-density and Residential Zones

To provide for a range of residential activities to accommodate the population growth of Whangarei District by applying:

1. The Medium-density Residential Zone in locations that:
 - a. Are contiguous with existing Living Zones in Whangarei City or Ruakaka/Marsden Point.
 - b. Feature sufficient roading access to accommodate increased development.
 - c. Are not identified as hazard prone.
 - d. Do not comprise highly versatile soils, Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features, High or Outstanding Natural Character, significant indigenous vegetation or high concentrations of archaeological sites.
 - e. Are serviced by Council's reticulated three waters infrastructure with sufficient capacity available.
 - f. Will not materially increase the potential for reverse sensitivity effects in the Rural Area.
 - g. Will not compromise the rural character of an area.
2. The High-density Residential Zone in locations that:
 - a. Meet the criteria under SD-P31.1.
 - b. Are in proximity to commercial centres and sufficient Green Space Zones.
 - c. Are feasible for higher density residential development.
3. The Residential Zone in locations that:
 - a. Are contiguous with existing Living Zones on the fringe of Whangarei City.
 - b. Are not identified as significantly hazard prone.
 - c. Do not comprise highly versatile soils, Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features, High or Outstanding Natural Character, significant indigenous vegetation or high concentrations of archaeological sites.
 - d. Do not compromise the future expansion of urban growth.
 - e. Will not materially increase the potential for reverse sensitivity effects in the Rural Area.
 - f. Will not compromise the rural character of an area.
4. The Low Density Residential Zone in locations that:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are contiguous with Residential Zones and Rural Urban Expansion Zone on the fringe of Whangarei City. b. Are predominantly of rural character. c. Are not identified as significantly hazard prone. d. Do not comprise Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features or significant indigenous vegetation. e. Have existing low density of clustered residential development with a rural outlook. f. Do not compromise the future expansion of urban growth. g. Will not materially increase the potential for reverse sensitivity effects in the Rural Area. h. Will act as a transition from the Urban Area to the Rural Area.
<p>SD-P32 – Conservation Zone</p>	<p>To protect and enhance natural, ecological, landscape, cultural and heritage values of the District by applying the Conservation Zone in locations primarily publicly owned and operated, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association categories - unmanaged natural park areas, unmanaged recreation and ecological linkages, and unmanaged green space. 2. That plays a special role in educating residents and visitors and providing recreation opportunities. 3. Where generally, the natural elements and unmodified nature of the area gives it a sense of wilderness and isolation. 4. That help to preserve and define Whangarei’s natural character and provide a connection to our natural heritage. 5. Where the management emphasis for the area is the conservation and protection of natural resources. 6. Where levels of development, facilities and management range from none to medium. 7. Where there are minimal buildings and structures, ensuring a largely undeveloped area and open expanse of land.
<p>SD-P33 – Sport and Active Recreation Zone</p>	<p>To provide for a range of sport and active recreation opportunities by applying the Sport and Active Recreation Zone in locations primarily publicly owned and operated, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association Park Categories: sport and recreation, civic spaces, public gardens, and cultural heritage. 2. Primarily used for organised activities including events and indoor and outdoor organised sports. 3. Containing cultural and historical buildings and provide for heritage conservation. 4. Area used for commemoration, mourning and remembrance. 5. Containing gardens developed to a high standard with collections of plants and landscaping for relaxation, contemplation, education, amenity/intrinsic value.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Used by local, district and regional population and visitors, includes venues for regional and national events. 7. That have a medium to high levels of development, facilities and management. 8. That contain buildings and structures to support active recreation, and or civic recreation, such as grandstands, sports and community buildings, toilets and changing facilities.
<p>SD-P34 – Open Space Zone</p>	<p>To establish a network of quality open spaces providing for informal recreation by applying the Open Space Zone in locations primarily publicly owned and operated, and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association Park Categories: neighbourhood green space, managed recreation and ecological linkages, and managed natural park areas. 2. Primarily used for outdoor informal recreation and community use. 3. Used predominately by local residents. 4. Where levels of development, facilities and management range from low to medium. 5. Featuring limited buildings and structures that support the use of the public space, such as barbeques and picnic facilities, playgrounds, skate parks, informal hard courts, shelters, toilet and changing facilities, and small-scale community buildings. 6. Where expected social interaction within the area is medium levels.
<p>SD-P35 – Rural Production Zone</p>	<p>To identify areas as Rural Production Zone to provide for, the protection of productive rural land resources to enable a diverse range of rural production activities, activities that support rural production activities and rural communities; and to maintain biodiversity and rural character where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a prevalence of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Existing production land use. b. Significant ecological and biodiversity values, such as indigenous bush and wetlands. 2. Larger land parcels are prevalent and the area is not compromised by significant clusters of rural living built development. 3. An area is not: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Located on the fringe of Whangarei City between the urban and rural environments. b. Suitable to provide for the future reticulated expansion of the Whangarei City Residential Zones. c. The criteria for the Rural Urban Expansion Zone and the Rural Living Zone are not met.
<p>SD-P36 – Rural Living Zone</p>	<p>To identify areas as Rural Living Zone to provide for a variety of rural living opportunities in the District without materially reducing the potential of</p>

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	<p>the Rural Area for productive use of land by providing for the Rural Living Zone in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have an existing average allotment density between 2 and 4ha. 2. Demonstrate a predominantly rural living character. 3. Are not identified as hazard prone area. 4. Are not identified as an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, Significant Indigenous Vegetation or Habitat, or an Outstanding Natural Character Area. 5. Do not gain direct access from an unsealed through road with significant volumes of traffic. 6. Are located within close proximity to community facilities, such as schools. 7. Are not located in close proximity to existing reticulated infrastructure. 8. Will not materially increase the potential for reverse sensitivity effects in the Rural Area. 9. Do not materially reduce the potential for soil-based rural production activities on land with highly versatile soils or land with established rural production activities.
<p>SD-P37 – Strategic Rural Industries Zone</p>	<p>To identify the Strategic Rural Industries Zone in locations where established Strategic Rural Industries operate and to limit the addition of new locations through the statutory plan change process where it can be demonstrated that activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are consistent with the District Plan definition of ‘Strategic Rural Industries’. 2. Have valid operational reasons to require a SRIZ. 3. Contribute positively to the economy of the District. 4. Provide local employment opportunities. 5. Can meet and fund local infrastructure requirements. 6. Incorporate appropriate mitigation and management methods designed to ensure environmental effects are acceptable in the area in which the activities are proposed to be located.
<p>SD-P38 – Rural Village Zone</p>	<p>To identify areas suitable for consolidated residential (RVRZ), commercial (RVCZ) and industrial (RVIZ) development within rural villages in locations that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are contiguous with existing Rural Village Zone. 2. Are predominantly comprised of land uses and character consistent with the Rural Village Zone. 3. Are not identified as hazard prone. 4. Do not comprise high Land Use Capability Class soils, Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features, High or Outstanding Natural Character or significant indigenous vegetation. 5. Are located in close proximity to existing reticulated infrastructure. 6. Do not compromise the long-term development potential of the rural village.

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	<p>7. Have an identified demand for residential and/or commercial land to meet the projected growth requirements over the lifespan of the District Plan.</p>
<p>SD-P39 – Rural (Urban Expansion) Zone</p>	<p>To identify areas as Rural Urban Expansion Zone that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are contiguous with Residential Zones on the fringe of Whangarei City. 2. Are predominantly comprised of existing rural residential character. 3. Legitimise the zoning of existing clusters of rural residential development. 4. Are not identified as significantly hazard prone. 5. Do not comprise Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features or significant indigenous vegetation. 6. Have existing lot density of less than 2 hectares. 7. Are predominately suitable for future reticulated urban expansion of Whangarei City. 8. Do not compromise the future expansion of urban growth. 9. Will not materially increase the potential for reverse sensitivity effects in the Rural Area.