

NE - Natural Environment

In most instances, *subdivision*, use and *development* will result in a change to the natural *environment*. These changes are not always negative, nor are they always significant; however, it must be noted that certain natural areas and features are more sensitive to the *effects* of *development* than others. Moreover, *development* may provide opportunities for improvements to natural areas and features. Accordingly, the following District-wide considerations must be applied across all *zones* to meet the Objectives of relevance to the natural *environment*.

Policies

NE-P1	Protection
Protect areas of <i>significant indigenous vegetation</i> and <i>significant habitats of indigenous fauna</i> (including <i>ecological sites</i> identified in Schedule 1, <i>key indigenous tree species</i> in ECO-Table 1, <i>key indigenous trees</i> in Schedule 2, and <i>rare and threatened vegetation species</i> in Schedule 3 of this Plan). Protect <i>outstanding natural features and landscapes</i> (identified in Schedule 4 of this Plan), <i>geological features</i> (identified in Schedule 6 of this Plan), and the values associated with these areas and features, from inappropriate <i>subdivision</i> , use and <i>development</i> .	
NE-P2	Adaptive Management
Any <i>subdivision</i> , use or <i>development</i> proposal seeking to use adaptive management to address adverse environmental <i>effects</i> on the natural <i>environment</i> that are uncertain and potentially significant must show evidence of the following adaptive management components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fully documented baseline information about the receiving <i>environment</i>; 2. identification of clear thresholds to trigger remedial action before the <i>effects</i> become overly damaging or irreversible; 3. a well-documented and robust programme funded by the consent holder to monitor adverse <i>effects</i> for the duration of the proposed <i>effects</i>; and 4. a method for reporting the results of monitoring. 	
NE-P3	Biodiversity Off-setting
Consider <i>biodiversity offsets</i> proposed as part of <i>resource consent</i> applications where it is anticipated that there will be significant residual adverse biodiversity <i>effects</i> from the proposed activities on <i>significant indigenous vegetation</i> or <i>significant habitats of indigenous fauna</i> after appropriate avoidance, minimisation, remediation and mitigation measures have occurred, in order to achieve no net loss and preferably a net gain in indigenous biodiversity values, having particular regard to the principles for <i>biodiversity offsets</i> in ECO-Table 2 of this Plan.	
NE-P4	Incentives
Where new <i>development</i> can achieve permanent net benefits to the natural <i>environment</i> as a result of that <i>development</i> , over and above any requirements to avoid, remedy or mitigate (including off-setting as in NE-P3), <i>development</i> incentives may be granted. In determining the appropriateness of awarding <i>development</i> incentives to a given activity, the proposal must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. exhibit a substantial net increase in one or more of the following: 	

- a. protection and enhancement of *indigenous vegetation* or terrestrial habitats for indigenous fauna; or
- b. protection and enhancement of *water* quality and/or improved habitats for indigenous fauna in aquatic ecosystems;

and

2. provide sufficient information relating to:

- a. whether or not permanent achievement of the benefit(s) can be realised and how, including descriptions of any legal instruments to be utilised to achieve those benefits; and
- b. the extent to which the positive benefits are consistent with the scale, nature and type anticipated in Council’s Development Incentives Guidelines; and
- c. the extent to which the net benefit of the total *development* achieved by the proposal offsets any increase in adverse *effects* generated by the *development* incentives applied for.

NE-P5	Active Participation
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Active participation of landowners is seen as vital to the protection and enhancement of *ecological sites, geological features, and the values of outstanding natural features and landscapes* identified in Schedules 1, 4, and 6 of this Plan. The *Council* will work with landowners, recognise their stewardship and current management practices, and will promote the use of non-regulatory methods, including assistance with the establishment of protective covenants, service delivery, education, and other incentives.

NE-P6	Eco-tourism
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Enable eco-tourism activities that complement the protection and/or enhancement of areas of *significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna* (including *ecological sites and rare and threatened vegetation species*) and contribute to the vitality and resilience of the District’s economy, while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse *effects* on the *environment*.