

## 2 Objectives

The following eighteen objectives in this Chapter set out the direction the Council intends to take in relation to Resource Management issues on the Kāpiti Coast.

### Objective 2.1 – Tāngata Whenua

**To work in partnership with the *tāngata whenua* of the District in order to maintain *kaitiakitanga* of the District's resources and ensure that decisions affecting the natural *environment* in the District are made in accordance with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi).**

#### Explanation

The *Council* recognises the status of the *tāngata whenua* under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) (Treaty) and in relation to the requirements of the RMA as separate and distinct from other interest groups. It works closely with Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ngāti Raukawa and Te Āti Awa ki Whakarongotai *iwi* who hold *mana whenua* within the District. The *Council* and the *tāngata whenua* are engaged in a Memorandum of Partnership which involves a pledge to develop a mutual commitment regarding the *environment* and decision-making. Working in ways that consolidate and appreciate the convergence of *tāngata whenua* and western knowledge can only strengthen environmental outcomes for the District.

In recognition that Māori and the Crown are Treaty partners, sections 6, 7 and 8 of the *RMA* furnish considerable scope for a distinctive Māori perspective to be incorporated in relation to decisions on the management, use, *development* and protection of the District's *natural and physical resources*.

In order to consider the issues relating to *tāngata whenua* on the Kāpiti Coast it is necessary to take into account the origin of *tāngata whenua* values in relation to the *environment*, including the Māori world view of creation and the legislative provision for *tāngata whenua* involvement in resource management.

#### The Māori World View

The Māori creation story embodies both physical and spiritual concepts of the world's origins. In general, there are three fundamental phases of the Māori creation story. The first being Te Kore (the void) which was the remote phase, a phase in which there was nothing, and the world was a void. While there was no organised expression in this realm, there existed an unlimited potential for being. There was no gender. The second phase was Te Po (the night) in which there was the spontaneous emergence of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, the first male and female forms. During this phase of creation they produced many children. In the darkness the children discussed the conditions in which they lived and how they could promote growth and life. Tāwhirimātea disagreed with his brothers and sisters who wished to separate their parents. Eventually, Tāne Mahuta thrust Ranginui high into the sky, letting in light and allowing for the desired growth and life. Papatūānuku became the earth. Thus, the third phase came about and became known as Te Ao Marama (the world of light).

These three phases are helpful in understanding the relationship Māori have with the physical and spiritual worlds, and the interconnectedness of people and their local environments. Generally, a Māori worldview in relation to the environment encapsulates the following principles:

- humankind's contribution is to enhance and maintain the life support systems of Papatūānuku;
- people should treat Papatūānuku with love and respect in recognition of her life-supporting function, her role in the creation of the natural world, and her place in *whakapapa*; and
- humankind do not own Papatūānuku, but are recipients, and therefore stewards, of the natural *environment*.

### The Principles of the Treaty

The legislative mandate for *tāngata whenua* involvement in the resource management system comes from recognition of the centrality of the Treaty to the management of natural resources. The *RMA* requires the principles of the Treaty to be taken into account by decision makers in the exercise of their responsibility to *tāngata whenua*. The *Council* endorses five principles as being a current reflection of the purpose and intent of the Treaty as interpreted by the Courts, which are relevant to the sustainable management of *natural and physical resources*. The five principles are:

- mutually-beneficial relationship;
- active protection;
- *iwi* self-regulation;
- shared decision-making; and
- the right to *iwi/hapū* resource development.

The principle of mutually-beneficial relationship includes the duty to act reasonably and in good faith and imposes a duty on both *tāngata whenua* and the *Council* to interact with reason and respect. The fundamental message of the Treaty is one of balance. Therefore, assertions of rangatiratanga over certain resources are not attacks on the *mana* of the Crown to make law in respect of Māori resources, but simply expressions of the obligation to ensure that the right of *tāngata whenua* to act in accordance with their own values is given an appropriate priority.

The second principle of active protection denotes a duty that is not merely passive but extends to active protection of Māori resources and other guaranteed *taonga* to the fullest extent practicable. In the context of the *RMA*, what is to be protected under this principle is a continuing capacity for *tāngata whenua* to exercise self-regulated decision-making authority over those resources important to them.

Generally, this obligation has a three-fold application. Firstly, as far as practicable, *tāngata whenua* should be protected from restrictions imposed by legislation, plan or policy which prevent or limit them using their land and resources according to their cultural preferences. Secondly, *tāngata whenua* should be protected from the adverse *effects* of the activities of others on their ability to use their resources, both in biophysical and spiritual terms. Thirdly, resources should be directed towards informing and supporting *tāngata whenua* in the development of resource management strategies which reflect the cultural and spiritual preferences, and in their participation in local government.

The principle of *iwi* self-regulation recognises that *tāngata whenua* can retain responsibility and control of the management and allocation of resources over which they wish to retain control. This involves the right to develop these resources to meet *iwi* social and economic needs. Application of this principle involves recognising the right of *tāngata whenua* to exercise *tino rangatiratanga*. The use of the term "rangatiratanga" in the context of the

Treaty denotes an institutional authority to control the exercise of a range of user rights in resources, including conditions of access, use and conservation management.

The transfer of powers provision in section 33 of the *RMA* is a practical way in which the *Council* could give effect to *tinu rangatiratanga*. The nature of any function to be transferred to an *iwi* authority would depend on the type of resource, the scale of the *development* project and the particular cultural and spiritual significance that the resource has to *tāngata whenua*.

The principle of shared decision-making requires the *Council* to allow the *tāngata whenua* to be a full party in the decision-making process. *Kawanatanga* as ceded by *tāngata whenua* under Article 1 of the Treaty gave the Crown the right to govern and to make laws applying to everyone. The delegation of resource management powers by the Crown to local authorities under the *RMA* means that those authorities can make policies, set objectives and make rules affecting the management of *natural and physical resources*, subject to the guarantee of *tinu rangatiratanga* to Māori and recognition of the partnership between Māori and the Crown.

This principle of *iwi/hapū* resource development recognises that *tāngata whenua* are not bound in the exercise of *rangatiratanga* and *kaitiakitanga* to the methods and technologies available at the signing of the Treaty but have the right to take advantage of new technology. Article III of the Treaty gave to Māori the same rights and duties as other New Zealand citizens. The Treaty guaranteed to Māori the retention of their property under Article II, and the choice of developing those rights under Article III. In pursuing development, *tāngata whenua* may choose to pursue non-traditional uses of their resources instead of, or complementary to, their traditional practices. Recognition of the ability and needs for *iwi/hapū* to develop their resources in a manner which achieves the purposes of the *RMA* is a fundamental principle embodied in the Treaty.

### Consultation with Tāngata Whenua

Effective, early and meaningful consultation is an integral and necessary component of resource management decision-making and should include:

- a genuine invitation to give advice and a genuine consideration of advice given;
- the provision of sufficient information so as to allow *tāngata whenua* to make an informed assessment of the proposal and determine their response to it; and
- the obligation to be willing to change plans or proposals, if that is the result of consultation.

The Courts have adopted a holistic application of sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8 of the *RMA*. All these sections are relevant when making decisions.

### Recognition of Kaitiakitanga

It is important to understand that *kaitiaki*, and the exercise of their responsibilities, *kaitiakitanga*, are a part of Māori cultural and spiritual belief, rooted in the values of Māori society. That society cannot be fully understood without reference to those values. Therefore, in determining the characteristics of *kaitiakitanga*, decision makers need to understand that the meaning of these concepts to Māori will be the crucial factor.

*Kaitiakitanga* is a term that denotes the package of tikanga or practices which have a primary objective in sustaining the *mauri of natural and physical resources*. Inherent in the notion of *kaitiakitanga* is the understanding that members of the present generation have responsibility, passed to them by preceding generations, to care for their natural

environment by protecting the *mauri*. *Kaitiakitanga* is inextricably linked to *tino rangatiratanga* as it may only be practiced by those *iwi*, *hapū* or *whānau* who possess *mana whenua* in their *iwi* area.

## Issues

Specific issues related to *tāngata whenua* on the Kāpiti Coast include:

- understanding the relationship of Māori people and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, *waahi tapu*, and other *taonga*;
- how to take into account the principles of the Treaty;
- how best to provide for the views of the *tāngata whenua* through resource management; and
- protection of sites of cultural importance and characteristics of the environment of special significance to *tāngata whenua*.

## Objective 2.2 – Ecology and Biodiversity

To improve indigenous biological diversity and ecological resilience through:

- a) protecting areas of *significant indigenous vegetation* and *significant habitats of indigenous fauna*;
- b) encouraging restoration of the ecological integrity of indigenous ecosystems;
- c) enhancing the health of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; and
- d) enhancing the *mauri of waterbodies*.

## Explanation

The RMA has as its purpose "to promote the sustainable management of *natural and physical resources*". Sustainable management is identified as meaning "managing the use, development, and protection of *natural and physical resources* in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while —

- sustaining the potential of *natural and physical resources* (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;
- safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems.

Section 7 (d) of the RMA requires particular regard to be had to the intrinsic values of ecosystems. The RMA places major emphasis on both the value of ecosystems and their healthy functioning. Ecosystems and ecological processes are central to how the natural *environment* will be sustained over time.

In ecology, resilience is the capacity of an ecosystem to respond to a disturbance by resisting damage and recovering quickly. Resilience is therefore critical to the sustainability of New Zealand's indigenous flora and fauna, to its waterways, to air and ultimately to enabling people to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. A more diverse and resilient ecosystem is better able to withstand environmental stress and has a greater chance of adapting to environmental change. The sustainable management of natural resources in the District cannot be achieved if biodiversity is not recognised and protected.

Biodiversity is the degree of variation of life forms within a given species, ecosystem, or an area. Before human habitation the Kāpiti Coast had a rich biodiversity. Pressures from settlement and *development* have however impacted on the natural *environment* to the point

that by 2001 only 300ha, or 1.8 per cent of the District's coastal plains were covered in native bush.

Following European settlement in Kāpiti, the dunelands, lowlands and foothills were rapidly cleared for *farming*, forestry, settlement or roads. *Wetlands* were drained, estuaries and riparian margins modified and lakes and waterways often became polluted. Only the mountain ranges retained large continuous tracts of native forest, but these contain a fraction of their original fauna because of introduced predators and browsers such as rats, stoats, cats, deer and possums.

The *Council* seeks to capitalise on what remains of its indigenous biodiversity. Kāpiti Island is renowned as one of the few accessible places where threatened species flourish and where the lost natural world of the mainland can be found. The District's biodiversity has profound environmental, cultural and economic benefits that extend far beyond the welfare of native plants and animals. A major issue facing the Kāpiti Coast that needs to be addressed is biodiversity decline.

A number of activities continue to adversely affect remaining biodiversity and natural habitats and ecosystems. The biological diversity or life-supporting capacity of ecosystems, and natural resources and their quality and intrinsic values are being lost or degraded when they are fragmented, isolated or damaged by inappropriate *subdivision*, use or *development* and the introduction of pests and weeds. The *mauri* (life force) of many of the District's freshwater ecosystems has been degraded by increasing demands for land and water and activities such as vegetation clearance, *earthworks* and discharges.

Biodiversity alone will not make a system resilient. The quality of habitat and ecosystems is an important factor in both sustaining *indigenous vegetation* and supporting rapid recovery from harm. *Indigenous vegetation* plays an important role in the preservation of the *natural character* of *wetlands* and riparian margins. *Indigenous vegetation* provides excellent habitat for indigenous fauna and is a conservator of water quality and soil stability. It is essential the District retains and enhances the extent and biodiversity of *indigenous vegetation*. Today, the main threats to indigenous forest are clearance for residential living, pasture, exotic forestry and *development*, stock grazing and plant and animal infestation.

Pressures from *subdivision*, land use and *development* activities mean it is important to protect the remaining areas of significant indigenous flora and fauna on a long-term sustainable basis. While significant areas in the District are already in public ownership and legally protected (i.e. Tararua Forest Park and Queen Elizabeth Park); outside these areas many remaining areas of remnant indigenous forest and *wetlands* have no legal protection. These areas need to be actively managed in a way that ensures their continued existence and enhancement.

For the *tāngata whenua*, indigenous biodiversity is an integral aspect of their world view, and they have a special role and responsibilities as *kaitiaki* of our indigenous biodiversity. Many of the natural features and qualities of the environment that are important for their intrinsic or scientific value have cultural significance to the *tāngata whenua*. All components of ecosystems, both living and non-living, possess the spiritual qualities of *tapu*, *mauri*, *mana*, and *wairua*. The control of adverse *effects* of activities on biodiversity values is central to issues concerning the relationship of the *tāngata whenua* to the land.

Enhancement of the health of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems is a means of ensuring that the *mauri* of *waterbodies* is enhanced. Maintaining and enhancing ecosystems in *waterbodies* is a Regional *Council* function, the District *Council* is responsible for managing land use which ultimately affects water quantity and quality.

### Objective 2.3 – Development Management

To maintain a consolidated urban form within *existing urban areas* and a limited number of *identified growth areas* which can be efficiently serviced and integrated with existing townships, delivering:

- a) urban areas which maximise the efficient end use of energy and integration with *infrastructure*;
- b) a variety of living and working areas in a manner which reinforces the function and vitality of *centres*;
- c) resilient communities where *development* does not result in an increase in *risk* to life or severity of damage to property from *natural hazard* events;
- d) higher residential densities in locations that are close to *centres* and public *open spaces*, with good access to public transport;
- e) management of *development* in areas of special character or amenity so as to maintain, and where practicable, enhance those special values;
- f) sustainable natural processes including freshwater systems, areas characterised by the *productive potential* of the land, ecological integrity, identified landscapes and features, and other places of significant natural amenity;
- g) an adequate supply of housing and areas for business/employment to meet the needs of the District's anticipated population which is provided at a rate and in a manner that can be sustained within the finite carrying capacity of the District; and
- h) management of the location and *effects* of potentially incompatible land uses including any interface between such uses.

#### Explanation

##### The Development Pattern for the Kāpiti Coast

The natural and physical characteristics of the District have been subject to significant change over a relatively short period of time, with a large proportion of this change attributed to human settlement and *development*. In turn, the form of settlement in Kāpiti has largely been shaped by three elements, being:

- natural features, particularly the Ōtaki and Waikanae Rivers and their estuaries;
- the main locations of pre-European Māori settlement; and
- the establishment of the railway and then the *State Highway*.

Māori settlement patterns within the District prior to European settlement consisted of seasonal settlements associated with harvest, particularly fishing, and permanent settlements of varying sizes along the coast. Significant sites and buildings associated with the social, economic, spiritual and political heart of whānau and *hapū* were located within some of the larger and more permanent settlements. The marae was the site where formal whānau, *hapū* and *iwi* meetings, as well as tangihanga and other ceremonies, took place under protocol or kawa that managed the placement and lifting of *tapu*. Some marae had status as matua marae while others might be more whānau-based. Key buildings were located around the marae.

These areas became the initial focus of post 1830 settlement and consequently set out the main settlement pattern for the District. In particular, this period of change was shaped by:

- wars throughout the North Island using the new muskets which profoundly changed the balance of power and influence between *iwi* and *hapū*;

- consequent migration of Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa and Te Āti Awa into and through the District;
- the use of Kāpiti Island as a defensive stronghold;
- early establishment of whaling stations, particularly on Kāpiti Island;
- loss of land from Māori control from the 1830s and particularly from the 1860s; and
- introduction of rail in the 1880s which refocused Māori and Pākehā settlements along the rail corridor.

With the completion of the railway in 1886, stations were established at 10 mile intervals at Paekākāriki, Wainui, Paraparaumu, Otaihanga, Waikanae, Hadfield, Te Horo, Hautere and Ōtaki. Paekākāriki became a rail village with the establishment of rail worker housing and workshops. Waikanae and Paraparaumu began to emerge as more significant settlements and Ōtaki refocused to some extent on the rail area. Wi Parata organised the relocation of Whakarongotai meeting house to its present location at the Waikanae Town Centre, in order to better position Te Āti Awa in relation to the new developments.

By the 1920s and 1930s, *subdivisions* were beginning to develop along the coast at Raumati and parts of Paraparaumu, largely without major modifications to landforms. This pattern continued from the late 1940s, as travel on the *State Highway* improved and more people could afford to buy cars. Since that time, further *infill* of settlement areas between the coastal hills, the *State Highway* and the coast has been the dominant trend, with the major influences on settlement form being:

- an east/west consolidation with limited connections between communities, which has increased reliance on the *State Highway*;
- purchase by the Crown of land for Queen Elizabeth Park in the 1940s, partly to control the residential expansion along the coast;
- a deliberate local authority focus since the 1960s on identifying land immediately north of Waikanae as a potential future urban growth area;
- purchase of land by the Crown for an international airport which has both provided a strategic asset and fundamentally shaped the form of Paraparaumu;
- the identification of a potential Sandhills Motorway route which has also shaped form through this area;
- significant population growth occurring since the late 1960s within existing broad urban areas, with major modification to landforms in some areas; and
- disestablishment of on-site water and *wastewater* systems in some areas and relatively uncontrolled demand for services in those areas.

Since the 1980s, there has been continued *development*, largely still within this broad urban area. It has been accompanied by a slow shift in attitude to *subdivision* standards and by a need to modify *infrastructure* investment to take account of environmental constraints.

### **Global Resource Management Issues**

In an increasingly globalised world, the reliance of the Kāpiti communities on foreign-produced food, energy resources and other essential and non-essential items leaves the communities vulnerable to supply and demand shocks associated with the production, transport and supply of these commodities. With these emerging risks, there is a need to position the District into a position of increased resilience.

While making the District more resilient is not solely a resource management issue, the role of the District Plan in this process is significant. In particular, the manner in which the Plan facilitates a more resilient urban form is a major consideration. Rising fuel prices alone have, and will continue to have, a major impact on the way in which people move around and through Kāpiti. Allowing for *development* which relies solely on private vehicles for transport will likely decrease the District's ability to respond to the local *effects* of global shocks. To this end, providing for *development* of greenfields sites (for example) may help meet demand for a particular housing preference; however this must be balanced by increased accessibility to, and efficient use of, existing *centres*, *open spaces* and other essential services for the majority of Kāpiti residents if resilience is to be enhanced. This means promoting an urban form which reduces the use of fossil fuels, and which enables local production and employment.

Yet another challenge is anticipated in the form of global climate change and associated sea level rise. Existing communities will need to adapt to a changing *environment*, and new *development* must be undertaken in a manner and in locations that avoid or can absorb the *risks* associated with climate change.

### Regional Considerations

The primary regional *RMA* plans of relevance to the Kāpiti Coast District Plan are the Operative Wellington Regional Policy Statement, 2013 (RPS), and the Operative Wellington Regional Plans for air quality, soil, discharges, freshwater, and the coastal area. The provisions of these plans and policy statements are applicable to growth management in Kāpiti and the District Plan is required to give effect to the RPS.

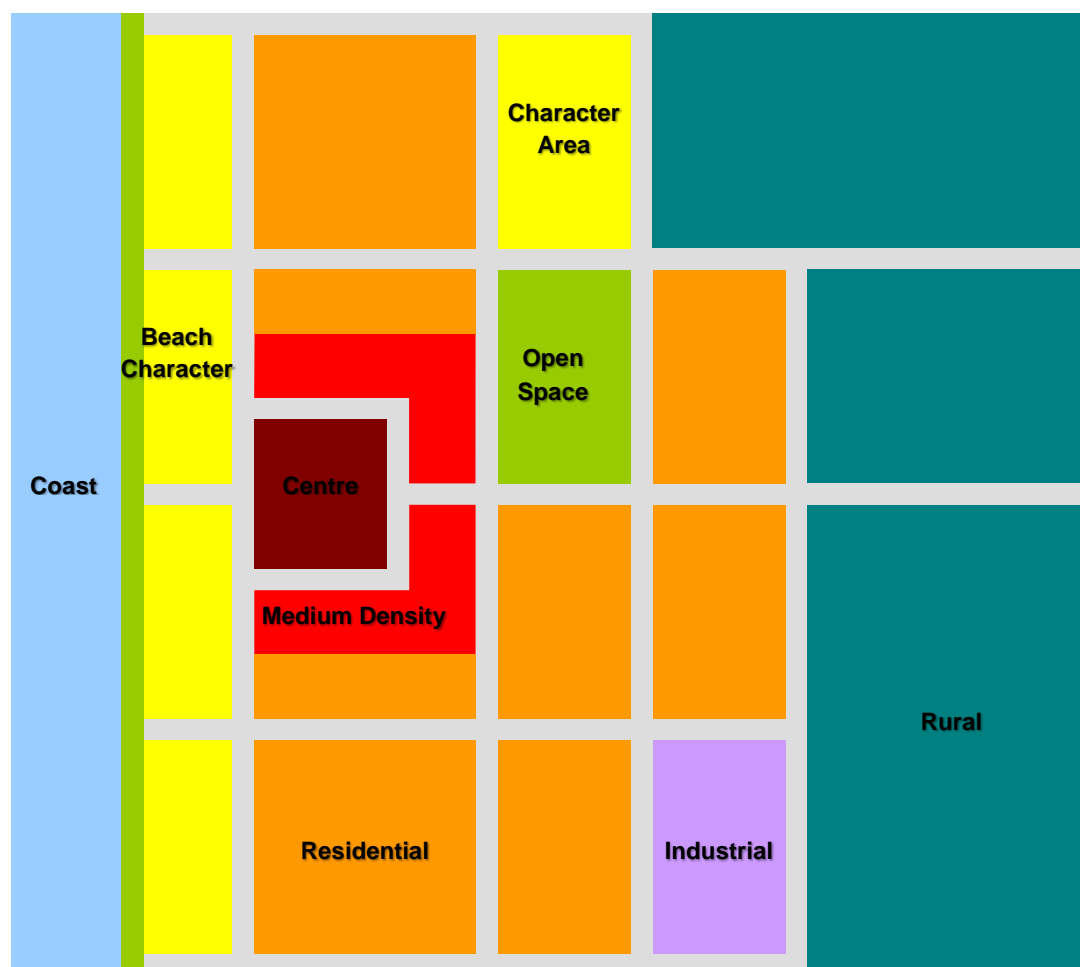
### Local Issues

In addition to these global and regional issues, Kāpiti faces local resource management challenges with respect to managing and accommodating growth and development. This begins with a need to recognise the significant resources that have been invested into existing settlements and the *infrastructure* supporting those settlements. New growth and *development* must make efficient use of this significant investment, rather than undermining it. This includes the potential undermining of the social capital that has been invested in existing Kāpiti communities, along with the physical and economic investment.

Achieving an urban form that balances the need to meet the many housing needs of the District's residents with the preservation of valued character and the achievement of *infrastructure* integration efficiencies is an additional, complex challenge. For example, providing for smaller *lot* sizes and more dense living environments can affect an area's underlying character; however, when these more intense *environments* are appropriately located within the wider urban context, they can increase efficiency outcomes of public and private investment in public *transport networks*, commercial areas, *open spaces* and other community facilities. The approach to managing these challenges is to:

- maintain the predominant low density character that defines the District's many communities, while targeting specific areas for either increased character protection, and (conversely) increased residential intensity (indicatively represented in Figure 2.1);
- provide for selected greenfields development areas in a way that also reinforces overall compact urban form.





**Figure 2.1:** Management of Urban Densities

Kāpiti is also subject to a range of threats from *natural hazards* and *development* must be mindful of this risk to ensure community resilience. The nature of these hazards is further outlined in the explanation to Objective 2.5 Natural Hazards.

A final local issue regarding growth management is the need to accommodate the projected increases in residential population and employment opportunities in a manner which can be sustained within the District's environmental carrying capacity. This requires the recognition of both the rate of growth anticipated and the nature of development desired, in addition to the underlying need to maintain environmental quality. Ensuring enough land is provided to meet anticipated growth in different living environments and in a manner which retains the benefits of the District's consolidated form is an on-going challenge.

### Objective 2.4 – Coastal Environment

To have a *coastal environment* where:

- a) *areas of outstanding natural character and high natural character, outstanding natural features and landscapes, areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna* are identified and protected;
- b) *areas of outstanding natural character and high natural character* are restored where degraded;
- c) the effects of inappropriate *subdivision, use and development* are avoided, remedied, or mitigated;

- d) public access to and along the coast to facilitate active and passive recreational use is maintained and enhanced while managing inappropriate *vehicle access*; and
- e) development does not result in further loss of coastal dunes in the area mapped as the dominant coastal environment.

### Explanation

The Kāpiti Coast extends approximately 40 km in length from Ōtaki in the north to Paekākāriki in the south, with most of the coastline (approximately 25 km) having urban *development* adjacent to the coastal edge. The majority of the foredune is a single low profile dune. The southern areas of Raumati, Queen Elizabeth Park and Paekākāriki have considerably higher foredunes.

There are many places within the *coastal environment* where there are significant ecological values and important coastal habitats, as well as landscapes of valued *natural character*.

The *coastal environment* is highly valued by both the local and wider community, in terms of its aesthetic, natural, productive, recreational and historical values. A large number of people live in the District to enjoy the *beach* and coastal marine area for recreation, food gathering, views, openness and spiritual reasons. The *beach* is a very popular destination for recreation for residents and visitors, valued as a great place to walk dogs and ride horses, for family picnics, for children to play, with good surfing, whitebaiting, fishing and swimming opportunities. The economic value of the coast is clear in terms of tourism, coastal property values and recreation opportunities. The coast is also valued as a source of inspiration for the creative community. The valued aspects of the *coastal environment* need to be managed to ensure all that happens now can continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

*Subdivision* and *development* can be inappropriate in the *coastal environment*, given the fragility of ecologically sensitive areas such as dunes. This dynamic system would have been able to retreat and accrete naturally over a wide area prior to permanent *development*, but the active dunes and shoreline are now constrained to a narrow strip in most areas. The natural character of many parts of the coastal foredunes is degraded by the presence of exotic plants, and natural coastal processes have been modified by *structures* and *development*.

The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) provides strong direction on managing the coastal edge in a way that recognises the potential *effects* of climate change. There is a clear directive to manage 'inappropriate' *development*.

The sustainable management of the *coastal environment* is important to *tāngata whenua* for social, economic, spiritual and cultural reasons. *Tāngata whenua* have strong links with the *coastal environment*, value its *mauri*, its *mana* and all it offers. Many sites within the *coastal environment* are associated with *iwi* histories, traditions and tikanga, for example, mahinga maataitai (places to gather seafood) and *tauranga waka* (canoe landing places). Of particular concern to *tāngata whenua* is the discharge of wastes into the *coastal environment*, which causes a loss of *mauri* of the *water body*. The NZCPS provides strong direction recognising *tāngata whenua* values associated with the coastal environment.

### Objective 2.5 – Natural Hazards

To ensure the safety and resilience of people and communities by avoiding exposure to increased levels of *risk* from *natural hazards*, while recognising the importance of natural processes and systems.

## Explanation

The majority of the District's settlements are located on a flat coastal plain with sandy and peat soils. The coastal plain is only slightly above the existing sea level and is split at various points by a series of swift flowing streams and rivers with steep catchments. Consequently, the Kāpiti Coast is susceptible to a range of *natural hazards* including:

- flooding due to the low lying nature of much of the District;
- erosion due to heavy rainfall and steep slopes;
- earthquake hazards, including ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, earthquake induced slope failure and tsunamis;
- wildfire due to the presence of forestry and dry areas including dry grasses particularly on the coastal dunes; and
- drought as a result of extended periods of little rain.

There are potentially high economic and social costs associated with *natural hazards* in the District with significant consequences for public health and safety, agriculture, housing and *infrastructure*. Inappropriate *development*, such as *building* in flood prone areas, or behaviour or lack of awareness of *natural hazards* can increase the exposure of people and communities to *risks* from *natural hazards*. A key issue for the District is avoiding areas at *risk* of *natural hazards* or where *development* exists already, adopting mitigation measures to lessen the impacts of *natural hazards*.

Under the RMA, *Council* is required to control the actual and potential *effects* of the use, *development* or protection of land including for the purposes of the avoidance or mitigation of *natural hazards*. Section 7 of the RMA also requires the *Council* to have particular regard to the *effects* of climate change. The *Council* has discretion under s106 of the RMA to refuse a *subdivision* consent where the land is or is likely to be subject to material damage from *natural hazards*, using the latest information available at the time of application, or where the subsequent use of the land will exacerbate the hazard or result in material damage to the land.

The Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002 sets out the functions and powers of various agencies, including local authorities, in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies, including those caused by *natural hazard* events.

Natural features and landforms such as sand dunes, *beaches*, *wetlands* and areas of native vegetation often play an important role in mitigating *natural hazards*. The *Council* recognises the benefits in protecting, reinstating or rehabilitating natural features to mitigate *natural hazards*. Key issues for the District include the degrading of natural features to mitigate *natural hazards* and the need to consider natural features and processes when considering hazard mitigation works. Further to this, it is recognised that hard engineering works to protect property and land from *natural hazards* have the potential to adversely affect the natural *environment* and weaken existing natural defences to *natural hazards*. Any hazard mitigation measures, structural works and other activities should only be put in place if they do not increase the *risks* and consequences of *natural hazard* events.

One of the challenges facing the *Council* is obtaining accurate information about *natural hazards*. The likely impacts or *effects* of some *natural hazards* such as flooding are able to be defined in a relatively precise manner. The *effects* of other hazards such as earthquakes are more difficult to predict however. In assessing the areas at *risk* from *natural hazard* events, and managing this *risk* there are a number of uncertainties and a precautionary approach needs to be adopted. The precautionary approach to *natural hazard risk*

management will ensure that appropriate decisions are made where there is insufficient information or knowledge to predict the *effects* of the hazard and where the likely *effects* of the hazard are potentially significantly adverse.

The *Council* recognises that climate change has the potential to increase both the frequency and magnitude of *natural hazard* events. Because of this it is even more important to have robust systems and techniques for planning for and responding to *natural hazard risks*. Long-term planning needs to take account of expected long-term shifts and changes in climate extremes and patterns to ensure future generations are adequately prepared for predicted climate conditions, and that a precautionary approach is taken to hazard *risk* mitigation and avoidance where these risks are potentially significantly adverse. Reducing the exposure of people and property to significant risk from *natural hazard* events and potential climate change impacts would result in less impact on people and communities. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement also provides strong direction on managing the coastal edge in a way that recognises the potential *effects* of climate change.

### Objective 2.6 – Rural Productivity

To sustain the *productive potential* of land in the District, including:

- a) retaining land which is suitable for a range of *primary production activities*;
- b) achieving added economic and social value derived from *primary production activities* through *ancillary* on-site processing and marketing;
- c) enabling activities that utilise the *productive potential* of the land in the rural environment;
- d) reducing conflict between land uses in the rural environment and adjoining areas; and
- e) avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse *effects* on the efficient operation of existing *primary production activities* from *sensitive activities* establishing on adjoining *sites*;

while safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems by avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse *effects* on the *environment*.

### Explanation

The rural environment of the Kāpiti Coast encompasses a wide range of landform types, land uses and activities, from intensive horticulture on the plains in and around Ōtaki, to pastoral *farming* on the dune country and foothills of the Tararua Ranges. The rural environment is of considerable value to the residents of the District and, in particular, the *farming* community. The existing farmers, rural service industries and future generations of people who desire employment in this sector depend on the sustainable management of the resources found in this environment.

Parts of Kāpiti, especially around Ōtaki, have both the conditions and the quality soils necessary for growing high quality food not only for export but also for national and local consumption. There is also a considerable amount of land in the wider District suitable for animal-based food production as well as other productive uses. The continued use of the rural environment for *primary production activities* is important for the ongoing resilience, health, and social and economic wellbeing of the District's communities.

In an increasingly globalised world, Kāpiti is susceptible to numerous resource management pressures which originate far beyond New Zealand's shores. Increasing population equates to increasing demand for food and other life-sustaining resources, as well as non-essential items which require considerable energy resources for production and distribution. Despite

this increasing demand, the land resource available to supply food and other essential resources to the world's population is finite.

Compounding this predicament, global climate change and sea level rise are affecting the extent (both productive and geographic) of the world's most arable soils. Moreover, increased urbanisation is resulting in further depletion of the world's soil and water resources, further exacerbating supply and demand stresses.

Globalisation has also resulted in the world's food supply (including transport) moving away from a local supply/consumption model, to a system based on economic efficiencies, often at the expense of higher energy consumption. Diminishing fuel supplies continue to result in new record high energy costs, making the District's primary production supply vulnerable to deepening price shocks; it also potentially creates more opportunities for a local food economy which has a greater role in supplying regional communities with a wider range of non-export products.

Greater realisation of the rural environment's *productive potential* through increased local production of, and access to, food, fibre and building materials is likely to enhance local and regional resilience, and to provide communities with more local employment choice.

In addition to global and regional issues, Kāpiti faces local resource management challenges in the rural environment. While protection of productive land is a common theme among all levels of this issue hierarchy, the District's unique physical and geographic characteristics require a unique management response. Specifically, the northern portion of the District provides excellent growing conditions for specialised crops, including grapes and olives. The retention of rural land is important for the ability of the rural environment to sustainably meet the needs of future generations. Finding ways to maximise the *productive potential* of rural land is an ongoing challenge for the District, particularly with constant pressure to develop rural areas of Kāpiti for urban and rural residential uses, including hobby *farming*.

There is also an ongoing need to enable some *development* such as on-site processing and marketing which is *ancillary* to *primary production activities* in the rural environment. Whilst these *ancillary* uses or buildings have great potential to add value to the productive sector, they also may adversely affect rural character values, soil resources, *transport networks*, and the District's *centres* where their size, location or use, are inappropriate. Accordingly, *ancillary* activities need to be actively managed in the rural environment.

Underpinning all of these issues is the need for rural production to be carried out in a manner that is viable for producers and avoids undue restrictions on day-to-day normal rural activities, but not at the expense of the natural *environment*. Natural systems and processes are critical resources for the District, and they are vulnerable to intensive land use activities, including those associated with rural production. Enabling the continued productivity and resilience of the District must be balanced with this need to protect important natural values.

## Objective 2.7 – Historic Heritage

To protect *historic heritage* in the District for the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the Kāpiti Coast community and future generations, including:

- a) supporting the contribution of *historic heritage features* and their values to the identity, character and amenity of places and landscapes;
- b) recognising and protecting *tāngata whenua historic heritage*, including *waahi tapu* and other places and areas significant to Māori; and
- c) providing for appropriate use and development of natural and physical resources with historic heritage values, while ensuring any adverse

**environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.****Explanation**

The *RMA* identifies the protection of *historic heritage* from inappropriate subdivision, use and development as a matter of national importance under section 6(f). In addition, section 6(e) identifies the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, *wāahi tapu*, and other *taonga* as a matter of national importance. These requirements facilitate the achievement of the overall purpose of the *RMA* to promote sustainable management of *natural and physical resources*.

The objective also gives effect to a requirement of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS). The NZCPS recognises that *historic heritage* in the *coastal environment* is extensive but not fully known, and vulnerable to loss or damage from inappropriate *subdivision*, use, and *development*. The NZCPS provides a strong direction on managing the *coastal environment* in a way that protects *historic heritage*.

The operative Wellington Regional Policy Statement (RPS) objectives and policies build on the *RMA* and NZCPS requirements and place emphasis on identifying and protecting *historic heritage*.

*Historic heritage* comprises the *natural and physical resources* that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, including archaeological, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific and technological qualities. The District has a rich physical, cultural and spiritual heritage and examples of *historic heritage* include any place or area (including building, structures, sites and trees) which is significant in the settlement, development and growth of Kāpiti. *Historic heritage* is important to the way the District's communities are shaped economically, aesthetically and culturally. Further, *historic heritage* contributes to the character and landscape values of the District's places. Consideration should therefore be given to the landscape section of Chapter 3 Natural Environment.

The values of the *tāngata whenua* are particularly important to defining the *historic heritage* of the District. Māori cultural heritage - as represented in the places and spaces that are of significance to *whānau*, *hapū* and *iwi* - cannot be separated from Māori environmental values generally. The 'people' and the 'environment' are not mutually exclusive groups in indigenous knowledge systems. In this sense, values such as *rangatiratanga*, *kaitiakitanga*, *tikanga*, *mauri*, *tapu* and *noa* (to name but a few) are inextricably connected to *wāahi tapu*.

*Historic heritage* features and their values are at risk of being degraded and lost through inappropriate *subdivision*, use and development. *Historic heritage* is significantly impacted, both positively and negatively, by land use change and *development* whether it is an individual *development* or the cumulative *effects* of many *developments*. These issues include:

- *Effect* of alterations to the existing landforms and removal of existing vegetation on heritage places, areas and values. Heritage values often arise from the collection of buildings and elements linked by a common historic theme or physical proximity. The change or loss of an item's setting can reduce its heritage value.
- *Demolition*, removal and *alterations* to historic places and areas. Unsympathetic alterations, additions, or detrimental uses can damage an item's heritage values. *Alterations* and *additions* to an item's exterior are often needed to make a heritage item usable. Removing items from their original *setting* can change their context and diminish their historical validity. Heritage items are a finite resource which cannot be

replaced. The *demolition* of heritage items results in complete loss of associated heritage values.

A consequence of the rapid development of Kāpiti has been that many *historic heritage features* have been destroyed or substantially modified and their values undermined. *Archaeological sites* and *waahi tapu* have been particularly affected by changes to the landform through *land disturbance*.

### Objective 2.8 – Strong Communities

**To support a cohesive and inclusive community where people:**

- a) have easy access and connectivity to quality and attractive public places and local social and community services and facilities;**
- b) have increased access to locally produced food, energy and other products and resources;**
- c) have improved health outcomes through opportunities for active living or access to health services; and**
- d) have a strong sense of safety and security in public and private spaces.**

### Explanation

People in the District are in general active and involved in their local communities. The standard of living and quality of life is good but there are groups who have constrained incomes and experience a level of poverty. It is an ongoing issue for the District to improve community resilience and safety, and to reduce household costs in terms of access to services, employment, facilities and educational and other opportunities.

A resilient community is one that has the capacity to actively respond and adapt to change with minimum cost to communities, to community systems (including infrastructure) and ecosystems. It is a community which is served by *infrastructure* and structures which can also adapt over time. The people of the Kāpiti Coast exhibit many of the features of a resilient community: openness, awareness of impacts of social, environmental and economic structures, a diverse leadership and many well-structured organisations involved with the community. This capacity needs to be grown and supported.

Many of the systems supporting the community on a day to day basis have characteristics which work against building strong and resilient communities. For example, there is poorly developed east/west connectivity in Paraparaumu and Raumati which imposes travel costs. The limited range of the local economic activity, much of it dependent on house construction and service activities also makes the District vulnerable to economic cycles. By building resilience on the Kāpiti Coast, communities will be more able to adapt to sudden change as well as long term transition to oil cost and climate change drivers.

Social networks and interactions have a significant role in maintaining wellbeing and a community with a high level of social capital is more likely to be resilient in the face of external pressures and change. The District has a strong network of community groups and organisations and people who are directly involved in the community as volunteers which build and maintain social cohesion and provide wider social wellbeing and enjoyment. There is a desire to strengthen the social wellbeing aspects of the District and to recognise the importance of shared values such as care for others, inclusion, participation and cooperation.

Household and community resilience can be achieved in a variety of ways such as storing rainwater for reuse, micro generation renewable energy systems (such as solar panels), and

growing fruit and vegetables. However, resilience also depends on support and cooperation within neighbourhoods and communities.

The District has a major resource in the food and fibre producing potential and capacity of its rural lands. There is, however, a need to increase access to locally produced food or a 'local food economy', particularly in the face of rising food prices. The *Council* recognises the need to continue to focus on the *productive potential* of the District, encouraging local food production at an individual and community level to build community resilience as well as for economic and commercial advantage.

In order to support social networks and interactions there needs to be community spaces for people to gather and share resources and knowledge such as farmers markets, and community gardens. There is also a need to improve the appearance and quality of new *development* and the quality of the District's town *centres* in particular. These have the potential to build a sense of community and community cohesiveness. Easy and safe access to these places and facilities is essential to the future of the District.

### Objective 2.9 – Landscapes, Features and Landforms

To protect the District's identified *outstanding natural features and landscapes* from inappropriate *subdivision*, use and *development*; and

- a) maintain or enhance the landscape values of *special amenity landscapes* and identified significant landforms; and
- b) avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse *effects of earthworks* on natural features and landforms.

#### Explanation

Landscape is the sum of geological and environmental processes overlaid by the wide range of human activities. The significance of any landscape is determined by a complex interaction of many factors, such as the size, shape and scarcity of a landscape feature within Kāpiti or New Zealand. The significance of a landscape may also be influenced by the extent that people value features and areas, for both their intrinsic qualities and the way they experience the environment.

Kāpiti Coast landscapes are an important local identifier for sense of place and are particularly defined by natural landscape features such as the coastal edge, swift flowing rivers, bush clad Tararua Ranges, coastal plains, bush remnants, *wetlands*, coastal escarpments and coastal hills. The District's identity is closely associated with the coastal and escarpment landscapes which form the backdrop to the string of distinct low density urban townships and coastal plains. Many Kāpiti Coast residents place a high value on the view of Kāpiti Island from public places including when entering the District from the south along *State Highway One* for its scenic value, and it is a key identifier that you have arrived in the Kāpiti Coast District.

The landscape values in the Kāpiti Coast have been affected by and are under pressure from *development* that is not sensitive to the existing landscape character and values, particularly in new urban expansion areas and rural residential areas. Risks arise from *earthworks* and other landform modification and from *buildings*, or *structures* that are at an inappropriate scale or inappropriate location and along with other services visually detract from these landscapes. *Development*, use and *subdivision* need to be managed in a way that avoids diminishing the value of these landscapes.



Identified significant landforms are those landforms that have been specifically identified within the District Plan (but not necessarily in the District Plan maps) such as in structure plans.

### Objective 2.10 – Contaminated Land

**To prevent or mitigate any adverse environmental effects, including risks to human health and the environment, arising from past, present or future activities involving contaminated land.**

#### Explanation

The Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO) sets the minimum performance standards for all *hazardous substances*, regardless of where they are used, stored, transported or disposed of. The *RMA* is focused on site-specific controls on the use of land, and on managing risks to the local *environment*. The two Acts work together.

Under Section 31 of the *RMA*, *territorial authorities* have relevant functions relating to *contaminated land*. *Territorial authorities* are required to control the actual or potential effects of the use, *development* or protection of land for the purposes of preventing or mitigating any adverse effects of the *development*, *subdivision* or use of *contaminated land*. *Territorial authorities* are required to control the actual or potential effects of the use, development or protection of land for the purposes of:

- preventing or mitigating any adverse effects of the development, subdivision or use of contaminated land.

*Contaminated land* management deals with the clean-up, remediation and re-use of land which is already contaminated. The National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing *Contaminants* in Soil to Protect Human Health, 2011, which the *Council* is responsible for giving effect to and enforcing, is applicable to this topic.

The Ministry for the Environment's Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) is a compilation of activities and industries that are considered likely to cause land contamination resulting from *hazardous substance* use, storage or disposal. The HAIL is intended to identify most situations in New Zealand where *hazardous substances* could cause, and in some cases have caused, land contamination. The HAIL is used to consistently report on-site history and for identifying sites for inclusion on Regional *Council's* Selected Land Use Register (SLUR).

The inappropriate storage, use or disposal of *hazardous substances* in the past has resulted in a number of known contaminated sites in the District. *Contaminated land* is defined in the *RMA* as land that 'has a *hazardous substance* in or on it that has significant adverse effect on the *environment* or is reasonably likely to have significant adverse effects on the *environment*.'

Contamination of an area of land may, in turn, result in contamination of other land, sediment, air, groundwater or surface water, both at the source of contamination and at locations remote from the source. Activities occurring on *contaminated* or *potentially contaminated land* pose risks to human health and the wider *environment* with the degree of risk often unknown until an assessment is made. The actual and potential effects and risks that *contaminated land* poses vary according to:

- the scale, history, nature and location of the *contaminant* source relative to potential receptors (ecosystems, plants, animals, people); and

- the exposure scenario (e.g. how the target receptor might come into contact with a *hazardous substance*). Exposure pathways include direct contact, ingestion, absorption, inhalation or contact with vapours.

Soils and sediments are sinks for many contaminating substances and often can only be remediated in a reasonable time if an active clean-up operation is performed. The remediation, use, *development* (including re-development) and *subdivision of contaminated land* may increase the risk of exposing people and the *environment* to *contaminants* as both remediation and the *development* of land can mobilise previously contained *contaminants*.

Where contamination is evident, the site can be either remediated, through the removal or treatment of material, or the contamination contained. Alternatively, *contaminated land* can be managed so that it does not pose an unacceptable risk to current or future owners, occupiers or users of the land. The on-going management of *contaminants* on land needs to be adequate to protect the reasonably foreseeable needs of present and future owners, occupiers and users. Poorly implemented risk management plans and poorly managed information can result in uninformed land use decisions and expose people and the environment to unacceptable risks.

*Development*, use, and *subdivision of contaminated land* in the District are managed through the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011, in addition to general *earthworks* rules and standards. The regional plan(s) for the Wellington Region also contain rules which manage *contaminated land* and activities which may result in discharges to water, and discharges to land where contaminants may enter water.

### Objective 2.11 – Character and Amenity Values

**To maintain and enhance the unique character and amenity values of the District's distinct communities so that residents and visitors enjoy:**

- a) relaxed, unique and distinct village identities and predominantly low-density residential areas characterised by the presence of mature vegetation, a variety of built forms, the retention of landforms and unique community identities;
- b) vibrant, lively *town centres* supported by higher density residential and mixed use areas;
- c) neighbourhood *centres*, village communities and employment areas characterised by high levels of amenity, accessibility and convenience;
- d) productive rural areas, characterised by openness, natural landforms, areas and corridors of *indigenous vegetation*, and *primary production activities*; and
- e) well managed interfaces between different types of land use areas (e.g. between living, working and rural areas and between potentially conflicting land uses, so as to minimise adverse *effects*).

### Explanation

The Kāpiti Coast consists of a series of unique settlements along the coast, each with their own character but linked by a common lifestyle focused on the *beaches*, natural areas and enjoyment of low key living. The character of *development* is typified by the distinct villages and townships located on the coastal plain between the *beach* and the Tararua Ranges. Added to this, the Kāpiti Coast has a wealth of heritage places, including places with natural, built, cultural, archaeological, geological, and heritage values.

Character is the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of natural or human elements which create a distinctive collective identity or sense of place. The RMA defines '*amenity*

*values*' as 'those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes'. In general, the combined *amenity values* of an area go towards defining the character of that area.

Many factors contribute to the perception of an area's *amenity values*. These values derive from a range of environmental characteristics, including the built form, such as scale, density, appearance, and age of *buildings*, as well as from the absence of *buildings* and the naturalness of an area. Other important contributors to *amenity values* include noise, privacy, access to *sunlight* and odour. *Amenity values* in the District vary from location to location, and largely depend upon the perceived character of each area. These differences are important factors in determining which environmental characteristics may be acceptable in one area while not in another.

Character and *amenity values* are significantly influenced by built form and *development*. The character and *amenity values* of the District are coming under threat from *development* that is not sensitive to the existing values, particularly in new urban expansion areas, *infill* residential areas and rural residential areas.

Ōtaki has the role of a rural service town and is unique for its *tāngata whenua* presence and for its post-European history, including Chinese settlers. Ōtaki has a number of distinct areas, consisting of Ōtaki Beach, the main town centre, the Railway area, the Waitohu Plateau and the industrial lands. The shape and form of Ōtaki has been influenced by the Ōtaki River and the various streams flowing through the town. The overlying residential character is low density with wide streets. The challenge for Ōtaki is maintaining the overall character of the town and its local areas, in particular the low key feel of the Ōtaki Beach Area.

Paekākāriki has a low density, settlement or village character with a unique rail settlement history. The coastal escarpment, the Tararua Ranges and the *beach* edge shape the village with Queen Elizabeth Park to the north. Paekākāriki is vulnerable to a change in character, should redevelopment of residential sites occur. The challenge for Paekākāriki will be maintaining the scale and character of the village while encouraging a more viable and stable commercial area.

The settlement of Raumati is where the old dune landforms have largely been retained. The settlement has a low density village feel and has strong connections with the *beach* and Queen Elizabeth Park. The major issues for Raumati are maintaining the scale and style of domestic *buildings* and supporting the distinctive local *centres*.

Paraparaumu comprises a large area of relatively low density housing tied together by Paraparaumu Beach and *Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre*. The Waikanae Estuary is an important natural feature to the north and the coastal hills and escarpment have a strong influence on the communities to the east of the railway line. The area is bisected by *State Highway 1* with Kāpiti Road as a major east/west route. There are significant retirement villages in Paraparaumu and the Kāpiti Coast Airport forms a significant feature of the town. The major challenge for Paraparaumu Beach is to improve the vibrancy and viability of the centre while avoiding a change in scale along the coastal edge. For other areas there is a need to restore and protect the estuary and river. The major challenge for the *development* of *Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre* will be achieving a District where the scale and form of *development* is sympathetic to the character of the District and local natural landform and which results in a lively and vibrant place.

Otaihanga is characterised by a quiet low density area which is set apart from the main urban area. It is strongly linked to the river. The major issue for Otaihanga is maintaining this character while providing for improved cross river access.

Waikanae has a number of distinctive low density areas. Waikanae Beach has a 'bach' character in some areas with a large lagoon, the estuary mouth for the river and Waimanu Stream. Waikanae Garden Precinct has large *lots* and distinctive extensive gardens and Waikanae East has the remnants of the old commercial centre. Waikanae North retains many of the dune and bush features which have been lost from other parts of the District.

The coastal villages of Te Horo and Peka Peka are low density, low scale settlements which have grown out of weekend bach use. The challenge for Te Horo and Peka Peka is to maintain their character as they come under increasing pressure to expand or intensify.

The coastal community of Te Horo Beach is a quiet, relatively remote, low-density area with one narrow *road* accessing the village, many streets with no kerbs or footpaths, and potential adverse *effects* from septic tanks on drinking water supplied by bores. The activities and *development* that would be appropriate in this area are therefore different from other areas with better services and *infrastructure*.

A significant area of the District is productive and attractive rural areas, with a backdrop of the Tararua Ranges. The rural areas are characterised by openness, natural landforms, areas and corridors of *indigenous vegetation*, and *primary production activities*. The major challenges for the District is protecting this rural character from pressures for urban expansion and rural lifestyle living.

### **Objective 2.12 – Housing Choice and Affordability**

**To meet diverse community needs by increasing the amount of housing that:**

- a) is of densities, locations, types, attributes, size and tenure that meets the social and economic wellbeing needs of households in suitable urban and rural locations;**
- b) is affordable and adequate for lower income households; and**
- c) can respond to the changing needs of residents, regardless of age, mobility, health or lifestyle preference;**

**while enhancing the amenity of living environments and contributing to the sustainability of communities and compatibility with the goals of environmental sustainability, in particular resource, water and energy efficiency.**

### **Explanation**

The housing stock within the Kāpiti Coast is primarily detached dwellings in a low density environment with detached housing forming 82% of the housing stock in the District (Statistics NZ 2006). It is dominated by three-bedroom family housing. Some limited supply of attached and higher density dwellings exist in selected areas. With a relatively high proportion of older persons in the District, the housing stock also includes a significant number of retirement villages and rest homes. This lack of choice imposes costs on households.

The housing needs of the District's communities are changing in accordance with changing demographic profiles, economic capacity and household structures. There is a need for the

District's housing stock to be more responsive to changing household formation and size patterns and to offer more choice.

In particular, population projections provide strong signals that the District's currently aging population will continue to expand relative to other age groups, over the coming 30 years. No matter what economic future may eventuate, it seems certain that the District will contain a large retired sector, and planning for housing and the urban environment needs to recognise this. This includes housing which is adaptable to the needs of residents as they change over time, such as the adoption of universal design principles.

Housing affordability encompasses the full costs associated with housing, including housing payments (rent/mortgage), operating costs (heating/electricity) and transport costs. As a result, housing affordability is affected by factors including energy efficiency, location in relation to employment and services and size and design relative to the needs of the household. However, the affordability of housing within the District is also governed by many factors beyond the control of the District Plan.

The District is also attracting a range of working households, partly due to improved transport links with central Wellington, but also due to the reasonably affordable housing stock present. The key segment of the community within the District likely to be affected by housing affordability concerns are working households on modest incomes and single-person households. To maintain options into the future to expand the District's workforce, there is a need to consider housing options for these households.

The provision of a range of housing types and built forms within the living *environment* can be achieved within a high amenity environment. Poor design of *subdivision* patterns and housing can lead to low amenity *environments*, particularly in high density or mixed use areas as environmental nuisances are less able to be absorbed within the locality. A high quality design does not have to result in expensive *development* and can produce affordable housing which meets the needs of households in a quality amenity environment.

### Objective 2.13 – Infrastructure

**To recognise the importance and national, regional and local benefits of *infrastructure* and ensure the efficient *development*, maintenance and operation of an adequate level of social and physical *infrastructure* and services throughout the District that:**

- a) meets the needs of the community and the region; and**
- b) builds stronger community resilience, while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects on the *environment*.**

### Explanation

*Infrastructure* is the physical *structures* and networks that support and provide essential services to the communities of the District. The efficient use and management of *infrastructure* has the potential to greatly affect economic productivity, environmental outcomes and a community's sense of wellbeing, while contributing significantly to a community's health and safety. The benefits of this *infrastructure* to the functioning of the District are therefore substantial.

It is recognised that the District shares boundaries with six other District *Councils* and it is important to acknowledge the importance of the *network utility* and *State Highway*

*infrastructure* linkages crossing these boundaries and to ensure the appropriate integration, coordination and safeguarding of such assets.

The importance of consistency across district boundaries has been recognised in the development of Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) (NESTF) Regulations 2016, National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPSET) and, Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009 (NESETA). These regulations are binding and enforceable and must be read in conjunction with rules in the District Plan. The NESTF applies to telecommunication equipment *cabinets* and allows for this equipment subject to certain size, location and noise standards. It also includes regulations in relation to radiofrequency fields generated by telecommunications facilities, which apply both within and outside of the *road* and applies radio frequency provisions to all telecommunications. The NESETA applies only to activities related to the operation, maintenance, upgrading, relocation or removal of an existing *transmission line* of the *National Grid* owned and operated by Transpower New Zealand Ltd.

While *infrastructure* can have significant local, regional and national benefits, it is recognised that the nature of some *infrastructure* generates adverse environmental *effects*. These *effects* may result from activities involved in establishing the *infrastructure*, be generated by the *infrastructure* itself, or be associated with the maintenance and operation of the *infrastructure*. Such activities may adversely affect landscape values, ecological resources, *indigenous vegetation*, *amenity values*, streetscape, heritage and public health and safety. There is also the potential for some activities undertaken in the vicinity of *infrastructure* to lead to adverse *reverse sensitivity* effects which may impinge upon public health and safety and restrict the operation of *infrastructure*.

There can be logistical or technical constraints on where *infrastructure* must be located to serve communities and to enable it to operate efficiently. The provision of *infrastructure* should also be integrated with urban growth activities. The *Council* seeks to ensure the benefits of *infrastructure* are recognised and appropriately weighed along with the logistical, technical and environmental constraints in any decision-making processes.

Network *infrastructure* associated with water supply, sanitation and drainage is a significant resource for the District and the costs of maintenance and upgrading this resource has substantial consequences for the communities of the District. The need to upgrade *infrastructure* to accommodate new *development* has a significant cumulative *effect* on the physical resources of the District, in addition to the environmental impacts in the immediate vicinity of the developed site. *Developments* may necessitate significant modification of the overall network and can lead to significant adverse *effects* on the receiving *environment* (i.e. sewage / stormwater) or resources (i.e. water). Increasing concern about social, environmental and cultural sustainability is driving changes and improvements in the performance of *infrastructure* services.

### **Objective 2.14 – Access and Transport**

**To ensure that the transport system in the District:**

- a) integrates with land use and urban form and maximises accessibility;**
- b) improves the efficiency of travel and maximises mode choice to enable people to act sustainably as well as improving the resilience and health of communities;**
- c) contributes to a strong economy;**
- d) avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse *effects* on land uses;**
- e) does not have its function and operation unreasonably compromised by other**

- activities;
- f) is safe, fit for purpose, cost effective and provides good connectivity for all communities; and
- g) provides for the integrated movement of people, goods and services.

## Explanation

The road and rail network, together with the Kāpiti Coast Airport and pedestrian and cycleways, comprise the District's main transport *infrastructure*. The urban *centres* and communities of the District have developed around the transport routes established by the *state highway* and railway which provide the main linkages between the urban *centres* of the District.

The current pattern and scale of movement in the District is heavily dependent on motor vehicles powered by fossil fuels. This dependency has a number of adverse consequences for the long term viability of transportation and for the *environment*. These adverse *effects* will become increasingly more prevalent as a result of global issues and pressures including climate change and peak oil. There is a need to increase transport efficiencies by increasing the use and efficiency of public transport, increasing walking and cycling and minimising the need to travel through better integration of transport and land use planning.

An efficient and effective *transport network* is critical to the functioning of the District, to move people, goods and services in a safe and effective manner. Poor land-use decisions which are not linked to the capacity of the *transport network* can create problems for the overall system. Equally, transport *infrastructure* is a major shaper of the broad patterns and character of urban areas and can if poorly managed and located create pressure for new *development* in areas which create inefficient demand for community investment in other *infrastructure*. Regard must be had for the interrelationship between land use activities and the transport *infrastructure*. Decisions about urban form and the location of land use activities are all interconnected, and are all crucial in terms of reducing *infrastructure* costs and environmental damage.

The rail corridor is also a key part of the District's *transport network*, and therefore its efficient and safe operation must be protected from potential adverse *effects* of activities. *Council's* role with regard to rail transport is largely an advocacy role. The *development* of the railway network is the subject of existing *designations* for the land use and is determined by the railway operator - Kiwi Rail. The provision of passenger rail services is supported by Wellington Regional Council funding. *Council* supports the maintenance and enhancement of the rail services for both passengers and industry. The District Plan addresses, where appropriate these services through facilitating associated facilities. However, smart land-use management decisions, particularly in the location of *residential activities* and the management of urban densities, along with maximising access to rail stations, can help support and increase the viability and returns on rail investment.

The *Council*, in conjunction with interested community groups, individuals and landowners has developed an indicative cycleway, walkway and bridleway (CWB) network. The community have a strong interest in such a system and the *Council* has committed to significant implementation of the network. A key issue for the *Council* is to ensure the CWB network is considered and incorporated into the design of *subdivisions* and *resource consents* and in the design and development of the roading network, parks and reserves.

The specific resource management issues relating to access and transport in the District are:

- ensuring equitable access to services by all;

- availability of public transport alternatives and a CWB network for residents of the District to travel between and within communities of the District;
- future of *State Highway 1* (SH1) and the Expressway in terms of separating through traffic on roads of the District from local traffic, traffic generation of Expressway interchanges (on local *road transport network*) and increased demand for commercial *development* at the interchanges;
- need for high quality *State Highway* network which connects safely and efficiently with the District *road* network through appropriate arterial routes;
- the need for and *effects* of additional transport linkages between and within communities of the District;
- the *effects* of *subdivision* and development on the *transport network* and vice versa;
- traffic congestion and hazards at key *road* intersections;
- road damage and noise from heavy vehicles travelling through the District (and more acutely in the urban areas);
- transport system dangers and conflicts over conflicting modes and land uses (e.g. cyclists commuting on *State Highway 1* and local shops requiring access to/from *State Highway 1*);
- adverse *effects* of other activities on the safety and efficient use of the *State Highway* system for traffic movement throughout the District;
- demand for access to and between recreational *open spaces*, including the CWB network;
- the future of Kapiti Coast Airport and the *Paraparaumu Sub-regional Centre* and *effects* on the safe and efficient operation of the surrounding *development* and associated activities;
- consolidating *infill*, mixed use and higher density *developments* near public transport hubs (e.g. railway stations and bus routes) to increase more sustainable modes of transport and reduce the demand for more private motor vehicle trips.

The Kapiti Coast Airport is a valued transport asset for the District. The main resource management issues associated with the Kapiti Coast Airport are:

- providing an optimum balance between allowing for reasonable noise associated with *aviation activities*, and managing the adverse *effects* on surrounding occupiers;
- controlling noise sensitive activities within the Airport Zone;
- managing the relationship between the Kapiti Coast Airport and the surrounding area, for example through the provision of a buffer between the *site* and surrounding areas;
- establishing *open space* and public access generally within the Airport Zone, subject to safety and operational considerations, and establishing links with existing CWB linkages;
- managing *development*, including the timing of *development*, so that it occurs with appropriate provision for *infrastructure* and services, including upgrades to transport and *infrastructure*;
- managing *development* to avoid, remedy and mitigate the *effects* of airport development on transport and service *infrastructure*;
- managing environmental *effects* including protection of the Wharemauku Stream, stormwater, flooding and water quality issues, and potential for protecting and enhancing the biodiversity within the site;



- airport safety;
- providing appropriately for the archaeological and *tāngata whenua* values associated with the Kapiti Coast Airport, particularly in respect of the area to the south of Wharemauku Stream and in the area to the west of Magrath Avenue;
- ensuring that *commercial activities* provided at the Kapiti Coast Airport are compatible with airport operations, and do not compete with the role and function of the *Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre*.

### Objective 2.15 – Economic Vitality

To promote sustainable and on-going economic development of the local economy, including the rural sector, with improved number and quality of jobs and investment through:

#### A.

- a) encouraging *business activities* in appropriate locations within the District, principally through differentiating and managing various types of *business activities* both on the basis of the activity, and the potential local and strategic effects of their operation;
- b) reinforcing a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form supported by an integrated *transport network*;
- c) enabling opportunities to make the economy more resilient and diverse;
- d) providing opportunities for the growth of a low carbon economy, including clean technology;
- e) minimising *reverse sensitivity effects* on *business activities*, including *primary production activities*; and
- f) enhancing the amenity of *Working Zones*;

while:

#### B.

- a) ensuring that economic growth and development is able to be efficiently serviced by *infrastructure*;
- b) encouraging commercial consolidation and the co-location of community services and facilities primarily within the *Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre* and *Town Centres*; and
- c) managing contamination, pollution, odour, noise and glare, associated with *business activities*, including *primary production activities*.

### Explanation

The Kāpiti Coast has a narrow economic base which is largely reliant on retail, the aged care and social services sector, and the residential construction sector for employment. The District's *centres* are heavily skewed to *retail activity* with limited business services and other activity. This makes them very reliant on the fortunes of the housing market and constraints on retail spend. The issues for the District are:

- difficulty in maintaining and enhancing the District's *centres*. The District's *centres* are important as points of investment, as transport nodes and as places of community and civic focus;
- pressure to maintain high levels of *development* and urban growth as a way of maintaining businesses and employment;

- limited job opportunities which results in young people leaving the District and large numbers of people commuting to Wellington for work;
- an aging population; and
- difficulties in encouraging businesses to start, remain in or come to the District.

The important role played by support and consumer-facing businesses is recognised. However there is a desire to create more employment in the District and to broaden the range of jobs available. A larger and more diverse local economy is less subject to external shocks such as peak oil, volatility in price and supply of other essential resources, and the need to fund expensive climate change adaptation measures. Economic development results in interesting and rewarding jobs and careers and it becomes easier for the community to afford amenities and *infrastructure*. Job creation, wealth attraction and greater District self-sufficiency in employment will better secure the future of the Kāpiti Coast residents.

Specifically, the *Council* sees a future economic growth aspiration of the District as a place of creativity and innovation. This prospect would be based on a sustainable District economy that is led by industries at the forefront of the business world of tomorrow, where new and emerging technology is welcomed and used, where entrepreneurs can work with likeminded people to develop clean technology, and where people in the District are employed locally in good quality jobs.

The District has a major resource in the food and fibre producing potential and capacity of its rural lands. These resources have the potential to support the development of a larger horticulture sector and a sustainable local food economy. Consideration should therefore also be given to the rural environment. The District's economy could benefit from a deliberate effort to add value to products made or grown in the District in order to improve the return per hour of labour invested. The *Council* recognises the importance of its role in controlling land use to enable and facilitate new opportunities to grow the local food economy.

The *centres* of the District provide a base from which business and a wide range of other commercial and related amenities operate. Improving the range of activities that take place in the District's *centres* and improving their appearance and liveability will benefit the District in the following ways:

- increase the sense of belonging and commitment to live and invest locally;
- increase investment flows and opportunities for business;
- provide local employment;
- support passenger transport hubs and increase access to local businesses; and
- increase housing choice for the workforce.

The District is faced with the on-going challenge of the need to take into account the changing regional, national and global context. Such changes include increasing scarcity and cost of fossil fuels and the transition to a low carbon economy. This presents opportunities to build on traditional areas of strength as well as new areas such as local value added food production. Further, increasing fuel costs will increase the need for local employment and new businesses in the District's *centres*.

Part of sustainable development is enabling people and communities to provide for their economic wellbeing. Economic development makes an important contribution to delivering a thriving and resilient future for the Kāpiti Coast. There is a need however, to achieve a balance between social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing in the sustainable

development of the District. The local economy and economic growth should, as far as possible, avoid environmental harm and develop within the basic capacity and thresholds of natural resources to support such growth.

In relation to State Highway 1, expressway interchanges tend to attract commercial development, particularly retail activities to locate around them. The Council has a clear policy of consolidation of such activity around its town centres as a way of reducing adverse environmental, social and economic *effects*. Accordingly, commercial development is not envisaged at the base of interchanges. This is essential to prevent sporadic and unplanned commercial activity outside existing town centres.

### Objective 2.16 – Centres

To have vibrant, safe and economically sustainable *centres* that function as key employment and economic nodes and as a focus for social and community life, as public transport and local service hubs, and as places for living, entertainment and recreation that:

- a) provide the primary focus for *commercial, retail* and community activities within the District;
- b) support community cohesion and a sense of place;
- c) reinforce a compact, well designed and sustainable District and regional form, through promoting and reinforcing a close proximity and good accessibility between living, business and employment areas;
- d) encourage economic opportunities and *business activities* in a manner which promotes:
  - i. the *Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre* as the principal commercial, retail, cultural, civic and tourist centre for the District, to be developed in a manner that:
    - a) achieves an integrated and compact *district centre*, linking all Precincts through a well-connected pedestrian and *transport networks* offering a choice of efficient routes and a quality built environment;
    - b) provides for a broad range of mutually compatible activities that are integrated with pedestrian and public transport;
    - c) is supported by opportunities for medium density residential living;
    - d) consolidates community activities within Precinct B; and
    - e) enables *commercial activities* and *retail activities* in Precincts A1, A2 and C, with restrictions on *retail activities* in Precinct C;
  - ii. the District's *town centres* at a scale and form that provides the urban focus for the commercial, tourism, education, entertainment, community and civic activities as well as opportunities for medium density residential living, where these meet the needs of the surrounding township community; and
  - iii. the District's *local centres* to provide for *commercial activities*, within a residential context, to primarily serve the local convenience, community and commercial needs of the surrounding residential community.

### Explanation

The District has a number of *centres* of varying scale, ranging from those with a sub-regional and district wide influence to those with a neighbourhood function. The Kāpiti Coast's urban form reflects its history of small coastal bach settlements and the *centres* that grew up along

the railway line. The historic village identity of the settlements in the District is closely tied to the individual identities of many of the *centres* in the District.

These *centres* are where the exchange of goods and services and associated land-use *effects* are concentrated. They also have a significant social component as a focus of many community activities, and the physical amenity and character of these areas is crucial to the perceptions people have of the urban communities and District as a whole. This includes the visual appearance, convenience and safety of *buildings* and physical setting and variety of activities/mixed uses in close proximity in each centre.

The Local Outcomes Statements for each community across the Kāpiti Coast sets out their desire to retain the coherence of their neighbourhood character and to retain a valued sense of place. A key challenge for the District is to ensure that *development* enhances the local sense of place which people can strongly associate with and feel part of. New *development* in *centres* does not have to replicate existing conditions to achieve a sense of place and sometimes, it is just as important to add new elements to the built environment and to stimulate the development of a 'future context'.

The District's *centres* support activities outside of usual retail and office business hours. Mixed use buildings provide a variety of activities within *centres*. An ongoing issue for the *Council* is to ensure that *buildings* are located and designed to be suitable to the use mix and ensuring privacy and noise mitigation. Mixed use development within the *centres* is preferred in locations which are close to public transport and *open spaces*.

The role of each of the *centres* within the District is set out in the *centres* hierarchy. Development that is inconsistent with the role of a *centre* could weaken the role and viability of other *centres* in the hierarchy and may have a range of adverse *effects* including cumulative *effects*, on both the *centre* and other *centres* within the District. Specific consideration needs to be given to the *effect* of development pressures, such as those created around the Expressway interchanges, which may affect the viability and vitality of the District's *centres*.

A key opportunity provided for is the further development of the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre as the District's principal commercial and retail centre. To guide this further development a Structure Plan has been prepared. The Structure Plan identifies four precincts (Precincts A1, A2, B and C) each of which provides opportunities for a range of activities to establish, including *commercial* and *retail activities*, but with some limitations on the type and scale of retail activities within Precinct C. These limitations will ensure that *retail activities* that establish within Precinct C do not adversely affect the viability and vitality of Precincts A1 and A2.

Furthermore, outside identified centres, commercial in particular *retail activities*, are limited. There are numerous adverse *effects* of dispersed and out of *centre* business development, including:

- increased demand on the *transport network* due to the increased number and length of trips required to access dispersed activities;
- loss of accessibility to services and facilities due to dispersed nature not being efficient for public transport service; and
- loss of economic agglomeration benefits resulting from the co-location of complementary activities.

Further adverse *effects* include increased environmental nuisances affecting sensitive land uses such as residential areas, declining *amenity values* in *centres*, inefficient use of existing *infrastructure* provided in identified *centres* and *working zones*, reduced certainty of re-

investment in public *infrastructure* and public investment in identified *centres* and *working zones*.

The extent and range of *commercial activities* provided for within the District's Industrial/Service Zones, and the Airport Zone, is limited to manage *reverse sensitivity* issues, scarcity of the industrial land resource, and to ensure that such areas avoid adverse *effects* on the function and amenity of the *Paraparaumu Sub Regional Centre* and *Town Centres*.

The distribution and location of *business activity* plays a key role in the form and growth of the District's urban areas. *Business activity* is vital to the effective and efficient functioning of the Community through providing for social and economic wellbeing. Intervention with regard to the distribution, scale and function of *business activity* is critical to promote sustainable resource management and the integrated management of *effects*. Such intervention is therefore undertaken for two reasons:

- a distribution of *business activity* that integrates with strategic and community *infrastructure*, and existing residential and *town centre* and industrial environments is more likely to secure desired outcomes and sustainably manage *effects*; and
- that if left unimpeded, resulting *development* patterns, despite the extent and scale of growth pressures, are likely to produce adverse environmental *effects*, and costs to the community.

The grouping of a wide range of facilities in integrated *centres* will benefit the community by encouraging economic and shared use of facilities, providing a meeting place for communities and encouraging ready access by both public and private transport.

An ongoing challenge for the *Council* is ensuring the consolidation and intensification of *business activities* to enable the development of vibrant and viable *centres* and the efficient use of *infrastructure* and facilities. Compact and well designed *centres* also promote the efficient use of energy and reduction of vehicle emissions.

An efficient urban form is also one which is easily accessed by active, public and private transport modes. A centre which is easily accessed ensures that the community and catchment it serves is able to access and support the businesses and facilities within the centre.

Pedestrian priority in *centres* means high traffic generating activities need to be carefully managed. *Supermarkets*, shopping malls and *department stores* are all forms of *retail activity* which are high generators of vehicle traffic. Development should be located and designed in such a way that potential adverse *effects* on the road network, particularly traffic movement, efficiency and safety, and adverse *effects* on pedestrians and passenger transport users, are appropriately managed.

The level of amenity provided by *developments* can influence the success of a *centre* as a destination for the local and wider community. Built form that is conscious of the local surroundings and heritage contributes to a high level of amenity within the centre. Where communities and businesses have a choice of *centres* to patronise or invest in, the level of amenity significantly contributes to the viability of the centre.

The streetscape is the key location for public interaction within *centres* and the interface between the *transport network* and the businesses. The development of a high quality public streetscape is critical to the development of a high amenity and accessible environment and therefore a vibrant and economically viable *centre*.

## Objective 2.17 – Open Spaces / Active Communities

To have a rich and diverse network of *open space areas* that:

- a) is developed, used and maintained in a manner that does not give rise to significant adverse *effects* on the natural and physical *environment*;
- b) protects the District's cultural, ecological and *amenity values*, while allowing for the enhancement of the quality of *open space areas*;
- c) supports the identity, health, cohesion and resilience of the District's communities; and
- d) ensures that the present and future recreational and *open space* needs of the District are met.

### Explanation

The District's network of *open space* is diverse, and covers a broad expanse of public and private land. As part of its core asset management function, the *Council* acquires, maintains and enhances a number of these spaces for public use, including:

- local neighbourhood parks;
- sports grounds and playgrounds;
- bush and coastal reserves; and
- cemeteries, destination parks, utility and other reserves.

In addition, large areas of *open spaces* in Kāpiti are managed by other public entities, including the Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation. The former administers Queen Elizabeth Park, a 650 hectare reserve linking Paekākāriki to Raumati. The most significant *open space* areas of the District are Kāpiti Island and Tararua Forest Park; managed by the Department of Conservation.

These features are major contributors to Kāpiti Coast's recreational and conservation values and are enjoyed by the local population and national and international visitors alike. They also contribute markedly to the identity and sense of place enjoyed by Kāpiti residents.

A predominant physical characteristic of *open spaces* in Kāpiti is the minimal presence of *buildings* and *structures*. However, most (if not all) of these places contain such features as clubrooms, toilets, gymnasia, pools, tramping huts, tracks, play equipment, benches, lighting, rubbish bins and so on. Where appropriately located, these *structures* enhance amenity and functionality for *open space* users, enabling a greater diversity of activities and a higher quality recreational experience.

The District's expanding network of cycleways, walkways and bridleways is also a vital component to the wider *open space* network. These assets not only provide physical connections among and between communities, but also offer viable active transport opportunities in lieu of private vehicle travel – an outcome that promotes improved air quality (from reduced vehicular emissions) and enhanced community and individual health, wellbeing and resilience.

From a strategic perspective, it is recognised that the regional *open space* network suffers from a lack of integrated strategic planning, further compounded by a lack of mechanisms available to share best practice and resources. Kāpiti shares District boundaries with a number of other local authorities, including boundaries that effectively dissect areas of *open space*. An issue for the Kāpiti Coast, therefore, is to understand the ways in which the

District's *open spaces* can best be managed to meet the needs of its residents whilst also recognising the benefits of incorporating the wider strategic aspirations of the Region.

Though the rate has slowed in more recent years, Kāpiti has experienced rapid population growth since the first *RMA* District Plan was made operative. This growth has led to an increased demand for greenfield development and *infill* housing, and an associated need to monitor the provision, quality and variety of *open spaces* in Kāpiti.

Despite the generous amount of *open spaces* the District enjoys, the distribution of these areas is not evenly spread geographically. Areas like Queen Elizabeth Park and Kāpiti Island are significant amenity resources; however, they are not readily accessed by every member of the community. As the District's population grows, there is therefore a continuous need to review the spatial provision of parks, reserves, playgrounds and other *open spaces* to ensure all residents and visitors have reasonable access to a variety of public spaces.

Similarly, the quality of *open spaces* in Kāpiti is a consideration that demands ongoing attention. Most facilities require periodic maintenance to retain healthy, user-friendly environments, which is generally funded by public rates and other government funding. With more intensive urban areas anticipated in parts of the District over the foreseeable planning horizon, existing *open spaces* in these settlements will need to be upgraded and enhanced to cope with increased usage and evolving recreational preferences. Moreover, where new *development* is to occur in greenfield areas, a balance must be reached between the provision (both in amount and location) of land for new *open space* uses and the improvements made to that land to enhance amenity and recreational opportunities. This is an ongoing challenge for the *Council* in terms of allocating funding from reserve contributions to best meet the needs of the Community.

The District's cultural, socio-economic and generational diversity collectively equate to competing desires for the use of public *open space*. Some residents prefer active recreational opportunities afforded by sports fields, playgrounds or bike trails, while others enjoy more passive activities like walking or picnicking. Others still value the contribution that *open space* areas make to the overall spaciousness of the Kāpiti Coast, the contrast this provides to its more urbanised areas and the potential these open spaces carry for the enhancement of the District's indigenous biological diversity.

Resource management issues relevant for *open spaces* on the Kāpiti Coast are not limited to local influences. In an increasingly globalised society, world-wide economic and resource management issues can affect the resilience of the District's communities. Peak oil and global climate change is likely to have an impact on the wellbeing of Kāpiti residents, and on the local natural and physical environment. In considering the specific relevance that the *effects* of climate change and peak oil have on *open spaces* in Kāpiti, thought must now be given to whether the core functions of some of these areas can evolve to facilitate a more resilient District.

*Open space* in and around urban areas is also an increasingly important asset to ensure community health and wellbeing. With increasing proportions of the District's population living in urbanised areas having limited private *open space* available on typical residential lots, public *open spaces* – including active transport facilities – are needed to facilitate healthy, active living opportunities. While the urbanisation of Kāpiti and wider New Zealand may provide for the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of communities in many instances, urban areas need to be developed in a manner that enables healthy living.

**Objective 2.18 – Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation**

**Increase the development and use of energy from renewable sources, including on-site systems, and efficiency and conservation of energy use while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects on the environment.**

**Explanation**

A secure, reliable and sustainable energy supply is vital to the functioning of the District. It enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety. The path to creating a more sustainable energy future is through using energy more efficiently and by generating more energy from renewable sources. This has the potential to allow communities to move towards self-sufficiency in the use of energy for the benefit of the whole District and to encourage economic development within the District.

*Council* must have regard to energy efficiency, climate change, and the benefits of the use and development of renewable energy under the RMA. The New Zealand Government has confirmed its commitment to increase the proportion of electricity generated from renewable sources in order to meet its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol and has set in place a policy framework and a programme to reach its targets. A number of national policy documents provide direction in terms of how we should respond to the challenges of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Wellington Region, including the Kāpiti Coast, is recognised as having resources that are suitable for renewable electricity generation, in particular wind, solar, wave and hydro energy. There is potential to reduce electricity related greenhouse gas emissions and meet future energy demand through maximising renewable electricity generation at the domestic, community and *commercial scale* using the renewable resources in the District. The District's urban environments offer opportunities for *domestic scale renewable energy generation*. The Rural zones have the most potential of any zone in the District for commercial renewable energy developments and *community scale renewable energy generation* development.

The use and development of renewable energy can be in a number of different forms. At the *domestic scale* there are various ways to use natural sources of heat, including the orientation of *buildings* towards the sun to assist with heating cooling and natural lighting. Significant gains can also be made through solar water heating or solar panels on *buildings*. Domestic small scale turbines may become more common. The scale of such facilities is unlikely to create significant adverse effects in rural areas where distances from neighbouring *properties* and screening vegetation could avoid or mitigate visual and noise effects.

*Renewable electricity generation activities* at community and *commercial scales* are unlikely to be able to internalise all potential adverse effects within the *site*. The scale of effects generated on the *environment* will vary depending on the location of the activity and the characteristics of the surrounding area. Wind turbines for example are usually provided at large scale and, by necessity, are usually located in open and prominent locations where the wind resource occurs. There are potential tensions between existing values of these areas and their potential for renewable electricity generation. There is potential that such developments can cause adverse effects on the *environment* including on amenity, landscape, ecology, cultural and heritage values.



If renewable electricity generation facilities are established in the District, they will represent important *infrastructure*. Inappropriate *subdivision*, land use and *development* can lead to *sensitive activities* establishing in close proximity to renewable electricity generation facilities. This may adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of these facilities due to the creation of *reverse sensitivity effects*.

Transmission *infrastructure* associated with *renewable electricity generation activities* will traverse land between the generation *site* and the area of demand. These facilities for the transmission of electricity to the areas of demand may have adverse environmental *effects*. It is preferable that the *effects* of construction and operation of renewable electricity generation facilities, including the *effects* relating to transmission, be assessed as a single package of *effects*.

The form and layout of *subdivisions* and *development* can play a major role in contributing to energy efficiency. Appropriately orientated sections enable new homes and other *buildings* to be designed to take advantage of the sun, resulting in warmer, drier homes and *buildings* that are less expensive to heat. This has economic as well as health benefits for individuals in the District.