

2 Objectives

The following twenty 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 the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

Explanation

The Council recognises the status of the *tāngata whenua* under the Treaty of Waitangi and in relation to the requirements of the Resource Management Act 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 Resource Management Act 1991 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. Section 6 (Matters of National Importance) requires that the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, *waahi tapu*, and other *taonga* is recognised and provided for. Section 7 (Other Matters) of the Act states that *kaitiakitanga* shall be given particular regard and Section 8 (Treaty of Waitangi) states that the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi shall be taken into account by all persons exercising powers, duties and functions under the Act.

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 myth 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 to 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 of Waitangi to the management of natural resources. The Resource Management Act includes the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi to guide 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 Te Tiriti O Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi), as interpreted by the Courts, which are relevant to the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The first is the principle of mutually-beneficial relationship. This 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 Resource Management Act, 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 Act is a practical way in which the Council could give effect to *tinō rangatiratanga*. The nature of any function to be transferred to an iwi/hapū 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 Resource Management Act 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 *tinō 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 just 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 or as 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 Resource Management Act is a fundamental principle embodied in the Treaty.

Consultation with *tāngata whenua*

Increasingly, consultation is perceived more as a legal requirement, rather than a principle that can benefit land use and development processes. However, 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 need to be taken into account 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 remember 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, passes 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 give effect to and take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
- 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 the:

- a) protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna;
- b) restoration of the ecological integrity of important degraded environments and habitats;
- c) enhancement of the health of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; and
- d) enhancement of the *mauri* of waterbodies.

Explanation

The RMA has as its purpose 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 well-being and for their health and safety while—

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

Section 7 (d) of the RMA requires regard to be had for the intrinsic values of ecosystems. The Act 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 for 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. While not yet completed, the importance of biodiversity has been signalled in the government's development of a draft National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity which was released for submissions in early 2011.

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 resulted in a whittling away of the precious natural environment to the point that by 2001 only 300ha, or 1.8 percent 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 Kāpiti Coast District 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 activity managed in a way that ensures their continued existence and enhancement.

The loss of biodiversity has progressed to the point that protection of natural areas is no longer an adequate response to protecting the sustainable long-term future of indigenous

biodiversity and ecological resilience. There is a need to restore and enhance important degraded environments that could provide buffers, habitats for protected or threatened species, or ecological services including soil conservation and water quality enhancement. The costs of fully enhancing, protecting and maintaining such areas on an ongoing basis can be large, both in terms of expertise and resources.

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 the health of waterbodies is a Regional Council function, the District Council is responsible for managing landuse 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 necessary infrastructure;
- b) a variety of living and working environments 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 appropriate areas, and avoidance of such development where it would adversely affect areas of special character or amenity;
- e) sustainable settlements that are developed in a manner which preserves: natural processes including freshwater systems; areas characterised by productive soils, ecological and landscape importance; and other places of significant natural amenity; and
- f) an adequate supply of housing and areas for business/employment to meet the needs of the districts anticipated population which is provided at a rate and in a manner that can be sustained within the finite carrying capacity of the District.

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 such as whare whakairo 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 'centres' 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 and relatively uncontrolled demand for services;

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, 1994 ("RPS"), the Proposed Wellington RPS, 2009 ("PRPS") 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 must be given effect to in the District Plan. Of particular relevance is the RPS (operative and proposed), which identifies the following key issues (in summary):

- [1] Poor quality urban design can adversely affect public health, social equity, land values, the vibrancy of local centres and economies, and the provision of, and access to, civic services. It can also increase the use of non-renewable resources and vehicle emissions in the region.
- [2] Sporadic and uncoordinated development (including of infrastructure) can adversely affect the region's compact form, potentially resulting in:
- (a) new development that is poorly located in relation to existing infrastructure and is costly or otherwise difficult to service
 - (b) development in locations that restrict access to the significant physical resource in the region – such as aggregate
 - (c) the loss of rural or open space land valued for its productive, ecological, aesthetic and recreational qualities
 - (d) insufficient population densities to support public transport and other public services
 - (e) new infrastructure that can encourage development in locations that undermine existing centres and industrial employment areas.
- [3] A lack of integration between land use and transportation and the region's transportation network can create patterns of development that increase the need for travel, the length of journeys and reliance on private motor vehicles, resulting in:
- (a) increased emissions to air from a variety of pollutants, including greenhouse gases
 - (b) increased use of energy and reliance on non-renewable resources
 - (c) reduced opportunities for alternate means of travel and increased costs associated with upgrading roads
 - (d) increased road congestion leading to restricted movement of goods and services to, from and within the region, and compromising the efficient operation of the transport network.

Other regional issues are also applicable to the management of growth in Kāpiti – for example, the management of effects of development on landscape values. These matters are covered in greater detail in other sections of the District Plan.

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 allotment 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.

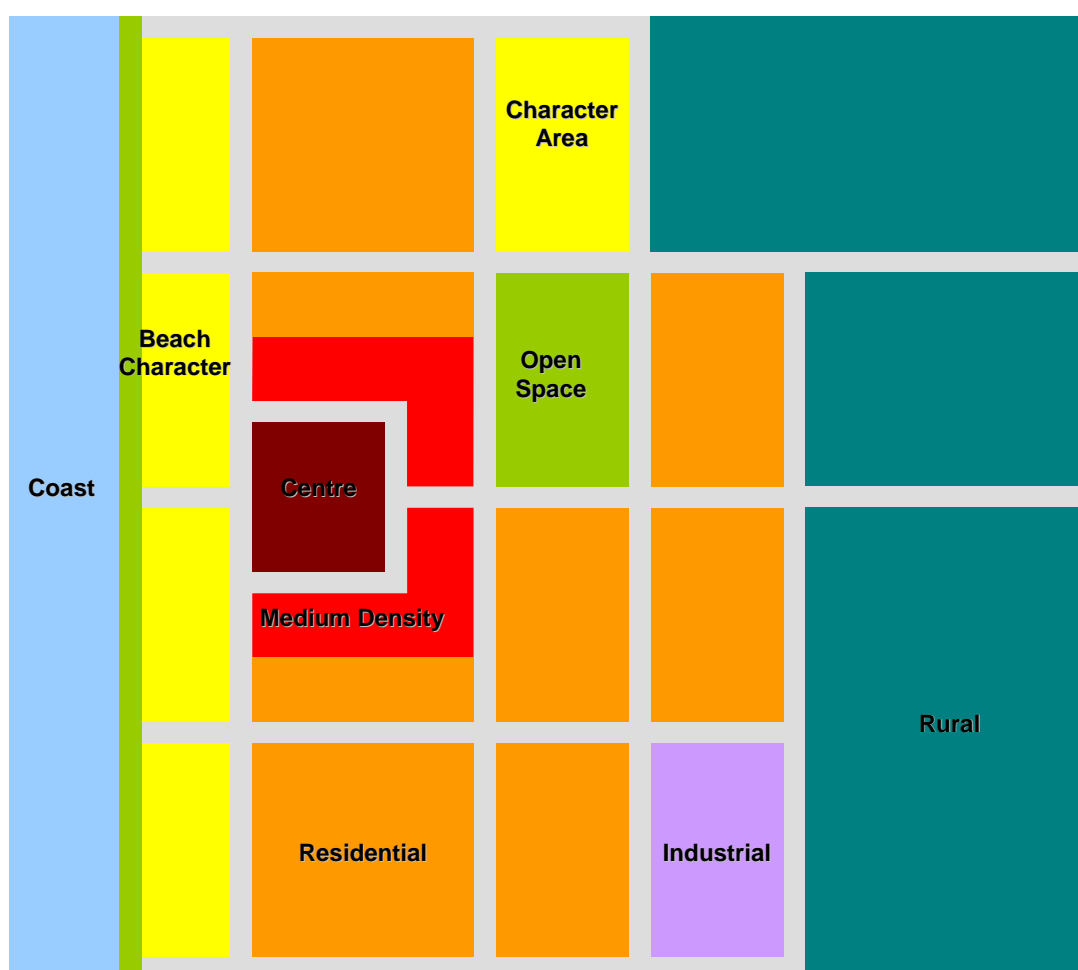


Figure 2.1: Management of Urban Densities

As Kāpiti is also subject to a range of threats from natural hazards, development must also be managed to avoid increasing exposure of people to these threats, and to avoid increasing potential economic loss from property damage. Surface flooding is a particularly common risk facing both urban and rural areas in the District and development must be able to neutralise the existing and potential increase in on-site and off-site impacts to avoid increased exposure to such hazards. Likewise, the District's geological characteristics and proximity to active seismic areas mean that many residents are vulnerable to the effects of earthquakes (including tsunami and liquefaction). New development must be mindful of this risk to ensure community resilience.

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) natural character, natural systems, natural landforms and natural processes, are protected, and restored where degraded;
- b) appropriate public access to and along the coast is improved;
- c) development does not result in further loss of **identified** coastal dunes; and
- d) communities are not exposed to increased risks from coastal hazards

[Comment: See notes below regarding need to focus and strike an balance on the provisions regarding coastal dunes.]

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. However, the coastal environment is more than the beachfront and dunes. It includes the coastal plain, extending to the foot of the hills. The wider coastal system includes rivers, streams and associated estuaries and lagoons which flow onto the coast.

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 landforms visible from and associated with the beach form part of the natural character of the coastal environment.

The coastal environment is highly valued by both local and the 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.

The natural ecology and processes of the coastal environment can be harmed if activities are not appropriately managed. A consequence of the unique characteristics and natural qualities of the coastal environment is that it is under considerable development pressure which tends to conflict with the natural character, systems, landforms and processes of the coastal environment. The beach and coastal plain have been highly modified by development and use since permanent settlement. The potential threats to the natural coastal systems include the

rapid rate of coastal development, degradation of the dune features, effects of climate change including more frequent storm events, sea level rise, salt water intrusion of wetland areas and pressure from increased recreation use.

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 coastal environment is also subject to a range of natural hazards that may adversely affect inappropriately located development. There is a real threat to private property in many areas even under existing sea level and climate conditions. These changes can result in coastal erosion occurring in developed areas. To provide for the wellbeing and safety of people and communities, it is imperative to identify and minimise the risks from such hazards by avoiding development from these areas, or mitigating the risks through informed design and siting.

The coastal hazard risks are projected to increase as an effect of climate change which is expected to drive future changes in sea level and coastal processes. These changes are expected to drive long term shoreline recession on sandy beaches such as those on the Kāpiti Coast. In areas where the coast is currently accreting, sea level rise may cancel out or even reverse this trend. Given the uncertainties with the rate of sea level rise it is necessary to take a precautionary approach to coastal hazards.

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 and in the context of coastal hazards, this includes controlling development and over time considering retreat in certain areas

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.

To guide the management of the coastal environment, the Council developed a Coastal Strategy in 2006 which determines the management of coastal activities, access, recreation, harvesting, the natural and built environments and coastal hazards. The Coastal Strategy summarises the outcomes desired by the community as follows:

- the coast is recognised as a dynamic natural system that accretes and retreats as part of the geological cycle and processes. Long term solutions which protect coastal processes and systems are sought for the benefit of current and future generations;
- there is a need to think about the coastal strip in its context within a coastal plain back to the base of the hills;
- public land is clearly identifiable, recognised as important public open space, and is as natural as possible with native plants. Restoration planting has been a priority on the foredune and has formed a natural erosion buffer. The community is well informed about dune restoration and enhancement and beach management practices. There is

interpretive signage at public beach access points explaining the fragility of coastal ecology;

- any structures within the coastal reserve (protection and access structures) are part of the built character and must be well designed and multipurpose where possible. All access to the beach across the foredunes is via a public accessway as these are suitable for all users and protect the environment;
- outstanding natural areas and fragile communities are identified and protected by clustering buildings and parking away from them and limiting access where appropriate. Harvesting of materials from the beach is managed to protect habitats, areas of cultural significance and prevent erosion;
- the beach is safe and welcoming for all to use and has the flexibility to accommodate existing and new sports and activities. All users will need to work together to achieve a harmonious beach experience;
- the individual character of settlements is clear with the beach providing a linking element between them. The distinct settlements are linked together but separated by areas of open space.

The district plan is a major tool for implementing the Coastal Strategy.

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 tsunami;
- coastal erosion and inundation due to long term trends of sea level rise, sediment supply and weather change;
- 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 Resource Management Act, 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 Act to refuse a subdivision consent where the land is or is likely to be subject to material damage natural hazards, using the latest information available at the time of application, or where the subsequent use of the land will exacerbate the hazard and/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.

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, there are a number of uncertainties and a precautionary approach needs to be adopted. The precautionary approach to natural hazard management will ensure that conservative decisions are made where there is insufficient information or knowledge to predict the effects of the hazard.

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 mitigation and avoidance. Reducing the exposure of people and property to risk from natural hazard events and potential climate change impacts would not only result in less impact on people and communities but would also enable the natural environment to respond and adjust in a natural way. 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 primary *productive potential* of land in the District, including:

- a) retaining highly versatile soils and specialised soils for primary production;
- b) achieving added economic and social value derived from primary production activity through ancillary on-site processing and marketing;
- c) achieving priority importance of activities that utilise the *productive potential* of the land in the rural environment; and
- d) reducing conflict between land uses in the rural environment and adjoining areas,

while ensuring that natural systems and natural processes are protected.

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 well-being 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 Kāpiti Coast 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.

The Proposed Wellington Regional Policy Statement identifies five major management challenges for soils and minerals in the region, which are of particular relevance to the rural environment. These are:

- preventing soil erosion
- maintaining soil health
- retaining productive soil for agricultural use
- preventing unsafe use of contaminated sites; and
- efficient mineral extraction.

Other regional issues also applicable to the rural environment including water quality and biodiversity are covered in other sections of the Plan.

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 comprises some of the country's most productive soils, and other soils which provide excellent growing conditions for specialised crops, including grapes and olives. The protection of this resource 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 these important resources 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.

At the same time, there is a need to consider housing preference and choice of residents as an important component of community well-being. Enabling these housing needs to be reasonably met in a manner which protects the soil resource and the District's rural character and in a manner that which does not compromise the benefits to be achieved from maintaining a consolidated urban form is an additional challenge.

There is also an ongoing need to enable some development which is ancillary to primary production activities in the rural environment. Whilst these ancillary uses and/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 and/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, 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 well being of the Kāpiti Coast community and future generations, this includes:

- a) supporting the contribution of historic heritage values, features and areas to the identity, character and amenity of places and landscapes; and
- b) recognising and protecting *tāngata whenua* historic heritage, including places, knowledge, histories and *ngā taonga* tuku iho.

Explanation

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 the natural environments chapter.

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 *waahi tapu*.

Historic heritage values are at risk of being degraded and lost through inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Historic heritage values are 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:

1. 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.
2. 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 the historic heritage values of areas have been 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 public places and local community services and facilities;
- b) have capacity to respond to change and ability recover from sudden environmental and economic system shocks and stresses;
- c) have increased access to locally produced food and energy resources;
- d) have improved health outcomes through opportunities for active living and/or access to health services;
- e) have access to high quality and attractive places;
- f) can efficiently and effectively use community resources, places and spaces;
- g) have a strong sense of safety and security in public and private spaces;
- h) feel part of and pride in a distinct shared identity and wellbeing; and
- i) find opportunities and places for community involvement and interaction

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 exhibit 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

To protect the District's natural landforms and valued landscapes, including:

- a) Identified *outstanding natural features and landscapes, significant amenity landscapes* **which are distinctive, widely recognised and highly valued by the community** and areas of high natural character;
- b) Stream and river corridors, including stream and river mouths, head waters and estuaries;
- c) **Significant identified Remaining** coastal dunes, wetlands and native vegetation; and
- d) The landscape values of coastal hills and escarpments.

[Comment:

- **The changes proposed to a) above are intended to better reflect and give effect to Policy 27 of the Wellington Regional Policy Statement.**
- **SHCL accepts that it is desirable and appropriate to retain significant areas of coastal duneland. The urban areas of the District and in particular the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre are subject to competing interests, however, including the need to develop land efficiently and to maximise amenity and utility for the public. Accordingly, there are locations, such as within the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre, within which sustainable management of resources is better promoted by allowing development to intensify at the expense of residual remaining coastal dunes.**
- **Those factors are reflected in the above amendment, in the changes proposed to the following Explanation and to the related and consequential wording changes elsewhere in Chapter 2.]**

Explanation

Landscape is the sum of geological and environmental processes overlaid by the wide range of human activities. Landscape is more commonly referred to as the natural (landform, ecology and water bodies) and human (land use, and development) features that form the visible landscape. The significance of any one 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. Some landscapes and features have strong cultural and historical associations. Many landscapes, while they cannot be regarded as outstanding, are distinctive, widely recognised and highly valued by the community for their contribution to the amenity and quality of the environment of the district. ~~have significant values that are important to the community and that contribute to the particular character and amenity values of the area.~~

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 Kāpiti Coast 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, 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. .

Distinctive landforms can be adversely affected by earthworks undertaken for new subdivisions and individual residential building developments which contribute to the alteration of the character of the area over time. The effects of earthworks on natural landforms, particularly for earthworks undertaken on prominent or steep slopes, near water bodies or impacting *waahi tapu* sites need to be minimised. ~~The Paraparaumu sub-regional centre has relatively unmodified characteristic sand dune forms that are highly valued by the community.~~ The visual amenity impact of further extractive industries, such as quarrying, has the potential to erode the natural landscape values of the District. These activities need to be managed to minimise their visual impacts. Development in the District needs to be guided by the natural landscape to protect specific landscape values and features.

Many developments undertaken across the Kāpiti Coast only have minor effects on the character and landscape. However as further development occurs there can be a gradual change in the landscape or character which results in an overall adverse impact on the landscape values. This occurs incrementally over an extended period and often as the result of numerous developments rather than as the result of one large development. As a result of the cumulative adverse effects there can be a loss of the district's landscape and character values. The loss of natural features such as the Kāpiti Coast's undulating dune landforms and native vegetation are two distinctive examples of irreversible loss of landscape and character values as a result of the cumulative effects of built development which did not take these features into account. The density and patterns of many post World War II subdivisions have not reflected the shape of the landform on which they are situated. Collectively, individual developments and subdivisions have a contributory impact on the character or landscape in a locality and it is important for this to be considered and ensure that it is a positive impact.

There are circumstances within the Kapiti Coast in which the desire to preserve natural landforms needs to be balanced against the wider benefits accruing from development of the land. By way of example, the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre contains some remnant, relatively unmodified characteristic sand dune forms. That part of the District is subject to competing interests, however, including the desirability of developing the scarce vacant land

within the Sub-Regional Centre efficiently and to maximise amenity and utility for the public. Accordingly, this is a location within which sustainable management of resources is better promoted by allowing development to intensify at the expense of residual remaining coastal dunes. That outcome is considered appropriate in light of the extensive areas of dunes that are protected and preserved elsewhere in the District.

The importance of public access to valued landscapes and landscape features to the Kāpiti Coast community is evident by the many walkways, bridleway, cycleways, viewing points and beach accessways throughout the Kāpiti Coast. The provision of public access to landscape features such as the coast and rivers is required under the RMA. This needs to be balanced with restricting access to avoid damage to features, for example; unrestricted access to coastal dunes may result in damage to native vegetation.

Rural residential subdivision layouts should reflect landform character and the open space of the rural landscape, such as clustered allotments which preserve the open space rural character of the rural environment, although the individual allotments are at a higher density. Subdivision patterns determine the location of buildings and planting and therefore are a key determinant of whether the eventual development is consistent with the landscape and character and values.

Landscape should be considered in conjunction with rural productivity when considering the use of rural land. The values of rural amenity and landscapes are often correlated with the primary production use of the land. Landscape, issues and impacts should be considered in conjunction with the retention of the productive potential of rural land and use for sustainable activities, including food production, ecological regeneration and, where suitable, energy generation. Rural production can be considered as contributing to landscape, values, and likewise, energy production may be considered to be a positive value that can contribute to the a landscape and not be at odds with existing landscape values.

Objective 2.10 – Contaminated land and hazardous facilities

To prevent or mitigate any adverse environmental effects, including risks to human health, the environment and physical assets, arising from past, present or future facilities and activities involving the manufacture, storage, use, transportation or disposal of hazardous substances.

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 Resource Management Act is focused on site-specific controls on the use of land, and on managing risks to the local environment. The two Acts work together. Although controls under HSNO cannot be negated or reduced by District Plan requirements, District Plans can place additional requirements on land use involving hazardous substances where the requirements are considered warranted for the protection of more sensitive land uses (such as residential zones, schools and hospitals) or natural environments (such as water bodies, aquifers, natural protected areas or similar ecologically valuable resources); or for the mitigation or avoidance of the increased risk posed by locating a facility in an area mapped as having a natural hazard risk.

Hazardous Facilities management is primarily one of risk management as the issue is one of dealing with potential rather than actual effects. While the contamination of land, water or air

is often the result of past activities, it is not the only potential adverse effect. The establishment and operation of hazardous facilities also needs to consider aspects of the RMA beyond the narrow focus of hazardous substances management, for example:

- policies, rules and regulations at national (National Policy Statements (NPS) and/or National Environmental Standards (NES), regional (Regional Policy Statements (RPS) and/or Regional Plans) and territorial (District Plans) level;
- transport and traffic issues;
- *landscaping* matters;
- amenity matters, such as noise, signage, etc;
- *building* restrictions; and
- discharges to the environment

Under Section 31 of the Resource Management Act, territorial authorities have two relevant functions relating to hazardous substances and 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 storage, use, disposal or transport of hazardous substances; and
- preventing or mitigating any adverse effects of the development, subdivision or use of contaminated land.

The storage, use, disposal or transport of hazardous substances is part of many industrial, commercial and rural activities of the District. Hazardous substances are a part of everyday life, and can be toxic, corrosive, flammable, highly reactive, or environmentally damaging. The use, storage and transport of hazardous substances and the inappropriate location and management of hazardous facilities can result in adverse effects on the environment, physical assets (in particular, infrastructure associated with water supply, sanitation and waste facilities, drainage and transport) and risks to the public health of communities within the district.

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). Many of the activities identified in the HAIL include production or manufacture, and for this reason manufacture is referenced in the Objective.

Hazardous substances can contaminate land when discharges occur and are not cleaned up. 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 through migration of the hazardous substance. 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 improved 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 and/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.

Objective 2.11 – Character and amenity

To protect the unique character of the District's distinct communities so that residents and visitors enjoy:

- a) relaxed, unique and distinct village identities and predominantly low-density residential environments 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 environments;**
- c) neighbourhood centres, village communities and employment areas characterised by high levels of amenity, accessibility and convenience;**
- d) productive and attractive rural areas, characterised by openness, natural landforms, areas and corridors of indigenous vegetation, and primary production activities; and**
- e) a high amenity interface between living and working environments and between potentially conflicting land uses.**

Explanation

The Kāpiti Coast consists of a series of unique centres 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 in the district 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 throughout the District, including places with natural, built, cultural, archaeological, geological, and heritage values.

Character is the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of natural and/or human elements which create a distinctive collective identity or sense of place. Amenity values are those environmental characteristics of an area that contribute to the pleasantness and attractiveness of that area as a place to live, work or visit. 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 the level and types of noise, privacy, access to sunlight and types of odour. In general, the combined amenity values of an area go towards defining the character of that area. 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 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, beach 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 beach 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 has historically been accessed primarily from ~~is bisected by~~ State Highway 1 but following completion of the Expressway, which bisects the township, there will be greater choice of access with respect to Wellington to the south and coastal towns to the North. Construction of the Expressway will alter traffic patterns and the relationship between different parts of the township. It will affect both the settlement's amenity and the manner in which it functions. ~~with~~ Kāpiti Road ~~is~~ 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.

[Comment: SHCL considers it essential that the District Plan recognise the implications of the construction of the Expressway for both the amenity of Paraparaumu and the manner in which the Sub-Regional Centre will function.]

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.

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 well-being 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 Kāpiti Coast 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 the operating 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 environments 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 and services

To ensure the efficient *development*, maintenance and operation of an adequate level of social and physical *infrastructure* and services throughout the District that meets the needs of the community, and builds stronger community and ecological resilience, while minimising potentially adverse environmental effects.

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.

The *infrastructure* of the District includes:

- electricity and telecommunication systems (network utilities) which generally consist of a bulk supply installation connecting to a local distribution or collection network, for example:
 - high pressure natural gas pipeline;
 - telecommunication and radio communication facilities;
 - a range of electricity distribution and transmission networks, including support structures, substations, and lines for local and national distribution, transmission and supply.
- networks associated with water supply, sanitation and waste facilities, and drainage including underground pipes and a network of pump stations, wastewater treatment plants, water abstraction and treatment plants, numerous attenuation ponds and soak pits;
- transport structures and facilities including roads, rail, walkways, cycleways, bridleways and the Kāpiti Coast Airport;
- social *infrastructure* including community halls, schools, health services, and community and sports facilities.

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) Regulations 2008, National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 and, Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009. These regulations are binding and enforceable and must be read in conjunction with rules in the District Plan. The NES for Telecommunication Facilities applies to telecommunication equipment cabinets and antennas located within road reserves; while the NES for Electricity Transmission Activities only applies 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, 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.

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 Kāpiti Coast District:

- a) integrates with 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) minimises adverse effects on land uses and vice versa; and
- e) is safe, fit for purpose, cost effective and provides good connectivity for all communities.

To recognise and respond appropriately to the changes in traffic flows and opportunities for growth that will be generated by development of the Expressway.

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 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 landuse planning.

The Council's Sustainable Transport Strategy (2008) sets out a long term view of the future options and opportunities in light of the impacts of peak oil, climate change and national and regional transport initiatives. The objective of the strategy is to create a physical transport system that is attractive, affordable, connected, responsive, and safe and offers effective mode choice so that it enables people to act in a sustainable way. The Council also has a Streetscape Strategy and Guideline which seeks to help:

- establish a clear vision for different streets and the character of specific areas;
- ensure a clear understanding of all factors affecting streetscapes, and the impact streetscape design can have on surrounding environments and choice of travel mode;
- minimise future conflicts between different users of streets;
- give guidance on what is both possible and desirable within different parts of the towns;
- establish the most efficient way to minimise effects on the environment;
- establish vehicular, pedestrian, and cycle safety and prioritisation of different transport modes appropriate to the use and character of individual roads;
- create a distinctive character that is supported by the community including iwi and other stakeholders;

- simplify the decision-making processes related to street upgrades and allocation of funds; and
- give more robust guidance in the subdivision consent process on what are appropriate minimum standards for new roads.

The Streetscape Strategy and guideline is specific to the urban environment and supports the assessment of subdivision consents and street upgrades. The District Plan is a key instrument to implement the Sustainable Transport Strategy and the Streetscape Strategy.

An efficient and effective transportation 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.

Construction of the Expressway will change both traffic patterns within the Kapiti Coast and relationships between different parts of the urban areas of the District. If the potential transportation benefits of the Expressway are to be maximised then the location and nature of land-use will need to be reviewed, with particular reference to the benefits that will accrue through development in close proximity to the Expressway interchanges and the risks that will arise if steps are not taken to connect existing urban nodes with the Expressway, in terms of both transportation links and the physical extension of the nodes themselves. Those issues are particularly important with respect to the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre which is located a short distance to the east of the Kapiti Road Expressway interchange. Advantage should be taken of the opportunity to physically extend the Sub-Regional Centre to the interchange across the extensive, currently vacant intervening land. [Comment: SHCL considers it essential that the District Plan acknowledge the impending completion of the Expressway and address its implications. That is particularly true of the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre given that it is at risk as a consequence of the improved access to the south, for reasons discussed in the report prepared by Council's consultant, Tim Heath.]

The rail corridor is also a key part of District's transportation 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 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, particular 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 ~~proposed~~ 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;
- the land use planning responses that should be made in light of the construction and operation of the Expressway in order to maximise public benefit from that resource while minimising the potential for adverse effects to be generated on key resources (eg: the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre) as a consequence of changes in traffic flows and consumer behaviours;
- 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 SH1 and local shops requiring access to/from SH1);
- 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 Airport is a valued transport asset for the District. The main resource management issues associated with the airport are:

- a) providing an optimum balance between allowing for reasonable noise associated with aviation activities, and managing the adverse effects on surrounding occupiers;
- b) controlling noise sensitive activities within the Airport Zone;
- c) managing the relationship between the Airport and the surrounding area, for example through the provision of a buffer between the site and surrounding areas;
- d) establishing open space and public access generally within the Airport Zone, subject to safety and operational considerations, and establishing links with existing CWB linkages;
- e) managing development, including the timing of development, so that it occurs with appropriate provision for infrastructure and services, including upgrades to transport and infrastructure;
- f) managing development to avoid, remedy and mitigate the effects of airport development on transport and service infrastructure;
- g) 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;
- h) airport safety;
- i) providing appropriately for the archaeological and *tāngata whenua* values associated with the Airport, particularly in respect of the area to the south of Wharemauku Stream and in the area to the west of Magrath Avenue;
- j) ensure 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 District Centre.

Objective 2.15 – Incentives

To support and encourage development (including subdivision) that demonstrates a permanent net environmental benefit, in the areas of water quality, biodiversity and energy, significantly beyond the minimum levels required by this Plan.

Explanation

The Council wishes to encourage settlement which goes beyond basic requirements or actions to avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of a proposal to a point where a development can provide a significant shift forward or contribution to improvement to the District. It wishes to do so in four areas: increasing the biodiversity levels of the District, particularly in degraded environments; improving water quality, achieving higher levels of building energy efficiency than anything required by the Building Act and encourage use of on-site renewable energy technologies.

The Council recognises the role of development incentives in encouraging significant and permanent benefit to the natural environment with regard to biodiversity, water quality and energy use which are significant issues for the District. The Council is prepared to consider a

number of development incentives for opportunities to increase the scale of development where developments go above and beyond what is already required of them to mitigate the effects of the activity on the environment in terms of biodiversity, water quality or energy.

As well as contributing to the District's natural character and having intrinsic values, a healthy biodiversity provides us with life's essentials. Biodiversity, ecosystems and the natural environment have all come under increasing pressure from both ecological threats such as pests and development threats such as ecosystem destruction from subdivision and land use activities. The Council may consider development bonuses where the applicant has demonstrated that, for example, the restoration of degraded habitats will be undertaken which will result in a substantial net benefit with regard to biodiversity.

Directly related to biodiversity, fresh water is integral to our health, wellbeing, livelihood and culture. People value freshwater for many reasons, it helps to drive our economy, defines our natural environment and sustains ecosystems. Activities on land, can adversely affect the quality of water thereby compromising the life supporting capacity of water bodies. The Council may consider development bonuses where the applicant has demonstrated that, for example, the establishment and physical and legal protection of a riparian margin, which will result in a substantial net benefit with regard to water quality.

The Kāpiti Coast faces several major long term energy challenges, including tackling carbon emissions. There is a clear need to improve energy efficiency and conservation, and maximise the use of renewable energy resources. The path to creating a more sustainable energy future is through using energy more efficiently and generating more energy from renewable sources. The Council may consider development bonuses where the applicant has demonstrated that; for example, using insulation higher than what is required under the Building Code in a residential development or other permanent design features, which will result in a substantial net benefit with regard to renewable electricity generation, and/or energy efficiency and conservation.

This objective intends that these initiatives are permanently locked in via use of a range of legal instruments.

The exact package of incentives is likely to vary from site to site and will be determined through negotiation between landowners, developers and the Council and using Development Incentive Guidelines. In general, the requirement for applicants to exhibit a 'substantial' net benefit means that the associated enhancement must be in the vicinity four (or more) times the outcome anticipated under the status quo. In general, the area or site to which the activity applies should also be the area or site to which the benefit and incentive will be available.

By encouraging activities to provide a significant and permanent benefit to the natural environment in terms of biodiversity, water quality and energy by offering increased scales of development the objective gives effect to section 6 of the RMA which requires the Council to recognise and provide for the preservation of the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers, and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate use, subdivision and development as a matter of national importance. The Act also requires the Council to provide for the protection of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna. In addition, a function of District Councils under the Act is the control of any effects of the use, development, or protection of land, for the purpose of maintaining indigenous biological diversity. The benefits to be derived from the use and development of renewable energy must be had regard to by the Council under the Act and the Council must give effect to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation. The Objective also gives effect to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement with regard to the restoration of degraded coastal habitats.

Objective 2.16 – Economic vitality

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

- 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) protecting business activities from reverse sensitivity effects and enhance the amenity of business activities; and
- f) enhancing the amenity of business areas

whilst:

- 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;
- c) managing contamination, pollution, odour, hazardous substances, noise and glare, and requiring enhanced levels of amenity values as associated with business activities.

Recognise and respond to the current lack of retail self-sufficiency in the District and seek to both arrest retail leakage from the District and minimise the risk that improvements in the region's road network will exacerbate those problems.

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 but they currently are characterised by sub-optimal retail offers and levels of amenity and service;
- 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;
- the risk that the improved accessibility between the District and Wellington that will result from completion of the Expressway and related road improvements further south, will result in a transfer of trade out of the District and, as a consequence,

exacerbate existing weaknesses in the range and depth of retail offered in the District (including in particular the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre) and compromise their amenity and resilience;

- the potential for the District to take advantage of that improved accessibility to attract new business activities to its centres and hence improve their amenity and resiliency.

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 like minded people to develop clean technology, and where people in the district are employed locally in good quality jobs. Council's role in achieving this future includes supporting the Ōtaki Clean Technology Centre and the establishment of a Clean Technology Trust and its development of a Technology Park. The District Plan must strike a balance between enabling such activity and managing potential adverse effects attributed to it.

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. The Development Management Strategy 2007 identifies the District's centres play a major role well beyond being a simple location for retail and civic activities. 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.

Construction of the Expressway will alter the relative accessibility of the District's centres in comparison with other, remote centres. Accordingly, the District Plan needs to take account of the implications of the Expressway and identify ways in which any adverse effects can be minimised and the potential benefits from the Expressway maximised.

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 for the district 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.

Objective 2.17 – Centres

To have vibrant, safe and economically viable 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 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, employment opportunities and business activities in a manner which promotes:
 - i) the Paraparaumu Sub-Regional Centre as the principal commercial, cultural, civic and tourist Centre for Kāpiti Coast District, to be developed in a manner that
 - a. achieves an integrated and compact town centre, linking all Precinct's through a permeable transport environment and a high quality building environment;
 - b. provides for a broad range of mutually compatible activities and employment opportunities that are integrated with public transport;
 - c. is supported by opportunities for moderate density residential living; and
 - d. consolidates ~~commercial and~~ community activities within Precincts 'A' and 'B'; **[Comment: Both the notified rules promoted by Council and the relief sought by SHCL provide for commercial activities in Precinct C. The policy as written effectively discourages development in Precinct C, which is critical to the integration of the Centre with the revised regional roading pattern.]**
 - 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.
 - 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 town 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 space.

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 developments which may affect the viability and vitality of the District's centres.

Commercial, in particular retail activities are largely restricted outside identified centres. 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 Zones, including the Airport Zone, is limited to manage reverse sensitivity issues, scarcity of the industrial land resource, and 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 well-being. 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) 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
- (b) 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 2.18 – Open spaces / active communities

To have a rich and diverse network of open spaces 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. Council’s Open Space Strategy (2012) recognises the defining feature of open space as areas which “people can move through...without fear of challenge, even though there may be a level of restriction on what they can do on it.” 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;
- cemeteries, destination parks, utility and other reserves

In addition, large areas of open spaces in Kāpiti are managed by other public entities, including Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation. The former administers Queen Elizabeth Park, a 650 hectare reserve linking Paekākāriki to Raumati. [Queen Elizabeth Park contains and preserves extensive tracts of sand dunes that are illustrative of the underlying geology and geography of the coastal parts of the District.](#)

The most significant open space areas of the District – Kāpiti Island and Tararua Forest Park – are 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, gymnasias, 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 use 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 Kāpiti 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 well being 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 well being. With increasing proportions of the District's population living in urbanised areas having limited private open space available on typical residential

allotments, 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 well being of communities in many instances, urban areas need to be developed in a manner that enables healthy living.

Objective 2.19 – Urban Design

To have liveable and safe public and private places and spaces, which:

- a) enhance the local economy, environment and community;**
- b) are sustainable, enduring and resilient;**
- c) provide a strong sense of place reflecting cultural values and distinct community identities;**
- d) are enjoyable, comfortable, welcoming and provide a diversity of experiences;**
- e) are vibrant and are easy to move around and through; and**
- f) have a positive relationship between public and private spaces**

at all levels of urban design, from macro (urban structure and subdivision) to micro (building details and materials) scale.

Explanation

The concept of good urban design goes beyond issues of aesthetics and appearances. Urban design has economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions. Quality urban design creates places that work and places that we use and value at various scales including centres, neighbourhood and individual building or space.

Urban design can have effects on the quality of infrastructure and quality of life which are key in creating successful centres. Quality urban design can also increase economic value with higher returns on investment and maintenance costs, more productive workplaces and more image and prestige.

Well connected, inclusive and accessible places are created through good urban design. Safety and energy efficiency can be enhanced and crime reduced through good urban design. It can also provide more and better opportunities for physical activity, resulting in improved physical and social wellbeing.

The Council recognises that inappropriately designed development can have a significant adverse effect on amenity values in the District, particularly in centres which are focal points for community employment, business, recreational and entertainment facilities. It is important to ensure that the design of new development in the District makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and pedestrian amenity, while responding appropriately to the established character and design of existing buildings of merit within centres, particularly those with heritage values.

The key issues for the District with respect to achieving urban design are:

- how new development, specifically built form and public space, contribute to local identity and a sense of place;
- the quality and amenity of public space and ensuring development fronting a street enhances the appeal of the District's urban environments;

- ensuring good urban design in growth areas and areas of intensification;
- ensure development contributes to a more sustainable urban environment;
- well-designed connections for all transport users including using CEPTED principles; and
- designing the District's urban areas with the community.

As a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol the Council is committed to raising the standard of urban design across the district. The seven design qualities outlined in the Urban Design Protocol are essential to creating quality urban design in the District.

With regard to context recognition should be given to the District's character, rural functions and relationship between the urban and rural environments. Development should occur at a scale which reflects its town, local or neighbourhood context with areas of intensification and focus for activity. Relationships between buildings, streets, neighbourhoods and centres need to be optimised.

Every neighbourhood within the Kāpiti Coast District has its own distinct character. This is a product of its location, history and current population and can include misshapen trees along a wind swept coast, historic buildings, a 1970's sculpture or even the lack of kerb and channels on some streets. Development should evoke a character which reflects its setting as a more intense town centre, village or neighbourhood centre and convey a sense of 'Kāpiti Coast'. Development should appropriately respond to or take advantage of the natural environment including the coastal dunes and plains, the escarpment, Kāpiti Island, and the Tararua Ranges. Besides preserving existing character elements there is also the potential to create new elements that will create a distinctive 'sense of place', strengthen existing character or be used in new areas to establish character.

Future development should broaden the range of living, working, entertainment, learning and recreational choices. A cross-section of society with different interests and needs has to be accommodated.

Physical, social, and recreational connections should provide for access, mobility and wayfinding for all transport users, improve safety and security by accommodating CPTED principles and promote public health and environmental sustainability. Buildings and spaces should also be designed to stimulate interest and foster local identity and sense of place.

Greater environmental responsibility should be factored into the built environment, including having regard for landscape, cultural and heritage values, using sustainable design solutions and green technology, incorporating renewable energy sources and increasing energy efficiency, avoiding hazards, and considering the impact on people's health.

The design of the District's urban areas should draw on other disciplines to achieve the best outcomes. Places need to be designed to take into account best practice and most importantly the needs and aspirations of the community.

The Council also recognises the importance of promoting the principles of low impact urban design and development (LIUDD). In New Zealand, the term LIUDD embraces low impact design but also deliberately extends and strengthens connections with sustainable urban design. This approach uses the ecological carrying capacity of the local environment as a starting point. Ultimately LIUDD emphasises the importance of 'integrated three-water management' through the naturalisation of the water cycle and by supporting green

construction. It is an ongoing challenge for the District to ensure that the District Plan, through the use of structure plans and supporting documents are founded on ecologically focussed sustainable design principles and do not create any barriers to the implementation of LIUDD within the District.

Objective 2.20 – 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 protecting the natural environment and significant amenity values.

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 Resource Management Act. 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 green house 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 utility scale using the renewable resources in the District. The District's urban environments offer opportunities for small scale renewable electricity devices. The Rural zones have the most potential of any zone in the district for commercial renewable energy developments and community scale renewable electricity 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 heat, 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.

Large scale renewable electricity generation activities are unlikely to be able to internalise all potential adverse effects that they may generate 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 facilities 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 an important physical resource. Inappropriate subdivision, land use and development in close proximity have the potential to adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the renewable electricity generation facility due to the creation of reverse sensitivity effects.

Infrastructure associated with renewable electricity generation will traverse land between the generation site and the area of demand. These facilities for the transmission of electricity to the grid are likely to have adverse environmental effects. However, unless the effects of construction and operation of renewable electricity generation facilities, including the effects relating to access and transmission, are assessed as a single package of effects, the viability of renewable energy projects could be compromised.

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.