

6 SUBDIVISION, USE AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

6.1 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT OBLIGATIONS

- 6.1.1 The coastal environment includes the land areas adjacent to the coast that are influenced by coastal processes and the coastal marine area (seaward of Mean High Water Springs). Council's jurisdiction within the coastal environment extends to the mean high water spring mark (MHWS). The land from the MHWS to the top of the first dominant ridgeline has generally been accepted as being influenced by coastal processes and requires special recognition in the District Plan.
- 6.1.2 The Resource Management Act specifically requires the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and its protection from inappropriate subdivision and development (Section 6(a)). The District Plan must also recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:
- (1) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development (Section 6(b));
 - (2) the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and/or significant habitats of indigenous fauna (Section 6(c));
 - (3) the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area (Section 6(d)) and;
 - (4) the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions (Section 6(e)).
- 6.1.3 The Act also requires council to control the effects of the use and development of land in order to avoid, remedy or mitigate for natural hazards - such as coastal erosion (Section 31 (b)).
- 6.1.4 The Regional Coastal Plan and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) also govern activities within the coastal area and the District Plan cannot be inconsistent with these policies. These documents together with the objectives, policies, and rules of the District Plan will ensure that the effects of activities within the Coastal Zone maintain the quality of the district's coastal environment.
- 6.1.5 The NZCPS was prepared by the Minister of Conservation pursuant to the Resource Management Act 1991. The purpose of the NZCPS is to state policies in order to achieve the purpose of the RMA in relation to the coastal environment of New Zealand. The guiding principles for the NZCPS are taken from Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the RMA. Those concerns that the NZCPS addresses, and that are reflected in this section of the Plan, are:
- (1) National priorities for the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment.
 - (2) Protection of the characteristics of the coastal environment of special value to tangata whenua.
 - (3) Activities involving the subdivision, use, or development of area of the coastal environment.
 - (4) Crown's interest in land of the Crown in the coastal marine area.
 - (5) Implementation of New Zealand's international obligations affecting the coastal environment.

- 6.1.6 In order to reflect the significant value given to protection of the coastal environment in the Resource Management Act, and reflecting Wairoa's significant coastal features, the District Plan contains a specific zone dedicated to the protection of the coastal environment.
- 6.1.7 While the District Council is not responsible for effects of activities within the Coastal Marine Area (the area from MHWS to the 12 mile limit of New Zealand's Territorial Sea), any policy in the District Plan must not be inconsistent with the policies and objectives of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Regional Policy Statement and Regional Coastal Plan.

6.2 DESCRIPTION OF COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

- 6.2.1 Wairoa District has about 130 km of coastline. This coastline includes a large portion of Hawke's Bay, the Mahia Peninsula, and a southern portion of Poverty Bay. The coastal environment is defined as Tatahi (the sea part), and Taha moana (the land part), with Mana Maori extending to the low water mark.
- 6.2.2 Steep uplifted marine terraces and cliffs dominate the western side of Mahia Peninsula. Sandy beaches, estuarine lagoons and inter-tidal rock platforms characterise the eastern side. Pukenui Beach, with a backdrop of steep hills dominates the District's coastline, north of Mahia Peninsula.
- 6.2.3 West of Mahia Peninsula, the Hawke's Bay coast forms a smooth curve down to the Wairoa River. Wave action has formed a rock beach barrier for most of this coastline. The Nuhaka and Wairoa Rivers break through this barrier. Elsewhere, a series of extensive lagoons and wetlands have been trapped behind. Whakaki Lagoon is the largest of these lagoons. These wetlands are of national importance because of the habitat they provide for indigenous plants and animals. They also have important landscape, recreational and amenity values.
- 6.2.4 From the Wairoa River westward, the coast is almost continuously steep, having ridgelines generally 100-200m high emerging straight from the sea, down to the District's south-west boundary at the Waikare River. The Mohaka River, as well as the smaller Waihua and Waikare Rivers, cut through these cliffs. As the Mohaka River drains a large, greywacke dominated catchment the beaches in this area are comprised of dark gravels and coarse sands.
- 6.2.5 The coastal environment is sensitive to change from natural processes and development activities. Parts of the coastal environment contain significant natural and ecological values. Parts of the coastal area also have high cultural/spiritual values as well as providing important seafood resources. The coast also supports a range of recreational activities such as swimming, surfing, fishing, game bird hunting and diving. These values can be threatened through inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
- 6.2.6 There is pressure to develop and use some areas of the coast for more intensive land use activities (residential, services and associated infrastructure). On Mahia Peninsula there is an increasing demand for residential subdivision, which is a concern. Freedom camping can also have adverse effects on the natural character, amenity and ecological values of the coastal environment. This pressure for coastal development can result in adverse effects such as changing the natural character of the coast, increasing natural hazard risks to existing communities, degrading ecological values, and indirectly, to depleting local seafood resources.

- 6.2.7 Elsewhere there has been little demand or pressure for coastal settlement. However, land use practices adjacent to the coastline or within erosion prone catchments can cause changes in water quality and quantity, which can affect coastal lagoons, estuaries and wetlands.
- 6.2.8 The cultural importance of the coastline to Tangata Whenua is also significant. This is particularly so in and around Mahia, Opoutama and Mahanga areas where there is the most coastal development pressure. Additional development undoubtedly places added and differing demands and pressures onto those coastal areas and the Tangata Whenua people of the District. Potential adverse effects of this include:
- depletion and/or pollution of traditional food sources,
 - pollution of the environment through increased use of sand and recreational vehicles,
 - the pressure to allow camping around the foreshores, and
 - the demand to subdivide and build holiday homes.

6.3 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 6.3.1 Disruption of natural coastal processes.
- 6.3.2 Detraction from the natural character, and contamination and destruction of ecological features.
- 6.3.3 Adverse effects of activities on traditional Maori uses and values in the coastal environment.
- 6.3.4 Loss of evidence relating to the history of New Zealand through the unlawful destruction or modification to archaeological sites in the coastal environment.
- 6.3.5 Loss of public access to the coastal environment, from the subdivision, use, and development of the coastal environment - particularly on the Mahia Peninsula.
- 6.3.6 In appropriate subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment causing the reduction or loss of natural character and ecological values.
- 6.3.7 Loss or reduction in amenity values caused by inappropriate subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment.

6.4 OBJECTIVES

- 6.4.1 To provide for use, development and subdivision that protects and enhances the natural character, amenity values, public access, and cultural values associated with the coastal environment and safeguards ecological values.
- 6.4.2 To minimise disruption of natural coastal processes.
- 6.4.3 To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment, and promote its enhancement.
- 6.4.4 To avoid adverse effects on sites of value to tangata whenua.
- 6.4.5 To avoid unlawful destruction or modification to archaeological sites in the coastal area.

- 6.4.6 To maintain and enhance public access to the coastal marine area.
- 6.4.7 To recognise that the use of land and coastal waters must be considered in an integrated manner.
- 6.4.8 Encourage management, maintenance and enhancement of the coastal lagoons identified in [Schedule 5](#) to retain and enhance their wildlife values.

6.5 POLICIES

- 6.5.1 Avoid use, development and subdivision in the coastal environment which adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely affect:
- (1) natural coastal processes;
 - (2) the relationship of tangata whenua with their ancestral coastal lands, waahi tapu and taonga;
 - (3) ecosystems, outstanding natural features and landscapes associated with the coast;
 - (4) the quality of coastal waters; and
 - (5) public access to and along the coastal environment.
- 6.5.2 Encourage appropriate subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment where natural character has already been compromised.
- 6.5.3 Avoid, where appropriate, sprawling or sporadic subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment.
- 6.5.4 Enable subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse environmental effects. In those areas of the Mahia Peninsula where there has been little subdivision, use and development, ensure that the following aspects of these environments are also maintained and considered:
- The natural character of the coastal environment;
 - Natural coastal processes;
 - The relationship of tangata whenua with their ancestral coastal lands, waahi tapu and taonga; and/or
 - Public access.
- 6.5.5 Encourage and promote the enhancement of public access to the coastal environment , which contributes to people’s enjoyment and recreational use, while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse environmental effects.
- 6.5.6 Where land in the coastal zone has been partitioned by the Maori Land Court, avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects arising from its use and development.
- 6.5.7 Encourage management, maintenance and enhancement of the coastal lagoons identified in [Schedule 5](#) to retain and enhance their wildlife values.

6.6 METHODS AVAILABLE USING THE PROVISIONS OF THE DISTRICT PLAN

- 6.6.1 Zoning to define an area of 500 metres from MHWS, considered to incorporate the coastal influenced environment as an area with special natural and physical resources of the Wairoa District to meet the obligations placed on the Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.
- 6.6.2 Support efforts to better understand coastal processes and attempts to map more accurately the coastal environment in the Wairoa District.
- 6.6.3 Performance standards to determine whether adverse effects of use (including recreational activities), development and subdivision within the Coastal Zone are able to be avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- 6.6.4 Advocacy of the policy framework stated in the District Plan to other agencies.
- 6.6.5 Adopt rules in the District Plan providing for esplanade strips and esplanade reserves.
- 6.6.6 Providing through the Wairoa District Council Annual Plan process for appropriately designed and located toilets and sewage disposal facilities to be constructed and maintained at popular beaches.
- 6.6.7 Providing permanent public access to the popular beaches through funding in the Wairoa District Council Annual Plan process.
- 6.6.8 Liaison with the Department of Conservation and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council concerning applications in or which could affect the Coastal Marine Area.
- 6.6.9 Advocate and support the planting of sand dunes, coastal lagoons and wetlands within appropriate native plants so as to enhance the natural features and character of the coastal environment.

6.7 EXPLANATION AND REASONS

- 6.7.1 Defining the coastal influenced environment recognises the national significance placed on the coast within the Resource Management Act and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, and its special characteristics. Wairoa District has a significant coastal environment, with Mahia Peninsula and the nationally recognised coastal lagoons. These values can be threatened by inappropriate subdivision, use and development. It is important to advocate the importance of the Wairoa coastline to encourage other parties to hold it in the same regard.
- 6.7.2 More stringent performance standards for activities operating within the coastal zone will enable determination of whether the effects of activities are acceptable given the importance of the coastal environment. All subdivision within the coastal environment will be assessed on a discretionary basis, given the development potential arising from subdivision and the effect of such additional development on the sensitive coastal environment. The coastal environment is the area experiencing the greatest development pressure within the Wairoa District. Council is obliged to recognise and protect the natural character of the coast, and ensure that servicing of sites in terms of stormwater and sewage disposal is appropriate

- 6.7.3 Funding the provision of permanent public access to popular beaches will not only better facilitate public access to these areas but will do so in a way that avoids or mitigates the adverse effects of long term uncontrolled access to beaches and the subsequent damage to foredunes and coastal habitats.
- 6.7.4 Council also wishes to actively encourage and educate the community on caring for the coast, through planting of sand dunes, coastal lagoons and wetlands.
- 6.7.5 The Hawke's Bay Regional Council and Department of Conservation have specific responsibilities in relation to the coastal marine area. Liaison with these agencies will ensure consistent treatment across the coastal environment, and the sharing of information and advice.

6.8 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

- 6.8.1 Natural ecosystems and coastal processes are protected and enhanced for their intrinsic values and for the benefit of present and future generations.
- 6.8.2 The natural character and amenity values of the coast are recognised, preserved and enhanced where desirable.
- 6.8.3 Enhanced public access to and along the coastal marine area.
- 6.8.4 Use, development and subdivision that maintains and enhances the natural character, amenity values and the values that tangata whenua associate with the coastal environment.

Cross References:

Part C – Land Management Zones and Rules

- [Chapter 15](#) – Coastal Zone

Part D – District Wide Rules

- [Chapter 12](#) – Designations
- [Chapter 23](#) – Indigenous Vegetation and Habitats of Indigenous Fauna
- [Chapter 25](#) – Surface of Water
- [Chapter 26](#) – Utilities
- [Chapter 27](#) – Subdivision

Schedules (including [Schedule 5](#) – Significant Rivers and Lakes)

Planning Maps