

# Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori

## Information Sheet

The Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan is open for submissions until 5pm on 4 April 2025. You can find out more at:

<https://haveyoursay.huttcity.govt.nz/proposed-district-plan>

The District Plan is the rulebook for land use and development that helps us manage infrastructure constraints and natural hazards, respond to climate change and protect the environment and our historic and cultural taonga. It sets out what is permitted and where, and what needs resource consent.

The Proposed District Plan includes a new chapter on Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori. This information sheet is designed to assist you in understanding more about Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori and how they may relate to your property.

### **What are Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori?**

Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori (or SASMs) are important places that connect significantly to cultural traditions, history or identity for Mana Whenua.

SASMs can include sacred sites and areas, such as burial sites, urupā/cemeteries, battle sites, former kāinga/villages and pā sites, Māori reserves, significant maunga/mountains, nohoanga/campsites and important mahinga kai/food gathering areas, including waterways.

### **Why are Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori included in the Proposed District Plan?**

Recognising and providing for protection of historic heritage a matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act. Many SASMs are significant due to their historic heritage values.

The Resource Management Act and the Wellington Regional Policy Statement require Hutt City Council to identify and protect sites and areas that are culturally important to Mana Whenua.

### **How were Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori identified?**

An extensive amount of work has been undertaken to identify and recognise the important sites and areas in the Proposed District Plan.

Some sites were already listed in the existing District Plan. These were mainly based on known archaeological sites sourced from information provided by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga and the New Zealand Archaeological Association, or were well known urupā/cemeteries.

New sites and areas have been identified based on knowledge and records held by Council and representatives of Mana Whenua.

### **Where are Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori located?**

Mana Whenua have historical and ongoing cultural connections with land and waterways throughout the region. Consequently, there are sites and areas of significance throughout Lower Hutt.

Some areas of Lower Hutt have been developed on, or near to locations of former pā and kāinga. As a result, there are a number of sites and areas of significance identified in the urban areas of the city.

Sites and areas have also been identified on public conservation land, in coastal locations and rural areas.

While some sites are identified and listed in the existing District Plan, they were not mapped extensively, and many landowners may not have been aware of their locations or existence.

All of the sites and areas of significance identified by Mana Whenua have now been mapped in the Proposed District Plan.

Schedule 6 of the Proposed District Plan lists all SASMs that have been identified and provides information about each of them.

## What rules apply to Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori?

The new rules are based on categories of the scheduled sites and areas, as shown in the table below.

Category 1	Pā, kāinga, urupā and other sites or areas which have a high level of certainty and significance.
Category 2	Pā, kāinga, urupā and other sites or areas that are significant, however their location may be less certain or they may not be as significant as those sites and areas listed in Category 1.
Category 3	Sites or areas of significance that are important to acknowledge, but where subdivision, land use, and development is generally appropriate.
Ngā Awa o te Takiwā	Water bodies and their margins.

For Category 1 sites and areas, resource consent will be required for undertaking certain earthworks and land disturbance, for new subdivisions, and for some types of new development. New buildings, and additions and alterations to existing buildings, would be permitted if less than 200m<sup>2</sup>.

The rules for Category 2 sites and areas are similar to the above except that land disturbance is permitted as long as the accidental discovery protocol process is followed.

The resource consent process will involve assessing the effects of the proposal on the values of the sites and areas of significance to Māori.

If resource consent is required, engagement with the relevant iwi authority is encouraged as, on viewing the specific details of your proposal, they may be able to confirm that your proposed activity will not impact the cultural values associated with the site.

For Category 3 sites and areas, there are no specific rules. These SASMs have been identified to inform landowners and the general public of their cultural significance.

In addition to land of significance to Māori, waterways have also been identified as significant to Mana Whenua. The Proposed District Plan includes rules that would manage the potential impacts of land use and development within the margins or waterways, including through resource consent requirements for earthworks, indigenous vegetation removal and new buildings and structures.

Please note that some sites may also trigger rules under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. Under this Act it is unlawful for any person to modify or destroy, or cause to be modified or destroyed, the whole or any part of an archaeological site without the prior authority of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. You can find more information here: <https://www.heritage.org.nz/archaeology/archaeological-authorities>

### **Rules having immediate legal effect**

Because SASMs are a type of historic heritage, the Resource Management Act states that the rules associated with them have immediate legal effect (i.e. need to be considered) from the time the Proposed District Plan was notified. This does not affect existing activities and buildings which have existing use rights under the Resource Management Act.