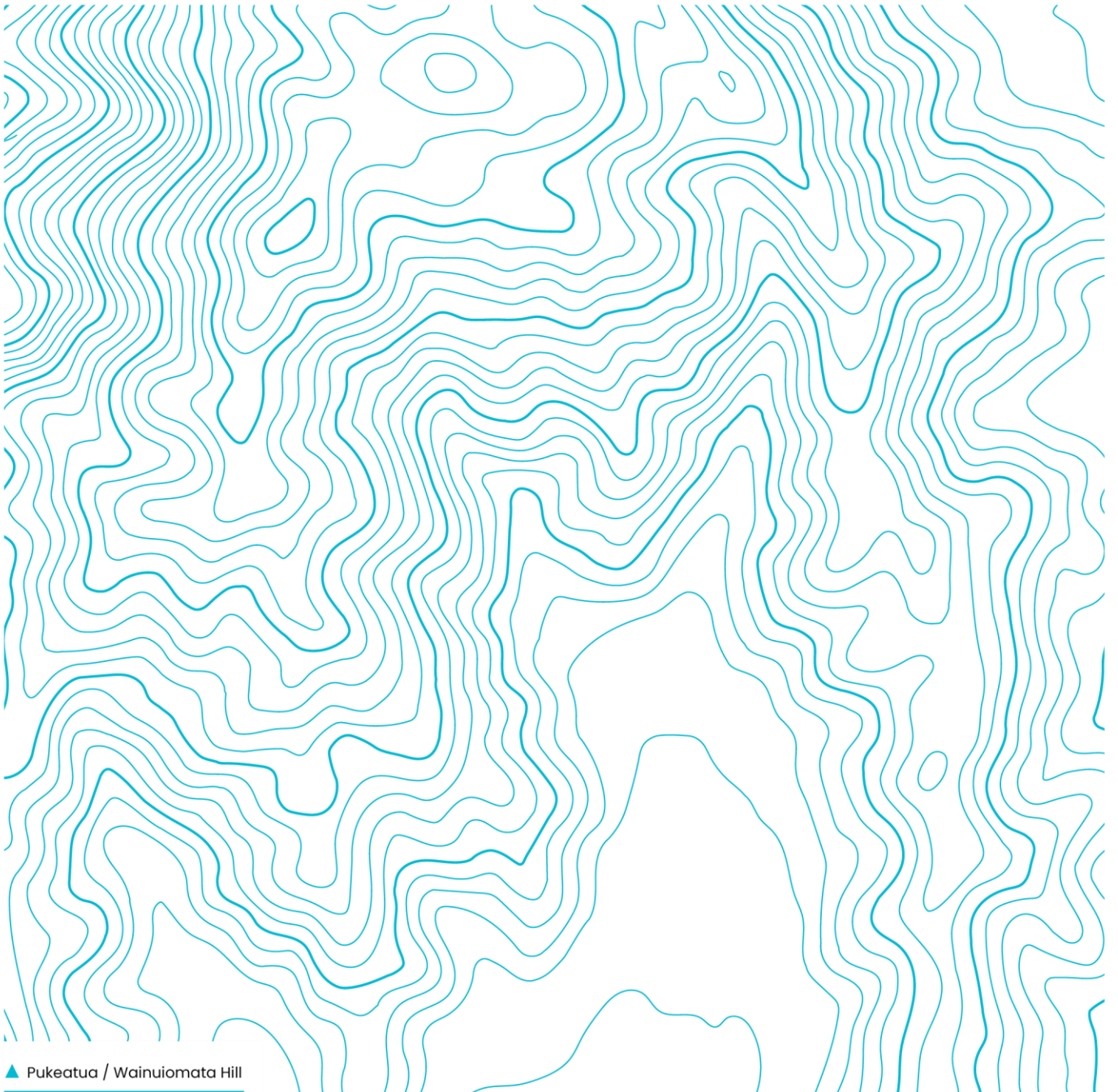


Section 32 Evaluation NATURAL CHARACTER



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2 Overview and Purpose

- (1) Hutt City Council is reviewing the City of Lower Hutt District Plan. This is a full review of the District Plan, including the approach to natural character.
- (2) This report is a record of the review with regard to natural character, and includes an evaluation of objectives and provisions for a Natural Character chapter for the proposed District Plan, in accordance with the requirements of s32 of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- (3) This report sits as one of a package of reports for the proposed Plan and should be read alongside the General report for matters common to all topics.

Scope of this report

- (4) The purpose of the Natural Character chapter is the protection, and where possible, the restoration of the natural character values of riparian and coastal margins. This report focuses on those aspects of natural character.
- (5) Areas of High, Very High and Outstanding Coastal Natural Character are identified in the Coastal Environment chapter and on the proposed District Plan maps. Natural Character areas outside the coastal environment have not been identified on planning maps.

Coastal and riparian margins of Lower Hutt

- (6) Hutt City has some 42km of coastline comprising the inner Wellington Harbour and open coastline to the Cook Strait. The coastline varies from highly modified areas such as Seaview through to remote and undeveloped areas such as Pencarrow Head, Baring Head and Turakirae Head.
- (7) There are also several rivers and streams (including Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River, Waiwhetū Stream, Wainuiomata River, Ōrongorongo River, Korokoro Stream) and two highly valued lakes (Lake Kōhangapiripiri, Lake Kōhangaterā).
- (8) Many of Hutt City's coastal and riparian margins have been modified to varying degrees by human activity. This has impacted both public access to these margins and the natural character of these margins. It also has wider implications around hazard management, conservation, aquatic habitat

enhancement, recreation and water quality. While water quality is a regional council function, land uses managed by the District Plan have an impact on use and development in riparian and coastal margins.

- (9) The preservation of the natural character of the coast, wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development is identified as a matter of national importance in section 6(a) of the RMA. There is further higher level guidance and direction relevant to this topic in the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region.

3 Statutory and Policy Context

- (10) The following sections discuss the national, regional and local policy framework that are particularly relevant to the statutory and policy context for natural character for the District Plan Review.

3.1 Resource Management Act 1991

3.1.1 Section 5 – Purpose and Principles

- (11) The purpose of the RMA is set out in Section 5. The purpose is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- (12) Under s5(2) of the Act, sustainable management means:

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*
- (c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

3.1.2 Section 6 – Matters of National Importance

- (13) Section 6 of the RMA sets out matters of national importance that all persons exercising functions and powers under the Act shall *recognise and provide for* in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The relevant s6 matters for natural character are:

Section	Relevant Matter
6(a)	<p><i>The preservation of the natural character of the Coastal Environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.</i></p>
6(c)	<p><i>The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.</i></p> <p>Significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna can contribute to overall natural character values and characteristics of the coastal environment, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins.</p>
6(e)	<p><i>The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.</i></p> <p>There is a strong historical and cultural relationship with ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.</p>
6(g)	<p><i>The protection of customary rights.</i></p> <p>Tangata whenua value waterbodies for their cultural and spiritual values as well as for customary use.</p>
6(h)	<p><i>The management of significant risks from natural hazards.</i></p> <p>Natural hazard risk is relevant to this chapter given the need for management of coastal environments and rivers (e.g. flood management), which can be areas with identified natural character values.</p>

3.1.3 Section 7 – Other Matters

- (14) Section 7 of the RMA sets out other matters that all persons exercising functions and powers under it shall *have particular regard to* in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The relevant s7 matters for natural character are:

Section	Relevant Matter
7(a)	<i>Kaitiakitanga</i>
7(aa)	<i>The ethic of stewardship</i>
7(c)	<i>The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values</i>
7(d)	<i>Intrinsic values of ecosystems</i>
7(f)	<i>Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment</i>
7(i)	<i>The effects of climate change</i>
7(j)	<i>The benefits to be derived from the use and development of renewable energy.</i>

3.1.4 Section 8 – Treaty of Waitangi

- (15) Section 8 of the RMA requires Council to *take into account* the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi when exercising functions and powers under the Act.
- (16) Council works in partnership with Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust), Wellington Tenth's Trust, Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust, Te Rūnanganui o Te Āti Awa ki Te Upoko o Te Ika a Māui Incorporated and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated to actively provide for and protect their interests and develop provisions to recognise and provide opportunities for tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga.

3.1.5 Section 31 – Functions of Territorial Authorities under this Act

- (17) Section 31 lists the functions of territorial authorities. The following are of relevance to the Natural Character chapter:
- The establishment, implementation, and review of objectives, policies, and methods to achieve integrated management of the effects of the

use, development, or protection of land and associated natural and physical resources of the district (s31a), and

- The control of any actual or potential effects of the use, development, or protection of land (s31b). This includes for the purpose of the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards and maintenance of indigenous biological diversity.

3.2 National Policy Statements and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

- (18) Sections 75(3)(a) and 75(3)(b) of the RMA require district plans to give effect to any National Policy Statement and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.
- (19) The relevant national policy statements and New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement area discussed below.
- (20) The full wording of the relevant objectives and policies are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2.1 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

- (21) The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS) sets out objectives and policies to achieve the purpose of the RMA in relation to the coastal environment. The relevant objectives and policies of the NZCPS as they relate to Natural Character (and coastal margins in particular) are identified below.

Reference	Comment
Objective 2	<p><i>To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect natural features and landscape values through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>recognising the characteristics and qualities that contribute to natural character, natural features and landscape values and their location and distribution;</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying those areas where various forms of subdivision, use, and development would be inappropriate and protecting them from such activities; and...
Objective 4	<i>To maintain and enhance the public open space qualities and recreation opportunities of the coastal environment ...</i>
Objective 6	<p><i>To enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety, through subdivision, use, and development, recognising that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>the protection of the values of the coastal environment does not preclude use and development in appropriate places and forms, and within appropriate limits; ...</i>
Policy 4	<p><i>Integration</i></p> <p>Gives directions on integrated management of natural physical resource on the coastal environment.</p>
Policy 6	<p><i>Activities in the coastal environment</i></p> <p>Gives direction on activities in the coastal environment, including for development to be set back from the coastal marine areas and other water bodies to protect natural character, open space, public access and amenity values.</p>
Policy 13	<p><i>Preservation of natural character</i></p> <p>Gives direction to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and to protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</p>
Policy 14	<p><i>Restoration of natural character</i></p> <p>Gives direction for the restoration or rehabilitation of natural character.</p>

Policy 18	<i>Public open space</i> Gives direction to recognise the need for public open space.
Policy 19	<i>Walking access</i> Gives direction for the recognition, maintenance and enhancement for public walking access.

3.2.2 NPS for Electricity Transmission

(22) The objective of the NPS for Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPS-ET) is:

To recognise the national significance of the electricity transmission network by facilitating the operation, maintenance and upgrade of the existing transmission network and the establishment of new transmission resources to meet the needs of present and future generations, while:

- *managing the adverse environmental effects of the network; and*
- *managing the adverse effects of other activities on the network.*

(23) The most relevant policies of the operative NPS-ET for the NATC chapter are listed below.

Reference	Comment
Policy 4	When considering the environmental effects of new transmission infrastructure or major upgrades of existing transmission infrastructure, decision-makers must have regard to the extent to which any adverse effects have been avoided, remedied or mitigated by the route, site and method selection.
Policy 5	When considering the environmental effects of transmission activities associated with transmission assets, decision-makers must enable the reasonable operational, maintenance and minor upgrade requirements of established electricity transmission assets.

Policy 6	Substantial upgrades of transmission infrastructure should be used as an opportunity to reduce existing adverse effects of transmission including such effects on sensitive activities where appropriate.
Policy 7	Planning and development of the transmission system should minimise adverse effects on urban amenity and avoid adverse effects on town centres and areas of high recreational value or amenity and existing sensitive activities.
Policy 8	In rural environments, planning and development of the transmission system should seek to avoid adverse effects on outstanding natural landscapes, areas of high natural character and areas of high recreation value and amenity and existing sensitive activities.

3.2.3 NPS for Renewable Electricity Generation

(24) The objective of the NPS for Renewable Electricity Generation (NPS-REG) is:

To recognise the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities by providing for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities, such that the proportion of New Zealand's electricity generated from renewable energy sources increases to a level that meets or exceeds the New Zealand Government's national target for renewable electricity generation.

(25) The most relevant policies of the operative NPS-REG are listed below.

Reference	Comment
Policy C1	Decision-makers shall have particular regard to the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the need to locate the renewable electricity generation activity where the renewable energy resource is available; (b) logistical or technical practicalities associated with developing, upgrading, operating or maintaining the renewable electricity generation activity; (c) the location of existing structures and infrastructure including, but not limited to, roads, navigation and telecommunication structures and facilities, the distribution network and the national

	<p>grid in relation to the renewable electricity generation activity, and the need to connect renewable electricity generation activity to the national grid;</p> <p>(d) designing measures which allow operational requirements to complement and provide for mitigation opportunities; and</p> <p>(e) adaptive management measures.</p>
Policy F	As part of giving effect to Policies E1 to E4, regional policy statements and regional and district plans shall include objectives, policies, and methods (including rules within plans) to provide for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of small and community-scale distributed renewable electricity generation from any renewable energy source to the extent applicable to the region or district.
Policy G	Regional policy statements and regional and district plans shall include objectives, policies, and methods (including rules within plans) to provide for activities associated with the investigation, identification and assessment of potential sites and energy sources for renewable electricity generation by existing and prospective generators.

3.2.4 NPS for Freshwater Management

- (26) The objective of the NPS for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) is:
- to ensure that natural and physical resources are managed in a way that prioritises:*
- (a) *first, the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems*
 - (b) *second, the health needs of people (such as drinking water)*
 - (c) *third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being, now and in the future.*
- (27) The following policies are most relevant in relation to coastal and riparian margins.

Reference	Comment
Policy 1	Freshwater is managed in a way that gives effect to Te Mana o te Wai.
Policy 3	Freshwater is managed in an integrated way that considers the effects of the use and development of land on a whole-of-catchment basis, including the effects on receiving environments.
Policy 6	There is no further loss of extent of natural inland wetlands, their values are protected, and their restoration is promoted.
Policy 7	The loss of river extent and values is avoided to the extent practicable.
Policy 9	The habitats of indigenous freshwater species are protected.
Policy 15	Communities are enabled to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing in a way that is consistent with this National Policy Statement.
Clause 3.5 Integrated Management	Every territorial authority must include objectives, policies and methods in its district plan to promote positive effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of urban development on the health and well-being of water bodies, freshwater ecosystems, and receiving environments.
Interpretation	Receiving environment includes, but is not limited to, any water body (such as a river, lake, wetland or aquifer) and the coastal marine area (including estuaries).

3.2.5 NPS on Urban Development

(28) The NPS on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) aims to support well-functioning urban environments to provide for current and future community well-being. Under the NPS-UD Hutt City is within a Tier 1 urban environment, where RMA plans must provide opportunities for land development to meet housing and business needs, supported by adequate development capacity.

- (29) While the preservation of the natural character of riparian and coastal margins is not addressed specifically, the NPS-UD is relevant as the requirement to enable densities of urban form commensurate with housing and business demands may result in additional development pressure close to and within coastal and riparian margins. In addition, the protection of coastal and riparian margins may be relevant qualifying matters where it is appropriate to make density requirements under Policy 3 of the NPS-UD less enabling.

3.2.6 NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity

- (30) The purpose of the NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPS-IB) is to provide direction to councils to protect, maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity requiring at least no further reduction in indigenous biodiversity nationally. The NPS-IB puts a strong focus on the involvement of tangata whenua as partners and on the engagement with people and communities, including landowners.

- (31) The NPS-IB directs territorial authorities to:

- Identify significant natural areas and include them in their district plans (using criteria prescribed by the NPS); and
- Manage the effects of new subdivision, use and development on the identified areas and indigenous biodiversity in general.

- (32) The prescribed management approach is to avoid the following adverse effects:

- The loss of ecosystem representation and extent;
- The disruption to sequences, mosaics, or ecosystem function;
- The fragmentation of SNAs or the loss of buffers or connections within an SNA;
- A reduction in the function of the SNA as a buffer or connection to other important habitats or ecosystems; and
- A reduction in the population size or occupancy of Threatened or At Risk (declining) species that use an SNA for any part of their life cycle.

- (33) Any other adverse effects must be managed by applying the effects management hierarchy outlined in the NPS-IB.

- (34) However, the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024, which came into force from 25 October 2024, introduced a new section to the RMA (s78), which effectively puts the implementation of the SNA parts of the NPS-IB on hold for three years, including requirements for identifying areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna as SNAs under the NPS-IB.
- (35) The NPS-IB also requires the management of any adverse effects of new subdivision, use and development on indigenous biodiversity outside of SNA. Any significant adverse effects must be managed applying the effects management hierarchy and any other adverse effects must be managed to give effect to the objective and policies of the NPS-IB.

3.3 National environmental standards

- (36) National Environmental Standards are regulations made under s43 of the RMA, and effectively function like rules in a district or regional plan.
- (37) The following NES are relevant for Natural Character.

3.3.1 NES for Electricity Transmission Activities

- (38) The NES for Electricity Transmission Activities 2009 (NES-ETA) set out a national framework of permissions and consent requirements for activities on existing electricity transmission lines. Activities include the operation, maintenance and upgrading of existing lines. They set out which transmission activities are permitted, subject to conditions to control the environmental effects.
- (39) The most relevant regulations for coastal margins and riparian margins relate to general regulations on trimming, felling and removing of trees and vegetation (Regulations 30, 31 and 32) and Earthworks (Regulations 33 and 34). The trimming, felling and removing of trees and vegetation in relation to an existing transmission line is permitted subject to standards and elevates to controlled or restricted discretionary depending on the conditions breached. Earthworks are permitted activities subject to conditions and elevate to controlled where conditions are breached.

3.3.2 NES for Telecommunication Facilities

- (40) The NES for Telecommunication Facilities 2016 (NES-TF) aims to provide national consistency in the rules surrounding the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure across New Zealand while ensuring the effects on the environment are minimised and managed appropriately.
- (41) The most relevant regulations for coastal margins and riparian margins are regulation 51, which manages activities carried out at places adjoining the coastal marine area, and regulation 52, which applies to activities over a river or lake. Regulation 56 of the NES states that rules in District Plans can be more stringent than the standards imposed by the NES-TF.

3.3.3 NES for Freshwater

- (42) The NES for Freshwater 2020 (NES-FW) set requirements for carrying out certain activities that pose risks to freshwater and freshwater ecosystems. Anyone carrying out these activities will need to comply with the standards. The NES-FW only deal with functions of regional councils.
- (43) While the regulations do not deal with the functions of territorial authorities under the Act, it is important to ensure that the proposed provisions are not inconsistent with the NES-FW.

3.3.4 NES for Commercial Forestry

- (44) The NES for Commercial Forestry 2023 (NES-CF) provides a consistent set of regulations for commercial forestry activities. It provides for eight core commercial forestry activities subject to conditions to manage potential effects on the environment.
- (45) Regulation 6 of the NES-CF states that a rule in a District Plan may be more stringent than the regulations of the NES where it gives effect to the NPS-FM or certain policies of the NZCPS. The most relevant provisions are regulation 14 and 16 which regulate the activity status for afforestation and introduce setback requirements. Regulations 23 and 29 regulate Earthworks and related setbacks.

3.4 National Planning Standards

- (46) Section 75(3)(ba) requires district plans to give effect to national planning standards.
- (47) The National Planning Standards require that where provisions to protect the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins are addressed, they must be included in the Natural Character (NATC) chapter under the Natural Environment heading in Part 2 – District-Wide Matters of the District Plan.

Topic & unique identifier	Location in DP structure	Elements included under that topic	Elements addressed under other topic areas
Natural Character NATC	Part 2 - District-wide Matters Natural Environmental Values	Provisions to protect the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins.	Provisions relating to Natural Character within the Coastal Environment are located in the CE Chapter. Energy and Infrastructure provisions relating to Natural Character to are located in the INF Chapter. Earthworks provisions relating to Natural Character are located in the EW Chapter. Subdivision provisions relating to Natural Character are located in the SUB Chapter

3.5 Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region

- (48) Section 75(3)(c) of the RMA requires district plans to give effect to any regional policy statement.

- (49) The Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region ('the RPS') identifies the significant resource management issues for the region and outlines the policies and methods required to achieve the integrated sustainable management of the region's natural and physical resources.
- (50) The relevant objectives and policies of the RPS for natural character are discussed below. The full wording of relevant provisions below is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Reference	Comment
Section 3.2 Coastal Environment (including public access)	
Objective 3	<i>Habitats and features in the coastal environment that have significant indigenous biodiversity values are protected; and Habitats and features in the coastal environment that have recreational, cultural, historical or landscape values that are significant are protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>
Objective 4	<i>The natural character of the coastal environment is protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>
Objective 5	<i>Areas of the Coastal Environment where natural character has been degraded are restored and rehabilitated.</i>
Objective 7	<i>The integrity, functioning and resilience of physical and ecological processes in the Coastal Environment are protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>
Policy 3	<i>Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment</i>
Policy 4	<i>Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment</i>
Policy 35	<i>Preserving the natural character of the Coastal Environment</i>
Policy 36	<i>Managing effects on natural character in the coastal environment</i>
Policy 37	<i>Safeguarding life supporting capacity of coastal ecosystems</i>
Policy 38	<i>Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment</i>
Policy 53	<i>Public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers</i>
Policy 64	<i>Supporting a whole of catchment approach</i>

Section 3.4 Fresh water (including public access)	
Objective 13	<i>The region's rivers, lakes and wetlands support healthy functioning ecosystems.</i>
Policy 15	<i>Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance</i>
Policy 41	<i>Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation disturbance</i>
Policy 43	<i>Protecting aquatic ecological function of water bodies</i>
Section 3.8 Natural Hazards	
Objective 19	<i>The risks and consequences to people, communities, their businesses, property and infrastructure from natural hazards and climate change effects are reduced.</i>
Policy 29	<i>Avoiding inappropriate subdivision and development in areas at high risk from natural hazards</i>
Section 3.10 Resource management with tangata whenua	
Objective 27	<i>Mahinga kai and natural resources used for customary purposes, are maintained and enhanced, and these resources are healthy and accessible to tangata whenua.</i>
Policy 49	<i>Recognising and providing for matters of significance to tangata whenua</i>

3.5.1 Proposed RPS Change 1

- (51) On 19 August 2022 Greater Wellington Regional Council notified Proposed Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (Proposed RPS Change 1). As of the writing of this report, the Regional Council has notified its decisions on Proposed RPS Change 1, but parts of these decisions have been appealed.
- (52) The table below lists the changes (as notified) which are relevant for natural character. The full wording of relevant provisions below is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Reference	Comment
3.1A Climate Change	
Objective CC.1	<i>By 2050, the Wellington Region is a low-emission and climate-resilient region, where climate change mitigation and adaptation are an integral part of:</i> <i>(a) sustainable air, land, freshwater, and coastal management,</i> <i>(b) well-functioning urban environments and rural areas, and</i> <i>(c) well-planned infrastructure.</i>
Policy CC.4	<i>Climate resilient urban areas – district and regional plans</i>
3.2 Coastal Environment	
Policy 3	<i>Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment</i>
3.4 Fresh Water	
Policy 15	<i>Managing the effects of earthworks and vegetation disturbance</i>
Policy FW.3	<i>Urban development effects on freshwater and the coastal marine area – district plans</i>
3.8 Natural Hazards	
Objective 19	<i>The risks and consequences to people, communities, businesses, property, infrastructure and the environment from natural hazards and the effects of climate change are minimised.</i>
Policy 29	<i>Managing subdivision, use and development in areas at risk from natural hazards – district and regional plans</i>

3.6 Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region

- (53) Section 74(2)(a)(ii) of the RMA requires territorial authorities, when preparing or changing a district plan, to have regard to any proposed regional plan of

its region in regard to any matter of regional significance or for which the regional council has primary responsibility under Part 4 of the Act.

- (54) The following provisions of the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region are relevant for the Natural Character chapter. The full wording of relevant provisions below is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

Reference	Comment
Ki uta ki tai: mountains to the sea	
Objective O1	<i>Air, land, fresh water bodies and the coastal marine area are managed as integrated and connected resources; ki uta ki tai – mountains to the sea.</i>
Objective O3	<i>Mauri particularly the mauri of fresh and coastal waters is sustained and, where it has been depleted, natural resources and processes are enhanced to replenish mauri.</i>
Objective O4	<i>The intrinsic values of fresh water and marine ecosystems are recognised and the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems is safeguarded.</i>
Beneficial use and development	
Objective O7	<i>The recreational values of the coastal marine area, rivers and lakes and their margins and natural wetlands are maintained and where appropriate for recreational purposes, is enhanced.</i>
Māori relationships	
Objective O12	<i>The relationships of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga are recognised and provided for, ...</i>
Objective O13	<i>Kaitiakitanga is recognised and mana whenua actively participate in planning and decision-making in relation to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources.</i>
Natural character, form and function	
Objective O14	<i>The natural character of the coastal marine area, natural wetlands, and rivers, lakes and their margins is preserved and protected from inappropriate use and development.</i>

Biodiversity, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai	
Objective O21	<i>Vegetated riparian margins are established, maintained or restored to enhance water quality, aquatic ecosystem health, mahinga kai and indigenous biodiversity of rivers, lakes, natural wetlands and the coastal marine area.</i>
Sites with significant values	
Objective O25	<i>Outstanding water bodies identified in Schedule A (outstanding water bodies) and their significant values are protected and restored. Where the significant values relate to biodiversity, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai, restoration is to a healthy functioning state including as defined by Tables 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8.</i>
Policies	
Policy P1	<i>Ki uta ki tai and integrated catchment management</i>
Policy P7	<i>Beneficial activities</i>
Policy P8	<i>Public access to and along the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers</i>
Policy P9	<i>Contact Recreation and Māori customary use</i>
Policy P14	<i>The National Grid</i>
Policy P21	<i>Exercise of kaitiakitanga</i>
Policy P23	<i>Identification of outstanding/high natural character and outstanding natural features and landscapes</i>
Policy P24	<i>Preserving and protecting natural character from inappropriate use and development</i>
Policy P29	<i>Natural buffers</i>
Policy P36	<i>Restoring Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana</i>

Policy P37	<i>Adverse effects on outstanding water bodies</i>
Policy P54	<i>Identified Significant surf breaks</i>
Policy P109	<i>Management of riparian margins</i>
Policy P139	<i>Functional need and efficient use</i>
Policy P140	<i>Recreational values</i>
Policy P141	<i>Public open space values and visual amenity</i>
Policy P154	<i>Motor vehicles on the foreshore</i>
Policy P155	<i>Motor vehicles in sites with significant value</i>

3.7 Proposed NRP Change 1

- (55) On 30 October 2023 Greater Wellington Regional Council notified Proposed Change 1 to the Natural Resources Plan (Proposed NRP Change 1).
- (56) The purpose of Proposed NRP Change 1 is the implementation of regulatory and non-regulatory recommendations from the Whaitua Implementation Programmes (Te Awarua-o-Porirua (TAoP) and Te Whanganui-a-Tara (TWT) Implementation Programmes). It also includes other regulatory amendments relating to air quality rules and beds of lakes and rivers rules and new sites with significant biodiversity values.
- (57) The most relevant amendments and additions of Proposed NRP Change 1 are listed below. The full wording of relevant provisions below is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

Reference	Comment
Policy P36	<i>Restoring Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana</i>

8 Wellington Harbour and Hutt Valley Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara	
Objective WH.02	<i>The health and wellbeing of Te Whanganui-a-Tara's groundwater, rivers and natural wetlands and their margins are on a trajectory of measurable improvement towards wai ora ...</i>
Objective WH.05	<i>By 2040 the health and wellbeing of the Parangarahu Lakes and associated natural wetlands are on a trajectory of improvement towards wai ora ...</i>
8.2.1 Ecosystem health and water quality	
Policy WH.P1	<i>Improvement of aquatic ecosystem health</i>
Policy WH.P2	<i>Management of activities to achieve target attribute states and coastal water objectives</i>
8.2.4 Rural land use and earthworks	
Policy WH.P21	<i>Managing diffuse discharges of nutrients and Escherichia coli from farming activities</i>
Policy WH.P27	<i>Promoting stream shading</i>
Policy WH.P29	<i>Management of earthworks</i>
Policy WH.P30	<i>Discharge standard for earthworks</i>
Policy WH.P31	<i>Winter shut down of earthworks</i>

3.8 Iwi management plans

- (58) Section 74(2A) requires territorial authorities, when preparing or changing a district plan, to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with the territorial authority, to the extent that its content has a bearing on the resource management issues of the district.
- (59) However, no iwi management plans have been lodged with Hutt City Council.

3.9 Hutt City Council plans, policies, and strategies

- (60) Section 74(2)(b)(i) of the RMA requires that when preparing or changing a District Plan, a territorial authority shall have regard to any management plans and strategies prepared under other Acts.
- (61) In addition, there are other plans, policies and strategies of Council that, while not directly prepared under a specific Act, should be considered as part of the District Plan Review as they set Council’s intentions on some matters that need to be addressed through the District Plan Review.
- (62) The following Council plans, policies and strategies are relevant for natural character:

Plan/Policy/Strategy	Comment
<p>Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy 2023</p>	<p>The Council’s Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy (IBS) sets a framework to guide Hutt City Council, Mana Whenua and the wider community in working together to protect and restore our indigenous biodiversity.</p> <p>The IBS sets a vision and three goals in relation to indigenous biodiversity.</p> <p>The vision is <i>‘Living in harmony with nature where, in the short-term future, indigenous biodiversity is valued, conserved and restored, sustaining communities and delivering benefits for all people.’</i></p> <p>The three goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous species and their habitats in Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt are protected and restored so they can thrive. • The role of Mana Whenua as Rangatira and kaitiaki is enabled, Matauranga Māori is respected, and customary practices are supported.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our community is connected with all of nature, values it and actively contributes to its protection and restoration. <p>The eight focus areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waka Houruatanga – Partnership with Mana Whenua • Whakamana hapori – Enabling Community • Te whakahaumarū wai me ngā arawai – Protecting water and waterways • Te whakahaumarū pūnaha hauropi, momo Māori me ngā nōhanga – Safeguarding ecosystems, species, and habitats • Te whakaaroturuki me te whakahaere riha – Pest monitoring & management • Āhuarangi hurihuri – Climate Change • Whakapiki hauora tūmatanui – Improving public health • Te whakatautōhu, te whakaaroturuki, te whakaarotake me te whakatiaki – Identifying, monitoring, evaluating biodiversity <p>While the strategy acknowledges that the District Plan is part of the regulatory framework for biodiversity, it does not set a direction for how the District Plan will address biodiversity.</p>
<p>Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2015-2045</p>	<p>The ‘Environmental Sustainability Strategy takes a long-term view of the environment. The strategy looks at the issues, risks and opportunities for the environment and addresses potential issues and change.</p> <p>One of the objectives is to improve access to, and connections between, urban parks and reserves. Another objective is to support and encourage development of pathways and cycleways alongside streams and rivers.</p>
<p>CBD Vision 2030</p>	<p>This document represents a shared future vision for the CBD of Hutt City out to the year 2030. This document considers improving connections to the Hutt River and along the River</p>

	<p>Trail as a key approach to revitalising the CBD. Some of the relevant outcomes include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an ecological and cultural corridor (in relation to the Hutt River); • Develop a river promenade; and • Enhance natural surroundings.
Urban Growth Strategy 2012 -2032	<p>Council published its 'Urban Growth Strategy' in March 2014. This strategy provides a 30-year blueprint for private sector development and related Council investment in Hutt City and contains key principles to guide the city's population growth and development aspirations.</p>
Reserves Strategic Direction 2016-2026	<p>The focus of this strategy is on the 2,780 hectares of reserve lands in the developed parts of the city that HCC manage and that the public can generally access. They include 'green spaces', parks, walkways and cycle ways, trails and tracks, hills and gullies, valleys, the harbour, the coastal edge, wetlands, streams and rivers and their margins.</p> <p>Vision Statement: A reserve network that is valued for protecting the natural environment and public open space, the benefits it brings to the city and its role in contributing to the health and wellbeing of the people and the natural environment of our city.</p>
Esplanade and Foreshore Reserve Management Plan 2002	<p>Esplanade and Foreshore Reserves offer the public the opportunity to access and pursue a wide range of recreational activities along the margins of water bodies.</p> <p>Objectives and Policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive and Active Recreation; • Tracks on Esplanade and Foreshore Reserves.
Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2032	<p>Parks, reserves and gardens help preserve and enhance the city's natural beauty and provide opportunities for a wide range of leisure and recreational activities which benefit the health and wellbeing of our people.</p>

<p>Urban Forest Plan 2010</p>	<p>The intention of this plan is to provide policy to guide decision making about vegetation management on land Council is responsible for.</p> <p>Vision Statement: A connected web of natural areas at a large scale, with (primarily) ecological motives and a focus on a high level of native ecosystem diversity, to support high native species diversity over the long term and with minimal intervention.</p> <p>The Plan states <i>Of the greatest interest to Council are gravel beaches, coastal rocky shores, lowland coastal forest, lowland wetlands and grey shrub communities. The vegetation types associated with these habitats are varied. Unfortunately many of these habitats are in poor condition.</i></p>
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3.10 District plans of adjacent territorial authorities

- (63) Section 74(2)(c) of the RMA requires territorial authorities, when preparing or changing a district plan, to *have regard to* the extent to which the district plan needs to be consistent with the plans or proposed plans of adjacent territorial authorities.
- (64) The approach of district plans of other territorial authorities in the Wellington region are discussed below:

Plan	Relevant Provisions
<p>Proposed Wellington District Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDP as notified contains Natural Character (NATC) chapter with objectives, policies and rules managing the preservation and protection of riparian margins. • Coastal margins and riparian margins in the coastal environment are addressed in the Coastal Environment chapter. • Subdivision, earthworks, infrastructure and renewable electricity generation within riparian margins are addressed in the SUB, EW, INF and REG chapters.

Plan	Relevant Provisions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter as notified does not address the margins of wetlands but considers these are sufficiently covered by the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (2020). • Chapter as notified does not rely on the identification of specific areas but applies a riparian margin setback from the beds of all rivers throughout the district. Within these margins certain activities are restricted.
<p>Proposed Porirua District Plan (decisions version)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision version contains Natural Character (NATC) chapter with objectives, policies and rules managing the protection, preservation and enhancement of the natural character of coastal and riparian margins. • Earthworks within riparian margins – policies and rules are located in the NATC chapter. • Subdivision within riparian margins – no specific policies or rules. • Infrastructure within riparian margins – standards are located in the INF chapter. • Chapter does not contain provisions for the natural character of wetlands but relies on other provisions and methods within and outside of the Plan that address the wider values of wetlands, including their natural character.
<p>Upper Hutt District Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains Natural Character (NATC) chapter. • NATC chapter applies to waterbodies in Upper Hutt including rivers, streams, ground water, and wetlands (no coastline, therefore no coastal margins) and refers to the protection of the quality or quantity of water resources and the diversity of aquatic habitats. • Also addresses the provision of access to waterbodies. • A single rule that classifies new buildings and structures within 20m of a waterbody as discretionary. • Subdivision provisions are located in the Subdivision chapter. • Earthworks provisions are located in Earthworks chapter.

Plan	Relevant Provisions
Kāpiti Coast District Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Natural Character chapter. • Considers the preservation of natural character in the Coastal Environment chapter. • There are policies within the specific zones that relate to natural character (e.g. GRUZ-P13 – relating to Kapiti and Outer Islands).
Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains Natural Character (NATC) chapter with objectives, policies and rules managing the preservation and enhancement of the natural character of freshwater environments, including rivers, lakes, natural inland wetlands, and their margins. • NATC policies and rules mainly relate to significant waterbodies (identified and listed in a schedule). • Natural character of coastal areas is addressed in the Coastal Environment chapter. • NES-FW manages vegetation removal, earthworks, natural hazards works, infrastructure, and public access structures within 10m of natural inland wetlands, NATC chapter does not duplicate these provisions. • NRP manages earthworks within 5m of surface waterbodies, NATC chapter, does not duplicate earthworks rules within these riparian margins.

3.11 Other statutory and non-statutory plan, policies, and strategies

(65) In addition to Hutt City Council’s plans, policies and strategies (discussed above), there are regional and national plans, policies and strategies that, while not mandatory considerations for the District Plan Review, should still be considered as they form part of the management regime for natural and physical resources in the district, and considering these documents can aid integrated management.

(66) The following other statutory and non-statutory plans, policies and strategies are relevant for natural character:

Plan, Policy, or Strategy	Comments
<p>Parangarahu Lakes Area Co-Management Plan 2014</p> <p>Greater Wellington Regional Council and Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust</p>	<p>Identifies the lakes their associated tributaries and wetlands as an area of national significance and outlines the issues, vision and management objectives. Key activities in the plan include the establishment of a new walking track to replace the removed boardwalk and advocating for secured links to the Remutaka Cycle Trail.</p>
<p>Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Environmental Strategy Action Plan 2018</p> <p>Greater Wellington Regional Council</p>	<p>Sets out aims and objectives identified by the community for the management and enhancement of the river corridor environment. The focus is on the enhancement and management of the river and meeting natural, social, and cultural requirements while providing flood protection. Relevant to landscape character and amenity values, this includes three key goals for the protection and enhancement of the river's natural environment, encouraging and enabling improved connections between the river corridor and adjoining communities, and providing spaces and facilities to support recreation opportunities. This environmental strategy sits within the wider Hutt River Flood Management Plan, October 2001, and enables the environmental, community and recreation objectives to be achieved.</p>
<p>Wellington Harbour Islands Kaitiaki Plan 2012-2017</p> <p>Department of Conservation</p>	<p>Outlines the vision, guiding principles and key management issues and objectives for the management of the islands in the harbour.</p>
<p>Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-2030</p>	<p>Toitū Te Whenua is the management plan for eight regional parks and forests. It includes Akatarawa, Battle Hill, Belmont, East Harbour (including the Northern</p>

<p>Greater Wellington Regional Council</p>	<p>Forest, Baring Head/Ōrua Pouanui and Parangarahu Lakes), Kaitoke, Pakuratahi, Queen Elizabeth and Wainuiomata parks.</p> <p>The Plan's vision is 'Restoring healthy ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature'. 'He waka eke noa', we're all in this together moving forward.</p>
<p>Hutt and Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection areas management plan 2016</p> <p>Greater Wellington Regional Council</p>	<p>Together these water collection areas annually supply approximately 60% of Wellington's water. Managing the water collection areas to ensure optimum water quality reduces the risk of contamination and minimises the need for more expensive water treatment.</p> <p>This plan focuses on management of the water catchments of the Hutt and Wainuiomata/Orongorongo rivers upstream of the water intakes to address primary goals of achieving:</p> <p>water quality which meets or exceeds drinking water standards;</p> <p>catchment management to maximise volumes of raw water secondary goals of protecting; and</p> <p>enhancing biodiversity and heritage values and providing for limited recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Whilst the Parks Network Plan (2011) is the overarching management plan for the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) park network, its scope does not encompass the two water collection areas (WCA) which are managed primarily for water supply purposes.</p>
<p>Te Mahere Wai o Te Kāhui Taiao</p> <p>Greater Wellington Regional Council, Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa Rangatira</p>	<p>A Mana Whenua whitua implementation plan to return mana to our freshwater bodies. There are a number of values and environmental outcomes identified, with timeframes for implementation.</p> <p><i>'Many of the key flood protection activities are identified as high potential impact activities and</i></p>

	<p><i>require discretionary activity resource consent under the PNRP. These methods often directly impact on the remaining natural form and character of the region's rivers and streams.'</i></p> <p><i>Long term (30+ years) – 'The āhua (natural character) of the Korokoro, Kaiwharawhara, Te Awa Kairangi, Wainuiomata, and Ōrongorongo awa and Parangārehu Lakes (Parangārahu Lakes is also an acceptable spelling alternative) is fully restored in the long term.'</i></p>
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3.12 Other legislation or regulations

- (67) In addition to the RMA, other legislation and regulations can be relevant considerations for a district plan, particularly where management of an issue is addressed through multiple pieces of legislation and regulatory bodies.
- (68) The Reserves Act 1977 is relevant for natural character.
- (69) Section 3 of the Reserves Act 1977 sets out three main functions as part of the Act's general purpose which includes "the preservation of access for the public to the coastline, islands, lakeshore and riverbanks and to encourage the protection and preservation of the natural character of these areas."
- (70) The Reserves Act requires the preparation of reserve management plans which govern in a detailed manner what can and cannot be carried out in the City's reserves. While the Reserves Act ultimately determines the types of uses appropriate for reserve areas that are classified under the Act, the RMA governs environmental policy and management, minimising the adverse effects of use and development.

3.13 Statutory Acknowledgements

- (71) The District Plan contains, as an addendum, the relevant provisions and statutory acknowledgement areas as identified by the Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Act 2009 and the Ngāti Toa Rangatira Claims Settlement Act 2014. The information provided in the addendum is for the purpose of public information only and does not form part of the District Plan.

- (72) A statutory acknowledgement is a formal acknowledgement by the Crown of the mana of tangata whenua over a specified area. It recognises the particular cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional association of an iwi with the site, which is identified as a statutory area.

Statutory Area	Location
Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika – Port Nicholson Block	
COASTAL MARINE AREA	As shown on SO 408070
HUTT RIVER	As shown on SO 408071
WAIWHETU STREAM	As shown on SO 408072
WELLINGTON HARBOUR	As shown on SO 408073
RIVERSIDE DRIVE MARGINAL STRIP	As shown on SO 408074
SEAVIEW MARGINAL STRIP	As shown on SO 408075
RIMUTAKA FOREST PARK	As shown on SO 408079
WAINUIOMATA SCENIC RESERVE	As shown on SO 408080
TURAKIRAE HEAD SCIENTIFIC RESERVE	As shown on SO 408081
Ngāti Toa Rangatira	
HUTT RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES	As shown on Deed Plan OTS-068-45
COOK STRAIT	As shown on Deed Plan OTS-068-38
WELLINGTON HARBOUR (PORT NICHOLSON)	As shown on Deed Plan OTS-068-40

4 Resource management issues

4.1 Introduction to resource management issues

- (73) The purpose of the Natural Character chapter is to protect the wider natural character of rivers and lakes and their margins as well as coastal margins across the district.
- (74) Hutt City has some 42km of coastline comprising the inner Wellington Harbour and open coastline to the Cook Strait which includes Pencarrow Head, Baring Head and Turakirae Head.
- (75) Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River is one of the largest rivers in the Wellington region. The headwaters originate in the Tararua Ranges, with the 56km long river flowing through the Hutt Valley past Upper Hutt and Hutt City before discharging into Wellington Harbour at Pito One. There are a number of other rivers and streams such as the Wainuiomata River, the Korokoro Stream and the Waiwhetū Stream as well as numerous unnamed tributaries.
- (76) There are also two highly valued lakes, Lake Kōhangapiripiri and Lake Kōhangaterā. Both lakes are located on the south coast and form part of the East Harbour Regional Park.
- (77) The coastal margins and riparian margins adjacent to the coast, streams and lakes have natural character values and provide public and customary access to the coast and freshwater bodies, while also providing public amenity, recreation, hazard management and ecological values within Hutt City.
- (78) The protection of identified areas of high, very high and outstanding natural character within the coastal environment is managed in the Coastal Environment chapter.

4.2 Evidence base

4.2.1 Existing approach of City of Lower Hutt District Plan

- (79) The operative District Plan currently does not contain a Natural Character chapter. There are very limited setback and margin requirements, mostly addressing flood hazard risks and protecting flood protection structures rather than protecting the natural character of those margins.
- (80) The key provisions in the ODP of relevance to this topic are identified below.
- (81) The existing provisions for coastal and riparian margins relate mainly to setback requirements from rivers with the intention of addressing flood hazard risks. There are only limited setback requirements that are intended to protect or maintain natural character values. Furthermore, the limited setback requirements are applied inconsistently depending on the underlying zone and purpose of the setback.

Topic / Chapter	Summary of relevant provisions
5A Central Commercial Activity Area	<p>5A 1.1.5 Hutt River Corridor</p> <p>Objective</p> <p><i>To recognise and enhance the significant amenity, natural and recreational values of the Hutt River and its relationship to activities in the Central Commercial Activity Area.</i></p> <p>5A 1.2.4 Hutt River Corridor</p> <p>Objective</p> <p><i>To recognise and enhance the significant amenity, natural and recreational values of the Hutt River and its relationship to development in the Central Commercial Activity Area.</i></p>
7B(i) Special Recreation Activity Area – Petone Foreshore	<p>7B(i) 1.1.1 Retaining the Open Space Character</p> <p>Objective</p> <p><i>That activities carried out on the Petone Foreshore retain the open space character and are compatible with the coastal environment.</i></p> <p>7B(i) 1.2.1 Buildings and Structures</p> <p>Objective</p>

	<i>To conserve and protect the open space character and amenity values of the area.</i>
7B(ii) Special Recreation Activity Area – Seaview Marina	<p>7B(ii) 1.2.1 Buildings and Structures</p> <p>Objective</p> <p><i>To ensure that buildings and structures have adverse effects which are no more than minor on amenity values of the area.</i></p>
7C River Recreation Activity Area	<p><i>The River Recreation Activity Area includes the Hutt, Wainuiomata and Orongorongo Rivers, the Waiwhetu Stream, and land adjacent to these water bodies. There are a number of other tributaries and streams included within this Activity Area. Some of these streams are narrow or shallow, which limits the range of activities that can be undertaken on them or along their banks.</i></p> <p>7C 1.1 Local Area Issues</p> <p>7C 1.1.1 Surface and Margins of Rivers</p> <p>Objective</p> <p><i>To ensure that activities that occur on the surface of rivers and Margins have adverse effects which are no more than minor on natural and ecological qualities and access to these areas is maintained.</i></p> <p>Policy</p> <p>(a) <i>To allow a wide range of low impact recreation activities such as fishing, swimming and other informal recreation and leisure activities.</i></p> <p>(b) <i>To control the use of motorised boating activities on the surface of rivers.</i></p> <p>(c) <i>To ensure that recreation and leisure activities on the surface of rivers and Margins have adverse effects which are no more than minor on the stability of river banks.</i></p> <p>(d) <i>To ensure that public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers is maintained and enhanced.</i></p> <p>(e) <i>To ensure that recreation activities have effects that are no more than minor on the natural and ecological qualities of river beds, banks and Margins.</i></p>

<p>8B General Rural Activity Area</p>	<p>8B 1.1.1 Open Space Character and Amenity Values Policy</p> <p><i>(c) The preservation of the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.</i></p> <p>8B 1.1.2 Coastal Environment Objective</p> <p><i>The natural character and amenity values of the coastal environment, together with significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i></p>
<p>13 Network Utilities</p>	<p>13.3.2.4 Separation Distance and Setbacks</p> <p>Requires all network utility structures in all zones to maintain a minimum 20m riparian setback.</p>
<p>14L Renewable Energy Generation</p>	<p>Rule 14L 2.1.9</p> <p>Requires all land based structures that support in-stream hydro or marine energy generation in Rural, Recreation and Business zones to be located outside any riparian setbacks.</p> <p>Rule 14L 2.1.10</p> <p>Requires all Community scale renewable energy generation activities, including associated construction and commissioning activities in Rural Zones to be located outside of any riparian setback.</p>

4.2.2 Analysis of other District Plans

- (82) The approach of the district plans of other territorial authorities in the Wellington region are outlined in Section 3.10 above.
- (83) In summary all District Plans in the Wellington region contain a Natural Character chapter except for the Kāpiti Coast District Plan.
- The Natural Character chapter of the Proposed Wellington District Plan (partially operative) addresses the natural character of waterbodies and the coast by applying general setback requirements (coastal and riparian margins).
 - The Natural Character chapter of the Proposed Porirua District Plan (partially operative) only addresses riparian margins outside the

coastal environment. Coastal margins and riparian margins within the coastal environment are located in the Coastal Environment chapter.

- The Upper Hutt District Plan requires setbacks of building from waterbodies (Upper Hutt does not have a coastline, therefore no coastal margins apply).
- The Natural Character chapter of the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan mainly refers to the protection of the natural character of identified significant freshwater waterbodies. The natural character of coastal areas is addressed in the Coastal Environment chapter.
- The Kāpiti Coast District Plan does not contain a Natural Character chapter but mainly addresses natural character in the Coastal Environment chapter.

4.2.3 National guidance documents

(84) The following national guidance document is considered relevant to this topic.

Document	Relevant Provisions
Environment Guide – Best Practice Natural Character Planning (2015)	<p>The Environment Guide website provides guidance on protecting natural character through District Plan provisions with a focus on the coastal environment. The key topics covered relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Natural Character? • Why is Natural Character important? • Threats to Natural Character • Protection of Natural Character • Best Practice Planning and • Best Practice Design.
NZCPS 2010 Guidance Note Policy 18: Public Open Space	<p>These guidance notes provide guidance on NZCPS policy including an overview and on implementation.</p>

4.2.4 Advice from mana whenua

- (85) Council has engaged with mana whenua as part of the District Plan Review, particularly through the Kāhui Mana Whenua engagement group. Through this engagement, mana whenua have advised that the natural environment, and in particular, waterbodies, the coast and their margins, are of particular significance to Māori, and their values can be impacted (and have been impacted in the past) from inappropriate land use and development.
- (86) All waterbodies in Lower Hutt have been identified as sites/areas of significance to Māori in the proposed District Plan.

4.2.5 Stakeholder and community engagement

- (87) For the District Plan Review, Council has primarily engaged with the community and other stakeholders through two rounds of engagement:
- The *Shaping Your City* engagement (2020), on issues and options for the District Plan Review, and
 - The *Draft District Plan* engagement (2023), on a full draft of the plan that had been developed through the District Plan Review.
- (88) Overall, the feedback received was in support of the proposed chapter and provisions with some requests for clarification or amendments. A number of comments referred to the provisions for infrastructure or earthworks in coastal and riparian margins. While some feedback requested more restrictive provisions other feedback asked for more permissive provisions. In summary the feedback sought the following amendments:
- Add a rule that allows for maintenance and repair of existing buildings and structures;
 - Change the rules to allow for all activities provided for in the relevant reserve management plan;
 - Apply the effects management hierarchy to manage adverse effects of infrastructure with a functional need to locate within margins; and
 - Require that earthworks in margins does not result in any sediment input into freshwater.

4.3 Summary of issues analysis

- (89) Based on the research, analysis and consultation outlined above the following resource management issues have been identified.

Issue 1: The need to preserve and protect the natural character and values of riparian margins and coastal margins from inappropriate subdivision, use and development

- (90) Section 6(a) of the RMA requires Councils to recognise and provide for the preservation of these the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers, section 6(d) of the RMA requires recognition and provision of the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along lakes and rivers, while 6(h) of the RMA requires recognition and provision for the management of significant risks from natural hazards.
- (91) Sections 7(d) and 7(f) of the RMA require Councils to have particular regard to the intrinsic values of ecosystems and the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment, while section 7(i) of the RMA requires Councils to have particular regard to the effects of climate change.
- (92) Objective 2 and Policy 13 of the NZCPS requires the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (addressed in Coastal Environment chapter).
- (93) Higher order direction in the regional plans follows this direction.
- (94) Increased urban growth and some rural activities can threaten the natural character of riparian and coastal margins (e.g. residential/urban development resulting in the piping / undergrounding of streams and a loss of natural character). Not providing for the preservation of these areas is not meeting higher order direction.
- (95) In response, the proposed Natural Character chapter aims to protect and enhance natural character of coastal margins and riparian margins, and provisions are proposed to manage the effects of subdivision, use and development on natural character of riparian and coastal margins.

Issue 2: The need to provide for the restoration and enhancement of the natural character of riparian margins and coastal margins

- (96) Sections 7(a), (b) and (f) of the RMA require Councils to have particular regard to kaitiakitanga, the ethic of stewardship and the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.
- (97) Policy 14 of the NZCPS requires promotion of the restoration or rehabilitation of the natural character of the Coastal Environment.
- (98) Higher order regional documents also require provisions for restoration and enhancement.
- (99) The current plan does not expressly encourage the restoration or enhancement of the natural character of riparian and coastal margins.
- (100) The introduction of overly restrictive provisions that do not allow for the restoration / enhancement of natural character could prevent these beneficial activities from being undertaken.
- (101) In response, provisions are proposed that allow for and support the restoration and enhancement of the natural character of riparian and coastal margins.

Issue 3: The need to provide for traditional cultural practices within riparian margins

- (102) Sections 6(e) and 7(a) of the RMA and require Councils to recognise and provide for the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga, protect customary rights and to have particular regard to kaitiakitanga.
- (103) Policy 2 of the NZCPS confirms and details these requirements with a focus on the coastal environment.
- (104) Higher order direction in the regional plans follows this direction.
- (105) The current plan does not expressly allow for traditional cultural practices within conservation areas.
- (106) The introduction of overly restrictive provisions that do not allow for kaitiakitanga and cultural harvesting could prevent these traditional activities from being undertaken.

(107) In response, provisions are proposed that allow for traditional activities while maintaining the natural character values of riparian and coastal margins.

5 Scale and significance assessment

(108) In writing this evaluation report we must provide a level of detail that corresponds to the scale and significance of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural effects anticipated from the implementation of the proposal.

(109) In assessing that scale and significance we have had regard to:

Matters of national importance	The protection of the natural character of riparian and coastal margins is a matter of national importance under s6 of the RMA.
Other matters	A number of other matters (outlined in s7 of the RMA) are relevant for the natural character topic of the District Plan Review, in relation to kaitiakitanga, stewardship, amenity values, ecosystems, the quality of the environment, climate change and renewable energy.
Degree of change from the operative plan	The proposed provisions introduce new regulations for the protection of the natural character of riparian and coastal margins and provide greater guidance and direction.
Geographic scale of effects	The proposed provisions apply to all rivers and lakes that meet the relevant definitions. While the length of coastal margins is extensive these are mostly in public ownership.
Number of people affected	While few people would be impacted by regulations imposed on land use and development within coastal and riparian margins (due to few people owning or occupying land in these area), a large number of people would benefit from the positive effects of protecting natural character in these areas, particularly in public areas.

Duration of effects	The positive effects of protecting natural character of coastal and riparian margins would be ongoing.
Economic impacts	There is the potential for an economic impact for people wishing to undertake land use and development in coastal and riparian margins, through resource consenting costs or constraint on those land uses and developments. However, there is also the potential for positive economic impacts through the additional value derived from the amenity values of natural character.
Social and cultural impacts	Protection of the natural character of coastal and riparian margins can have positive social and cultural effects, particularly through the contribution to amenity values and promoting the restoration of these areas to their natural state. The proposed Natural Character chapter would provide for customary harvesting within coastal and riparian margins.
Environmental impacts	There may be effects on social, economic and cultural wellbeing, as well as on environmental wellbeing. These effects maybe positive, such as enhanced natural character, or negative, such as the limitation of activities within riparian and coastal margins.
Health and safety impacts	Health and safety is of little relevance for the natural character topic of the District Plan Review. Protection of coastal and riparian margins can make a positive contribution to reducing natural hazard risks. However, there may also be a need for hazard mitigation works, including structures, to be located within coastal and riparian margins.
Degree of interest from mana whenua	Tangata whenua have a particular interest in riparian and coastal margins.
Degree of interest from the public	There has been little interest from the public during

Degree of risk or uncertainty	The approach to protecting natural character is well understood and therefore the degree of risk and uncertainty is low.
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(111) Overall, the scale and significance of the proposed provisions are **low to medium**.

6 Proposed District Plan objectives and provisions

6.1 Natural Character chapter

- (112) The proposed Natural Character chapter includes objectives, policies and rules that apply to the margins of all rivers, lakes and coastlines in the district. It does not rely on the identification of specific areas on the planning maps. Instead, it defines riparian and coastal margins as an area within 10m of the banks of rivers and lakes and 10m inland from the coastal marine area.
- (113) Within riparian margins certain activities would be restricted in order to protect the natural character values of rivers, lakes and their margins and, where appropriate, maintain and enhance public access. The proposed provisions give effect to Policy 43 of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region which requires Council's to have particular regard to maintaining or enhancing the ecological functions of riparian margins and the protection and reinstatement of riparian habitat when changing or reviewing a district plan. They are consistent with Policy 6 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement which requires development to be set back from the coastal marine area and other water bodies in the coastal environment. Activities are still anticipated within these areas, however most activities will require resource consent to ensure the effects of activities are assessed and take into account the character and amenity of the area.
- (114) The Natural Character chapter does not contain provisions for the natural character of wetlands. It relies on other provisions and methods within and outside of this Plan that address the wider values of wetlands, which include their natural character. In particular, provisions for wetlands in the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Natural Resources Plan and the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater, which manage vegetation removal, earthworks, natural hazards works, infrastructure and public access structures within 10 metres of natural wetlands. As such, Council has decided not to duplicate provisions for these activities, and they are not managed through this chapter.

(115) The proposed provisions are summarised below.

<p>Objective</p>	<p>NATC-01 Natural Character of Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins <i>The natural character of coastal margins and riparian margins is preserved and protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, and enhanced where appropriate.</i></p>
<p>Policies</p>	<p>NATC-P1 Customary Harvesting within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins allows for customary harvesting by Mana Whenua in accordance with tikanga Māori.</p> <p>NATC-P2 Restoration and Enhancement within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins provides for appropriate activities to achieve restoration and enhancement of natural character within coastal margins and riparian margins.</p> <p>NATC-P3 Indigenous Vegetation Removal within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins provides a policy framework for the removal of indigenous vegetation within coastal margins and riparian margins.</p> <p>NATC-P4 Appropriate Use and Development within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins provides for use and development within coastal margins and riparian margins where it appropriately manages adverse effects.</p> <p>NATC-P5 Inappropriate Use and Development within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins requires the avoidance of use and development within coastal margins and riparian margins unless it does not have adverse effects on the natural character and maintains public access or has a functional or operational need to be located in a margin and adverse effects on natural character are minimised.</p>
<p>Rules</p>	<p>LAND USE ACTIVITIES</p> <p>NATC-R1 Customary Harvesting by Tangata Whenua within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins is a permitted activity.</p> <p>NATC-R2 Restoration and Enhancement Activities within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins are permitted activities subject to a</p>

number of conditions and elevate to restricted discretionary in the case of a non-compliance.

NATC-R3 Indigenous Vegetation Removal within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins is a permitted activity subject to conditions. Non-compliance with conditions elevates the activity status to restricted discretionary.

NATC-R4 All Other Land Use Activities within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins are restricted discretionary activities.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

NATC-R5 Maintenance, Repair, Alteration and Demolition of Existing Buildings and Structures within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins are permitted activities.

NATC-R6 New Farming Fences within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins are permitted activities subject to conditions and elevate to restricted discretionary in the case of non-compliance.

NATC-R7 New Buildings and Structures and Additions to existing Buildings and Structures within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins are permitted activities only where they are for hazard mitigation activities. All other new buildings and structures are restricted discretionary activities.

Note on non-notification clauses

- (116) The introduction of non-notification clauses has been considered but has been found to be inappropriate since activities and non-compliances with standards that trigger the need for a resource consent may have wider adverse effects and affected parties may not be easily determined. Therefore, no public or limited notification preclusion clauses have been applied to any provisions of the Natural Character chapter.

6.2 Other chapters

6.2.1 Infrastructure

(117) The provisions relating to infrastructure within the Coastal Environment are located in the Infrastructure chapter and consist of:

(118) The general approach can be summarised as follows:

- Allow for operation, maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure in coastal and riparian margins (permitted activity),
- Allow for specified new infrastructure structures and equipment in coastal and riparian margins (such as new antennae attached to existing poles), and
- Provide for upgrading of existing infrastructure and for new infrastructure in coastal and riparian margins (permitted if located within formed legal road or along bridge, restricted discretionary otherwise).

6.2.2 Subdivision

Objective	<i>SUB-O2 Subdivision Design</i> refers to the provision for and protection of identified natural and coastal environment values.
Policy	<i>SUB-P20 Subdivision of Land Containing Coastal Margins or Riparian Margins</i> contains a policy framework that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides for subdivision of land containing coastal or riparian margins where adverse effects of future development are minimised; and • only allows for subdivision in all other zones where there is a functional need and appropriate restoration or rehabilitation planting will be incorporated.
Rules	<i>SUB-R10 Subdivision of land containing Coastal Margins or Riparian Margins</i> is:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a controlled activity where any building platforms and related access are identified and located entirely outside of the coastal margin or riparian margin; and • a discretionary activity where any building platforms and related access are located within a coastal margin or riparian margin.
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6.2.3 Earthworks

(119) The provisions relating to earthworks in coastal margins and riparian margins are located in the Earthworks chapter.

Objective	<i>EW-O1 Earthworks</i> requires earthworks to be undertaken in a manner that minimises adverse effects on the natural environment.
Policy	<p><i>EW-P13 Earthworks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins</i> contains a policy framework for earthworks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows for minor earthworks and earthworks for the maintenance of existing walking, cycling and farming tracks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins; • provides for earthworks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins that are for new walking, cycling or farming tracks and of a scale that protects the identified values; and • only allows for other earthworks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins where adverse effects can be managed appropriately.
Rules	<p><i>EW-R13 Earthworks within Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins</i> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permitted activities where they are for the maintenance of existing walking, cycling and farming tracks or are minor earthworks; • controlled activities where they are for new farming tracks or new walking and cycling tracks in Rural Zones or Open Space and Recreation Zones – subject to compliance with standards;

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• restricted discretionary activities for any other earthworks – subject to compliance with standards; and• discretionary activities where compliance with standards is not achieved. |
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6.2.4 Renewable Electricity Generation

(120) The provisions relating to renewable electricity generation within coastal and riparian margins are in the Renewable Electricity Generation chapter.

(121) The general approach can be summarised as follows:

- Allow for operation, maintenance and repair of existing renewable electricity generation in coastal and riparian margins (permitted activity); and
- Provide for upgrading of existing renewable electricity generation and for new renewable electricity generation in coastal and riparian margins (permitted if located within formed legal road or along bridge, restricted discretionary otherwise).

7 Evaluation of objectives

- (122) This section is the evaluation of objectives, as required through s32(1)(a) of the RMA.
- (123) An objective is a statement of what is to be achieved through the resolution of a particular resource management issue. A district plan objective should set out a desired end state to be achieved through the implementation of policies and rules.
- (124) Under s75(1)(a) of the Resource Management Act, a district plan must state the objectives for the district.
- (125) Under s32(1)(a) of the Resource Management Act, an evaluation report required under the Act must examine the extent to which the objectives of the proposal being evaluated are the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA. The purpose of the RMA, as stated in s5(1) of the Act, is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- (126) For the purposes of this evaluation, the Council has evaluated the proposed objectives as well as the objectives of the operative District Plan and other reasonably practicable alternatives.

Evaluation of Objectives	
Proposed Objective	
NATC-01 Natural Character of Coastal Margins and Riparian Margins	
The natural character of coastal margins and riparian margins is preserved and protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, and enhanced.	
Relevance	
Addresses a relevant resource management issue	Yes – addresses the relevant resource management issues for Natural Character, identified in section 4.3 of this report, of needing to preserve and protect the natural character of coastal and riparian margins and allowing for their restoration and enhancement.

Assists the Council to undertake its functions under s31 RMA	Yes – sets a clear outcome for Council for the management of effects of the use, development, or protection of land and associated natural and physical resources.
Gives effect to higher level documents	Yes – gives effect to higher order documents: The reference to preserving, protecting, maintaining and enhancing natural character is consistent with the relevant matters under sections 6 and 7 of the RMA and the identified objectives and policies of the RPS.
Usefulness	
Guides decision-making	Yes – provides clear guidance regarding the preservation and protection of the natural character within coastal and riparian margins.
Reasonableness	
Will not impose unjustifiably high costs on the community/parts of the community	Yes – some additional costs may occur for landowners due to additional resource consent requirements. However, when implemented through policies and methods the clearly articulated expectations regarding the preservation and protection of coastal and riparian margins will provide certainty around expected outcomes. Any additional costs that may occur are justifiable in the context of addressing the identified resource management issue of protecting natural character.
Acceptable level of uncertainty and risk	Yes – the proposed objectives clearly describe the intention to protect the natural character of coastal and riparian margins and to provide for their enhancement, thereby providing for greater certainty and reducing risk compared to the current provisions. The approach is well established.
Achievability	
Consistent with identified tangata	Yes – no submissions were received in relation to the objectives during engagement on the Draft District Plan. There is nothing to

whenua and community outcomes	suggest the proposed objectives are inconsistent with identified tangata whenua and community outcomes.
Realistically able to be achieved within the Council's powers, skills and resources	Yes – the proposed objectives are achievable within Council's powers, skills and resources by implementing the associated policies and rules that are proposed.

Other Potential Objectives:

Operative District Plan Objectives – Status Quo

Most of the status quo objectives of the operative District Plan that relate to Natural Character have a much wider focus on protecting and enhancing character, landscape and amenity values and managing natural hazard risk, while only applying in certain zones and overlays. Only the operative Subdivision chapter has an objective that specifically relates to the protection of land in the coastal environment, areas adjoining lakes and rivers and other environmentally sensitive areas from inappropriate subdivision.

Most of the relevant status quo objectives do not specifically relate to the preservation and protection of the natural character of coastal and riparian but have a wider focus on landscape and amenity values. They do not align with intention and wording of higher order documents.

They do not provide guidance to decision makers and the public on expected outcomes and therefore create uncertainty and risk.

Alternative Objectives

The following variations of the proposed objectives have been considered:

- Variation 1 - An objective that only applies to coastal margins and to the riparian margins of identified significant waterbodies.
- Variation 2 - An objective that only applies to riparian margins while coastal margins are covered in the Coastal Environment chapter.

Both options have been found to be less appropriate.

Variation 1 would not provide the same level of protection since the preservation and protection of riparian margins of waterbodies that are not identified as significant would not be protected. While this option would provide more certainty it would not align with higher order guidance that requires the preservation and protection of the natural character of riparian margins in general, not only for significant waterbodies.

Variation 2 would likely achieve the same outcome but would result in a lot of duplication of provisions relating to the protection of the natural character of margins in different chapters.

Summary

The above analysis shows that the proposed objective relating to the protection of natural character and the management of activities within coastal and riparian margins is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA.

The proposed objective aligns with national best practice and implements national and regional guidance and direction (s5, s6, s7, RPS) by describing the envisaged preservation and protection of natural character within coastal and riparian margins and also stating the intention to provide for maintenance and enhancement of natural character. They provide greater certainty to decision makers and plan users regarding the desired outcomes.

The existing objectives in the operative District Plan and the considered alternatives do not reflect or give effect to higher level direction and do not provide the same level certainty and guidance to decision makers and plan users.

8 Evaluation of policies and rules

- (127) Policies and rules implement, or give effect to, the objectives of a plan.
- (128) Policies of a district plan are the course of action to achieve or implement the plan's objective (i.e. the path to be followed to achieve a certain, specified, environmental outcome). Rules of a district plan implement the plan's policies, and have the force and effect of a regulation.
- (129) Under s32(1)(b) of the Resource Management Act, an evaluation report required under the Act must examine whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate way to achieve the objectives by:
- (i) *identifying other reasonably practicable options for achieving the objectives; and*
 - (ii) *assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions in achieving the objectives; and*
 - (iii) *summarising the reasons for deciding on the provisions.*
- (130) Under s32(2) of the Resource Management Act, the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions must:
- (a) *identify and assess the benefits and costs of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural effects that are anticipated from the implementation of the provisions, including the opportunities for—*
 - (i) *economic growth that are anticipated to be provided or reduced; and*
 - (ii) *employment that are anticipated to be provided or reduced; and*

- (b) *if practicable, quantify the benefits and costs referred to in paragraph (a); and*
- (c) *assess the risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information about the subject matter of the provisions.*

Structure of this evaluation

- (131) For this evaluation, the proposed policies and rule framework have been evaluated together. This is because the proposed policies and the rule framework form a package of provisions that collectively implement the single objective of the proposed Natural Character chapter.
- (132) Reasonably practicable alternatives for implementing the objectives have been included with a brief assessment and reasons why they have not been adopted.

Quantification of benefits and costs

- (133) Section 32(2)(b) requires that, where practicable, the benefits and costs of a proposal are to be quantified.
- (134) Based on the assessment of the scale and significance of the proposed provisions above, specific quantification of the benefits and costs in this report is considered neither necessary, beneficial nor practicable in relation to this topic. Instead, this report identifies more generally where any additional costs or cost may lie and a qualitative assessment of identifiable costs and benefits associated with this proposal is provided in the assessment of policies, rules and other methods contained in this report.

Risk of acting / not acting if information is uncertain or insufficient

- (135) As part of the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of provisions, section 32(2)(c) of the RMA requires an assessment of the risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information about the subject matter of the provisions.

(136) For the proposed Natural Character chapter, there is certain and sufficient information on which to base the proposed policies and methods as:

- The proposed approach and provisions are well understood,
- The proposed provisions are consistent with existing approaches in the Wellington region,
- The proposed provisions give effect to higher order direction, and
- Previous consultation has not raised any significant issues with the proposed provisions.

Evaluation of provisions to implement Objective NATC-O1

POLICIES

NATC-P1: Customary harvesting within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-P2: Restoration and enhancement within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-P3: Indigenous vegetation removal within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-P4: Appropriate use and development within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-P5: Inappropriate use and development within coastal margins and riparian margins

RULES

NATC-R1: Customary harvesting by Mana Whenua within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-R2: Restoration and enhancement activities within coastal margins and riparian margins

NATC-R3: Indigenous vegetation removal within coastal margins and riparian margins

<p>NATC-R4: Activities within coastal margins and riparian margins not otherwise provided for</p> <p>NATC-R5: Repairs, maintenance, alterations and demolition of buildings and structures within coastal margins and riparian margins</p> <p>NATC-R6: Construction of farming fences within coastal margins and riparian margins</p> <p>NATC-R7: Construction of buildings and structures and additions to existing buildings and structures within coastal margins and riparian margins</p> <p>PROVISIONS IN OTHER CHAPTERS</p> <p>INF - Infrastructure</p> <p>EW - Earthworks</p> <p>SUB - Subdivision</p> <p>REG - Renewable Electricity Generation</p>	
<p>Efficiency and effectiveness</p>	
<p>Costs</p>	<p>Benefits</p>
<p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct or indirect environmental costs from the proposed provisions have been identified since they provide for the management of adverse effects of 	<p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed provisions aim to protect and enhance the natural character values of coastal and riparian margins through the management of use and development within

subdivision, use and development on the natural character of coastal and riparian margins.

Economic

- Some administrative costs associated with the proposed provisions, including the time and cost where resource consents are needed for buildings or structures in coastal and riparian margins.
- Restrictions on subdivision, use and development in coastal and riparian margins can impact development opportunities of a site, and therefore may have opportunity costs for landowners. However, the protected margins are comparatively small and well defined.
- Any economic growth and employment costs are likely to be negligible.

Social

- No direct or indirect social costs have been identified.

Cultural

- No direct or indirect cultural costs have been identified.

coastal and riparian margins, while allowing for customary harvesting and restoration and enhancement measures.

Economic

- Acknowledging that some activities have an operational or functional need to locate in these areas will result in reduced consenting costs and economic benefits for those activities.
- Clearly expressed expectations and strong guidance reduce uncertainty.
- Any economic growth and employment benefits are likely to be negligible.

Social

- The preservation and protection of the natural character of coastal and riparian margins and the provision for their enhancement will ensure that they will be retained for the community and future generations to enjoy, thereby having social wellbeing benefits

Cultural

- These provisions have cultural wellbeing benefits as the preservation and protection of natural character and the provisions for customary harvesting will help to provide for

	<p>an ongoing relationship with waterbodies and the sea, a taonga, and better enable tikanga Māori and kaitiakitanga.</p>
<p>Effectiveness and efficiency summary</p> <p>The proposed provisions are the most effective method of meeting the objectives relating to Natural Character. They will require the consideration of natural character values when assessing activities within coastal margins and riparian margins and propose the restriction of inappropriate use and development in these areas to achieve the objective.</p> <p>The proposed provisions are efficient in meeting the objectives for Natural Character. They provide for limited use and development within coastal and riparian margins and focus on the management of adverse effects on the natural character.</p> <p>The proposed provisions will allow for the assessment of subdivision, use and development to determine whether effects on the natural character of margins are acceptable or can be managed appropriately. The evaluation above confirms that the benefits of the proposed provisions outweigh the costs.</p>	
<p>Other reasonably practicable options for achieving the objective</p>	
<p>Status quo</p> <p>The limited status quo objectives relating to the protection of the natural character of coastal and riparian margins are not supported by policies and rules. The status quo provisions do not provide an adequate policy and rule framework for the protection of natural character of coastal and riparian margins, particularly when compared to the guidance given in the proposed option.</p>	

Only apply provisions to identified significant waterbodies

The identification of significant waterbodies and the application of the natural character provisions only to those identified and listed significant waterbodies has been considered. However, this approach does not give full effect to higher order guidance which refers to the protection of natural character in general, not only for waterbodies that meet certain significance criteria. Furthermore, this option carries a risk of not identifying all relevant waterbodies since there are no prescribed criteria for the identification of significant waterbodies.

Map coastal and riparian margins as an overlay, and applying policies and rules to that overlay

The mapping of all coastal and riparian margins has been considered but found to be impractical for the following reasons. A full district wide assessment of all waterbodies would be required to identify those waterbodies meeting the minimum requirements, including waterbodies on privately owned land. Furthermore, the width of rivers in particular may be subject to change, due to changes to river banks.

Include the riparian margins of wetlands

There are other provisions and methods within and outside of this Plan that sufficiently protect the wider values of wetlands, including their natural character. The Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region and the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater in particular manage vegetation removal, earthworks, natural hazards works, infrastructure and public access structures within 10 metres of natural wetlands. As such, the proposed Natural Character chapter does not duplicate provisions for these activities.

Overall evaluation

The proposed provisions are the most appropriate way to achieve the objectives because they are more effective and efficient in terms of protecting the natural character of coastal margins and riparian margins than the alternative options that have been considered.

The proposed provisions will achieve the objectives because:

- They ensure that the natural character of coastal and riparian margins is protected through policies and rules;
- The framework enables appropriate activities, including the restoration and enhancement of the natural character and customary harvesting, while managing potentially inappropriate activities; and
- The chapter and provisions (including definitions) align with the National Planning Standards and relevant higher order documents (Resource Management Act, New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region).

9 Summary

(137) This evaluation has been undertaken in accordance with section 32 of the RMA in order to identify the need, benefits and costs and the appropriateness of the proposal having regard to its effectiveness and efficiency relative to other means in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The evaluation demonstrates that this proposal is the most appropriate option as it:

- Best gives effect to higher order documents, including section 6 of the RMA, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, the Regional Policy Statement and the National Planning Standards;
- Is the most effective and efficient way to achieve the purpose of the Act and the strategic objectives of the Proposed District Plan;
- Reduces uncertainty when compared to the status quo and other options considered, through clear definitions supported by a balanced policy and rule framework; and
- Addresses the identified resource management issues by protecting the natural character of coastal and riparian margins through land use and development restrictions within these margins while providing for restoration activities, enabling mana whenua to continue traditional cultural practices and providing for the ongoing maintenance and operation of existing infrastructure.

10 Attachments

Appendix 1: Relevant provisions of National Policy Statements and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

Appendix 2: Relevant provisions of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (including Proposed RPS Change 1)

Appendix 3: Relevant provisions of the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region (including Proposed NRP Change 1)

Appendix 1: Relevant provisions of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

Appendix 1 – Full Wording of NZCPS Relevant Provisions

NZCPS	
Objective 2	<p><i>To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect natural features and landscape values through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>recognising the characteristics and qualities that contribute to natural character, natural features and landscape values and their location and distribution;</i> <i>identifying those areas where various forms of subdivision, use, and development would be inappropriate and protecting them from such activities; and</i> <i>encouraging restoration of the coastal environment.</i>
Objective 4	<p><i>To maintain and enhance the public open space qualities and recreation opportunities of the coastal environment by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>recognising that the coastal marine area is an extensive area of public space for the public to use and enjoy;</i> <i>maintaining and enhancing public walking access to and along the coastal marine area without charge, and where there are exceptional reasons that mean this is not practicable providing alternative linking access close to the coastal marine area; and</i> <i>recognising the potential for coastal processes, including those likely to be affected by climate change, to restrict access to the coastal environment and the need to ensure that public access is maintained even when the coastal marine area advances inland.</i>
Objective 6	<p><i>To enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety, through subdivision, use, and development, recognising that:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the protection of the values of the coastal environment does not preclude use and development in appropriate places and forms, and within appropriate limits;</i> • <i>some uses and developments which depend upon the use of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment are important to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities;</i> • <i>functionally some uses and developments can only be located on the coast or in the coastal marine area;</i> • <i>the coastal environment contains renewable energy resources of significant value;</i> • <i>the protection of habitats of living marine resources contributes to the social,</i> • <i>economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities;</i> • <i>the potential to protect, use, and develop natural and physical resources in the coastal marine area should not be compromised by activities on land;</i> • <i>the proportion of the coastal marine area under any formal protection is small and therefore management under the Act is an important means by which the natural resources of the coastal marine area can be protected; and</i> • <i>historic heritage in the coastal environment is extensive but not fully known, and vulnerable to loss or damage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.</i>
<p>Policy 4 Integration</p>	<p><i>Provide for the integrated management of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment, and activities that affect the coastal environment. This requires:</i></p> <p><i>(c) particular consideration of situations where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) subdivision, use, or development and its effects above or below the line of mean high water springs will require, or is likely to result in, associated use or development that crosses the line of mean high water springs; or</i> <i>(ii) public use and enjoyment of public space in the coastal environment is affected, or is likely to be affected; or</i> <i>(iii) development or land management practices may be affected by physical changes to the coastal environment or potential inundation from coastal hazards, including as a result of climate change; or</i> <i>(iv) land use activities affect, or are likely to affect, water quality in the coastal environment and marine ecosystems through increasing sedimentation; or</i> <i>(v) significant adverse cumulative effects are occurring, or can be anticipated</i>
<p>Policy 6: Activities in the coastal environment</p>	<p><i>(1) In relation to the coastal environment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) recognise that the provision of infrastructure, the supply and transport of energy including the generation and transmission of electricity, and the</i>

	<p><i>extraction of minerals are activities important to the social, economic and cultural well-being of people and communities;</i></p> <p><i>(b) consider the rate at which built development and the associated public infrastructure should be enabled to provide for the reasonably foreseeable needs of population growth without compromising the other values of the coastal environment;</i></p> <p><i>(c) encourage the consolidation of existing coastal settlements and urban areas where this will contribute to the avoidance or mitigation of sprawling or sporadic patterns of settlement and urban growth;</i></p> <p><i>(d) recognise tangata whenua needs for papakāinga³, marae and associated developments and make appropriate provision for them;</i></p> <p><i>(e) consider where and how built development on land should be controlled so that it does not compromise activities of national or regional importance that have a functional need to locate and operate in the coastal marine area;</i></p> <p><i>(f) consider where development that maintains the character of the existing built environment should be encouraged, and where development resulting in a change in character would be acceptable;</i></p> <p><i>(g) take into account the potential of renewable resources in the coastal environment, such as energy from wind, waves, currents and tides, to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;</i></p> <p><i>(h) consider how adverse visual impacts of development can be avoided in areas sensitive to such effects, such as headlands and prominent ridgelines, and as far as practicable and reasonable apply controls or conditions to avoid those effects;</i></p> <p><i>(i) set back development from the coastal marine area and other water bodies, where practicable and reasonable, to protect the natural character, open space, public access and amenity values of the coastal environment; and</i></p> <p><i>(j) where appropriate, buffer areas and sites of significant indigenous biological diversity, or historic heritage value.</i></p>
<p>Policy 13 Preservation of natural character</p>	<p><i>(1) To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and to protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:</i></p> <p><i>(a) avoid adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal environment with outstanding natural character; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment; including by:</i></p> <p><i>(c) assessing the natural character of the coastal environment of the region or district, by mapping or otherwise identifying at least areas of high natural character; and</i></p>

	<p>(d) ensuring that regional policy statements, and plans, identify areas where preserving natural character requires objectives, policies and rules, and include those provisions.</p> <p>(2) Recognise that natural character is not the same as natural features and landscapes or amenity values and may include matters such as:</p> <p>(a) natural elements, processes and patterns;</p> <p>(b) biophysical, ecological, geological and geomorphological aspects;</p> <p>(c) natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks;</p> <p>(d) the natural movement of water and sediment;</p> <p>(e) the natural darkness of the night sky;</p> <p>(f) places or areas that are wild or scenic;</p> <p>(g) a range of natural character from pristine to modified; and</p> <p>(h) experiential attributes, including the sounds and smell of the sea; and their context or setting.</p>
<p>Policy 14 Restoration of natural character</p>	<p>Promote restoration or rehabilitation of the natural character of the coastal environment, including by:</p> <p>(a) identifying areas and opportunities for restoration or rehabilitation;</p> <p>(b) providing policies, rules and other methods directed at restoration or rehabilitation in regional policy statements, and plans;</p> <p>(c) where practicable, imposing or reviewing restoration or rehabilitation conditions on resource consents and designations, including for the continuation of activities; and recognising that where degraded areas of the coastal environment require restoration or rehabilitation, possible approaches include:</p> <p>(i) restoring indigenous habitats and ecosystems, using local genetic stock where practicable; or</p> <p>(ii) encouraging natural regeneration of indigenous species, recognising the need for effective weed and animal pest management; or</p> <p>(iii) creating or enhancing habitat for indigenous species; or</p> <p>(iv) rehabilitating dunes and other natural coastal features or processes, including saline wetlands and intertidal saltmarsh; or</p> <p>(v) restoring and protecting riparian and intertidal margins; or</p> <p>(vi) reducing or eliminating discharges of contaminants; or</p> <p>(vii) removing redundant structures and materials that have been assessed to have minimal heritage or amenity values and when the removal is authorised by required permits, including an archaeological authority under the Historic Places Act 1993; or</p>

	<p><i>(viii) restoring cultural landscape features; or</i></p> <p><i>(ix) redesign of structures that interfere with ecosystem processes; or</i></p> <p><i>(x) decommissioning or restoring historic landfill and other contaminated sites which are, or have the potential to, leach material into the coastal marine area.</i></p>
<p>Policy 18 Public open space</p>	<p><i>Recognise the need for public open space within and adjacent to the coastal marine area, for public use and appreciation including active and passive recreation, and provide for such public open space, including by:</i></p> <p><i>(a) ensuring that the location and treatment of public open space is compatible with the natural character, natural features and landscapes, and amenity values of the coastal environment;</i></p> <p><i>(b) taking account of future need for public open space within and adjacent to the coastal marine area, including in and close to cities, towns and other settlements;</i></p> <p><i>(c) maintaining and enhancing walking access linkages between public open space areas in the coastal environment;</i></p> <p><i>(d) considering the likely impact of coastal processes and climate change so as not to compromise the ability of future generations to have access to public open space; and</i></p> <p><i>(e) recognising the important role that esplanade reserves and strips can have in contributing to meeting public open space needs.</i></p>
<p>Policy 19 Walking access</p>	<p><i>(1) Recognise the public expectation of and need for walking access to and along the coast that is practical, free of charge and safe for pedestrian use.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Maintain and enhance public walking access to, along and adjacent to the coastal marine area, including by:</i></p> <p><i>(a) identifying how information on where the public have walking access will be made publicly available;</i></p> <p><i>(b) avoiding, remedying or mitigating any loss of public walking access resulting from subdivision, use, or development; and</i></p> <p><i>(c) identifying opportunities to enhance or restore public walking access, for example where:</i></p> <p><i>(i) connections between existing public areas can be provided; or</i></p> <p><i>(ii) improving access would promote outdoor recreation; or</i></p> <p><i>(iii) physical access for people with disabilities is desirable; or</i></p> <p><i>(iv) the long-term availability of public access is threatened by erosion or sea level rise; or</i></p> <p><i>(v) access to areas or sites of historic or cultural significance is important; or</i></p>

	<p><i>(vi) subdivision, use, or development of land adjacent to the coastal marine area has reduced public access, or has the potential to do so.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Only impose a restriction on public walking access to, along or adjacent to the coastal marine area where such a restriction is necessary:</i></p> <p><i>(a) to protect threatened indigenous species; or</i></p> <p><i>(b) to protect dunes, estuaries and other sensitive natural areas or habitats;</i> <i>or</i></p> <p><i>(c) to protect sites and activities of cultural value to Māori; or</i></p> <p><i>(d) to protect historic heritage; or</i></p> <p><i>(e) to protect public health or safety; or</i></p> <p><i>(f) to avoid or reduce conflict between public uses of the coastal marine area and its margins; or</i></p> <p><i>(g) for temporary activities or special events; or</i></p> <p><i>(h) for defence purposes in accordance with the Defence Act 1990;</i></p> <p><i>(i) to ensure a level of security consistent with the purpose of a resource consent; or</i></p> <p><i>(j) in other exceptional circumstances sufficient to justify the restriction.</i></p> <p><i>(4) Before imposing any restriction under (3), consider and where practicable provide for alternative routes that are available to the public free of charge at all times.</i></p>
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Appendix 2: Relevant provisions of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (including Proposed RPS Change 1)

Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region

Regional Policy Statement	
Section 3.2 Coastal Environment (including public access)	
Objective 3	<p><i>Habitats and features in the coastal environment that have significant indigenous biodiversity values are protected; and</i></p> <p><i>Habitats and features in the coastal environment that have recreational, cultural, historical or landscape values that are significant are protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i></p>
Objective 4	<i>The natural character of the coastal environment is protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>
Objective 5	<i>Areas of the Coastal Environment where natural character has been degraded are restored and rehabilitated.</i>
Objective 7	<i>The integrity, functioning and resilience of physical and ecological processes in the Coastal Environment are protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>
Policy 3 Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment M	<p><i>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect high natural character in the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, development and/or use. Natural character should be assessed considering the following matters, with a site determined as having high natural character when the landscape is slightly modified or unmodified, the land-cover is dominated by indigenous vegetation and/or the vegetation cover is natural and there are no apparent buildings, structures or infrastructure:</i></p> <p><i>(a) The extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur, including:</i></p> <p><i>(i) natural elements: the products of natural processes – such as landforms, water forms, vegetation and land cover;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) natural processes: the ecological, climatic and geophysical processes that underlie the expression and character of the place, site or area;</i></p>

Regional Policy Statement

- (iii) *natural patterns: the visual expression or spatial distribution of natural elements which are, or which appear to be, a product of natural processes; and/or*
- (iv) *surroundings: the setting or context, such that the place, site or area contributes to an understanding of the natural history of the wider area.*
- (b) *The nature and extent of modifications to the place, site or area, including, but not limited to:*
 - (i) *physical alterations by people to the landscape, its landforms, waterforms, vegetation, land cover and to the natural patterns associated with these elements;*
 - (ii) *the presence, location, scale and density of buildings and structures, including infrastructure, whether appearing to be interconnected or isolated, and the degree of intrusiveness of these structures on the natural character of the place;*
 - (iii) *the temporal character of the modification – such as, whether it is fleeting or temporary, transitory, transitional or a permanent alteration to the character of the place, site or area; and/or*
 - (iv) *any existing influences or pressures on the dynamic ecological and geophysical processes contributing to the presence and patterns of natural elements, such that these may change and the natural elements and/or patterns may become threatened over time.*
- (c) *Social values: the place, site or area has meaning for a particular community or communities, including:*
 - (i) *sentimental: the natural character of a place, site or area has a strong or special association with a particular community; and/or*
 - (ii) *recognition: the place, site or area is held in high public esteem for its natural character value, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a particular community.*

Policy 4
Identifying the
landward
extent of the
coastal
environment
M

- District plans shall include policies and/or rules to identify the landward extent of the coastal environment using the following criteria:*
- (a) *area or landform dominated by coastal vegetation or habitat;*
 - (b) *any landform affected by active coastal processes, excluding tsunami;*
 - (c) *any landscapes or features, including coastal escarpments, that contribute to the natural character, visual quality or amenity value of the coast; and*
 - (d) *any site, structure, place or area of historic heritage value adjacent to, or connected with, the coastal marine area, which derives its heritage value from a coastal location.*

Regional Policy Statement

Policy 35
Preserving the natural character of the Coastal Environment

R

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to preserving the natural character of the coastal environment by:

- (a) minimising any adverse effects from point source and non-point source discharges, so that aquatic ecosystem health is safeguarded;*
- (b) protecting the values associated with estuaries and bays, beaches and dune systems, including the unique physical processes that occur within and between them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, so that healthy ecosystems are maintained;*
- (c) maintaining or enhancing amenity – such as, open space and scenic values – and opportunities for recreation and the enjoyment of the coast by the public;*
- (d) minimising any significant adverse effects from use and enjoyment of the coast by the public;*
- (e) safeguarding the life supporting capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems;*
- (f) maintaining or enhancing biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystems; and*
- (g) protecting scientific and geological features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.*

Policy 36
Managing effects on natural character in the coastal environment

R

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, a determination shall be made as to whether an activity may affect natural character in the coastal environment, and in determining whether an activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- (a) the nature and intensity of the proposed activity including:
 - (i) the functional need or operational requirement to locate within the coastal environment*
 - (ii) the opportunity to mitigate anticipated adverse effects of the activity**
- (b) the degree to which the natural character will be modified, damaged or destroyed including:
 - (i) the duration and frequency of any effect, and/or*
 - (ii) the magnitude or scale of any effect;*
 - (iii) the irreversibility of adverse effects on natural character values;*
 - (iv) whether the activity will lead to cumulative adverse effects on the natural character of the site/area.**
- (c) the resilience of the site or area to change;*
- (d) the opportunities to remedy or mitigate previous damage to the natural character;*
- (e) the existing land uses on the site.*

Regional Policy Statement	
<p>Policy 37 Safeguarding life supporting capacity of coastal ecosystems</p> <p>R</p>	<p><i>When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems by maintaining or enhancing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) any area within the intertidal or subtidal zone that contains unique, rare, distinctive or representative marine life or habitats;</i> <i>(b) areas used by marine mammals as breeding, feeding or haul out sites;</i> <i>(c) habitats in the coastal environment that are important during the vulnerable life stages of indigenous species;</i> <i>(d) habitats, corridors and routes important for preserving the range, abundance, and diversity of indigenous and migratory species;</i> <i>(e) any area that contain indigenous coastal ecosystems and habitats that are particularly vulnerable to modification – such as, estuaries, lagoons, coastal wetlands, dunelands, rocky reef systems and salt marshes; and</i> <i>(f) the integrity, functioning and resilience of physical and ecological processes.</i>
<p>Policy 38 Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment</p> <p>R</p>	<p><i>When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a District Plan, particular regard shall be given to whether the proposal is within the Coastal Environment using the following criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) any area or landform dominated by coastal vegetation or habitat;</i> <i>(b) any landform affected by active coastal processes, excluding tsunami;</i> <i>(c) any landscapes or features, including coastal escarpments, that contribute to the natural character, visual quality or amenity value of the coast; and</i> <i>(d) any site, structure, place or area of historic heritage value adjacent to, or connected with, the coastal marine area, which derives its heritage value from a coastal location</i>
<p>Policy 53 Public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers</p> <p>R</p>	<p><i>When considering an application for a subdivision consent, or a coastal or land use consent on public land, or a change, variation or review of a district plan to address subdivision or rezoning, particular regard shall be given to enhancing public access to, and along:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) areas of the coastal marine area, and lakes and rivers with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values identified in accordance with policy 21;</i> <i>(ii) areas of indigenous ecosystems and habitats, and areas with significant indigenous biodiversity values identified in accordance with policy 23;</i> <i>(iii) outstanding natural features and landscapes identified in accordance with policy 25;</i> <i>(iv) special amenity landscapes identified in accordance with policy 27;</i>

Regional Policy Statement	
	<p>(v) places, sites and areas with high natural character identified in accordance with policy 36; and</p> <p>(vi) the rivers and lakes identified in Table 15 of Appendix 1;</p> <p>(b) Wellington Harbour and Porirua (Onepoto Arm and Pāuatahanui Inlet) Harbour;</p> <p>Except where there is a need to protect:</p> <p>(c) sensitive indigenous habitats of species;</p> <p>(d) the health or safety of people;</p> <p>(e) sensitive cultural and historic heritage values; and/or</p> <p>(f) the integrity and security of regionally significant infrastructure.</p>
<p>Policy 64 Supporting a whole of catchment approach NR</p>	<p>Take a whole of catchment approach that recognises the inter-relationship between land and water, and support environmental enhancement initiatives to restore and enhance:</p> <p>(a) coastal features, ecosystems and habitats;</p> <p>(b) aquatic ecosystems and habitats; and</p> <p>(c) indigenous ecosystems and habitats.</p>
Section 3.4 Fresh water (including public access)	
<p>Objective 13</p>	<p>The region's rivers, lakes and wetlands support healthy functioning ecosystems.</p>
<p>Policy 15 Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance M</p>	<p>Regional and district plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that control earthworks and vegetation disturbance to minimise:</p> <p>(a) erosion; and</p> <p>(b) silt and sediment runoff into water, or onto land that may enter water, so that aquatic ecosystem health is safeguarded.</p>
<p>Policy 41 Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation disturbance R</p>	<p>When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a regional or district plan, particular regard shall be given to controlling earthworks and vegetation disturbance to minimise:</p> <p>(a) erosion; and</p> <p>(b) silt and sediment runoff into water, or onto or into land that may enter water, so that healthy aquatic ecosystems are sustained.</p>
<p>Policy 43 Protecting aquatic ecological</p>	<p>When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to:</p> <p>(a) maintaining or enhancing the functioning of ecosystems in the water body;</p> <p>(b) maintaining or enhancing the ecological functions of riparian margins;</p>

Regional Policy Statement	
<p>function of water bodies</p> <p>R</p>	<p>(c) <i>minimising the effect of the proposal on groundwater recharge areas that are connected to surface water bodies;</i></p> <p>(d) <i>maintaining or enhancing the amenity and recreational values of rivers and lakes, including those with significant values listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1;</i></p> <p>(e) <i>protecting the significant indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values of rivers and lakes, including those listed in Table 16 of Appendix 1;</i></p> <p>(f) <i>maintaining natural flow regimes required to support aquatic ecosystem health;</i></p> <p>(g) <i>maintaining fish passage;</i></p> <p>(h) <i>protecting and reinstating riparian habitat, in particular riparian habitat that is important for fish spawning;</i></p> <p>(i) <i>discouraging stock access to rivers, lakes and wetlands; and</i></p> <p>(j) <i>discouraging the removal or destruction of indigenous wetland plants in wetlands.</i></p>
Section 3.8 Natural Hazards	
Objective 19	<i>The risks and consequences to people, communities, their businesses, property and infrastructure from natural hazards and climate change effects are reduced.</i>
<p>Policy 29</p> <p>Avoiding inappropriate subdivision and development in areas at high risk from natural hazards</p> <p>M</p>	<p><i>Regional and district plans shall:</i></p> <p>(a) <i>identify areas at high risk from natural hazards; and</i></p> <p>(b) <i>include policies and rules to avoid inappropriate subdivision and development in those areas.</i></p>
Section 3.10 Resource management with tangata whenua	
Objective 27	<i>Mahinga kai and natural resources used for customary purposes, are maintained and enhanced, and these resources are healthy and accessible to tangata whenua.</i>
<p>Policy 49</p> <p>Recognising and providing for matters of significance to tangata whenua</p>	<p><i>When preparing a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, the following matters shall be recognised and provided for:</i></p> <p>(a) <i>the exercise of kaitiakitanga;</i></p> <p>(b) <i>mauri, particularly in relation to fresh and coastal waters;</i></p> <p>(c) <i>mahinga kai and areas of natural resources used for customary purposes; and</i></p>

Regional Policy Statement	
R	<i>(d) places, sites and areas with significant spiritual or cultural historic heritage value to tangata whenua.</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>policies which must be implemented in accordance with stated methods in the RPS</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>policies to which particular regard must be had when varying a district plan</i>
<i>NR</i>	<i>policies that outline non-regulatory actions to help achieve the objectives of the RPS</i>

Proposed RPS Change 1

RPS-PC1 – as notified	
3.1A Climate Change (New Chapter)	
<i>Objective CC.1</i>	<i>By 2050, the Wellington Region is a low-emission and climate-resilient region, where climate change mitigation and adaptation are an integral part of:</i> <i>(a) sustainable air, land, freshwater, and coastal management,</i> <i>(b) well-functioning urban environments and rural areas, and</i> <i>(c) well-planned infrastructure.</i>
<i>Policy CC.4</i> <i>Climate resilient urban areas – district and regional plans</i>	<i>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to provide for climate-resilient urban areas by providing for actions and initiatives described in Policy CC.14 which support delivering the characteristics and qualities of well-functioning urban environments.</i>
3.2 Coastal Environment	
<i>Policy 3</i> <i>Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment – district and regional plans</i>	<i>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect high natural character in the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, development and/or use. Natural character should be assessed considering the following matters, with a site determined as having high natural character when the landscape is slightly modified or unmodified, the land-cover is dominated by indigenous vegetation and/or the vegetation cover is natural and there are no apparent buildings, structures or infrastructure:</i> <i>(a) The extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur, including:</i> <i>(i) natural elements: the products of natural processes – such as landforms, waterforms water forms, vegetation and land cover;</i> <i>(ii) natural processes: the ecological, climatic and geophysical processes that underlie the expression and character of the place, site or area;</i> <i>(iii) natural patterns: the visual expression or spatial distribution of natural elements which are, or which appear to be, a product of natural processes; and/or</i> <i>(iv) surroundings: the setting or context, such that the place, site or area contributes to an understanding of the natural history of the wider area.</i> <i>(b) The nature and extent of modifications to the place, site or area, including, but not limited to:</i> <i>(i) physical alterations by people to the landscape, its landforms, water forms, vegetation, land cover and to the natural patterns associated with these elements;</i>

RPS-PC1 – as notified

- (ii) *the presence, location, scale and density of buildings and structures, including infrastructure, whether appearing to be interconnected or isolated, and the degree of intrusiveness of these structures on the natural character of the place;*
- (iii) *the temporal character of the modification – such as, whether it is fleeting or temporary, transitory, transitional or a permanent alteration to the character of the place, site or area; and/or*
- (iv) *any existing influences or pressures on the dynamic ecological and geophysical processes contributing to the presence and patterns of natural elements, such that these may change and the natural elements and/or patterns may become threatened over time.*
- ~~(c) *Social values: the place, site or area has meaning for a particular community or communities, including:*~~
 - ~~(i) *sentimental: the natural character of a place, site or area has a strong or special association with a particular community; and/or*~~
 - ~~(ii) *recognition: the place, site or area is held in high public esteem for its natural character value, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a particular community.*~~

3.4 Fresh Water

Policy 15
Managing
Minimising the
effects of
earthworks
and vegetation
disturbance –
district and
regional plans

Regional and district plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that control earthworks and vegetation disturbance to minimise the extent necessary to achieve the target attribute states for water bodies and freshwater ecosystems including the effects of these activities on the life-supporting capacity of soils, and to provide for mana whenua / tangata whenua and their relationship with their culture, land, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga.

~~(a) *erosion; and*~~

~~(b) *silt and sediment runoff into water, or onto land that may enter water, aquatic ecosystem health is safeguarded*~~

Policy FW.3
Urban
development
effects on
freshwater and
the coastal
marine area –
district plans

District plans shall include objectives, policies, and methods including rules, that give effect to Te Mana o te Wai and section 3.5(4) of the NPS-FM, and in doing so must:

- (a) Partner with mana whenua / tangata whenua in the preparation of district plans;*
- (b) Protect and enhance Māori freshwater values, including mahinga kai;*
- (c) Provide for mana whenua / tangata whenua and their relationship with their culture, land, water, wāhi tapu and other taonga;*
- (d) Incorporate the use of mātauranga Māori to ensure the effects of urban development are considered appropriately;*

RPS-PC1 – as notified

- (e) Adopt an integrated approach, ki uta ki tai, that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment to determine the location and form of urban development;*
- (f) Integrate planning and design of stormwater management to achieve multiple improved outcomes – amenity values, recreational, cultural, ecological, climate, vegetation retention;*
- (g) Consider the effects on freshwater and the coastal marine area of subdivision, use and development of land;*
- (h) Consider the use and development of land in relation to target attribute states and any limits set in a regional plan;*
- (i) Require that Water Sensitive Urban Design principles and methods are applied during consideration of subdivision, the extent of impervious surfaces and in the control of stormwater infrastructure;*
- (j) Require that urban development is located and designed to minimise the extent and volume of earthworks and to follow, to the extent practicable, existing land contours;*
- (k) Require that urban development is located and designed to protect and enhance gully heads, rivers, lakes, wetlands, springs, riparian margins and estuaries;*
- (l) Require riparian buffers for all waterbodies and avoid piping of rivers;*
- (m) Require hydrological controls to avoid adverse effects of runoff quantity (flows and volumes) and maintain, to the extent practicable, natural stream flows;*
- (n) Require efficient use of water;*
- (o) Manage land use and development in a way that will minimise the generation of contaminants, including building materials, and the extent of impervious surfaces;*
- (p) Consider daylighting of streams, where practicable; and*
- (q) Consider the effects of land use and development on drinking water sources.*

3.8 Natural Hazards

Objective 19 *The risks and consequences to people, communities, ~~their~~ businesses, property, ~~and~~ infrastructure and the environment from natural hazards and the effects of climate change effects are reduced minimised.*

Policy 29
Avoiding inappropriate Managing subdivision, use and
Regional and district plans shall:

- (a) identify areas affected by natural hazards; and*
- (b) use a risk-based approach to assess the consequences to subdivision, use and development from natural hazard and climate change impacts over a 100 year planning horizon;*

RPS-PC1 – as notified

***development
in areas at high
risk from
natural hazards
– district and
regional plans***

- (c) include objectives, policies and rules to manage subdivision, use and development in those areas where the hazards and risks are assessed as low to moderate; and*
- (d) include objectives, policies and rules to avoid subdivision, use or development and hazard sensitive activities where the hazards and risks are assessed as high to extreme.*

Appendix 3: Relevant provisions of the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region (including Proposed NRP Change 1)

Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region

Natural Resources Plan	
<i>Ki uta ki tai: mountains to the sea</i>	
Objective 01	<i>Air, land, fresh water bodies and the coastal marine area are managed as integrated and connected resources; ki uta ki tai – mountains to the sea.</i>
Objective 03	<i>Mauri particularly the mauri of fresh and coastal waters is sustained and, where it has been depleted, natural resources and processes are enhanced to replenish mauri.</i>
Objective 04	<i>The intrinsic values of fresh water and marine ecosystems are recognised and the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems is safeguarded.</i>
<i>Beneficial use and development</i>	
Objective 07	<i>The recreational values of the coastal marine area, rivers and lakes and their margins and natural wetlands are maintained and where appropriate for recreational purposes, is enhanced.</i>
<i>Māori relationships</i>	
Objective 012	<i>The relationships of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga are recognised and provided for, including:</i>

Natural Resources Plan	
	<p>(a) <i>maintaining and improving opportunities for Māori customary use of the coastal marine area, rivers, lakes and their margins and natural wetlands, and</i></p> <p>(b) <i>maintaining and improving the availability of mahinga kai species, in terms of quantity, quality and diversity, to support Māori customary harvest, and</i></p> <p>(c) <i>providing for the relationship of mana whenua with Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa, and including by maintaining or improving Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa so that the huanga identified in Schedule B are provided for, and</i></p> <p>(d) <i>protecting sites with significant mana whenua values from use and development that will adversely affect their values and restoring those sites to a state where their characteristics and qualities sustain the identified values.</i></p>
Objective O13	<i>Kaitiakitanga is recognised and mana whenua actively participate in planning and decision-making in relation to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources.</i>
Natural character, form and function	
Objective O14	<i>The natural character of the coastal marine area, natural wetlands, and rivers, lakes and their margins is preserved and protected from inappropriate use and development.</i>
Biodiversity, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai	
Objective O21	<i>Vegetated riparian margins are established, maintained or restored to enhance water quality, aquatic ecosystem health, mahinga kai and indigenous biodiversity of rivers, lakes, natural wetlands and the coastal marine area.</i>
Sites with significant values	
Objective O25	<i>Outstanding water bodies identified in Schedule A (outstanding water bodies) and their significant values are protected and restored. Where the significant values relate to biodiversity, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai, restoration is to a healthy functioning state including as defined by Tables 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8.</i>

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Policies

Policy P1
Ki uta ki tai and integrated catchment management

Air, land, fresh water bodies and the coastal marine area will be managed recognising ki uta ki tai by using the principles of integrated catchment management. These principles include:

- (a) decision-making using the catchment as the spatial unit, and*
- (b) applying an adaptive management approach to take into account the dynamic nature and processes of catchments, and*
- (c) coordinated management, with decisions based on best available information and improvements in technology and science, and*
- (d) taking into account the connected nature of resources and natural processes within a catchment, and*
- (e) recognising links between environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability of the catchment.*

Policy P7
Beneficial activities

The following activities are recognised as beneficial and generally appropriate:

- (a) activities for the purpose of restoring natural character, aquatic ecosystem health, mahinga kai, outstanding water bodies, sites with significant mana whenua values, and sites with significant indigenous biodiversity values, and*
- (b) activities that restore natural features such as beaches, dunes or wetlands that can buffer development from natural hazards, and*
- (c) day-lighting of piped streams, and*
- (d) removal of aquatic weeds, and pest plants and animal pests, and*
- (e) the establishment of river crossings (culverts and bridges) or fences and fence structures that will result in the exclusion of regular livestock access from a water body, and*
- (f) the retirement, fencing and planting and management of riparian margins, and*
- (g) the retirement of erosion prone land from livestock access, and*
- (h) maintenance, and use and upgrade of existing structures in the coastal marine area, natural wetlands and the beds of rivers*

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	<p>and lakes (noting that Policy P33 will apply with respect to fish passage), and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) removal of dangerous or derelict structures in the coastal marine area, natural wetlands and beds of lakes and rivers, and (j) structures necessary to provide for monitoring resource use or the state of the environment in the coastal marine area, natural wetlands and beds of lakes and rivers, and (k) activities necessary to maintain safe navigation, and (l) artworks that support and enhance public open space.
<p>Policy P8 Public access to and along the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers</p>	<p>Maintain and enhance the extent or quality of public access to and along the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers except where it is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) protect the values of estuaries, sites with significant mana whenua values identified in Schedule C (mana whenua), sites with significant historic heritage value identified in Schedule E (historic heritage) and sites with significant indigenous biodiversity value identified in Schedule F (indigenous biodiversity), or (b) protect public health and safety, or protect Wellington International Airport and Commercial Port Area security, or (c) provide for a temporary activity such as construction, a recreation or cultural event or stock movement, and where the temporary restrictions shall be for no longer than reasonably necessary before access is fully reinstated, and <p>with respect to (a) and (b), where it is necessary to permanently restrict or remove existing public access, the loss of public access shall be mitigated or offset by providing enhanced public access at a similar or nearby location to the extent reasonably practicable.</p>
<p>Policy P9 Contact Recreation and Māori customary use</p>	<p>Use and development shall avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on contact recreation and Māori customary use in fresh and coastal water, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) providing water quality and, in rivers, flows suitable for contact recreation and Māori customary use, and (b) managing activities to maintain or enhance contact recreation values in the beds of lakes and rivers, including by retaining

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	<p><i>existing swimming holes and maintaining access to existing contact recreation locations, and</i></p> <p><i>(c) encouraging improved access to suitable swimming and surfing locations, and</i></p> <p><i>(d) providing for the passive recreation and amenity values of fresh water bodies and the coastal marine area.</i></p>
<p>Policy P14 The National Grid</p>	<p><i>(a) Recognise and provide for the benefits of the National Grid.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Enable the operation, maintenance or upgrade of existing National Grid assets.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Where the National Grid has a functional need or operational requirement to locate in the coastal environment, lakes, rivers or wetlands, manage the adverse effects of its activities on natural character, natural features and natural landscapes, and indigenous biodiversity by:</i></p> <p><i>(i) Seeking to avoid adverse effects of new development or major upgrades on values of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. outstanding natural character,</i><i>2. natural attributes and characteristics of outstanding natural features and landscapes,</i><i>3. indigenous biodiversity values of the aquatic ecosystems, habitats, species and areas listed in Policy P38(a).</i> <p><i>(ii) Seeking to avoid significant adverse effects of new development or major upgrades on:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. other areas of natural character in the coastal environment,</i><i>2. natural attributes and characteristics of other natural features and landscapes in the coastal environment,</i><i>3. indigenous biodiversity values that meet the criteria in Policy P11(b) of the NZCPS.</i> <p><i>(iii) Having regard to the extent to which adverse effects have been avoided, remedied or mitigated:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. through the route, site and method selection process, and</i>

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	<p>2. <i>given the constraints imposed by the activity's operational requirements.</i></p> <p>(iv) <i>Recognising there may be some areas in the coastal environment where:</i></p> <p>1. <i>avoidance of adverse effects is required to protect the values, natural attributes and characteristics identified within (c)(i) 1, 2, and 3 above.</i></p> <p>2. <i>avoidance of significant adverse effects is required to protect the values, natural attributes and characteristics identified within (c)(ii) 1, 2, and 3 above.</i></p> <p>(d) <i>Remedy or mitigate any adverse effects from the operation, maintenance, upgrade, major upgrade or development of the National Grid which cannot be avoided.</i></p> <p><i>In the event of any conflict with any other objectives and policies in the Plan relating to indigenous biodiversity within Policy P38, natural character, and natural features and natural landscapes, Policy P14 takes precedence.</i></p>
<p>Policy P21 Exercise of kaitiakitanga</p>	<p><i>Kaitiakitanga shall be recognised and provided for by involving mana whenua in the assessment and decision-making processes associated with use and development of natural and physical resources including;</i></p> <p>(a) <i>managing activities in sites with significant mana whenua values listed in Schedule C (mana whenua) in accordance with tikanga and kaupapa Māori as exercised by mana whenua, and</i></p> <p>(b) <i>the identification and inclusion of mana whenua attributes and values in the kaitiaki information and monitoring strategy in accordance with Method M2, and</i></p> <p>(c) <i>identification of mana whenua values and attributes and their application through tikanga and kaupapa Māori in the maintenance and enhancement of mana whenua relationships with Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa.</i></p>
<p>Policy P23 Identification of outstanding/high natural character and</p>	<p>(a) <i>Identify in the Plan areas of outstanding and high natural character in the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area) and in wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins.</i></p>

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outstanding natural features and landscapes

(b) Identify in the Plan outstanding natural features and landscapes within the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area) and in wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins.

(c) Until areas of high and outstanding natural character and outstanding natural features and landscapes in the coastal environment are mapped in this Plan, as assessment may be required as to whether an activity is within:

(i) An area of high or outstanding natural character

(ii) An outstanding natural feature or landscape.

The need for such an assessment will depend on the level or scale of potential effects and the sensitivity of the receiving environment and shall take into account Policies 3 and 24 of the Regional Policy Statement. Any assessment shall be commensurate with the scale and significance of the effects that the use or development may have on the environment.

Note: Refer to Method M31.

**Policy P24
Preserving and protecting natural character from inappropriate use and development**

To preserve natural character and protect it from inappropriate use and development by:

(a) avoiding adverse effects of activities on the natural character of areas within the coastal environment that have outstanding natural character, and

(b) avoiding significant adverse effects and avoid remedy and mitigate other adverse effects of activities on the natural character of areas within the coastal environment that do not have outstanding natural character, and

(c) outside the coastal environment, avoiding and, where avoidance is not practicable, remedying or mitigating adverse effects of activities on the natural character of wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins that have outstanding natural character, provided that the outstanding natural character of the area taken as a whole is retained, and

(d) outside the coastal environment, avoiding and, where avoidance is not practicable, remedying or mitigating significant adverse effects of activities on the natural character of wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins that have high natural

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	<p>character, provided that the high natural character of the area taken as a whole is retained, and</p> <p>(e) outside the coastal environment, avoiding, remedying or mitigating other adverse effects of activities on the natural character of wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins that are not addressed under (c) or (d) of Policy P24.</p>
<p>Policy P29 Natural buffers</p>	<p>Provide for the restoration or enhancement of natural features such as beaches, dunes or wetlands that buffer development from natural hazards and ensure the adverse effects of use and development on them are minimised avoided, remedied, or mitigated.</p>
<p>Policy P36 Restoring Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana</p>	<p>The ecological health and significant values of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana will be restored including by:</p> <p>(a) managing activities, erosion-prone land, and riparian margins to reduce sedimentation rates and pollutant inputs, to meet the water quality, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai objectives set out in Tables 3.4 to 3.8, and</p> <p>(b) undertaking planting and pest management programmes in harbour and lake habitats and ecosystems.</p>
<p>Policy P37 Adverse effects on outstanding water bodies</p>	<p>The adverse effects of use and development on outstanding water bodies and their significant values identified in Schedule A (outstanding water bodies) shall be avoided, unless there is a functional need for operation, maintenance or upgrade of existing Regionally Significant Infrastructure in which case adverse effects of activities shall be managed by:</p> <p>(a) avoiding adverse effects where practicable, and</p> <p>(b) where adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimising them, and</p> <p>(c) where adverse effects cannot be minimised, they are remedied where practicable, and</p> <p>(d) where residual adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimised, or remedied, offsetting is provided where possible.</p> <p>Proposals for biodiversity mitigation and biodiversity offsetting will be assessed against the principles listed in Schedule G1 (biodiversity mitigation), and Schedule G2 (biodiversity offsetting). A</p>

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	<p><i>precautionary approach shall be used when assessing the potential for adverse effects on outstanding water bodies.</i></p> <p><i>Where more than minor adverse effects on outstanding water bodies cannot be avoided, minimised, remedied or redressed through biodiversity offsets, the activity is inappropriate.</i></p>
<p>Policy P54 Identified Significant surf breaks</p>	<p><i>Use and development in and adjacent to the significant surf breaks identified in Schedule K (surf breaks) shall be managed by minimising avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects on the recreational qualities and values of the surf breaks.</i></p> <p><i>Natural character in relation to those surf breaks will be managed in accordance with Policy P24.</i></p>
<p>Policy P109 Management of riparian margins</p>	<p><i>Maintain or restore water quality, aquatic ecosystem health, mahinga kai and natural character, and reduce the amount of contaminants entering surface water bodies, through the management of riparian margins including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) the exclusion or restricted access of livestock likely to affect riparian margins or water quality,]</i> <i>(b) set-back distances from surface water bodies for some land use activities including earthworks, vegetation clearance, cultivation and break-feeding,</i> <i>(c) encouraging the planting of appropriate riparian vegetation, and</i> <i>(d) the control of pest plants and animals.</i>
<p>Policy P139 Functional need and efficient use</p>	<p><i>Use and development in the coastal marine area shall:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) have a functional need, or</i> <i>(b) have an operational requirement to locate within the coastal marine area, and no reasonable or practicable alternative to locating in the coastal marine area, or</i> <i>(c) be use or redevelopment of, or on, existing structures in the Lambton Harbour Area; or</i> <i>(d) for any other activity, it shall have no reasonable or practicable alternative to locating in the coastal marine area, and</i> <i>(e) be made available for public or multiple use unless a restriction on public access is necessary, and</i>

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	<p>(f) result in the removal of structures once redundant, except where operational requirements prevent this within the Cook Strait Cable Protection Zone and adjacent foreshore, and</p> <p>(g) concentrate in locations where similar use and development already exists where practicable, and</p> <p>(i) in respect of (a), (b) and (d) above, only use the minimum area necessary, and</p> <p>(j) in respect of (c), makes efficient use of any occupied space</p>
Policy P140 Recreational values	The adverse effects of use and development in the coastal marine area on recreational values shall be managed by providing for a diverse range of recreational opportunities while avoiding conflicts and safety issues.
Policy P141 Public open space values and visual amenity	<p>The adverse effects of new use and development on public open space and visual amenity viewed within, to and from the coastal marine area shall be avoided, remedied or mitigated by:</p> <p>(a) having particular regard to any relevant provisions contained in any bordering territorial authorities' proposed and/or operative district plan, and</p> <p>(b) managing use and development to be of a scale, location, density and design which is compatible with the natural character, natural features and landscapes and amenity values of the coastal environment and the functional needs, operational requirements and locational constraints, of the Commercial Port Area and the Wellington International Airport, and</p> <p>(b) taking account of the future need for public open space in the coastal marine area.</p>
Policy P154 Motor vehicles on the foreshore	District and city councils may restrict the use of motor vehicles on the foreshore, with the exception of vehicles associated with: (a) (b) (c) (d) surf lifesaving operations, or emergency situations, including (but not restricted to) firefighting, oil spills, rescue operations, salvage of vessels and marine mammal strandings, or local authority activities, or the development, operation, maintenance and upgrade of Regionally Significant Infrastructure.
Policy P155	The use of motor vehicles on the foreshore and seabed in a site identified in Schedule C (mana whenua), Schedule E4

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Motor vehicles in sites with significant value	<i>(archaeological sites), Schedule F2c (birds-coastal), Schedule F4 (coastal sites), Schedule F5 (coastal habitats) shall be avoided, except when required for surf lifesaving, emergency, law enforcement, Department of Conservation, local authority or Regionally Significant Infrastructure purposes.</i>

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Policy P36 Restoring Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana	<p><i>The ecological health and significant values of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour (Port Nicholson) and Wairarapa Moana will be restored including by:</i></p> <p><i>(a) managing activities, erosion-prone land, and riparian margins to reduce sedimentation rates and pollutant inputs, to meet the water quality, aquatic ecosystem health and mahinga kai objectives set out in Tables 3.4 to 3.8, and</i></p> <p><i>(b) undertaking planting and pest management programmes in harbour and lake habitats and ecosystems.</i></p>
8 Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara	
<u>Objective WH.O2</u>	<p><u><i>The health and wellbeing of Te Whanganui-a-Tara's groundwater, rivers and natural wetlands and their margins are on a trajectory of measurable improvement towards wai ora, such that by 2040:</i></u></p> <p><u><i>(a) water quality, habitats, water quantity and ecological processes are at a level where the state of aquatic life is maintained, or meaningful progress has been made towards improvement where degraded, and</i></u></p> <p><u><i>(b) the hydrology of rivers and erosion processes, including bank stability are improved and sources of sediment are reduced to a more natural level, and</i></u></p> <p><u><i>(c) the extent and condition of indigenous riparian vegetation is increased and improved, and</i></u></p> <p><u><i>(d) the diversity, abundance, composition, structure and condition of mahinga kai species and communities are increased, and</i></u></p>

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	<p><u>(e) huanga of mahinga kai and Māori customary use for locations identified in Schedule B (Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa) are maintained or improved, and</u></p> <p><u>(f) mana whenua can safely connect with freshwater and enjoy a wider range of customary and cultural practices, including mahinga kai gathering, and</u></p> <p><u>(g) mana whenua and communities can safely connect with freshwater and enjoy a wider range of activities, including swimming and food gathering, and</u></p> <p><u>(h) freshwater of a suitable quality is available for the health needs of people.</u></p>
<p><u>Objective</u> <u>WH.O5</u></p>	<p><u>By 2040 the health and wellbeing of the Parangarahu Lakes and associated natural wetlands are on a trajectory of improvement towards wai ora, such that:</u></p> <p><u>(a) water quality, habitats, water quantity and ecological processes are at a level where the state of aquatic life is maintained, or meaningfully improved where degraded, to achieve the target attribute states in Table 8.2, and</u></p> <p><u>(b) the lakes are not impacted by submerged invasive plants and support healthy native aquatic plants, and</u></p> <p><u>(c) the lakes function as a productive nursery with breeding habitats of indigenous species, and</u></p> <p><u>(d) riparian vegetation is present around the perimeter of each lake, and</u></p> <p><u>(e) the diversity, abundance, composition, structure and condition of mahinga kai species and communities has increased, and</u></p> <p><u>(f) mana whenua can safely connect with and enjoy waterbodies to undertake a wider range of customary and cultural practices, including mahinga kai gathering, and</u></p> <p><u>(g) huanga of mahinga kai and Māori customary use for locations identified in Schedule B (Ngā Taonga Nui a Kiwa) are maintained or improved.</u></p>
8.2.1 Ecosystem health and water quality	
<p><u>Policy WH.PI:</u> <u>Improvement</u></p>	<p><u>Aquatic ecosystem health will be improved by:</u></p>

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of aquatic ecosystem health

- (a) progressively reducing the load or concentration of contaminants, particularly sediment, nutrients, pathogens and metals, entering water, and
- (b) restoring habitats, and
- (c) enhancing the natural flow regime of rivers and managing water flows and levels, including where there is interaction of flows between surface water and groundwater, and
- (d) co-ordinating and prioritising work programmes in catchments that require changes to land use activities that impact on water.

Policy WH.P2 Management of activities to achieve target attribute states and coastal water objectives

- Target attribute states and coastal water objectives will be achieved by regulating discharges and land use activities in the Plan, and non-regulatory methods, including Freshwater Action Plans, by:
- (a) prohibiting unplanned greenfield development and for other greenfield developments minimising the contaminants and requiring financial contributions as to offset adverse effects from residual stormwater contaminants, and
 - (b) encouraging redevelopment activities within existing urban areas to reduce the existing urban contaminant load, and
 - (c) imposing hydrological controls on urban development and stormwater discharges to rivers
 - (d) requiring a reduction in contaminant loads from urban wastewater and stormwater networks, and
 - (e) stabilising stream banks by excluding livestock from waterbodies and planting riparian margins with indigenous vegetation, and
 - (f) requiring the active management of earthworks, forestry, cultivation, and vegetation clearance activities, and
 - (g) soil conservation treatment, including revegetation with woody vegetation, of land with high erosion risk, and
 - (h) requiring farm environment plans (including Freshwater Farm Plans) to improve farm practices that impact on freshwater.

8.2.4 Rural land use and earthworks

Policy WH.P21: Managing diffuse discharges of

Reduce diffuse discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus and Escherichia coli from farming activities by:

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<p><u>nutrients and Escherichia coli from farming activities</u></p>	<p><u>(a) capping, minimising and reducing diffuse discharges from individual rural properties in accordance with WH.P22, WH.P23 and WH.P24, and</u></p> <p><u>(b) applying target attributes states as limits on rural land use change and on the intensification of farming activities, and</u></p> <p><u>(c) progressively establishing and maintaining woody vegetation on highest erosion risk land (pasture) as a limit on land use, and</u></p> <p><u>(d) excluding stock from water bodies as a limit on land use, and</u></p> <p><u>(e) supporting good management practice through Wellington Regional Council's environmental restoration programmes.</u></p>
<p><u>Policy WH.P27: Promoting stream shading</u></p>	<p><u>Contribute to the achievement of aquatic ecosystem health by promoting the progressive shading of streams where nutrient reductions alone will be insufficient to achieve the periphyton target attribute states in Table 8.4.</u></p>
<p><u>Policy WH.P29: Management of earthworks</u></p>	<p><u>The risk of sediment discharges from earthworks shall be managed by:</u></p> <p><u>(a) requiring retention of soil and sediment on the land using good management practices for erosion and sediment control measures that are appropriate to the scale and nature of the activity, and in accordance with the GWRC Erosion and Sediment Control Guideline for the Wellington Region (2021), for the duration of the land disturbance, and</u></p> <p><u>(b) limiting the amount of land disturbed at any time, and</u></p> <p><u>(c) designing and implementing earthworks with knowledge of the existing environmental site constraints, specific engineering requirements and implementation of controls to limit the discharge of sediment to receiving environments, and</u></p> <p><u>(d) requiring erosion and sediment control measures to be installed prior to, and during earthworks and ensuring those controls remain in place and are maintained until the land is stabilised against erosion.</u></p>
<p><u>Policy WH.P30: Discharge standard for earthworks</u></p>	<p><u>The discharge of sediment from earthworks over an area greater than 3,000m² shall:</u></p> <p><u>(a) not exceed 100g/m³ at the point of discharge where the discharge is to a surface water body, coastal water, stormwater network or to an artificial watercourse, except that when the discharge is to a river with background total suspended solids that exceed 100g/m³, the</u></p>

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	<p><u>discharge shall not, after the zone of reasonable mixing, decrease the visual clarity in the receiving water by more than:</u></p> <p><u>(i) 20% in River class 1 and in any river identified as having high macroinvertebrate community health in Schedule F1 (rivers/lakes), or</u></p> <p><u>(ii) 30% in any other river, and</u></p> <p><u>(b) be managed using good management practices in accordance with the GWRC Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for the Wellington Region (2021), to achieve the discharge standard in (a), and</u></p> <p><u>(c) be monitored by a suitably qualified person, and the results reported to the Wellington Regional Council.</u></p>
<p><u>Policy WH.P31:</u> <u>Winter shut down of earthworks</u></p>	<p><u>Earthworks over 3,000m² in area shall:</u></p> <p><u>(a) be shut down from 1st June to 30th September each year, and</u></p> <p><u>(b) prior to shut down, be stabilised against erosion and have sediment controls in place using good management practices in accordance with the GWRC Erosion and Sediment Control Guideline for the Wellington Region (2021).</u></p>