

District Growth and Development

Issues

This chapter contains overarching objectives and policies in relation to growth and development in the District. The Urban Form and Development (UFD) chapter contains more detailed objectives and policies in relation to growth and development in *Urban Areas*.

The [National Policy Statement on Urban Development \(2020\)](#) (NPS-UD) mandates that Council ensure there is enough residential development capacity to meet anticipated housing demand over the next 30 years. The residential development capacity requirement is known as the housing bottom line.

To comply with the NPS-UD, the Council must provide sufficient development capacity to meet both the projected residential demand, plus a competitiveness margin. This margin is set at 20% for the short to medium term and 15% for the long term. The housing bottom lines for the District are as follows:

- Short-Medium Term (2024–2034): 6,449 dwellings
- Long Term (2034–2054): 10,277 dwellings

These housing bottom lines were established through the [Whangārei Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment 2024](#).

The objectives and policies seek to address significant resource management issues for the Whangārei District including the following:

- Managing residential growth and development.
- Managing commercial, industrial and open space growth and development.
- Managing existing and future development in areas subject to *natural hazards* and environmental risks.
- Protection of natural heritage (landscapes, biodiversity and natural features).
- Issues of significance to *mana whenua*.
- Protection of built and cultural heritage.
- Fragmentation of the rural environment.
- The protection of and efficient development, operation and maintenance of infrastructure.
- The protection of strategic business and industry.
- The provision of land for open space and recreation.

The objectives and policies of this chapter guide decision making at the strategic level and apply in addition to the objectives and policies in other parts of the District Plan.

Objectives

DGD-01 Range of Zones

Provide for differing character and *amenity values* in a range of zones with differing expectations.

DGD-02 Rural Areas

Protect the range of *amenity values* and characteristics in the *Rural Area*.

DGD-03 Growth

Accommodate future growth by:

1. Enabling urban consolidation and intensification of Whangārei City, the Marsden City Precinct, existing Local Centre and Settlement Zones; while
2. Avoiding urban development sprawling into productive *rural areas*.

DGD-04 Historic Heritage and Sense of place

1. Identify and protect historic heritage resources.
2. Maintain and enhance other characteristics, qualities and features that are valued by the community and contribute to the District's unique identity and sense of place.

DGD-05 Incompatible Activities and Reverse Sensitivity

Avoid conflict between incompatible land use activities from new *subdivision*, use and development.

DGD-06 Indigenous Biodiversity

Identify and protect the values and attributes of indigenous biological diversity (Significant Natural Areas) and maintain the extent and diversity of other indigenous biodiversity.

DGD-07 On-site and Reticulated Infrastructure

Provide efficient and effective on-site and *reticulated* infrastructure in a sustainable manner and coordinate new land use and development with the establishment or extension of infrastructure and services.

DGD-O8 Cultural Values

Ensure that growth and development takes into account Māori cultural values.

DGD-O9 Land Use and Transport Planning

Maintain and enhance accessibility and safety for communities and integrate land use and transport planning.

DGD-O10 Hazards

Minimise the risks and impacts of *natural hazard* events, including the influence of climate change, on people, property and infrastructure.

Policies

DGD-P1 Range of Zones

To manage effects on character and *amenity values* by providing for a range of zones with differing expectations.

DGD-P2 Incompatible Land Uses and Reverse Sensitivity

To manage the establishment and location of new activities and expansion of existing activities to avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses.

DGD-P3 Natural Hazards

To manage the risk of *natural hazards* to people and property by:

1. Assessing the risk of coastal and flood hazards on *subdivision*, use and development over a 100-year timeframe.
2. Ensuring new *subdivision*, use and development does not increase the risk from coastal and flood hazards.
3. Ensuring measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change are provided for in development, growth and transport planning.
4. Ensuring that the risk of *natural hazards* is assessed when zoning new areas of land for more intensive development.
5. Avoiding locating regionally significant and critical infrastructure within identified hazard zones unless there is a functional or *operational need* for its location.

DGD-P4 Amenity

To ensure that the scale and nature of new land use activities are commensurate with the anticipated level of amenity and stated issues and objectives for the relevant zone.

DGD-P5 Sustainable Infrastructure

To avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the sustainable provision of infrastructure by ensuring that all *subdivision* and land use is served by infrastructure and services that are appropriately designed, located and constructed.

DGD-P6 Urban Expansion

To avoid inappropriate urban expansion by:

1. Ensuring that urban development occurs:
 - a. In a planned and coordinated manner.
 - b. Where appropriate infrastructure and services can be provided, including a range of transport choices.
2. Requiring new urban development to be consolidated within or adjacent to *Urban Areas* and rural settlements.
3. Avoiding urban development sprawling into the *Rural Area*.

DGD-P7 Transport System

To enable a safe, effective, efficient and accessible transport system by:

1. Integrating and coordinating transport and land use planning.
2. Improving access to alternative transport options.
3. Enhancing walkability and cycle connections within urban neighbourhoods and rural settlements.
4. Concentrating more intensive urban development in close proximity to public *transport infrastructure*.

DGD-P8 District-Wide Matters

To identify and protect biodiversity, outstanding natural features and landscapes, the natural character of the coastal environment, heritage features, and Sites of Significance to Māori from inappropriate subdivision and development by mapping District-Wide Matters, and applying rules to protect the values, attributes, characteristics and qualities of these areas.

DGD-P9 Special Purpose Zones

To provide for specific activities or areas where special circumstances apply by identifying and zoning areas as Special Purpose Zones.

DGD-P10 Minor Residential Units

To provide for a greater range of housing choices in specified zones by enabling *minor residential units* only where they are ancillary to the *principal residential unit* on site based on the size, design, and location of the *residential units* and their supporting *infrastructure*.

Open Space and Recreation Provisions

Objectives

DGD-OSR-01 Sufficient Open Space

Provide sufficient quality open space for the social and cultural well-being of a growing population.

DGD-OSR-02 Range of Open Space

Provide a range of open space land in the District to enable recreational, cultural, community, conservation, and educational use.

Policies

DGD-OSR-P1 Open Space Linkages

To increase the functionality and effectiveness of the open space network by ensuring that linkages (including walking and cycling linkages) are created between new and existing areas of open space through *subdivision* design.

DGD-OSR-P2 Range of Open Space and Recreation Zones

To identify and manage the range of *Open Space and Recreation Zones* to provide for active sport and recreation, conservation and open space.

DGD-OSR-P3 Natural Open Space Zone

To protect and enhance natural, ecological, landscape, cultural and heritage values of the District by applying the Natural Open Space Zone in locations that are primarily publicly owned and operated and:

1. Are categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association Categories: unmanaged natural park areas, unmanaged recreation and ecological linkages, and unmanaged green space.

2. That play a special role in educating residents and visitors and providing recreation opportunities.
3. Where generally, the natural elements and unmodified nature of the area gives it a sense of wilderness and isolation.
4. That help to preserve and define Whangārei's natural character and provide a connection to our natural heritage.
5. Where the management emphasis for the area is the conservation and protection of natural resources.
6. Where levels of development, facilities and management range from none to medium.
7. Where there are minimal *buildings* and *structures*, ensuring a largely undeveloped area and open expanse of land.

DGD-OSR-P4 Sport and Active Recreation Zone

To provide for a range of sport and active recreation opportunities by applying the Sport and Active Recreation Zone in locations that are primarily publicly owned and operated and:

1. Are categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association Park Categories: sport and recreation, civic spaces, public gardens, and cultural heritage.
2. Are primarily used for organised activities including events and indoor and outdoor organised sports.
3. Contain cultural and historical *buildings* and *major structures* and provide for heritage conservation.
4. Are used for commemoration, mourning and remembrance.
5. Contain gardens developed to a high standard with collections of plants and *landscaping* for relaxation, contemplation, education, amenity/intrinsic value.
6. Are used by local, district and regional population and visitors, includes venues for regional and national events.
7. That have a medium to high levels of development, facilities and management.
8. That contain *buildings* and *structures* to support active recreation, and or civic recreation, such as grandstands, sports and community *buildings*, toilets and changing facilities.

DGD-OSR-P5 Open Space Zone

To establish a network of quality open spaces providing for informal recreation by applying the Open Space Zone in locations that are primarily publicly owned and operated and:

1. Are categorised as the following New Zealand Reserve Association Park Categories: neighbourhood green space, managed recreation and ecological linkages, and managed natural park areas.
2. Are primarily used for outdoor informal recreation and community use.
3. Are used predominately by local residents.
4. Where levels of development, facilities and management range from low to medium.
5. Feature limited *buildings* and *structures* that support the use of the public space, such as barbeques and picnic facilities, playgrounds, skate parks, informal hard courts, shelters, toilet and changing facilities, and small-scale community *buildings*.
6. Where expected social interaction within the area is medium levels.

Regionally Significant Infrastructure Provisions

Objectives

DGD-RSI-O1 Identification and Protection

Regionally significant infrastructure is identified and protected.

DGD-RSI-O2 Recognised Benefits

The benefits of *regionally significant infrastructure* are recognised and provided for.

DGD-RSI-O3 Adverse Effects

Avoid, remedy, mitigate or offset adverse effects arising from the development, operation, maintenance, and upgrading of *regionally significant infrastructure*.

Policies

DGD-RSI-P1 Benefits of Regionally Significant Infrastructure

To recognise and provide for the social, economic and cultural benefits of *regionally significant infrastructure* by enabling its ongoing operation, maintenance, development, and upgrading where adverse effects are managed.

DGD-RSI-P2 New Regionally Significant Infrastructure

Manage adverse effects created by new network utilities and *regionally significant infrastructure* by avoiding, remedying, mitigating, or offsetting (where offered or agreed to), while taking into account the following matters:

1. Benefits of the activity.
2. Any recognition within a national policy statement.
3. Constraints that limit the design and location of the activity.
4. Whether the proposal is a *regionally significant infrastructure* lifeline utility which meets the foreseeable needs of Northland.
5. The extent to which the adverse effects of the activity can be practicably reduced including any positive effects on the subject *site* or elsewhere (provided that the positive effects accrue to the community of interest and/or resource affected).
6. Any monitoring programme for identified significant adverse effects with uncertain outcomes which can be addressed by an adaptive management regime where the infrastructure assists in achieving efficient land use.
7. Whether the infrastructure proposal helps to achieve consolidated development and efficient use of land.
8. Ensuring damage to or loss of the relationship of iwi with ancestral sites, sites of significance, *wāhi tapu*, customary activities and/or *taonga* is avoided or otherwise agreed to by the affected iwi or hapū.

DGD-RSI-P3 Managing Adverse Effects of Existing Regionally Significant Infrastructure

To manage adverse effects created by the operation, maintenance and upgrading of existing network utilities and *regionally significant infrastructure* by:

1. Allowing adverse effects that are not significant while the maintenance or upgrading is being undertaken.
2. Allowing any adverse effects that, after the conclusion of the maintenance or upgrading, are the same or similar to the adverse effects that existed before the maintenance or upgrading was undertaken.
3. Avoiding, remedying, mitigating, or offsetting (where offered or agreed to) adverse effects, if DGD-P17.1 or DGD-P17.2 do not apply.
4. Taking into account the following matters:
 - a. Benefits of the activity.

- b. Any recognition within a national policy statement.
- c. Constraints that limit the design and location of the activity.
- d. Whether the proposal is a *regionally significant infrastructure* lifeline utility which meets the foreseeable needs of Northland.
- e. The extent to which the adverse effects of the activity can be practicably reduced including any positive effects on the subject *site* or elsewhere (provided that the positive effects accrue to the community of interest and/or resource affected).
- f. Any monitoring programme for identified significant adverse effects with uncertain outcomes which can be addressed by an adaptive management regime where the infrastructure assists in achieving efficient land use.
- g. Whether the infrastructure proposal helps to achieve consolidated development and efficient use of land.

DGD-RSI-P4 Airport Zone

To recognise and provide for Whangārei Airport as *regionally significant infrastructure* by applying the Airport Zone in locations where there is a *functional need* to support airport operations.

DGD-RSI-P5 Hospital Zone

To recognise the regionally significant nature of the Whangārei *Hospital* and provide for the wide range of existing and future medical facilities and supported activities by applying the Hospital Zone in the locations of Whangārei Hospital and associated medical facilities.

Rural Area Provisions

Objectives

DGD-RA-O1 Productive Functions

Protect the long-term viability of the productive functions of rural land in a manner that delivers economic benefit and sustains the environment.

DGD-RA-O2 Rural Area Land Uses

Provide for a range of appropriate land uses in the *Rural Area*, including *rural production activities*, residential, rural residential, rural lifestyle, commercial, industrial, *strategic rural industries*, activities ancillary to *farming or plantation forestry* and *mineral extraction* activities in appropriate areas.

DGD-RA-03 Viability of Productive Functions

Avoid adverse effects on the viability of the productive functions of rural land and regionally significant *mineral* resources in the *Rural Area* resulting from ad hoc or scattered residential, rural residential and rural lifestyle *subdivision* and development.

DGD-RA-04 Rural Living

Consolidate rural lifestyle *subdivision* and development by zoning appropriate areas as Rural Lifestyle Zone.

DGD-RA-05 Rural Residential Development

Provide for areas of rural residential development on the fringe of Whangārei City while ensuring that these areas can accommodate future urban growth.

DGD-RA-06 Rural Settlements

Provide for managed growth of rural settlements.

Policies

DGD-RA-P1 Residential Activities

To protect *highly versatile soils* from activities which would materially reduce the potential for soil-based *rural production activities*.

DGD-RA-P2 Development Scale and Design

To manage the cumulative effects of on-site *wastewater discharge* in the Settlement Zone Residential, Rural Lifestyle Zone and Future Urban Zone by requiring site specific design and any other evidence and/or mitigation measures necessary to demonstrate that the effects of *wastewater* disposal can be adequately addressed.

DGD-RA-P3 Rural Production Zone

To identify areas as Rural Production Zone to provide for the protection of productive rural land resources to enable a diverse range of *rural production activities* and activities that support rural production activities and rural communities, and to maintain biodiversity and rural character, where:

1. There is a prevalence of:
 - a. Existing production land use.
 - b. Significant ecological and biodiversity values, such as indigenous bush and *wetlands*.
2. Larger land parcels are prevalent and the area is not compromised by significant clusters of rural lifestyle built development.

3. An area is not:
 - a. Located on the fringe of Whangārei City between the urban and *rural zones*.
 - b. Suitable to provide for the future *reticulated* expansion of the Whangārei City *Residential Zones*.
4. The criteria for the Future Urban Zone and the Rural Lifestyle Zone are not met.

DGD-RA-P4 Rural Lifestyle Zone

To identify areas as Rural Lifestyle Zone to provide for a variety of rural lifestyle opportunities in the District without materially reducing the potential of the *Rural Area* for productive use of land by providing for the Rural Lifestyle Zone in locations that:

1. Have an existing average *site* density between 2 and 4ha.
2. Demonstrate a predominantly rural living character.
3. Are not identified as hazard prone area.
4. Are not identified as an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, Significant *Indigenous Vegetation* or Habitat, or an Outstanding Natural Character Area.
5. Do not gain direct access from an unsealed through *road* with significant volumes of traffic.
6. Are located within close proximity to community facilities, such as schools.
7. Are not located in close proximity to existing *reticulated* infrastructure.
8. Will not materially increase the potential for *reverse sensitivity* effects in the *Rural Area*.
9. Do not materially reduce the potential for soil-based *rural production activities* on land with *highly versatile soils* or land with established *rural production activities*.

DGD-RA-P5 Strategic Rural Industries Zone

To identify the Strategic Rural Industries Zone in locations where established Strategic Rural Industries operate and to limit the addition of new locations through the statutory plan change process where it can be demonstrated that activities:

1. Are consistent with the District Plan definition of 'Strategic Rural Industries'.
2. Have valid operational reasons to require a Strategic Rural Industries Zone.
3. Contribute positively to the economy of the District.
4. Provide local employment opportunities.
5. Can meet and fund local infrastructure requirements.

6. Incorporate appropriate mitigation and management methods designed to ensure environmental effects are acceptable in the area in which the activities are proposed to be located.

DGD-RA-P6 Settlement Zone

To identify areas suitable for consolidated residential (Settlement Zone Residential), commercial (Settlement Zone Centre) and industrial (Settlement Zone Industrial) development within rural settlements in locations that:

1. Are contiguous with existing Settlement Zone.
2. Are predominantly comprised of land uses and character consistent with the Settlement Zone.
3. Are not identified as hazard prone.
4. Do not comprise high Land Use Capability Class soils, Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features, High or Outstanding Natural Character or significant *indigenous vegetation*.
5. Are located in close proximity to existing *reticulated* infrastructure.
6. Do not compromise the long-term development potential of the rural settlement.
7. Have an identified demand for residential and/or commercial land to meet the projected growth requirements over the lifespan of the District Plan.

DGD-RA-P7 Future Urban Zone

To identify areas as Future Urban Zone that:

1. Are contiguous with *Residential Zones* on the fringe of Whangārei City.
2. Are predominantly comprised of existing rural residential character.
3. Legitimise the zoning of existing clusters of rural residential development.
4. Are not identified as significantly hazard prone.
5. Do not comprise Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features or significant *indigenous vegetation*.
6. Have existing *site* density of less than 2ha.
7. Are predominately suitable for future *reticulated* urban expansion of Whangārei City.
8. Do not compromise the future expansion of urban growth.
9. Will not materially increase the potential for *reverse sensitivity* effects in the *Rural Area*.