

SECTION 2.7 COASTAL ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

2.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Hastings District has an extensive coastline covering some 78 kilometres. The Coastal Environment contains a complex mix of natural and built features, as well as significant cultural, heritage and recreational values, which the Hastings community needs to manage in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

At present the Hastings District's Coastal Environment is managed through a range of policies and rules, spread throughout the District Plan. This is likely to continue. However a strategy for the management of the effects of activities in the area is reflected in the Coastal Environment Strategy to ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach to the sustainable management of the resource.

In managing this diverse resource the District Plan also needs to have regard to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement which has set out clear directions for the management of the nation's coastal resources. At a local level the Council will work with the Department of Conservation in its role in the management and protection of the coast's 'natural values'. The Hawke's Bay Regional Council is an adjoining authority, who manage the Coastal Marine Area through their Regional Coastal Plan. The interaction of activities and processes within the wider coastal environment means that the two plans must be consistent in promoting the integrated management of the District's coastal resources.

2.7.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- ***The Hastings District coastline is exposed to continuing natural processes of accretion and erosion, as well as the effects of natural events such as floods, storm surges, and ongoing tidal action.***

The District Plan identifies those sites within the margin of the coast that are potentially subject to erosion. During the life of the District Plan the Council will need to review its available information to ensure that any future development in the Coastal Environment continues to be carried out in such a way as to avoid future housing and infrastructural elements being placed at risk by these processes.

- ***Defining the extent of the Hastings District's Coastal Environment.***

There are a number of differing boundaries that are used to measure the coast. However there is at present no established definition of the Coastal Environment, though it is acknowledged that the landward extent of the area will vary considerably. It is also recognised that the shoreline is a dynamic system subject to diverse natural processes which can, at times, rapidly alter the extent and location of the coastal environment within the Hastings District. Effective management of the coastal resources will be dependent on adequately defining the scope and area of the Coastal Environment.

- ***Preserving the natural character of the Coastal Environment.***

The Resource Management Act establishes as a matter of National Importance, the preservation of the natural character of the Coastal Environment, from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement has outlined the direction established to give effect to this part of the Act, and this will guide the ongoing development of the District Plan's philosophy towards the Coastal Environment.

A significant portion of the Hastings District's coast adjoins private, rurally zoned land, and is generally inaccessible to the public, and not subject to significant threat. Other parts of the coast have been subject to extensive development over many years. The District Plan will need to balance the increasing demand for access, use, and development of the Coastal Environment with the environmental goals set for the coast by the Regional Coastal Plan, and the direction established by the Resource Management Act 1991 and National Coastal Policy Statement.

- ***The Coastal Environment is a significant repository of natural values in the Hastings District.***

The Coastal Environment of the Hastings District provides an important habitat for flora and fauna. The District Plan will need to identify these, and where appropriate introduce suitable provisions to ensure the preservation, and enhancement of these resources.

- ***Protecting the visual significance of the coast.***

Parts of the Hastings District's Coastline have important visual significance, at a District, Regional, and National level. Both Cape Kidnappers, and the Whakaari Headland at Tangoio are significant physical features and unique landscape nodes which are important to the Hawke's Bay community. It is important therefore that the District Plan provides for the protection and enhancement of these, and other key landscape vistas on the coast.

- ***The recreational value of the Coastal Environment.***

The Hastings Coastal Environment provides a significant recreational resource that contributes positively to the well being of the Hastings and wider Hawke's Bay communities. Differing levels of development and access along the coast contribute to the varied recreational experiences available to the community. Growing populations, tourism development, and increasing leisure options will increase demand for access to, and for the use of the Coastal environment for a widening range of recreational pursuits. The District Plan needs to ensure that recreational needs, and the ability of the public to have access to the coastal environment's resources are provided for as part of the wider management of the resource.

- ***Protecting Tangata Whenua values in the Coastal Environment.***

Local Iwi have long and historic connections with the Coastal Environment. Both the Takitimu and Kurahaupo canoes made landings along the Hastings District's coast, and there has been traditional occupation of the coastal margins by Iwi since that time. The sea also provides a traditional and valued food resource for Iwi. The coastal environment therefore has particular significance to local Iwi, and the District Plan will need to ensure that the tangata whenua are consulted as part of the ongoing and future management of the Coastal Environment Resources.

- ***Recognising the modified Coastal Environment.***

Parts of the Hastings Coastal Environment have been modified over many years by human habitation, rural development and the development of roading and other public infrastructure. The District Plan must recognise and provide for ongoing development, within the context of the need to sustainably manage the Hastings District's coastal resources.

- ***Providing for the sustainable development of coastal settlements in the Hastings District.***

Waimarama, Te Awanga, Haumoana, Waipatiki and Whirinaki are all well established residential coastal settlements, which have developed over a considerable period of time. Each settlement originally developed as a bach community, but now variously function as both permanent residential settlements and holiday areas. The provision of commercial and service activities in these communities also reflects their permanence as residential localities.

The continued expansion of these communities is presently constrained by a lack of suitable land, infrastructural limitations, and the necessity to integrate their future development with the wider residential strategies of the Hastings District.

The coastal communities are also an integral part of the amenity of the coast and their future form and scale needs to be consistent with the overall direction of use, activity and development in the Coastal Environment. The community will need to establish a balance between continuing demand for permanent and temporary housing in the coastal areas of the Hastings District, and the environmental values that it wishes to protect.

- ***Existing bach settlements are not properly provided for.***

The Hastings District's Coastal Environment contains small bach communities at Waipatiki, Tangoio and Ocean Beach. While Waipatiki has land zoned for residential activity, the latter two areas are located in the Rural Zone.

Ocean Beach

The limited status of Ocean Beach has contributed positively to its form, and scale, and it has accordingly developed a unique character, that typifies the bach nature.

During the life of the District Plan the Council will need to examine the future of this settlement, its long term location, design, and its significance to the wider community. The Council will need to balance the impact of seeking to address the long term future of this area, against the changes that could occur to their character as a result of any modification to its status, or size.

Tangoio

The Tangoio settlement has been the subject of a submission seeking the establishment of appropriate zoning. While that submission may not provide the most ideal environmental solution there are sufficient grounds to accept that specific policies could achieve better environmental outcomes for this locality and also remove historical uncertainties associated with the existing bach settlement. The implementation of the Coastal Environment Strategy is the opportunity to follow up particular solutions within a Change to the Plan.

2.7.3 OBJECTIVE

- ***CEO1 To ensure the implementation of the integrated management regime contained within the Coastal Environment Strategy that protects, manages and develops the Coastal Environment.***

2.7.4 POLICIES

- ***CEP1 Implement the Hastings District Coastal Environment Strategy to ensure the integrated management approach is adopted for the protection and development of the Hastings coastal environment.***

Explanation

The Council will undertake a strategic review of the Coastal Environment within five years of the District Plan being made operative. It is intended that the Hastings Coastal Environment Strategy is reviewed every five years to ensure the integrated management approach to the long term use, development and protection of the coastal resources.

- CEP2 Carefully manage development and any further expansion of residentially zoned land in existing coastal settlements in accordance with the Hastings Coastal Environment Strategy.**

Explanation

The HUDS study completed by Council in 1993 identified Te Awanga and Haumoana as two coastal communities that could accommodate additional residential development in the future. The review did not examine such areas as Waimarama, Waipatiki, or Whirinaki which were not considered part of the urban residential resource. But as part of the HCES technical studies, these coastal areas are subject to development demand and have potential for residential growth. At present further expansion of the former two communities is constrained by infrastructural limitations. The formulation of Structure Plans for all the recommended coastal areas will investigate and resolve existing issues and constraints. Until the development of these structure plans, the development or expansion of existing coastal settlements should be consistent with the Hastings Coastal Environment Strategy.

- CEP3 Review the legal and practical future of the existing bach community at Ocean Beach as part of the Hastings District Coastal Environment Strategy.**

Explanation

This bach community has limited legal status. This has restricted its development rights, but has also resulted in a form, style, and density that has contributed to its unique 'bach' appeal. As part of the implementation of the Hastings Coastal Environment Strategy Council is examining how this bach community should be managed in the future, and if retained, how its style, form and contribution to the character of the coast and District can be maintained and enhanced.

- CEP4 Establish appropriate provisions within the Hastings District Plan to address the effects caused by natural coastal processes in the Coastal Environment.**

Explanation

The Natural Hazards Section (Section 12.3) of the District Plan will identify those properties and areas in the Coastal Environment which are potentially subject to the effects of natural hazards particularly inundation or coastal erosion.

- CEP5 Encourage the provision of public access to the Coastal Environment unless it is in conflict with other cultural or natural values apparent on the coast.**

Explanation

Public access for the purpose of recreation and enjoyment is an important element in the protection and enhancement of the Coastal Environment. Access to the coast is generally limited to points dictated by current road access, and the recreational scope of different areas is influenced by levels of development and the ease of access to a location. The Hastings District Coastal Environment Strategy identifies recreational opportunities in the coastal environment, as well as the opportunity to develop levels of public access to the coast that match the recreational opportunities of individual areas along the coastline.

- CEP6 Ensure the protection of natural and cultural features identified in the Coastal Environment.**

Explanation

The District Plan includes provisions through its Landscape, Community Facilities Recreation Conservation and Natural Areas, Waahi Tapu, and Heritage provisions which identify and provide for objectives, policies and rules to protect significant elements in the coastal environment. Their continued promotion is important to protect the wider heritage values in the area, and to protect these values for future generations.

- **CEP7 Seek to provide for the future management of the existing bach community at Tangoio by way of a subsequent Variation or Change to the Plan.**

Explanation

The present bach community has limited legal status. Historically there have been mixed signals as to what environmental outcomes are sought for the locality. The Draft Coastal Environmental Strategy has provided some guidance and suggested that limited and selective development could be provided for. Once this strategic study is completed, particular solutions which address appropriate Objectives, Policies and Methods for the locality may be advanced as a Variation or Change to the Plan.

2.7.5 METHODS

The Objectives and Policies will be implemented through the following Methods.

- **Hastings Coastal Environment Strategy Review**

The preparation and adoption of a Hastings District Coastal Environment Strategy will provide an integrated approach to the management of the resources in the coastal environment. The strategies identified in this study will be delivered through the District Plan, and where appropriate the Annual Plan and Strategic Plan.

- **Hastings District Plan**

Rural, Plains, Coastal Residential Zones: These zones have land within the Coastal Environment.

Landscape Areas - RMU (Section 12.2): The Coastal Environment contains a number of the Hastings District's Outstanding Natural Features, and Special Landscape Character Areas (see Appendix 12.2-1 and 12.2-2). These features principally reflect their natural character and contribution to the visual significance to the Hawke's Bay Community. The RMU provisions will control the establishment of activities that could negatively impact on the visual historical significance of the natural environment.

Natural Hazards RMU (Section 12.3): This Section of the District Plan will identify land that is subject to threat as a result of natural processes that occur along the coast. Information on potential hazards in the Coastal Environment will be used to avoid, remedy or mitigate inappropriate development.

Waahi Tapu - RMU (Section 12.4): This Section of the District Plan identifies those localities where Waahi Tapu may exist. Development of land affected by the RMU, will endeavour to avoid the desecration or destruction of these sacred sites.

Community Facilities, Recreation and Marae DWA (Section 13.5): This Section of the District Plan establishes provisions for the acquisition, use and development of reserves, and identifies those natural areas (biotic, and botanic) whose protection Council will facilitate.

Riparian Land Management and Public Access DWA (Section 13.9): The District Plan identifies a number of Department of Conservation RAP (Recommended Areas for Protection) in the Coastal Environment (see Appendix 13.9-1). The District Plan makes provision for rates relief and/or the establishment of Conservation Lots where identified natural areas are permanently protected.

- **Hawke's Bay Regional Policy Statement and Plans**

Hawke's Bay Regional Coastal Plan: The District Plan covers the Coastal Marine Area, which lies adjacent to the Hastings District boundary at Mean High Water Springs. Both areas are encompassed within the Coastal Environment. The District Plan will have regard to the adopted HB Regional Council Coastal Plan to ensure that the approaches to activities are dealt with consistently.

- **National Coastal Policy Statement**

This establishes a national direction for the interpretation of the way in which territorial local authorities shall interpret Section 6(f) of the Act. The District Plan cannot be inconsistent with the policy, and directions set out in the statement.

- **Hastings District Council Annual Plan**

Identifies funding for Council-initiated projects related to the Coastal Environment.

2.7.6 ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

It is anticipated that the following outcomes will be achieved.

- Improved understanding of the values and matters of significance that exist within the Coastal Environment.
- An integrated management approach to the use, development, and protection of the Coastal Environment is implemented.
- The protection of natural, cultural, heritage, and scenic features of the coast, that reflect the significance of such features to the character of the Coastal Environment, and their contribution to the community's social, cultural and natural heritage.
- The adoption of long term sustainable development strategies for each of the coastal communities.