

## **CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Manawatū District Plan (“the District Plan”) provides a framework to control and manage how land is used, developed or protected. The District Plan is a tool to avoid or lessen the impact of any adverse **effects** and provide protection to the **natural and physical resources** within the Manawatū District.

This District Plan is the first review of the Manawatū District Plan, which became operative in 2002. That Plan was the first District Plan produced by the **Council** for the Manawatū District following local government amalgamation in 1989 and the enactment of the Resource Management Act in 1991.

## 1.1 The Manawatū District

The Manawatū District covers an area of 256,300 hectares and stretches from Rangiwahia in the north, to Himatangi Beach and Palmerston North City in the south. The western boundary of the District follows the Rangitikei River and the eastern boundary is the Ruahine Ranges.

Within the Manawatū District, are a range of natural features stretching from the rugged peaks of the Ruahine Ranges to the natural beauty of the Pohangina Valley and the wind swept West Coast beaches and sanddunes.

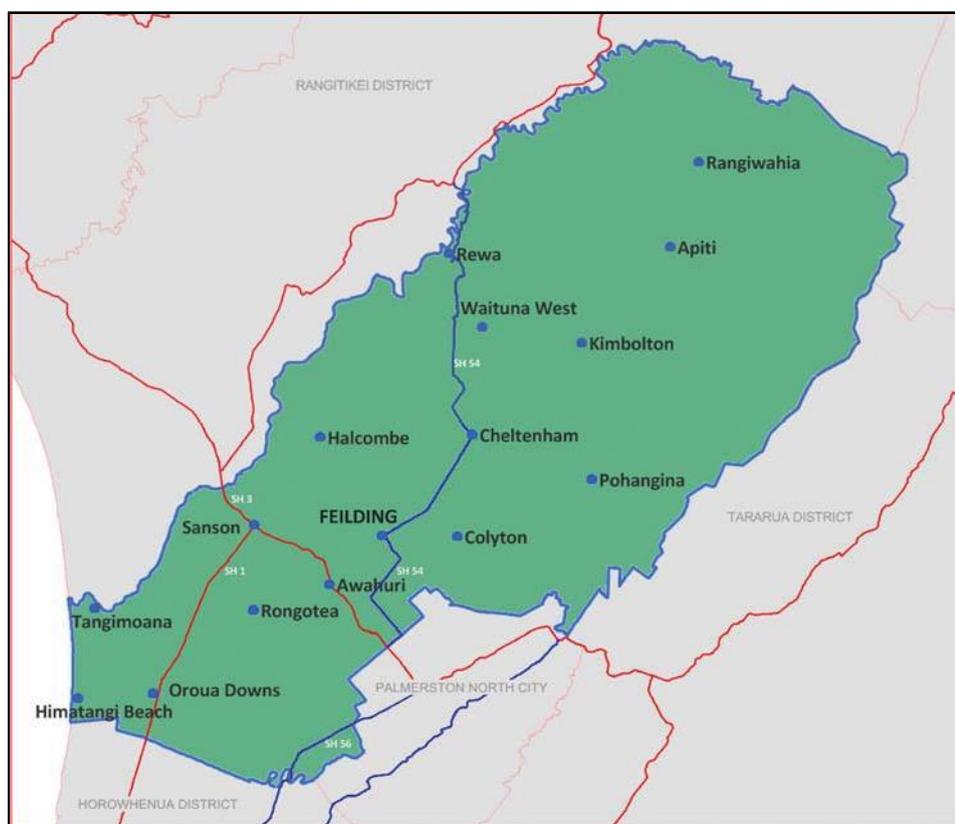


Figure 1 Extent of the Manawatū District

The Manawatū District is a thriving rural district with agriculture as its leading **industry**. Feilding maintains a role as a service centre to the surrounding rural community with a number of rural-based businesses being located there. The smaller communities around the District provide access to local services.

## 1.2 Statutory Context

The District Plan is prepared by the Manawatu District **Council** (“**Council**”) in response to its obligations under the Resource Management Act (1991) (“the **Act**”). The District Plan includes objectives, policies and methods to achieve the integrated management of **natural and physical resources** of the Manawatū District.

### 1.2.1 Resource Management Act (1991)

The purpose, function and contents of District Plans are directed towards achieving the purpose of the **Act**, which is “*to promote the sustainable management of **natural and physical resources***”. The **Act** defines **natural and physical resources** to include “*land, water, air, soil, minerals and energy, all forms of plants, animals and all structures*”.

Section 5 of the **Act** defines sustainable management as:

*“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**”.*

Section 6 identifies matters of national importance, which need to be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the **Act**.

Section 7 deals with 'other matters' which need to be given particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the **Act**.

Section 8 requires the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti O Waitangi) to be taken into account in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

The concept of sustainable management is complex and involves a range of considerations, including the following elements:

- managing the adverse **effects** of human activities on the **environment**
- considering the natural **environment**
- enabling people to meet their needs
- considering future generations

To achieve sustainable management, and to maintain it, means managing all these diverse aspects in an integrated manner. Integrated management is the foundation on which sustainability can be built. The District Plan is one component of **Council's** integrated management of the Manawatū District.

The District Plan will encourage, and in some cases require, particular methods to be used as part of development, to promote sustainable management.

Examples of these methods include:

- Controlling the type, scale and location of activities and development in order to manage any adverse **effects** on the **environment**.
- Protecting **sites** and items with significant heritage values including archaeological **sites**, historic **Buildings**, conservation areas, **sites** of ecological significance, geological items, and notable trees.
- Protecting areas of landscape significance.

While the District Plan regulates land use and related matters specified in Section 31 of the **Act**, action can also be taken through other **Council** processes.

The **Council's** strategic planning is specified in the Long Term Plan which is prepared under the Local Government Act 2002. This document sets out what work we will do, services we will provide and how we will pay for it over the 10 years from adoption in 2012 till 2022.

The **Council** is also required to prepare an Annual Plan for each financial year setting out what it wants to achieve during that period. Both the Long Term Plan and the Annual Plan are prepared using a consultative process under the Local Government Act 2002.

As part of the Long Term Plan 2012-22, vision statements for the Manawatū District, its villages, rural community and Feilding urban township were developed. The vision statements help to guide **Council** in its activity and provides a clear and compelling picture of our future.

This Manawatū District vision is:

*Connected, vibrant and thriving Manawatū – the best rural lifestyle in New Zealand.*

Rural area vision statement:

*The food basket of New Zealand within a sustainable rural landscape that offers outstanding recreational opportunity.*

Villages vision statement:

*Attractive and prosperous communities that offer lifestyle choices and business opportunities within a unique **environment**.*

Feilding urban vision statement:

*A thriving community enjoying the most vibrant country town in New Zealand, servicing the regional rural sector.*

### 1.2.2 Other statutory documents

Although drafted under the Resource Management Act (1991), the District Plan also takes into account the requirements in other legislation, national policies, plans and agreements. The influences of these documents are incorporated into the District Plan to ensure the integrated management of our **natural and physical resources**.

The District Plan must give **effect** to any national policy statement, any New Zealand coastal policy statement and any regional policy statement. It also must not be inconsistent with any regional plan.

Other influences include:

- National Environmental Standards
- Management plans and strategies prepared under other legislation
- iwi authority considerations
- Heritage New Zealand register.

## 1.3 The Content Structure of the District Plan

### 1.3.1 Contents

The District Plan is prepared as a single document which addresses the resource management issues affecting the Manawatū District. The document should be read as a whole so that the common themes and the relationships between the various provisions can be understood.

The Plan consists of the following two main parts:

- **Objectives, policies and rules** divided into chapters. Each chapter addresses a separate topic with some applying district-wide and others being specific to areas of land referred to as **zones**. Each chapter is accompanied, where necessary, by appendices which provide additional information.
- **Maps** – illustrate zoning and other planning controls for the District.

### 1.3.2 Structure

Each chapter in the District Plan is structured to contain the following information:

- the significant resource management issues
- the objectives to resolve the issues
- the policies to implement the objectives
- the rules to implement the objectives and policies.

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### Resource Management Issues

Resource management issues are statements about the qualities or values that are important to the Manawatū District which need to be addressed to achieve sustainable management.

Issues have been identified through monitoring of the effectiveness of the Operative District Plan (2002) and through consultation with, and feedback from the community.

### Objectives

The objectives identify what the **Council** wants to achieve in the **environment** and outlines the direction the **Council** has chosen to take to address the resource management issues identified.

Objectives may state an environmental outcome for a specific **zone** such as maintaining the character that is unique to that **zone**. Objectives may also relate to issues which apply throughout the District, such as:

- infrastructure
- heritage matters
- natural hazards
- hazardous facilities and contaminated **sites**.

## Policies

Policies relate directly to objectives. They are broad action steps that address aspects of an objective. Policies state what the **Council** is going to achieve, or the outcome sought to achieve the objective.

## Rules

The Plan includes rules for the purpose of carrying out the **Council's** functions under the **Act** and achieving the objectives and policies of the District Plan. The type, form and scale of different activities are controlled by rules. Some rules are applicable throughout the District, such as those relating to historic heritage. Others are to manage specific **effects** experienced in certain areas and are applied to a specific **zone**. District-wide rules need to be addressed in conjunction with rules for the specific **zone**.

All rules in the District Plan have the force of statutory regulation.

## 1.4 Procedural information

### 1.4.1 General duty to comply

Compliance with the District Plan and the Resource Management Act (1991) does not remove the need to comply with all other applicable acts, regulations, bylaws and rules of law. Activities which do not require a **building** consent under the Building Act (2004) may still require a resource consent under this District Plan.

### 1.4.2 Types of activities

The Resource Management Act (1991) classifies activities into the following types:

- **permitted activities**
- **controlled activities**
- **restricted discretionary activities**
- **Discretionary Activities**
- **non-complying activities**
- prohibited activities.

The status of activities assumes a hierarchy that reflects those activities that are anticipated to have minimal impact on the **environment** (permitted) through to those which anticipate the most significant environmental impact (prohibited).

Resource consents are not required for **permitted activities**, but are required for all others identified in the Plan. The exception to this is prohibited activities. **Council** cannot grant a resource consent for such an activity. It can only be provided for in the Plan by means of a plan change.

In some instances, **Council** has restricted its discretion to certain matters identified in the District Plan (**restricted discretionary activities**) and in other instances, there is no restriction on **Council’s** discretion (**Discretionary Activities**). For **Discretionary Activities**, the **Council** may impose a wide range of conditions that have regard to a range of potential environmental **effects**.

There are two types of **non-complying activities** in the District Plan, those that are listed as **non-complying activities** and activities which default to a non-complying status because they are not specifically provided for as permitted, controlled, restricted discretionary or discretionary.

Guidance on applying for a resource consent is contained in **Council’s** brochure named “A Guide to Land Use Consents”.

### 1.4.3 Changes to the District Plan

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#### Public plan changes and variations

The **Act** sets out a formal process where the **Council** can propose changes or variations to the District Plan. District Plan changes apply to an operative plan. Variations apply to a proposed plan or plan change. Any plan changes or variations will need to be publicly notified and there are submission, hearing and appeal rights.

The **Council** has a responsibility to maintain a district plan which is current and relevant and which addresses contemporary issues in the **environment**. The provisions of the District Plan may therefore be changed or varied as necessary.

#### Private plan changes

The **Act** sets out a formal process where any person can lodge a request with the **Council** seeking a change to the District Plan. Further information about this process, including the information requirements, and likely costs, can be obtained from the **Council**.

### 1.4.4 Monitoring

The **Council** is required to gather such information and undertake or commission such research as is necessary to carry out effectively its functions under the **Act**. This includes monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of policies, rules, or other methods in the District Plan. Monitoring is undertaken throughout the life of the District Plan and

appropriate Plan Changes will be initiated to respond to issues that may be identified in future.

The following types of monitoring will be undertaken by the **Council**:

- Collecting and analysing information about resource consents.
- Monitoring complaints and enforcement actions.
- Monitoring trends through analysing statistics e.g. census, accident statistics, **building** consents, traffic data.
- Scientific measurement, e.g. of land or water quality.
- Maintaining records of natural hazards.