

Significance and Engagement Policy

17 August 2026

What this workshop hopes to achieve

- Outline of role of Significance and Engagement Policy
- S+E policy context at TDC
- Considering amendments in preparation for LTP 2027-37
- Considering amendments in response to the water reforms



Important notes

- No decisions are being made at this workshop.
- The workshop is based on information available at the time of preparation. New information may become available or the S+E policy requirements may change because of ongoing reforms.
- Timaru DC's current policy is available [here](#).

Legislative basis

- A S+E policy is required by s 76AA of the LGA 2002.
- It must set out the following, as well as Council assets determined as being strategic.
 - (a) that local authority's general approach to determining the significance of proposals and decisions in relation to issues, assets, and other matters; and
 - (b) any criteria or procedures that are to be used by the local authority in assessing the extent to which issues, proposals, assets, decisions, or activities are significant or may have significant consequences; and
 - (c) how the local authority will respond to community preferences about engagement on decisions relating to specific issues, assets, or other matters, including the form of consultation that may be desirable; and
 - (d) how the local authority will engage with communities on other matters.

What did Council amend for LTP 2024-34?

- Incorporated its Enhancing Māori Contribution to Decision Making Policy into the body of this policy.
- Overhauled the appendices to try to improve guidance to officers and give elected members and the community greater assurance in the robustness and consistency of significance assessments.
- Sought to increase assessment sign-offs for Council reports.
- How have these changes worked in practice, and what might we have done differently in hindsight?

What should or could be considered for the LTP?



Significance criteria

Are we “valuing” the correct things? What should be added, or could be removed? Do we need to amend how “significance” is reached?



Strategic assets

Does the list of strategic assets need changing? What should be added, or could be removed? Do the trigger points need refining? What impact might the System Improvements Bill have?

Significance criteria

	Timaru	Ashburton	Mackenzie	Waimate	Waitaki	Christchurch	Dunedin
	<i>Less-structured</i>	<i>More-structured</i>	<i>Less-structured</i>	<i>Less-structured</i>	<i>Less-structured</i>	<i>Less-structured</i>	<i>Less-structured</i>
Impact on community	y	y	y*	y	y	y	y
Impact on strategic assets	y	y	y	n	y	y	y
Impact on levels of service	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Extent of community interest	y	y	y	n	y	y	y
Impact on (views of) manawhenua	y	y	y	n	y	y	n
Financial impact	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Consistency with existing plans etc	y	n	y	y	y	n	y
Impact on environment	y	y	n	n	y	n	n*
Extent of risk/ reversibility	y	y	n	y	y	y	y
Likely impact/ consequences on wellbeings	n	n	n	y	n	y	y
Impact on Council capacity to execute role, projects	n	n	n	y	y	y	n
Cultural relevance (impact on social cohesion)	n	n	n	y	n	n	n
*alluded to indirectly, not explicitly							
Italics = the extent to which the policy requires a structured methodology be followed to take scores against set criteria and arrive at an overall level of "significance"							

Strategic assets

strategic asset, in relation to the assets held by a local authority, means an asset or group of assets that the local authority needs to retain if the local authority is to maintain the local authority's capacity to achieve or promote any outcome that the local authority determines to be important to the current or future well-being of the community; and includes—

- (a) any asset or group of assets listed in accordance with [section 76AA\(3\)](#) by the local authority; and
- (b) any land or building owned by the local authority and required to maintain the local authority's capacity to provide affordable housing as part of its social policy; and
- (c) any equity securities held by the local authority in—
 - (i) a port company within the meaning of the [Port Companies Act 1988](#);
 - (ii) an airport company within the meaning of the [Airport Authorities Act 1966](#) or an airport operator within the meaning of [section 5](#) of the Civil Aviation Act 2023

S 97 of the LGA 2002 states that the decision to transfer ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the local authority can only be taken if provided for in the LTP (and thus subject to SCP consultation and audit oversight; s 93E also applies).

TDC's current strategic assets

8.3. Council considers the assets, or groups of assets, listed in Appendix A to be strategic:

- 8.3.1. Council's equity securities in Timaru District Holding Ltd;
- 8.3.2. Council's housing assets as a whole;
- 8.3.3. Cultural and Learning Facilities as a whole;
- 8.3.4. District cemeteries as a whole;
- 8.3.5. Parks facilities as a whole;
- 8.3.6. Recreational facilities as a whole;
- 8.3.7. Redruth Landfill;
- 8.3.8. Roading network as a whole;
- 8.3.9. Timaru Airport, and;
- 8.3.10. Water supply, Wastewater and Stormwater networks as a whole.

8.4. To remove doubt, strategic assets as defined above are the assets as a whole entity and not the individual elements of that asset. The requirements of section 97 of the LGA are only triggered if the proposal relates to the asset as a whole, or where it would materially affect the nature and operation of the asset.

Ashburton

Schedule 1 – Strategic assets

The strategic assets of Ashburton District Council are listed below. Decisions that involve the transfer of ownership or control of an element of a group strategic asset where the remaining assets of the group still enable the Council to meet its strategic outcome will not on their own be regarded as a strategic asset.

Activity / group of activity	Council assets	Trigger
Investments	• Shareholding in Electricity Ashburton • Shareholding in Transwaste Canterbury Ltd • Shareholding in Rangitata Diversion Race Management Ltd • Shareholding in Ashburton Contracting Ltd	• Transfer of any portion of Council's shareholding
Drinking Water	• Council's water supply and reticulation networks as a whole	• Transfer of control or ownership of the networks as a whole
Wastewater	• Council's wastewater infrastructure as a whole	• Transfer of control or ownership of wastewater infrastructure as a whole
Transportation	• Council's road network as a whole	• Transfer of control or ownership of the road network as a whole
Open Spaces	• Council cemeteries • The land comprising the inner of Baring Square Ashburton, including the Ashburton Town Clock and the Cenotaph. • Reserve lands as a whole including land held under the Reserves Act 1977 and land used for parks, gardens, sports field and recreation areas	• Transfer of control or ownership
Community Services	• Council's Elderly Persons Housing stock	• An increase or decrease in ownership or control of 30% or more of elderly persons housing stock
Facilities	• Ashburton Airport • Ashburton Art Gallery & Museum • EA Networks Centre • Te Whare Whakatere	• Transfer of control or ownership of the facility

Mackenzie

The Council considers the following assets to be strategic assets in terms of the LGA:

- a. The entire urban and rural roading network of the Mackenzie District.
- b. The urban water supplies as a whole of Burkes Pass, Fairlie, Lake Tekapo and Twizel.
- c. The piped rural water supplies of Albury, Allandale, and Downlands (Albury to Cave section).
- d. The stock water race systems as a whole at Ashwick/Opuha, Punaroa/Eversley and School Road.
- e. The wastewater reticulation and treatment systems as a whole at Burkes Pass, Fairlie, Lake Tekapo and Twizel.
- f. The stormwater reticulation systems as a whole at Fairlie, Lake Tekapo and Twizel.
- g. The Council cemeteries at Albury, Burkes Pass, Fairlie, Tekapo and Twizel.
- h. All Council's parks, recreation reserves, sports fields and facilities held under the Reserves Act 1977 or otherwise.
- i. Council's swimming pools at Fairlie and Twizel.
- j. Council's stock of tenanted pensioner housing.
- k. The Fairlie Medical Centre.
- l. The Twizel Events Centre and the community hall at Lake Tekapo.
- m. The Mackenzie Community Centre at Fairlie.
- n. Council's administration buildings in Fairlie and Twizel.
- o. Council's shareholding in Alpine Energy Limited.
- p. The Pukaki Airport

Waimate

5.2 For the purpose of Section 76AA (3) of the Act, Council considers the following assets to be strategic assets:

- a. Regent Theatre
- b. Waimate Public Library - building and collections
- c. Resource Recovery Park
- d. Parks and Reserves as a whole
- e. Knottingley Park & Arboretum, and Victoria Park
- f. Cemeteries
- g. Roading Networks and connected infrastructure
- h. Sewerage Networks and Treatment Plants
- i. Norman Kirk Memorial Pool
- j. Stormwater Networks
- k. Water Treatment, Storage, and Supply Networks
- l. Community Housing
- m. Local Government Centre
- n. Waimate Event Centre

Waitaki

Council has identified the following Strategic assets. This list will be updated as required following any changes to the Annual Plan or LTP.

- a) its roading network
- b) its water collection, storage, treatment, and distribution system
- c) its wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system
- d) its stormwater collection and disposal system
- e) Ōamaru (closed) and Palmerston Landfill
- f) Ōamaru Airport
- g) waterfront facilities and assets owned and operated by the Council at Ōamaru Harbour* (see Map 1)
- h) all land and buildings comprising the Council's community housing stock
- i) Council cemeteries
- j) Ōamaru Public Gardens
- k) Alps to Ocean Cycle Trail (within Waitaki District boundaries)
- l) Waitaki Aquatic Centre
- m) Ōamaru Opera House
- n) Waitaki District Public libraries
- o) Waitaki Museum and Archive
- p) Forrester Gallery
- q) Shareholdings

Christchurch

The Council-owned assets listed as strategic are set out below, grouped according to their nature of activity:

Infrastructure

- a) its stormwater collection and disposal system;
- b) its wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system;
- c) its water collection, storage, treatment and distribution system.
- d) its waste management system;
- e) its roading network;
- f) all public transport infrastructure owned or operated by the Council.

Shareholdings

- g) its shareholding in Christchurch City Holdings Ltd, Civic Building Ltd and Transwaste Canterbury Ltd, and VBase Ltd;
- h) the shares Christchurch City Holdings Ltd holds in Lyttelton Port Company Ltd, Christchurch International Airport Ltd, Orion New Zealand Ltd, Enable Services Ltd, Eco Central Ltd, City Care Ltd.

Community Facilities

- i) Christchurch Town Hall;
- j) Christchurch Art Gallery and its permanent collection;
- k) all land and buildings comprising the Council's social housing portfolio;
- l) all public library facilities;
- m) all parks and reserves owned by or administered by the Council;
- n) all public swimming pools;
- o) all waterfront land and facilities owned or operated by the Council, including wharves, jetties, slipways, breakwaters and seawalls;
- p) cemeteries and listed heritage buildings and structures.

“All” or “its” means the asset as a whole.

Where a strategic asset is a network or has many components, decisions may be made in respect of individual components within the network without those components being regarded as strategic, unless such decisions are considered to significantly alter the level of service provided by the Council.

Dunedin

Aquatic Facilities
Cemeteries
Community housing
Dunedin Botanic Garden
Dunedin Centre, Town Hall and Municipal Chambers
Dunedin Chinese Garden
Dunedin Public Art Gallery and collections
Dunedin Public Libraries and collections
Dunedin Railway Station
Edgar Centre
Forsyth Barr Stadium
Hereweka Harbour Cone
Logan Park
Olveston House and collections
Parks, recreation and open space network
Regent Theatre
Shares in Dunedin International Airport Limited
Dunedin City Holdings Limited
The Town Belt
Toitū Otago Settlers Museum and collections
Transportation Network
Waste management facilities

Notes:

- The DCC may consider any other asset or group of assets as being 'significant' by using the criteria of significance in this Policy.
- Where a strategic asset is a network or has many components, decisions can be made on individual components within the network without it being regarded as significant, unless that component substantially affects the level of service provided to the community.

What else might be considered?

- Proposed introduction of formalised submission rules
 - Late submissions
 - Minimum requirements for a submission
 - How to manage informal feedback e.g. multiple signatory submissions/petitions, and social media
 - Potential redaction of offensive or defamatory language – and who decides

Water reforms

- TDC's policy will have to reflect the structural changes, and the WO will require a S+E policy.
- Transfer of water assets as strategic assets (removal from TDC's policy).
 - Treatment of stormwater
- Under the LGWSA 2025, TDC must assess new water contracts against its S+E policy and, for those deemed "significant" contracts, treat these as a change proposal requiring certain analysis, public consultation and information disclosure.
 - Suitability of TDC's current policy for this task, possible additional criteria to address gaps (see next bullet point), and likelihood of "significant" contracts on the horizon.
- Consideration of [Selwyn](#) and [Dunedin](#) policies (significance criteria for water) as examples