

9 SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE

Intensive development in areas where there is insufficient servicing infrastructure can have an adverse effect on the environment.

Explanation

Intensive development in areas which are not fully serviced, eg rural areas can lead to adverse effects on services. These services are important physical resources in both urban and rural areas. Physical resources include all structures.

The provision of adequate utilities or on-site systems such as those for sewage collection treatment and disposal, and stormwater collection and disposal systems is a necessary prerequisite to subdivision, use or development of land, if adverse effects are to be avoided. Similarly reticulated electricity supply and telecommunication systems also reduce or avoid adverse effects on the environment.

The Council operates a number of water supply schemes to provide a potable supply of water for human consumption, stock consumption, industrial and commercial activities and fire fighting where appropriate. Connection is only possible if the property is located within an area serviced by a scheme. Water is available from that scheme and connection will be subject to an application being submitted and approval being granted by the Water Supply Authority.

While individual development seldom requires major extensions of services, the cumulative effect of, for example, closely concentrated rural dwellings, leads to a subsequent demand for public sewage disposal, upgraded water supply and roading which cannot be efficiently supplied. There is considerable public investment in the servicing facilities provided in the District. These facilities should be managed and planned for in an efficient manner.

Although developers may undertake service provision within the land to be subdivided or developed, many reticulated services are network operations and the on site works feed or link into a wider system. This often uses up capacity in the wider system, or results in the need to modify, upgrade or duplicate it. It can also increase maintenance and operating costs. For this reason it is appropriate that, if the network needs to be upgraded as a result of a development, the developer contributes toward this cost.

Most developments also require the provision of electricity and telecommunications. These facilities also need to be managed and planned for in an efficient manner.

OBJECTIVE

- (1)
 - (a) Avoid, remedy, or mitigate the adverse effects of development, including servicing infrastructure, on the environment.
 - (b) Ensure that an adequate level of infrastructure is provided to enable the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources by the recovery of the costs of providing that infrastructure directly from developers and, where appropriate, by apportioning costs between the developer and the community in accordance with the relative benefits of providing that infrastructure.

Principal Reason

Infrastructure is an essential part of the District's resources, and the maintenance of the District's infrastructure is essential to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of its people, as well as their health and safety.

An integrated approach to the management of infrastructural issues associated with new land uses and subdivision will ensure any adverse effects on the environment are managed in an efficient and equitable manner.

POLICIES

- (1) To ensure that the means of providing water to a site is established at the time of subdivision.

Explanation and Principal Reason

Not all areas of the District can be supplied with potable or stock water. Some areas remain on private systems (usually independent for each property), but some means of supply for stock and domestic consumption needs to be identified.

- (2) To require financial contributions to develop and maintain the District's water supply infrastructure and reticulation, i.e. headworks, mains, and reservoir; roading network, water, sewerage or stormwater systems. Any cash contribution will be spent on the infrastructure within ten years of payment.

Explanation and Principal Reason

To recognise that there is a major investment in water supply schemes and other services and to provide for ongoing improvements to these services.

- (3) To discourage development that may compromise subsequent efficient servicing and subdivision of land identified for future residential development.

Explanation and Principal Reason

To retain the opportunity for providing efficient servicing, without being adversely affected by a subdivision layout not suited to comprehensive residential use and servicing.

- (4) To ensure that sufficient servicing is provided for intensive development in a way that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on the environment.

Explanation and Principal Reason

Make provision for new servicing where appropriate, subject to environmental constraints.

- (5) To recognise the Timaru Harbour Board and the Timaru City Council Empowering Act 1962.

Explanation and Principal Reason

The Act recognises a deed between the Timaru Harbour Board and the Timaru City Council and empowers Timaru Harbour Board to transfer land to the Timaru City Council, and the Timaru City Council to accept the dedication of any of that land as streets with railway sidings and pipeline easements.

OBJECTIVE

- (2) An effective and efficient telecommunications and radio communications system which is capable of meeting social and economic needs.

Principal Reason

Network utility infrastructure is an essential physical resource within the Timaru District. In addition to land, air and transport systems, it includes those built structures necessary for supplying services to the community, such as water and power supply, telecommunications, waste disposal and other central and local government functions. The social, economic and cultural well-being of the community and its health and safety is highly dependent on such infrastructure.

POLICIES

- (1) To provide for the maintenance, enhancement and operation of telecommunications, radio communications, electricity, water, sewage, stormwater and irrigation infrastructure, both existing and future, needed by the community to ensure its health, safety and well-being.

Explanation and Principal Reason

Network utility systems are essential elements of the community infrastructure. They are also a resource in terms of the Act's definition of "natural and physical resources". The continued operation (and expansion where this contributes to both the demands/needs of the community, and the efficiency of the particular network concerned) should be provided for.

- (2) To avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse environmental effects of utilities infrastructure.
- (3) To take into account the operational and locational requirements of utilities infrastructure when considering site suitability.
- (4) To encourage co-siting of utility facilities wherever operationally feasible.

Explanation and Principal Reason for Policies (2)-(4)

Achieving the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 requires any adverse effects on the environment to be avoided, remedied or mitigated. The physical infrastructure associated with network utilities can create adverse effects on land and water resources. The environment also, however, includes people and their social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions. Network utility systems provide social and economic benefits to people, and these also need to be considered when minimising adverse effects. Accordingly, there is a need to carefully balance the likely environmental impacts of infrastructure provision against the requirements of an efficient and effective network utility. Furthermore, it will not always be operationally feasible or environmentally desirable to have structures co-located in single locations. Each proposal will need to be considered on its merits.

METHODS

- (1) Using zoning and subdivision controls to provide for growth in appropriate locations and at a scale and intensity to ensure that development occurs in a sustainable manner.

Principal reason

Enables growth to occur in a manner that will not have adverse environmental effects on the resources of the District.

- (1) Require servicing appropriate to the intention and development potential of the zoning.

Principal reason

To ensure that human activity, and particularly urban development, occurs without significant adverse effects upon the environment and existing public infrastructure, through the provision of utilities and/or on-site services or upgrading public infrastructure where necessary.

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- (3) Making provision for future development within the Timaru Urban Area by using the latest census to identify potential expansion areas in the District Plan for a 20 year planning period (see Residential 5 Zone in the Planning Maps).

Principal Reason

Provides a planned and integrated approach to future development and avoids the uneconomic provision of services.

- (4) Including rules which require the provision of works or services, and/or require the payment of cash, to cover an equitable portion of the actual cost of providing physical works (see General Rule 6.5).

Principal Reason

Ensures services are supplied in an efficient and equitable manner and that the costs of achieving access to water supply schemes are realised by those benefiting from them.

- (5) Provision will be made for the waiving of rules requiring a financial contribution where the service is supplied by the property owner. In the case of water supply, prospective purchasers should be made aware of the need to obtain their own water supply (see General Rule 6.5 and policies for zones).

Principal Reason

In situations where no servicing is required it is not necessary to ask for a financial contribution. Because it is often assumed that a water

supply will be available on a site, it is appropriate to ensure that prospective purchasers are made aware of this.

Under section 221 of the Resource Management Act, a consent notice may be placed on the title at the time of subdivision. This advises any future owner of any conditions that have been imposed on the property and which are to be complied with on a continuing basis by the subdividing owner and subsequent owners, i.e. the continuing provision for maintaining a potable supply.

- (6) Making provision for land which can be easily serviced for industrial purposes.

Principal Reason

Some industries require access to bulk services, therefore much of the land in Industrial Zones should be in locations which are able to be efficiently serviced.

ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES

- (1) Settlements will continue to encroach upon rural areas but in a controlled manner representing logical extensions of services.
- (2) Greater consideration will be given to the adverse environmental effects of development and the efficient servicing of those areas.
- (3) Services present in existing commercial areas are maximised to achieve the sustainable use, development and protection of those physical resources.
- (4) Provision of utilities consistent with the nature of the local environment and operational needs.

MONITORING

- (1) Review impact and efficient provision of services to various settlements after not less than four years, from the date this plan becomes operative.
- (2) Assess effectiveness of Policies within four years of the Plan becoming operative.