

Topic 11: Noise

Introduction

As part of the District Plan Review, Timaru District Council has commissioned a Discussion Document on noise to stimulate discussion and form a basis for public consultation. This can be found at www.timaru.govt.nz/dpr.

It identifies three main issues with how the current District Plan manages noise, establishes potential options to address these issues and discusses the associated strengths and weaknesses. We seek your feedback on the issues and options.

Issues and Options

Issue 1

Management of noise emissions from industrial / commercial activities located near Residential Zones.

People within Residential Zones anticipate a reasonably quiet environment where they can relax. In contrast, industrial / commercial activities generate a higher degree of noise with the operation of machines, the use of heavy vehicles, high volumes of traffic and pedestrian flow, the concentration of people etc. Therefore, when industrial / commercial activities are located near Residential Zones, conflict in the acceptable level of noise emission occurs. There are some established industrial / commercial activities that adjoin Residential Zones. Noise complaints raised from these areas are received by Council regularly. This raises the question, are the conflicts in land use dealt with sufficiently by the District Plan?

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan approach that does not address any potential industrial / commercial noise issues located near Residential Zones prior to the industrial / commercial activity being established; (ii) amend the District Plan to include more stringent noise limits for industrial / commercial activities located near Residential Zones; (iii) amend the District Plan to require acoustic treatment and separation distances at zone boundaries between Industrial / Commercial and Residential Zones; (iv) amend the District Plan to include a buffer area between Industrial / Commercial and Residential Zones; and / or (v) amend the District Plan to require resource consent for industrial/commercial activities located close to Residential Zones.

This summary outlines the issues our district faces in relation to noise.

We welcome your feedback on this topic.

Andrea Leslie
Timaru Ward Councillor





Issue 2

Protection of strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities against reverse sensitivity

There are a number of established strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities that generate noise emissions. The strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities include the railway line, the state highways, the Timaru Airport, the Timaru Motor Raceway, the Timaru Port, Fonterra, to a certain extent the Washdyke Industrial Area, and the local sport and shooting clubs. These strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities serve the District and wider area with the provision of essential services, recreational facilities and employment opportunities. The on-going operations of the strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities are affected by reverse sensitivity issues. Investments made into the strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities need to be secured and their growth needs to be protected.

The options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions that capture major strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities as industrial or recreational activities, or site specific designations. Smaller strategic facilities are captured as recreational activities or operate under existing use rights or with resource consent; (ii) amend the District Plan to include a list (and maps) of the strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities; and / or (iii) amend the District Plan to include a noise contour and buffer area restricting noise sensitive activities adjacent to the strategic infrastructure, sites and facilities.

Issue 3

Management of noise from commercial activities within Recreational Zones

Recreational land that provides public open space is located throughout residential neighbourhoods. In recent years, there has been an increase in commercial based recreational activities on recreational land such as social functions, concerts. Such activities generally concentrate large numbers of people, operate at night time and include the use of amplified music / speaker systems. The noise generated can adversely affect the amenity enjoyed by the residents in the neighbourhood. The residents are less tolerant to noise emissions from such activities compared to community / sport based recreational activities. Noise emission from commercial based recreational activities within Recreational Zones need to be managed and guided to protect residential amenity of the neighbourhood.

Options for addressing this issue are to (i) retain the current District Plan provisions that do not limit noise emissions or hours of operation within Recreation Zones; (ii) amend the District Plan to include noise limits for commercial activities within Recreational Zones; and / or (iii) amend the District Plan to include limitations on the scale and hours of commercial activities within Recreation Zones.