

Sites of Significance to Māori

The hapū who hold manawhenua in Timaru District are Kāti Huirapa. The rohe of Kāti Huirapa extends over the area from the Rakaia River in the north to the Waitaki River in the south. The Papatipu Rūnanga that represents Kāti Huirapa is Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.

Issues

- The protection of sites and areas of significance to Kāti Huirapa from adverse effects of activities and land use, including ensuring that the values underlying the connection with the area are protected and maintained.
- The ability for Kāti Huirapa to provide timely input to decision-making about activities that could affect their significant sites/areas and their values.
- An ongoing ability to access and use resources in accordance with tikanga.

Operative District Plan Approach

There are no specific sites or areas of significance to Māori identified on the planning maps or within the plan. There is mention of takata whenua values in various places in the objectives and policies in the Natural Environment, Heritage and Rural Zone sections. However, the methods applied to these provisions focus on consultation and are not directive in terms of process or through rules requiring any action.

Proposed Plan Approach

The objective and policy framework is intended to provide clarity on the need to provide for recognition and protection of sites and areas of significance to Māori from inappropriate activities, and to ensure that there is involvement in decision making processes for Kāti Huirapa.

Rules within the chapter are focused on activities that have been identified as being a particular threat to cultural values, including earthworks, buildings and structures, vegetation clearance, plantation forestry and temporary events. The rules are generally split between the larger wāhi tupuna areas and the smaller wāhi taoka, wāhi tapu, wai taoka, and wai tapu overlays, within which more restrictive rules are applied.

In addition to the rules within this chapter, there are a range of supporting provisions in other chapters, such as matters of discretion that will require consideration of impacts on cultural values.

Changes

Key changes include:

Inclusion of Kāti Huirapa in resource management decisions and consultation and engagement with Kāti Huirapa

Provision for customary harvest and other cultural practices, existing access and opportunities for enhanced access

Identification of sites and areas of significance, and management of the effects of in a way that protects the cultural values of different areas and recognises the threats to identified values

Ensuring the sustainability of ecosystems that support taonga and mahinga kai.

The rules are separated into two groups:

1. Those applying to the wāhi tupuna overlay within which earthworks above 750m² require resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity.
2. Those applying to the wāhi taoka, wāhi tapu, wai taoka, and wai tapu overlays as follows:

Summary of key rules

Permitted activities

- Wāhi taoka overlay: any new or extended building subject to height and scale limits
- All overlays: indigenous vegetation clearance for specified activities such as customary harvest and cultural use, and for other exemptions to align with Biodiversity rules.

Restricted discretionary activities

- Earthworks
- Wāhi taoka overlay: those buildings and structures that do not meet permitted activity standards
- Wāhi tapu, wai taoka and wai tapu overlays: all new or extended buildings
- Indigenous vegetation clearance that is not otherwise permitted.

Non-complying activities

- Plantation forestry
- All shelterbelts or woodlots as well as plantation forestry at rock art sites
- Any temporary event except cultural events in wāhi tapu areas
- Mining, quarrying and intensively farmed stock.

Reasons

As part of fulfilling the Resource Management Act 1991 obligations under sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8, the Council has developed this chapter (and provisions in other chapters) together with rūnanga for the purpose of managing activities that have potential adverse effects on the values of sites and areas that are significant to Kāti Huirapa. The intent of this approach is to give effect to the outcomes sought by Kāti Huirapa for the sites and areas of significance to them.

What it Means in Practice

Private landowners who have sites and areas of significance to Māori identified on their property will require resource consent to undertake activities that may currently be permitted. In some instances, a cultural impact assessment may be all that is required and, in others, restrictions on the proposed activity may be necessary to ensure protection of cultural values.

