

Coastal Environment

Issues

- The need to identify the qualities that contribute to the natural character of the terrestrial part of Timaru's coastal environment
- The need to manage adverse effects of land use, development and subdivision on the values of the coastal environment
- The need to recognise the importance of the coastal environment to Ngāi Tahu
- The need to protect people and property from risks associated with coastal hazards.

Operative District Plan Approach

Coastal Environment

The Operative Plan does not map the Coastal Environment or contain a Coastal Environment chapter. The coastal environment is essentially zoned as Rural 3 Zone, which covers those areas of the coastal environment which retain a high degree of natural character, and where inappropriate use and development would threaten those natural character values. A default discretionary activity status is applied to buildings that are accessory to existing household units and farming.

Coastal Hazards

The planning maps in the Operative Plan identify the 100yr coastal erosion line and coastal inundation line. The objectives and policies seek to avoid further non-essential development or redevelopment in the most hazard prone areas of the District (with reference to flooding rather than coastal hazards). The rules generally prohibit buildings and structures seaward of the Coastal Hazard 1 line, but do not apply to the 100yr coastal erosion line or take into account climate change or sea level rise.

Proposed Plan Approach

The policies have focus on achieving the preservation of natural character and its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, by managing activities in a comprehensive manner, and managing the effects and risks from coastal hazards.

The planning maps identify the coastal environment and areas with high natural character. The rules are focused upon managing effects on the attributes of the coastal environment and the qualities of natural character. Any activity where there is the potential for significant adverse effects on areas with high natural character will require resource consent.

The planning maps identify coastal high hazard areas: land subject to coastal erosion over the next 100 years; and/or subject to sea water inundation (excluding tsunamis) over the next 100 years. Given the level of risk to people and property, stringent rules apply in these areas requiring resource consent for most activities.

Changes

Key changes include:

Identify the Coastal Environment area

Identify and protect the natural character qualities of the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, use and development

Enable the restoration or rehabilitation of the natural character of the coastal environment

Protect people and property from coastal hazards

Recognise and maintain Kāti Huirapa's relationship with the coastal environment.

Summary of key rules

Permitted activities

- Amenity planting outside of high natural character areas
 - Plantation forestry outside of high natural character areas
 - Limited Regionally significant infrastructure
 - Limited buildings and structures
 - Limited earthworks
 - Planting of trees and/or vegetation for conservation, restoration, natural hazard mitigation work or enhancement purposes.
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Restricted / Discretionary activities

- Subdivision
 - Natural hazard mitigation works (not including vegetation)
 - Regionally Significant infrastructure in coastal high natural character areas
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Non-complying activities

- Quarrying and mining
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Reasons

The Council has an obligation to manage the coastal environment to preserve its natural character and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development under the RMA, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement.

The National Planning Standards require the Council to identify the coastal environment as an overlay and address its management, including coastal hazards, in a Coastal Environment chapter.

The Timaru District Landscape and Coastal Study has identified areas of Coastal High Natural Character (CHNC). The Timaru Coastal Erosion Assessment prepared by Jacobs and Timaru District Coastal Hazard Assessment prepared by NIWA have identified areas at high risk from coastal hazards.

What it Means in Practice

- The extent of the coastal environment, areas with high natural character and hazard areas are clearly identified on the planning maps
- Existing activities such as farming and small-scale buildings and structures are provided for
- Resource consents will be required for a greater number of activities (including those that may currently be permitted) than the present rules
- No duplication with rules in the underlying Rural Zone which will minimise the risk of conflicting provisions and potentially unnecessary applications
- Better protection of natural character values and improved protection for people and property from coastal hazard risks.

